

Study Abroad

Orientation Handbook



Oklahoma State University

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The Study Abroad Orientation Handbook is divided into sections that focus on the major areas of concern that most students encounter before, during, and after a study abroad experience.

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ACADEMIC CREDIT

Whether you are studying abroad on a reciprocal exchange or an affiliated /approved program, the courses you plan to take abroad must be pre-approved, their OSU equivalence established, and their applicability to your degree program determined.

RECIPROCAL EXCHANGE

Reciprocal Exchange enables you to pay tuition and fees to Oklahoma State University while studying abroad at a host university. You pay all other charges such as room and board, books and supplies, at your host institution.

You are enrolled at OSU in a holding number designated as “Study Abroad 3090,” specific to your academic college.

Once abroad, you enroll in specific classes at your host university. The classes taken abroad replace “Study Abroad 3090” credits when you complete your studies and the courses are posted on the OSU transcript.

To efficiently and successfully complete the enrollment process and to receive credit for your work abroad, please carefully follow the *Reciprocal Exchange Timetable* and observe the deadlines for submitting required documents. The Timetable was developed to help you organize your time; *failure to observe deadlines may result in your dismissal from the exchange.*

AFFILIATED/APPROVED PROGRAMS

Affiliated/approved programs encompass programs offered by US universities and study abroad organizations as well as direct enrollment. The process of pre-approval of courses is similar to that for reciprocal exchange. You are enrolled at OSU in the holding number TEMP 1777-691. You do not pay OSU tuition and fees, but pay the program fees of the host institution.

SELECTING CLASSES AT YOUR HOST INSTITUTION

Ideally, you select all the classes you may consider taking abroad before you leave OSU. The classes are then evaluated for their OSU equivalence using the **Course Equivalency Evaluation** form. You can then use this evaluation to help select classes when you enroll abroad. In some cases, you must wait until you are on site before knowing which classes will be available.

You must complete the Course Equivalency Evaluation Form and obtain the appropriate signatures from your college academic advising office, the Financial Aid Office, the Study Abroad Office, and the course evaluator before you are authorized to enroll or before you have confirmation that your courses will transfer back to OSU as you expect for affiliated/approved programs.

VERIFYING YOUR ARRIVAL AND ENROLLMENT

Between the first and fifth day of classes at your host university, you are expected to fax your **Enrollment Verification and Arrival Report** to the Study Abroad Office. Do not fax the form earlier, as it won't be accepted. Your federal financial aid will be disbursed as soon as the Enrollment Verification has been received and evaluated. The Enrollment Verification and Arrival Report must be submitted no later than the Friday of the first week of class. You will be notified by e-mail of the evaluation of your courses. This notification will enable you to make informed decisions about dropping or adding classes.

You are responsible for all the courses you report on the Enrollment Verification and for any changes you make within six weeks after the date classes begin at your host university. Make certain the number of host university credit hours is accurately indicated for each course. If there is a discrepancy between the courses and number of credit hours reported on the Enrollment Verification and the official academic record (transcript), you must provide an explanation of the discrepancy from your host coordinator who has previously verified the accuracy of the credits, so we are ensured of having valid information.

MAKING CHANGES IN YOUR ENROLLMENT

Use the **Drop/Add Notification** to make course schedule changes. Making changes in your schedule is allowed through the Friday of the sixth week of classes at your host institution. Your final schedule of classes will be determined by the Verification of Enrollment and any subsequent Add/Drop Notifications received by the six-week deadline. You will be responsible for payment of fees for the total hours of enrollment based on these verifications. In addition, you may not add a course after the six week deadline. You may drop a class after the deadline, however, you will receive a grade of “W” and you will be charged for the course, just as you would be if you were in residence at OSU.

If a course appears on the official academic record from your host university that was not reported on your Enrollment Verification or Add/Drop Notification, you will not receive credit for the course. If a course that appears on your Enrollment Verification or subsequent

Add/Drop Notification does not appear on the official academic record from your host institution, you will receive an “N” grade, meaning no grade reported. You will still be charged for the credit hours.

If you add any courses that were not previously evaluated, you should provide a description of the course **in English**. Neither the Study Abroad Office nor the evaluator will be able to translate course descriptions for you.

OBTAINING AN OFFICIAL ACADEMIC RECORD (TRANSCRIPT)

At the end of each term of your studies abroad, please ask that an official academic record be sent to the Study Abroad Office. If your host university issues an academic record only once a year, please let us know so we can note the exception. Your financial aid will be disbursed when you demonstrate that you have successfully completed the previous period of academic work.

If you think you will not receive an official academic record promptly and that your financial aid for the subsequent semester may be delayed because you are not able to provide a transcript, use the **Academic Progress Report** to record the signatures from your individual professors indicating you successfully completed your classes. The form can temporarily serve as an official transcript; however, the official document must be provided within a reasonable time.

Remember, it's in your own best interests to be as organized and as accurate as possible! The forms were designed to make the process more efficient and easy to use. It's your academic record that will be affected. We have to work together as a team to try to coordinate two different academic systems. The better organized you are, the more time you will have to spend absorbing the host culture!



FINANCIAL AID

When you decided to Study Abroad, one of your major concerns was probably the cost - the cost of the program as well as the cost of traveling to, and living in, another country. If you are eligible, you may use financial aid to help pay for your study abroad experience. REMEMBER, TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR FINANCIAL AID, THE COURSE WORK YOU TAKE WHILE ON A STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM MUST TRANSFER BACK AND APPLY TO YOUR DEGREE

You may already receive financial aid to assist you with educational expenses or you may plan to apply for financial aid to help with the cost of study abroad. The following checklist will help you remember the necessary steps to take.

- **If you plan to apply your existing federal financial aid to study abroad**, contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid at (405) 744-6604, 119 Student Union.
- **One of the early steps you need to take is to get a cost of living estimate** from your host university. The Study Abroad office can help you with this step.
- **To apply for Federal/ State Financial Aid** complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) - paper applications are available in 119 Student Union or in the Student Services Offices of the individual OSU Colleges. An electronic application can be completed by using FAFSA Express in the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, 213 Student Union, or by using FAFSA on the Web at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
 1. Provide the required supporting documents (U.S. Income Tax Returns, for example) **as requested** by the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid;
 2. Review your Financial Aid Award Letter and accept or decline offers. Return the signed award letter to 119 Student Union. If you are accepting a Federal Loan, you will need to have completed a Master Prom Note (MPN) using your FAFSA pin number at <http://dlenote.ed.gov> and entrance interview at www.dl.ed.gov. Check with the Bursar – Student Loans, 113 Student Union, telephone (405) 744-6447, regarding the processing of your promissory note if you are accepting a Federal Perkins Loan.
 3. If you are a previous borrower in any of the following loan programs, you should contact the holder of your loan to ensure you have complete deferment forms and any other information required to keep you in good standing in these programs:

- Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal Subsidized or Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans
- Federal Direct Subsidized or Unsubsidized Loans

- **If you hold scholarships or plan to apply for scholarships....**

1. Check with the awarding Agency/Department to see whether you can use your scholarship money to study abroad.
2. Apply for the following OSU programs: Continuing University Fee Waivers – application is available online beginning (approximately) December 1 or via the Web at www.okstate.edu/finaid. Application deadline is March 1; departmental Scholarships may be offered specifically for study abroad. Check with the individual College Student Service Office; freshman and Transfer Fee/Tuition Waivers – apply using the OSU Application for admission and filling out the scholarship application. Check with Office of High School and College Relations, 219 Student Union, or the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, 119 Student Union.

Important Facts About Federal Financial Aid Disbursements for Study Abroad Students

- Disbursement of Federal Student Aid cannot occur until the first day of attendance at the host institution. ***This attendance must be confirmed by faxing official documentation to Study Abroad Office.*** We will forward this information to the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid
- Disbursements are divided by the type of terms at the host institution, for example, into blocks, quarters, or semester. Your financial aid may be disbursed in increments that differ from the traditional two-semester academic year.
- If you are studying abroad for more than one block, semester or quarter, **the subsequent term's financial aid cannot be disbursed until you submit the grades for completed coursework.**

Official grades for completed coursework at the host institution must be received before disbursement will be made to students returning to OSU for subsequent terms within the current academic year (for example, spring or summer) or for the next academic year for students returning to the U.S. in late spring or summer.

In general, federal financial aid will be dispersed into your Bursar's account when you confirm you are enrolled and classes have begun at your host university. Any surplus payment after tuition and fees will be refunded to you as you have designated: direct deposit, check to parents, etc.

If you are using financial aid to study abroad, you will receive a financial aid checklist and statement of responsibility. The financial aid checklist and statement of responsibility provide further details and cautions regarding financial aid.

KEY FINANCIAL AID POINTS:

- ❖ Linda Millis, financial aid specialist for Study Abroad at Oklahoma State University, is located in the Office of Financial Aid, 119 Student Union, e-mail: linda.millis@okstate.edu.
- ❖ Before your aid will be released on the first day of class abroad, you must provide the Financial Aid office with the following
 - ✓ A signed course evaluation form
 - ✓ A signed statement of responsibility
 - ✓ A signed verification of enrollment
- ❖ Make certain you maintain full-time student status
 - ✓ Undergraduates: 12 hours per semester
 - ✓ Graduates: 6 hours per semester
 - ✓ Scholarship recipients: 28 hours per academic year or other specific requirements
- ❖ **BEFORE** you leave, be sure to request from your host university that your transcript be forwarded to the Study Abroad Office. You must demonstrate that you successfully completed the previous semester and that you are presently enrolled in classes (enrollment verification) before your financial aid will be released for future semesters.

NOTE: Make sure you sign all the promissory notes before you leave OSU and that you have arranged for direct deposit from your bursar's account.



PRACTICAL MATTERS

From the passport to packing...

Students must have a signed, valid passport (and visas, if required). Students studying abroad must be sure that they have the proper visa to study there; a visitor's visa or entry without an appropriate visa may not allow one to study. Students should remember to fill in the emergency information page of their passport.

- It is a good idea for relatives of students abroad to obtain and maintain a valid passport as well, in case of an emergency requiring them to travel.
- Students should make copies of their passport's data page and any visas. They should keep a copy separately from the originals while traveling and leave one at home with their family and with their student advisor. This will help to obtain a replacement passport in the event the passport is lost or stolen.

Passports and Visas

If you do not have a passport and have not begun the application process, get busy! The months from January to August are the busiest for passport offices, so allow lots of time for processing, especially if you are studying abroad for the summer or fall semester.

Student Visa Applications

If the country in which you will be studying requires a student visa, get it as soon as possible. Do not procrastinate, or you may not receive your visa in time. You will need an acceptance letter from your host institution, passport, and other documents as required by the host country's consulate. Remember to send the visa application and passport by certified mail or Fed Ex so you can track the documents.

Find out if you will need a visa by checking the foreign entry requirements of your host country:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html

International Student I.D. Card (ISIC)

This card is invaluable to student travelers because it makes you eligible for special privileges, student discounts and travel bargains--that means lower-price air fares and accommodations; sometimes admission is reduced or free to museums, theaters, and cultural or historic sites. The ISIC card also gives students some emergency evacuation and repatriation insurance coverage. Please review the materials that accompany the card.

You should get the card before you leave the U.S. but be aware that it expires one year from the date of issue. Here on the OSU campus the card is available through the Study Abroad Office.

Remember to bring the following:

- One passport-size photo with your name written on the reverse side
- Your OSU school I.D.

The ISIC card costs \$22.00 and can be charged to your bursar account or paid with check or cash.

Medical & Travel Insurance

Make sure to have a complete physical before you go. At your doctor's office, do the following:

- Check that all shots are current, particularly the following: measles, rubella, polio, mumps, diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough. Check on any immunizations needed for vacation travel.
- Get copies of all prescriptions (including for glasses or contacts), and be sure to request that any prescriptions include the generic names of drugs, since U.S. brands may not be available (or may be expensive). If you rely on any over-the-counter U.S. medicines (Advil, Tylenol, etc.), take them with you in a quantity sufficient for your stay.
- Have your doctor write a specific medical history if you are required to take any medications that might be considered suspicious narcotics in a foreign country. Do not assume that you know the difference: ask your doctor about this specifically.

Please review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site for updated immunizations information: <http://www.cdc.gov/>.

You should also schedule a dentist appointment before you go, if possible. Try to do this well in advance, so that any necessary dental work can be completed before your departure.

Medicine and Packing

Remember to keep all medications (even common things like Tylenol or Advil) in their original containers with any prescriptions clearly marked. If you have allergies or need medication regularly, be sure to pack it in your carry-on luggage rather than in baggage that will be checked. You should have your carry-on luggage with you at all times, which will reduce the risk that necessary medication will be lost in transit or stolen.

Bring an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses. (Always bring spare glasses, even if you think you'll never need them.) Also bring a legible copy of your prescription. Contact lens wearers should bring extra contact lens solution and a 220/110 volt converter if you use heat disinfectant.

Medical insurance is required of all students participating in an OSU study abroad program. You must be covered by medical insurance while abroad, including during travel to and from the program. Be sure that your present insurance will be in effect when you are overseas!

Every year, hundreds of students become ill or suffer injuries overseas. It is essential that students have medical insurance that would cover a medical emergency abroad. Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/>.

Discuss the following items with your insurance company:

- eligibility requirements
- duration of coverage
- the dollar limit of the policy, per incident and in total
- emergency evacuation and repatriation coverage and procedures
- cost of premium
- coverage for accidents
- contact and procedures for making claims
- related benefits such as 24-hour emergency contact, doctor referral services, etc.

Take along some claim forms from your insurance company so that you'll have them on hand if they are needed. Be sure that you understand what your insurance company's method of reimbursement will be while you are overseas--in many cases you will be required to pay the total cost of any treatment and then wait for reimbursement. It is wise to discuss a plan with your parents for receiving emergency money while overseas, if your plan requires you to pay for medical treatment up-front, even if you will eventually be reimbursed by your insurance.

The following telephone numbers and websites are listed as resources for insurance companies specializing in travel and foreign study. You should confirm with your current or prospective provider that coverage for you is not limited or excluded while you are out of the country. Some companies listed below offer only health insurance or medical assistance programs; others provide comprehensive coverage including health, cancellation and baggage insurance. **MAKE SURE YOUR PLAN INCLUDES EMERGENCY MEDICAL EVACUATION AND REPATRIATION OF REMAINS.** Another option to include is provision for and inclusion of pre-existing conditions. Participation in a reciprocal exchange or study abroad program requires that you have adequate coverage abroad in the event of a medical emergency, so please take the time to consider and review your policy status. Inclusion of companies on this page does not suggest endorsement by Oklahoma State University or the Study Abroad Office.

*This has been reviewed by Oklahoma State University Office of Student Health Insurance. Brochures are available in the OSU Study Abroad Office.

OSU's Insurance – for Reciprocal Exchanges Only	HTH Students Study Abroad Plan
www.okstate.edu/UHS/uhsstuins.htm	1-888-350-2002 http://www.hthstudents.com
*Scholastic Overseas Services (SOS) SOS Scholastic Traveler Membership and Optional Medical & Travel Insurance	*Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI)
1-800-523-8662 www.internationalsos.com	1-800-303-8120 www.culturalinsurance.com

Taking Money Abroad



You will want to plan your financial needs for study abroad carefully. Take traveler's checks and cash to tide you over for a few days or a week upon arrival in the host country. Some options for handling money include using Automatic Teller machines (ATM), traveler's checks, cash advances on credit cards and wire transfers. Some of these can be complicated and expensive so you should ask your program staff to recommend the most effective means in the host country. You will probably spend relatively large sums of money in your first few weeks abroad as you learn your way around a new setting and buy what you need to get settled. It takes a few days to adjust to a new currency and understand its value.

- **Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) Card**

Without a doubt, the most convenient, secure, and economical way to keep yourself supplied with cash in the local currency is by using an ATM debit card (or check card), preferably with a Visa or MasterCard logo, and with a four-digit PIN code. With such a card you can draw money out of a checking account in your home bank in the U.S. (but not out of a savings account). You will receive the commercial exchange rate, which is always better than the tourist rate, and you will not be tied down to banking hours. There is a limit to the amount you can draw out on any one day--usually \$300, and your home bank will usually charge a fee for each transaction, typically somewhere between \$1 and \$3. Therefore, it makes sense to take out the maximum allowable amount each time. And of course, if you are going to need large amounts of cash, you will need to do some planning ahead. It is also important to know how much money you have in your checking account back home and to keep track of your cash transfers. If you plan to use an American Express card for accessing your checking account, you need to sign up with American Express for that service ahead of time at (800) CASH-NOW. The service is ultimately more expensive than using a debit or check card with a Visa or MasterCard logo. Since you could lose your ATM card or have it stolen, it is important to have a backup financial plan for emergencies. The most sensible one is to take a few hundred dollars in traveler's checks.

- **Traveler's Checks**

Travelers checks are a good means of transporting money abroad because you are given a record of the check numbers and stolen checks are replaced. Keep check numbers recorded in a safe place. Traveler's checks are especially useful if you plan to travel to several countries with different currencies. American Express will cash American Express traveler's checks free of charge. Banks usually offer good exchange rates, but may charge a commission. Hotels, railroad stations and commercial "exchanges" tend to give expensive rates and charge the highest commission. Traveler's checks are a safe way to keep emergency funds.

- **Credit Cards**

Credit cards often give you the best exchange rates for purchases, but many small restaurants, stores and cafés do not accept them. You should also find out which card is most commonly accepted in your host country. When using a credit card abroad, always verify the amount on the bill and keep your receipts. Notify your credit card company of your study abroad plans to avoid the cut-off or blocking systems activated by out of pattern charges to your card. Purchases made overseas are not subject to U.S. purchase protection policies for damaged or stolen goods. Some credit card companies charge high interest rates immediately on a cash advance unless there are sufficient funds in your credit card account.

- **Wire Transfers**

Wire transfers are yet another option. Banks, American Express offices and commercial agencies will wire money to a bank account or agent abroad in 3-4 business days. There may be a large transaction fee both to send and to receive the money. Ask about these fees both at home and abroad before wiring money.

Packing



Nearly everyone agrees that you can't take as much as you'd like to. Once you've dragged your bags across airports, bus terminals, train stations, up and down stairs, over cobbled streets and uneven sidewalks, you'll probably wish that you had listened to the "less is more" advice. Analyze your travel plans: How often do you have to change vehicles (airport to train station, train to bus, and bus to taxi)? How much flexibility will you have about leaving things behind while you travel during vacations? If you plan to see the country you're visiting at either the beginning or end of your program, you will probably have to carry everything with you, so you should take less.

The standard advice for choosing how much stuff to take is as follows: lay out all the clothes you plan to take and then cut the amount in half. This should give you the right amount!

OSU's programs are all located in areas of varying weather. Temperatures can change dramatically overnight or even in the course of a single day, so the best rule for choosing a wardrobe is to select items that can be interchanged and layered when you need more warmth and dressed up or down as the occasion warrants.

Past participants said that in England, France, and Spain students dress up, both for class and to go out. One year students will tell us that European style is to wear only black. The next year they will say Europeans wear all types of clothes and colors. It is hard to say what the style will be when you are over there, but make sure the clothes you pack are comfortable and that you like them. You can always buy new clothes when you arrive. Students have commented that there are good secondhand clothing stores all through Europe.

Some suggested clothing items:

- solid colored items that can be worn with at least two or three outfits
- practical, comfortable clothes that can be layered for warmth
- a few clothes for each season
- one dressy outfit that can be worn in any season (a dress for women, sports jacket and slacks for men)
- slippers (most floors will not be carpeted, and, in Europe, bare feet are considered offensive)
- flip-flops or shower shoes for traveling and for the beach
- a bathing suit or two
- a raincoat or pull-over and a jacket
- a sweatshirt and a few sweaters
- gloves and a scarf (students on every program have recommended both of these)
- a pair of comfortable walking shoes and a pair of dress shoes. **Don't take too many shoes!** They are bulky.
- lots of underwear and socks (you can save trips to the laundry by taking lots of underwear)
- sunglasses

Other Essentials:

- Small, battery-powered, travel alarm clock
- Postcards of your hometown and of the OSU campus
- Small first-aid kit
- Walkman with compact speakers (in addition to headphones).
- Dictionaries, grammar review texts, etc.
- An OSU calendar that tells you of important dates back here on campus, e.g., course sign-up deadline, off-campus application deadline, and housing lottery
- Family photos and mementos

The store down the street from your new home probably sells everything that you will need, but if you have "special" needs then pack up these items just in case.

Luggage information

It is possible to study abroad for a full academic year on an internal frame backpack and a carry-on bag.

You can only check two pieces of luggage, each no larger than 623" (L+W+H) and weighing no more than 70 pounds. If you bring more than the two pieces, the airlines may charge you \$50 to \$70 per extra bag. You may also take a carry-on bag that is no larger than 8" x 16" x 21". Eight inches is the maximum height for a bag to fit under the seat. Do not assume that you can take a larger bag and find room in the overhead compartment. Space overhead is limited in overseas flights and may already be full when you get to your seat. **It is a good idea to call your airline and verify the baggage regulations for your particular flight.**

Remember to leave room in your luggage to bring items home.

Documents to Take in Your Carry-on Luggage

In addition to the documents listed below, students from all OSU programs should carry a list of important addresses and telephone numbers, including the program director's office phone number and address.

- Passport (with your visa if you need one)
- Proof of medical insurance while abroad
- International Student Identity Card
- Medications
- Change of clothing
- Schedule
- Cash

Customs Tip: You may need proof of prior ownership for foreign-made goods, particularly cameras and stereo equipment, in order to avoid paying Duty when you come home. It is possible to pre-register these items with Customs before you go--they'll note the serial numbers and give you a certificate. Taking the receipts along will do just as well, provided you still have them. *Save the receipts for things you buy while abroad.* They can sometimes prove very useful at Customs on your return.

SAFETY & EMERGENCY



If students are going to be in a country for more than a couple of weeks, they should register at the American Embassy or Consulate. To register yourself, visit the following website: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>

WHAT U.S. CONSULAR OFFICERS CAN AND CAN NOT DO TO HELP U.S. CITIZENS ABROAD:

- If students find themselves in trouble overseas, the Consular Officer at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate can provide certain assistance and advice. Consular Officers can also help in the event of illness, injury, natural catastrophe, evacuations, destitution, or death.
- In the United States, the Office of Overseas Citizens Services can also assist American students abroad and their families in the USA in emergency cases. The 24-hour number to call is (202) 647-5225.
- There are certain things that consular officers at American embassies **CAN NOT** do for American citizens abroad. For example, they cannot cash checks, lend money or serve as your attorney.

For more information see the U.S. Department of State website at <http://travel.state.gov/>

Security Issues

Please read this section very carefully and refer to it while abroad. There is no way to guarantee that you won't be involved in an unpleasant incident. Remember, awareness is your best defense: be alert, know the dangers, and avoid them. It is also important that you keep a low profile; however, it is difficult, if not impossible, to blend in entirely. Here are a few tips to help you lay low.

- In Europe, avoid cabs that pick up more than one person at a time. If there is not a clearly visible meter, establish the fare with the driver before the taxi begins to move. Make sure that the meter is clear when you get into the cab. If you are not comfortable, get out. Be sure that you are able to give directions to the driver. Do not get into a cab that does not have a visible meter.
- When traveling by train, particularly at night, have one member of your group serve as look-out. Sleeping students have had their security pouches (including passports, money, and return air tickets) stolen without waking up until it was too late. Try to get the lower or upper bunks; the middle bunks are uncomfortable and not secure. Always take turns sleeping on trains. Sleep with your belongings, and check under your beds.
- Keep your wallet in your front pocket.
- Check your luggage before crossing borders to make sure no one has added anything to your backpack without your knowledge. Also, don't keep anything valuable in the outside pockets of your pack; they're an easy target for thieves, so use them to store guidebooks, maps, and toilet paper. Tuck your camera, film, and anything else that you'd like to hang onto at the bottom of your pack.
- Don't carry all your money (or traveler's checks) in one place, and avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Don't take anything that is extremely valuable (jewelry) or that couldn't be replaced.
- Use a small lock to close the zipper of your backpack and keep the key in a separate location. This is one more deterrent for a would-be thief.
- If you must put down your bag or daypack, particularly while traveling; put it between your feet with one leg through a strap.
- Stay away from bags or packages that don't have an obvious owner standing right next to them. Never pick up a package that someone has "forgotten"; instead, leave the area, if possible.
- Trust your instincts. If you don't feel comfortable in a situation, restaurant, or hotel, get out. Don't stay anywhere you feel unsafe.

EMERGENCY PLANNING – CRISIS MANAGEMENT

This section is included to better prepare you to handle emergency situations that may arise while you are abroad. While most students experience no difficulty during their time abroad, it is better to be prepared should an emergency occur. The following information was taken from the studentsabroad.com website, a site available to students and study abroad advisors alike, provided by the Center for Global Education through a grant from FIPSE, U.S. Dept. of Education and other sponsors.

Emergency Planning

- Emergency Card
- Emergency Action Plan Steps
- Personal Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Crisis Management

Communication Info Sheets

- Words To Know
- Phrases To Know
- Icons To Know

Most students returning from study abroad say that it was one of the most valuable parts of their college or university experience. While most students experience a safe and healthy time abroad, some are forced to deal with minor crises like pick-pockets, petty theft, or a minor illness or injury (similar to those faced by students in the U.S.). In an unfamiliar environment with communication and cultural barriers, a minor crisis may be more difficult to handle. In addition, similar to the realities on a U.S. campus, there may be a few students who encounter a major emergency while abroad, such as a serious illness or injury, traffic accident, natural disaster, or violent crime (see the Crisis Management section for more information). The following resources: **Emergency Card**, **Personal Emergency Action Plan**, and **Emergency Action Plan Steps**, will assist you in being prepared before going and after arriving abroad.

Emergency Card

The Emergency Card on page 12 is a condensed resource, which includes your most important contact numbers and personal information. We recommend that you print out the Card. Then, fill in all the requested names, addresses, phone numbers and personal information. Make several copies of your completed card. Make sure to leave a copy of it with each of your U.S. emergency contacts, with your emergency contacts abroad, and keep a copy with you at all times.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Steps

We suggest you print out the Emergency Action Steps and keep a copy with you at all times. We have included a list of suggested documents and items to help you respond more effectively during an emergency. (See page 13)

Personal Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Whether studying or working abroad, we recommend you print out and fill in the emergency planning form. This form should help you create a personal Emergency Action Plan (EAP). It is different from the Emergency Card above. Your EAP is equivalent to a strategy-planning device in case of an emergency, whereas the Emergency Card is a wallet-sized summary of your personal information and emergency contacts. (See page 14)

Emergency Card

Print out the Emergency Card. Fill it in. Leave a copy with your U.S. emergency contacts, with your abroad emergency contacts, and keep a copy with you at all times.



STUDENT EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD	
Student Name _____ Date of Birth ____/____/____ Citizenship _____ <hr/> Study Abroad Program Name Abroad Program Emergency Contact Address _____ Phone # _____ Cell # _____ Email _____ <hr/> Abroad Housing Emergency Contact Address _____ Phone # _____ Cell # _____ Email _____ <hr/> Home (US) Campus Emergency Contact Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone # _____ Cell # _____ Email _____	Family (US) Emergency Contact Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone # _____ Cell # _____ Email _____ Insurance Company _____ Policy # _____ 24 Hour Ph # _____ Embassy/Consulate _____ Phone # _____ <hr/> Address _____ Equivalent 911 Abroad _____ Phone # _____ <hr/> Nearest Hospital Abroad _____ Phone # _____ <hr/> Address _____ Passport # _____ Blood Type _____ Special Medical Conditions _____ Wishes in Event of Serious Injury/Death _____ _____

Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Steps

Print out the EAP Steps. Attach the appropriate documents and bring necessary items with you. In case of an emergency, follow the EAP Steps.

Documents that should be attached to your EAP:	Items that you should have with you at all times:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copy of Passport and Visa (where applicable) 2. Copy of Emergency Assistance Hotline Information 3. Copy of Insurance Card/Information 4. Copy of Area Maps/Safe Routes 5. Copy of Emergency Card 6. Copy of Communication Sheets 7. Copy of Traveler's Check Receipts 8. Information Release and Approval for Medical Emergency Care Form (contacts & care approval) 9. Special Medical Needs Treatment Information 10. Power of Attorney 11. Copy of Home & International Drivers Licenses 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication Device(s) Cell phone, PDA, Phone, Calling Card (a program Satellite phone may help in remote locations) 2. Funds Local \$s, US\$, Travellers Checks, ATM/Credit Card 3. Sample Emergency/First Aid Kit Flashlight, water (or purification tablets), whistle, pocket knife (not on plane), adhesive bandages, elastic bandage (ace-type), antibiotic ointment, gauze pads, first aid tape, scissors, sun block, lip ointment, burn cream, passport, aspirin/pain reliever, am/fm radio, map, batteries, insect repellent, prescription/medication, thermal blanket, toilet paper, glasses, contacts/saline solution. <i>(varies by location and personal needs)</i>



Personal Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Knowing the answers to the questions found below can be a good first step in helping to keep yourself safer in an emergency by creating a personal EAP. If you need help drawing a map, finding escape routes or writing emergency preparedness directions/steps, consider asking yourself the following series of questions. You should really try to include answers to all of these questions in your personal EAP:

Know Where to Go

Where should you go first in an emergency, and what method of transportation will you use to get there?

Be aware of all your emergency transportation options. Know the numbers for the following:

Airport:	_____	Bus Station:	_____
Train Station:	_____	Metro Station:	_____
Rent-a-Car:	_____	Boat/Ferry/Port Authority:	_____

Know Your Emergency Contact Information

In addition to your personal emergency contacts, we also recommend you look up/ask for the numbers for the following individuals and agencies nearest to your study abroad and/or travel location(s):

City or country's 911 equivalent:	_____	Local Government/Visa office:	_____
Consulate/Embassy:	_____	Police:	_____
Fire:	_____	Hospital:	_____
Post Office:	_____	Translator Service:	_____
Lawyer:	_____	Red Cross:	_____
24-Hour Assist/Insurance Hotline:	_____	Other:	_____

Who will you call first, second, third, etc. in an emergency?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Do your emergency contacts have each others' phone numbers so they can communicate and relay information about you to each other?

What are some alternate ways of communicating with your emergency contacts?

The following are some communication options you may have available:

Telephone	Cell Phone/Text Message
Satellite Phone	Fax
E-mail/Internet	PDA/Palm Pilot
Post Office/Express Mail Service	Wire Service

Who would you like those assisting you to contact in the event of your illness, injury, incarceration, kidnapping, etc...?

Do all of your emergency contacts know what your wishes are in the event of your serious injury or death?

Where does your nearest emergency contact live, and how fast can you get to him/her?

Back-up Plan/Special Conditions

If the situation does not permit you to follow the original emergency plan, what is the back-up plan (Plan B)?

Are there any other special conditions to consider which are unique to your situation (i.e. weather conditions/hazards in your region of study/travel, a personal physical handicap, poor public transportation or phone service in your area...)?

Emergency Kit/Money

Which items do you still need to add to your emergency first aid kit before it is fully stocked and ready?

Do you have emergency cash reserves, travelers' checks, credit cards, etc. on-hand, in case you can't count on banks/ATMs, or get to a bank/ATM?

Using the emergency supplies and reserve money you have set aside, for how many days would you be able to sustain yourself, and what would you use each day?

CRISIS MANAGEMENT (Source: <http://www.studentsabroad.com/crisismanage.html>)

In this section, you will find information on how to better cope during a crisis. Being able to deal well with a crisis situation includes understanding your emotions, keeping yourself as safe as possible, and communicating with your emergency contacts by creating and using your personal [Emergency Action Plan](#) (EAP). Please refer to the Emergency Card, and EAP Steps provided for more resources on crisis management and emergency planning.

Most students returning from study abroad say that it was one of the most valuable parts of their college or university experience. While most students experience a safe and healthy time abroad, some are forced to deal with minor crises like pick-pockets, petty theft, or a minor illness or injury (similar to those faced by students in the U.S.). In an unfamiliar environment with communication and cultural barriers, a minor crisis may be more difficult to handle. In addition, similar to the realities on a U.S. campus, there may be a few students who encounter a major emergency while abroad, such as a serious illness or injury, traffic accident, natural disaster, or violent crime. Many study abroad programs have developed comprehensive support strategies. The first place to start getting information about your program's support strategies is in your study abroad advisor's office in the U.S. and your program director's office abroad.

Minor and Major Emergencies

While most students experience a safe and healthy time abroad, some are forced to deal with minor emergencies. Some of the more common minor emergencies that students may face abroad include: pick-pocketing, petty theft, illness, injury, and the consequences of alcohol use.

The majority of students can protect themselves from such minor emergencies in much the same ways they protect themselves from similar situations at home. However, what students consider a minor emergency here at home can turn into a more difficult to handle situation abroad. Small emergencies abroad can seem like larger ones due to language and communication barriers, and a lack of familiarity with foreign surroundings.

In addition to minor emergencies, some students may also face larger emergencies abroad. Frequently, these major emergencies tend to be events out of a student's control. Some unpredictable, major emergencies that could occur abroad include: natural disasters like earthquakes and hurricanes, acts of terrorism, and serious medical problems.

Things To Do Before a Crisis Occurs

- **Emergency Action Plan:** The first step in crisis management is being prepared before a crisis occurs. Consider adopting a personal Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for yourself. Essentially, this document describes what actions to take in the event of an emergency. Your EAP could be as simple as a list of people to call in case you are hurt, along with copies of your insurance papers, passport, and names of any medications to which you are allergic. Please see the [Emergency Planning](#) section for how to create a personal EAP, and steps to take during an emergency.

1) Why Create an EAP?

The more support networks you have during an emergency or crisis, the more likely someone will be available to help you. Also, the better prepared you are ahead of time, the better chance you have of responding effectively to a crisis. Therefore, it is important to set-up support networks, and an EAP, before an emergency occurs-before you actually need assistance. Creating an EAP is a good first step towards keeping yourself healthy and safe in the event of an emergency or crisis while abroad.

2) Who Needs a Copy of Your EAP?

We remind you to give copies of your EAP to your contacts abroad, and leave copies with appropriate contacts at home, which may include several family members and friends. Make sure to always keep a copy on hand for yourself as well. You should consider giving your EAP to the following contacts:

In the United States:

- Your primary home emergency contact
- Power of Attorney
- Family members/relatives/guardian
- Friends
- Your home campus/institution's department(s), which maintains emergency contact information for study abroad students (for instance, the study abroad office, student affairs, registrar, etc.)
- Your study abroad program provider, whether it is or is not located on your home campus

Important Links to Remember

- [SAFETI Crisis Management Handbook](#)
- [U.S. Department of State: Crisis Abroad](#)
- [U.S. Department of State: Crisis Awareness and Preparedness](#)
- [Personal Safety Overseas: Safety Tips for Overseas Travel: An Update](#)

In your Host Country:

- Your primary abroad emergency contact
- Housing coordinator abroad/home-stay family member(s)
- Friends or family abroad (both in your host country and in other neighboring countries you may visit)
- Your abroad campus/institution's department(s), which maintains emergency contact information for study abroad students, where applicable
- Your study abroad program resident director/coordinator in the UK, where applicable
- Attach your EAP to your embassy or consulate registration form (if they accept it)
- Yourself

3) How to Create an EAP

- **Getting to You:** Ideally, try to develop detailed written directions so that someone would be able to locate you at your study abroad location, or travel location(s), in the event of an emergency. You may want to draw visual aids or maps in addition to writing out instructions.
 - **Getting Yourself Out:** Then, try to develop detailed instructions for yourself, showing possible routes from your place of residence, hotel/hostel, work/internship and/or university/program to a safe place. You may also want to include other places that you frequent, including shops, restaurants, subway stations, nightclubs, etc. You may want to draw visual aids or include a copy of a map in addition to writing out instructions.
 - **Things to Consider:** Remember, elevators may not function, and electric doors may not open in the event of an emergency; make sure to map out escape routes in which you take the stairs (or wheelchair ramps) rather than elevators. Consider carrying a small flashlight with you at all times in case the lights go out and you need to find your way through dark hallways or stairwells. Phone lines may also go down, so don't rely on calling someone to come pick you up. Have your Emergency/First Aid Kit available to take with you.
 - **Programs and Groups:** Check to see what kind of emergency plan your program/group has (if any). Even though you are with a program/group, you may have to rely on your own EAP to help you cope with a crisis. It is important to create a balance between what your program/group can do for you in an emergency, what your embassy/consulate can do, what your personal contacts can do, and what you will need to do for yourself.
 - **On Your Own:** If you are not studying/traveling with a program or group, it becomes even more crucial for you to create a detailed EAP; you might find yourself alone and entirely responsible for your own safety, your own evacuation, and your own well-being. If you are traveling independently, provide an itinerary for your trip. Check in with your emergency contacts by e-mail or phone from your various travel locations; this will help give them a general idea of where you are and where you are going. Remember to carry your [Emergency Card](#) with you at all times so you can get in touch with your contacts for assistance. Try to balance what your embassy/consulate can do for you in an emergency, how your contacts might be able to help you, and what you will need to accomplish on your own.
- **Registration with the Embassy:** When you arrive in your host country, register with the U.S. Consulate or Embassy (if you are not a U.S. citizen, register with the embassy/consulate of your home country). Registering with the Consulate or Embassy officials will make it easier for them to contact you in case of an emergency and to assist you in case you lose your passport, etc. To better enable them to assist you, it is suggested that you sign the privacy release form when you register. Ask for a briefing from the consular officer on safety issues in your host country.
 - **Injury:** Prior to departure or immediately upon arrival abroad, you should identify appropriate medical facilities in case of injury abroad. It is important to know whether your travel insurance will pay in advance for care, or whether you will need to apply for reimbursement. In the case of injury, the U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs can assist your family in sending you the necessary funds to pay for your medical care. In some instances they can help arrange for your transport and accompaniment back home, although they won't pay for this.
 - **Serious Emergencies:** Natural disasters, political upheaval, and terrorism are some of the events the U.S. State Department considers to be serious emergencies or crises. When they occur, a task force is set up in Washington D.C. to deal with the situation and provide assistance to U.S. citizens abroad.
 - **Charter Out of a Country:** If political crisis disturbs regular departures from your host country or the other countries in which you are traveling, and it is unsafe for Americans to remain abroad, your program provider and/or the U.S. State Department may be able to arrange for special charter travel out of a country.
 - **Death:** In the event of your death abroad, the Bureau of Consular Affairs will locate and inform your next of kin and relay special instructions for the disposition or burial of your remains, although they will not pay for this. A representative from the Bureau can also help to settle your estate on behalf of your relatives by preparing an official Foreign Service Report of Death that can be used in U.S. courts.

Who Can Help You?

- **What Program Sponsors Should Do:** A task force of study abroad administrators developed a set of guidelines, which include fourteen points of responsibilities for program administrators. (To see the fourteen points, go to the [Inter-Organizational Task Force Guidelines](#).)
- **Participant Responsibilities and What Program Sponsors Cannot Do:** Even after evaluating your program's ability to perform in the event of a crisis, certain things remain beyond the control of all program sponsors. The [Inter-Organizational Task Force Guidelines](#) lists six points about what program sponsors cannot do and lists twelve responsibilities of program participants.
- **What Your University/Institution Abroad Can Do:** This differs from institution to institution. The staff and administrators of your university/institution abroad can only do so much to ensure your safety. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to keep college or university staff well informed of your whereabouts, travel plans, needs, health problems, safety concerns, etc. By telling college or university staff about your needs and activities, you can greatly reduce possible risks to your safety. While you can, and should, always ask your college or university staff for assistance, they might not always be able to help you.
- **Keeping Yourself Safe:** Program sponsors can only do so much to ensure your safety. The student participants themselves can have a major impact on their own health and safety abroad through the decisions they make before and during the program, and by their day-to-day choices and behaviors. Check the [U.S. State Department's Tips for Students](#) website for what you can do to help keep yourself safe while abroad. (As noted in the previous section, the [Inter-Organizational Task Force Guidelines](#) website also lists twelve responsibilities of program participants.)
- **Parents, Guardians and Families:** Parents, guardians, and families can also play an important role in the health and safety of study abroad program participants. They are often the major lifeline to home and can help participants make decisions, or encourage appropriate behavior while abroad. Even though study abroad is a time of great independence for students, the student's parents, guardians and family members should not be left in the dark about their student's activities abroad. The [Inter-Organizational Task Force Guidelines](#) lists six suggestions for parents and guardians. Parents may also want to read the SAFETI Newsletter article "[Advice for Parents: Frequently Asked Questions](#)".

During and After a Crisis

- **Understanding Your Emotions:** In response to a crisis, you may experience the following range of emotions. These feelings are normal responses to a difficult situation:

Disbelief	Fear	Anger
Anxiety/Panic	Difficulty concentrating	Denial
Worry/Concern	Stress	Excitement
Depression	Shock	Other

- **Making Yourself Feel Safer:** There are some things you can do to calm your emotions and make yourself feel safer in an emergency/crisis situation.

The following list gives some tips on how to maintain your physical safety and mental health during a crisis:

- Realize your feelings are normal
- Find/make a safe environment
- Maintain a basic self-care regimen (shower, shave, get dresses, exercise, etc.)
- Avoid confrontation, both physical and verbal
- Take one step at a time
- Assess what you can and cannot control
- Ask for help
- Create a support network

Steps to help you stay calm and use your EAP more effectively in an emergency

STEP ONE	Remain calm. Take a deep breath. You will need a clear head in order to focus on your next move.
STEP TWO	<p>Assess the situation/Get Advice from Program Staff. Identify in what kind of emergency situation you find yourself. Contact program staff for advice. An emergency/crisis can be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal: Accident/Injury, Death, Illness, Family Problem, Sexual Assault, Kidnapping, Arrest, etc. 2. Regional: Natural/Environmental Disaster, Civil Unrest, Political Uprising, Terrorist Attack, War Outbreak, etc.
STEP THREE	Take Action. Exercise good judgment. Follow your evacuation plan/written instructions/maps you have developed as part of your EAP to help remove you from the emergency and get you to a safer location where you can get help. Remember the alternate transportation options you have available.
STEP FOUR	<p>Get in touch. Now that you are in a safer and more stable location, update others about your situation. Using a method of communication at your disposal, get in touch with your emergency contacts so they can help you. Have them assist you in finding what you need (medical care, transport, a lawyer, etc.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take care of yourself. While you are waiting for your contacts to assist you, or in case you cannot reach anyone to assist you, use your emergency kit. Take out the supplies you need to keep yourself healthy (bandages, food, jacket, radio, etc). You may need additional/continuing medical care and/or personal/psychological counseling. 2. Keep Trying. If you cannot get a hold of anyone to help you (because phone lines are down, you are trapped, etc) don't give up. Try alternate methods of communication and transportation until you are able to reach someone. If you need to move to another location, let others know and leave a written description of where you are going.
STEP FIVE	Move to a more permanent location. After you have removed yourself from any immediate threat, regrouped at a safer location, and gotten in touch with your emergency contacts, you may need to move to a more permanent location for treatment/assistance. Consider your transportation options and get yourself to the appropriate location (hospital, police station, embassy/consulate, contact's home, counseling center, etc.)
STEP SIX	Stay in touch. Maintain contact and update your emergency contacts on your condition. It would be useful to have a "communication tree" whereby your emergency contacts can collaborate to help you through the emergency situation (you may need to have privacy release forms in place for this to happen).
STEP SEVEN	Evaluate and revise your EAP. After the emergency is over, and once your condition has stabilized, evaluate your EAP and use what you've learned to revise it in case of future emergencies (Please provide feedback to the LMU Center for Global Education about how other students might learn from your experience).

COMMUNICATION INFO SHEETS

Source: <http://www.studentsabroad.com/infosheet.html>

Words To Know

If you are studying or traveling abroad, you should already be relatively proficient in the language(s) of the country(ies) to which you will be traveling. In the event of an emergency, you need to be able to communicate and understand effectively. You need to be able to ask for help if injured, and ask for legal protection if your rights are in jeopardy. If you have a specific health condition, a special need, or if you are allergic to any medication, know exactly how to say so in the native language. Regardless of your language proficiency level, there are a few basic words, phrases, and questions that you should be able to pronounce fluently. You should fill out our Words To Know Sheet and take it with you for reference.

Phrases To Know

Each student should develop his or her own personal list of essential words and phrases to know. You may encounter many other helpful and important phrases you would like to include on your own list. For instance, you may want to look up specific phrases pertaining to your host country. Use our list as a guide, or starting point; then add your own additional country-specific phrases. In addition, you should also know how to dial a country's 24-hour emergency phone number (equivalent to a 9-1-1 system).

Service Icons

You may find it helpful to print and cut out a Service Icons Card that you can carry with you. See the examples on page 24. More expansive versions are available from online travel product retailers. The card contains a series of simple images that represent services you may require—services like a telephone, post-office, taxi, and hospital. If you don't remember, or don't know, how to say a certain word in your host country's language, you can point to the picture on the card that represents that word. For example, if you need to find a telephone, you can show someone the picture of a telephone on the card and they can assist you. It is better to already be able to comfortably communicate in your host country's language when studying in abroad. However, you should keep this card with you just in case you forget how to say a certain word, or, in the case of injury, you become physically unable to verbally communicate.

Words To Know

Word	Translation	Word	Translation
Airport	_____	Ambulance	_____
ATM	_____	Baggage Claim	_____
Bank	_____	Bathroom	_____
Bus	_____	Computer	_____
Consulate	_____	Doctor	_____
Embassy	_____	Emergency	_____
Emergency Room	_____	Exchange Rate	_____
Fire	_____	Fire Station	_____
Food	_____	Help	_____
Hospital	_____	Hostel	_____
Hotel	_____	Insurance	_____
Internet	_____	Law	_____
Lawyer	_____	Luggage	_____
Market	_____	Medicine	_____
Metro	_____	Metro Station	_____
Money	_____	Nurse	_____
Pharmacy	_____	Police	_____
Police Station	_____	Post Office	_____
Restaurant	_____	Station	_____
Store	_____	Street	_____
Suitcase	_____	Taxi	_____
Telephone	_____	Thief	_____
Train	_____	Train Station	_____
Translation	_____	Translator	_____
University	_____	Water	_____

Phrases To Know

ARRESTS	
I am a United States citizen. _____	I have a right to call the United States Embassy/Consulate. _____
Please call the United States Embassy/Consulate immediately. _____	
FOOD & WATER	
Where is the market? _____	Is this safe drinking water? _____
Where can I get something to eat? _____	I can't/don't eat meat/pork, etc. _____
I am allergic to... _____	
GENERAL INFO	
My name is... _____	I don't understand. _____
Please speak slowly. _____	What (time, date, day) is it? _____
Where is the nearest (bathroom, telephone, bank, ...)? _____	Can you give me directions to ...? _____
Where can I find information about ...? _____	Can you write this down for me? _____
Can you show me on this map? _____	I'm lost. _____
Can you contact this person for me? _____	Where is the closest internet café? _____
HELP	
This is an emergency. _____	Where can I get help? _____
I need help. _____	Please help me! _____
Where is the police station? _____	Stop! Thief! _____

MEDICAL	
My blood type is... _____	I'm not feeling well. _____
Please take me to the hospital/doctor. _____	How do I get to the (doctor, hospital)? _____
I'm allergic to penicillin/aspirin.etc. _____	I am diabetic, etc. _____
MONEY	
Do you take travelers' checks? _____	I need a cash advance from my credit card. _____
Do you take credit cards? _____	What is the exchange rate for (dollars) to (local currency)? _____
Where can I exchange money? _____	How much does this cost? _____
Where is the closest ATM? _____	Where is the closest bank? _____
TRANSPORTATION	
How long is the trip? _____	Are there student rates? _____
How much is the ticket? _____	Where can I get a (bus, taxi, train, metro)? _____
Can you take me to a (bus,taxi,train,metro)? _____	Where can I rent a car? _____
Please take me to the airport. _____	What is the fare? _____
Does this bus/metro stop at...? _____	

Icons To Know

You may find it helpful to print and cut out our Service Icons Card that you can carry with you. The card contains a series of simple images that represent services you may require—services like a telephone, post-office, taxi, and hospital. If you don't remember, or don't know, how to say a certain word in the language of the country where you are studying, you can point to the picture on the card that represents that word. For example, if you need to find a telephone, you can show someone the picture of a telephone on the card and they can assist you. It is better to already be able to comfortably communicate in the language of the country in which you will be studying. However, you should keep this card with you just in case you forget how to say a certain word, or, in the case of injury, you become physically unable to verbally communicate.





CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

For many, graduating from high school is as large a cultural adjustment as going abroad – Why? Because all the rules change! Many of the same principles involved in adjusting to another country apply to adjusting to any new situation. Studying abroad is one of the best opportunities you'll have to get to know yourself and to better understand your own culture. We have compiled some information regarding culture shock and the discomfort you may experience when confronting a new culture to help you understand and recognize the adjustment process and assist you in adjusting quickly to a new culture.

STAGES OF ADJUSTMENT

Be prepared to undergo a fairly typical adjustment cycle during your stay. You will start out your study abroad experience with a great deal of excitement. After a while, the novelty may begin to wear off and reality will set in. You may feel frustrated, disappointed, depressed, homesick and irritable, and you may start complaining about people and things. ***This is normal!*** Part of what gets you through the cultural adjustment process is knowledge and understanding of the different feelings, or stages, of adjustment.

Culture Shock: Signs of culture shock include depression, homesickness, excessive sleeping, withdrawing from others, and irritability. Again, this is a very normal process. It is important not to give up. This stage will pass and remember...your family and friends believe in you and what you are doing. Bit by bit things will get better. As you complete your adjustment cycle, you'll come to accept and enjoy your new situation.

Some reasons for culture shock are:

1. The new experience of encountering ways of doing, organizing, perceiving or valuing things which are different from yours and which *threaten* your basic, unconscious belief that your acculturated customs, assumptions, values and behaviors are 'right'.
2. Culture shock is a cumulative process. It builds up slowly, from a series of events that are difficult to identify.
3. Culture shock comes from being cut off from the known cultural cues and patterns with which you are familiar – especially the subtle, indirect ways you normally have of expressing feelings. All the nuances and shades of meaning that you understand instinctively have been taken from you. Having your values brought into question yanks the moral rug right out from under you!
4. Culture Shock also derives from living and/or working over an extended period of time in a situation that is ambiguous.

STAGES OF CULTURE SHOCK

1. Quaintness – everything is new, wonderful and exhilarating, even liberating.
2. Sameness – once the novelty begins to wear off, an effort is frequently made to dismiss cultural differences and point out similarities.
3. Differences – eventually, the focus shifts from sameness to differences in the culture, sometimes to such an extent that these differences become overwhelming.
4. Culture shock – final stage; comes about when the differences are narrowed down to a few of the most troubling ones and are then blown out of proportion (for Americans, standards of cleanliness, attitudes toward punctuality and the value of human life tend to loom especially large).

RE-ENTRY SHOCK

When you return home from your study abroad experience, you will find that you have changed. There is a good chance that you will find it difficult to re-enter your home environment. Re-entry shock can cause you to re-examine your life, values and attitudes. In essence, you will unlearn everything about life you had learned up to that point and see it through a more worldly perspective.

Some signs of re-entry shock are:

1. Disorientation – tasks and decisions that used to be simple are now overwhelming.
2. Re-evaluation of the goals you set before leaving.
3. Alienation – feeling like a ‘foreigner’ in your own country.
4. Nostalgia – looking back at your past experience and wishing you were there.

Not everyone will experience a severe case of culture shock, nor will everyone experience all of the conditions. Many people sail through culture shock with relative ease and manage to experience a new culture in a positive way. Remember...you are not alone!

Phone Numbers & Addresses

Oklahoma State University
Study Abroad/NSE Office
005 Classroom Building
Stillwater, OK 74078-7064
Phone: 405-744-8569
Fax: 405-744-5667
E-mail: abroad@okstate.edu
Web: <http://studyabroad.okstate.edu>

Oklahoma State University
Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid
Linda Millis
119 Student Union
Phone: 405-744-6604
E-mail: linda.millis@okstate.edu



Checklist

Pre-departure Preparation is essential!

Once you have received official notice of your acceptance to an OSU Study Abroad program, you may proceed with the following:

- Apply for a Visa, if necessary (this can take 8-12 weeks).
U.S. Department of State lists foreign entry requirements on its web site (<http://travel.state.gov/foreignentryreqs.html>).
- Apply for a passport (this can take 4-6 weeks).
- Make flight arrangements and be prepared to pay airline bill.
- Check the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) web site, <http://www.cdc.gov/travel> for information on required and recommended vaccinations for the country to which you are traveling.
- Check with the Bursar and financial aid to see how your bill looks.
- Attend the OSU general Orientation.
- Complete and submit all forms.
- Check the State Department website (<http://travel.state.gov/>) regularly between now and your departure for information related to safety in the countries you plan to visit.
- Prepare to receive and pay a bill for your tuition and fees *or* instructional fees.
- Purchase any textbooks or materials needed before departure.
- Plan a budget and obtain sufficient funds to cover expenses while abroad. Ensure that these funds are either accessible from abroad (credit card, ATM) or can be carried with you (traveler's checks).
- Inform your family or friends of how you can be reached while abroad.

NOTES
