

**ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY**

**Study Abroad Handbook**



**Pre-Departure Orientation  
2005-2006**

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# Roosevelt University Pre-Departure Handbook

## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your upcoming study abroad program! It will be an academically challenging and personally rewarding experience. Hopefully you will be able to travel and visit other countries and cities while you are overseas. Enjoy your time abroad and feel free to contact our office with any questions.

### Roosevelt University Contact Information

Colleen Earley, Director  
Office of International Programs (OIP)  
430 S. Michigan Ave. HCC 125  
Chicago, IL 60605  
[cearley@roosevelt.edu](mailto:cearley@roosevelt.edu)

OIP Tel. 001-312-341-3531  
OIP Fax 001-312-341-6377  
Office Hours: M-Th 9am – 6pm; Fri 9am – 5pm CST  
Roosevelt 24-hour Emergency Tel.: 001-312-341-2020

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

### Passports

**Your passport must be valid until your anticipated return date plus one year.** If you are going on a summer program your passport must be valid for at least 6 months from the date you enter your destination country. You can obtain an application from the local post office or visit [http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html) and download an application and instructions. You can find answers to frequently asked questions on this site as well. We also recommend that your emergency contact obtain a passport as well. This will simplify and expedite their ability to assist you in case of emergency. When you receive your passport make 4 copies of the name/information page. Submit 1 page to the Office of International Programs, give 1 to your emergency contact person, and keep 1 in your carry-on luggage and 1 in your checked luggage. If your passport is lost or stolen you will need the copy in order to replace it. **U.S. passports are valuable and subject to theft.** Guard yours closely. Buy a travelers belt with space for your passport or keep it in your front pocket. Do not carry it with you daily if you have a secure apartment/room in which to leave it.



### Visas

A visa is a piece of documentation, stamp or sticker, which proves that you have received permission from the respective country's government to enter that country. You must provide the proper documentation at the port of entry and should obtain these documents prior to leaving the U.S. Visas can be obtained from the embassy of the country you wish to visit. You will either mail your passport and visa application to the consulate, or you may be required to appear in person at the consulate to obtain your visa. This will enable you to have the visa and proper documentation before you leave for your trip.

- Visit [www.embassy.org/embassies/](http://www.embassy.org/embassies/) or [www.travisa.com](http://www.travisa.com) in order to determine visa requirements for any country. Find the embassy of the nation you wish to visit and go to the consular section that serves your permanent address. Here you will find contact information and visa application procedures. You can also contact Office of International Programs for more information.

- **Apply early as it may take 3 months to receive your visa. Some countries, such as Spain, have very specific guidelines regarding when you can apply for the visa. Each country has different regulations regarding visas and not all nations require that you obtain a visa, it all depends on your country of citizenship, the purpose your visit, and length of time your stay.** Most western European destinations do not require a visa for U.S. citizens if the visit is for 90 days or less.

- Your passport & visa application should be mailed via overnight express mail which can be tracked. It is highly recommended that you pre-purchase a return overnight express mail envelope for the consulate to use to return your passport and visa to you. **Some consulates may require you to apply for the visa in person.**

### **International Student Identity Card ISIC (OPTIONAL)**

ISIC cards are internationally recognized identity cards and provide discounts on airline tickets, train tickets, museums, restaurants and more. You will also receive supplemental travel insurance benefits, but you will still need primary medical policy for your time abroad. The ISIC supplementary insurance includes:

- \$10,000 Accident Medical Expense
- \$100/day Sickness/Hospital Benefit (up to 100 days)
- \$250,000 Emergency Medical Transportation Benefit
- \$25,000 Repatriation of Remains (in the event of death, pays for the return of remains to the U.S.)
- \$500 Lost Document Replacement Service

The application fee is \$22 and the ISIC card is valid for one year. Visit [www.myISIC.com](http://www.myISIC.com) to find out the application procedures and where you can find an issuing location in Chicago.

### **WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU GO**

The Department of State's Consular Information Sheets are available for every country of the world ([http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/warnings\\_consular.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/warnings_consular.html)) They describe entry requirements, currency regulations, unusual health conditions, the crime and security situation, political disturbances, areas of instability, and special information about driving and road conditions. They also provide addresses and emergency telephone numbers for U.S. embassies and consulates. In general, the sheets do not give advice. Instead, they describe conditions so travelers can make informed decisions about their trips.

In some dangerous situations, however, the Department of State recommends that Americans defer travel to a country. In such a case, a Travel Warning is issued for the country in addition to its Consular Information Sheet. Please review Roosevelt's policy of travel to a country where the Department of State has issued a Travel Warning.



#### **Tips on Finding Airfare**

To find the best price on airfare purchase your ticket approximately 4-12 weeks prior to your departure. Prices are highest more than 90 days from

departure as the bargain fares have not yet been determined, but if you wait too long, the bargain fares sell out.

### **Where to Buy Your Airline Ticket:**

**There are a lot of great deals on the internet but be sure to read the fine print and know exactly what you are purchasing. Some things to consider:**

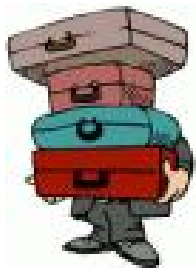
- Flexibility on return date: can you change the return date, how much is the change fee?
- Do you want to have an open-ended return?
- What airline are you using? Are they in bankruptcy or labor strike proceedings?
- If not using a travel agent, are there support services from the airline if your flight is cancelled or you miss your flight?
- Make sure your seat is confirmed! If it is not confirmed and you are late checking in you could get bumped off the flight.
- Bargain fares: look at length of layovers and total travel time. Sometimes excessive travel time is not a bargain.

### **More Tips:**

- Some study abroad programs offer discount group flight rates for participants. Contact your study abroad program director for details.
- For student discount tickets you can try STA Travel [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com). In order to receive the student discount you must purchase an ISIC International Student Identity Card. For details on the ISIC see page 4 of this manual.
- Use a credit card to purchase your ticket. Most credit cards offer consumer protection if you have reason to dispute the charge later.
- **When you receive your ticket make sure that your name is spelled EXACTLY as it is on your passport.** If it is incorrect you may not be allowed to board the plane. Some discount tickets do not allow name changes if you notice the error later.
- Always call and confirm your flight 48 hours prior to departure AND your return. Arrive at least 2 hours prior to your scheduled departure.

### **Packing**

Everyone has very different styles about the best way to pack, however everyone agrees on one thing: **Do NOT pack more than you can carry by yourself!** The following are sample packing



lists. The way you pack will depend on your personal needs, the type of program, climate and season of your destination. For example if you are going on a city-a-day tour, pack very lightly as you will have to lug your stuff all the time. If you will be in one place the entire time and have a place to store your belongings safely while taking mini trips, you can pack more. However, if you will be in one place most of the time but want to travel at the end of the program and don't have anywhere to store your luggage, you need to pack lightly. **You MUST be able to carry ALL of your belongings through the airport(s) and to your final**

**destination.** Many seasoned travelers suggest that you lay out everything you will pack then leave half that pile at home. Another tip for packing is to walk one half mile carrying everything you want to bring and see if that helps you decide what to leave at home. Remember: You will acquire more STUFF during your travels.

### **General Guidelines for Packing:**

- Bring quick dry no-wrinkle clothing. You can buy an iron when you arrive.
- Bring clothes that mix and match well.
- Budget to buy clothes there: It will help you blend in more.

- Be prepared to dress more conservatively. Don't wear expensive looking jewelry. A flashy wardrobe can mark you as a tourist.
- Be prepared to hand wash clothes or use laundromats.
- Bring clothes you can layer for various temperatures.
- Don't bring what you can buy there.
- Don't bring clothing that is obviously American or has English wording/American phrases.
- Bring only things you will use almost every day.
- Leave room in your suitcase for souvenirs and other purchases.
- Bring a backpack for daytrips and weekend travel.
- Check the weather online and pack appropriately.
- All electronics may need an adapter for different voltage depending on country. Otherwise, you can buy the appliances once you arrive. You can buy hair-dryers, curling irons, and straighteners just as you can here.

**Airlines allow only 2 bags to be checked, 1 small carry-on, and 1 personal bag to go on the flight. You can ship things home, but overseas shipping is quite expensive. Check with the airline policy as they may have weight limits on your bags.**

### **Suggested Basic Packing Lists (adjust for your type of program and season of travel)**

#### **Clothing:**

- 4-6 tops-weather specific
- 2-3 pairs pants/slacks
- 2 dressy outfits
- 1 sweater/windbreaker/jacket
- 7 pairs socks and underwear
- 1 bathing suit
- Comfortable walking shoes/sneakers
- Sandals and/or dress shoes



#### **In Carry-On Luggage:**

- Passport & copy of passport
- Airline ticket & copy of ticket and itinerary/receipt
- Money/ATM card/Credit Card/Traveler's Checks
- Copies of ATM card/Credit Card
- Name & Address of Program Director (if applicable)
- Address Book/Emergency contact information
- 1 weeks worth of prescription medications and prescriptions
- 1 pair of underwear, 1 pair socks, toothbrush, deodorant
- Change of clothes
- Guidebook

#### **Miscellaneous Items (Pick only what you need- most can be bought while abroad):**

- Prescription Medications (enough for duration of program)
- Photos of friend, family, and pets (leave frames at home)
- Journal
- Book to read in English
- Backpack for weekend trips
- Travel size toiletries (buy bigger size when you get there)
- First Aid kit--travel size: 3-4 band aids, aspirin, Imodium, antiseptic wipes
- Inexpensive camera and film

- Sun block
- Warm hat/Mittens
- Ziploc baggies
- Shower shoes/flip-flops
- Flashlight
- Travel alarm clock
- Batteries
- Sunglasses/sunhat
- CD/mp3 player
- Towels, Sheets
- Hiking boots (wear on the plane)

### **Packing Medications:**

- Bring all medications labeled in correct containers/packaging.
- Bring a physician's prescription with the **GENERIC NAME** for all medications. You might also wish to have a letter from your doctor concerning the medication and your legitimate need for it. Such a letter could be an especially useful document for customs officials.
- **ALL** prescriptions should have **generic** name listed. Brand names vary from country to country.
- If you have a chronic condition or medication allergy consider ordering a medic alert bracelet. Contact your pharmacist for ordering information.
- Carry one week's worth medication with you in carry-on luggage for flight.
- If you use birth control pills, remember to bring prescription

### **WHAT DO YOU DO ONCE YOU GET OFF THE PLANE?**

You arrive at the airport, get through customs....now what? Before you go, try to determine what your next plan of action will be once you get off the plane. Here are some things to think about once you arrive at the airport:

- Do you have to take a train, cab, or bus to your destination? How much will it cost?
- Make sure you have some of the local currency on hand to pay for whatever public transportation you might need to take. Many airports overseas have offices that will exchange your U.S. dollars for the local currency. In addition, contact your bank at home. They might be able to exchange U.S. dollars for the local currency also.
- Will someone be meeting you at the airport? Where will they be meeting you? Make sure you have contact information for airport pick-up and the local program coordinator.

Once you arrive at your destination, please contact the Office of International Programs with your local address, e-mail, and phone number in case of emergency.

### **Housing Abroad**

Before you begin your travels, make sure you know whether or not you will have to bring your own furnishings for your accommodations. Some places provide bedding, kitchenware, and appliances, while others may not. If you discover your housing includes bedding, you might want to bring your own set of sheets. If you plan on doing a lot of traveling throughout Europe, which includes staying in hostels, it would be a good idea to bring your own set of sheets and a small towel or buy these upon arrival.



### **Money Matters Abroad**

Students often grapple with how much money to bring and what form. Since the amounts and forms will vary from program to program, here we will outline the pros and cons of each form of money and suggest

some things to think about when considering how much to bring. It is always better to bring a combination of money forms. You should also know what the current exchange rate of money is in your destination country. Exchange rates often fluctuate and you don't want to end up with less local currency than you had planned.

**Know the rate of exchange before you depart! You can find this information on [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) or [www.x-rates.com](http://www.x-rates.com)**

#### **U.S. Dollars**

- Can be exchanged for local currency anywhere
- Always recognized
- **Cannot be replaced if stolen**
- Mix with other forms of currency
- Sometimes exchange rate not great

#### **Traveler's Checks/Cards**

- Can be obtained at local banks
- Often a small service fee to exchange, no problems exchanging
- **Can be replaced if stolen**
- American Express offers travelers cheques in the form of a card. Please visit <http://www10.americanexpress.com/sif/cda/page/0,1641,18622,00.asp?a=2000> for more information.

#### **Bank/ATM Cards**

- Great exchange rate/ withdraw as local currency
- Reliable/Safe if stolen they must have PIN number
- **Not all cards work overseas, check with your bank**
- Dependent on availability of ATM machines in destination
- Check with bank and/or program administrator for more info



#### **Credit Cards/Debit Cards**

**Contact your credit card company to inform them you will be using your card abroad. Many companies will deactivate your card when they see international charges to protect against fraud if they have not been notified.**

- Great Exchange Rates
- Must have for emergencies
- Not accepted everywhere, **can be problems with debit cards-check with bank**
- Some stores/restaurants require minimum purchase
- Must be used responsibly, **easy to overspend your budget**
- Make sure someone at home is taking care of bill while you are away
- Visa and MasterCard most widely accepted

#### **Native Currency**

- Cash is king!
- Many small businesses, street vendors etc accept cash only
- Can easily be obtained using ATM card, traveler's checks, or U.S. cash
- **Cannot be replaced if stolen**

#### **Euro**

The euro is now the legal currency in the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. The three EU countries that have not adopted the euro are the UK, Sweden and Denmark.

If you are traveling to any of these 12 countries, you will need to use euro currency or euro traveler's cheques.

## Money Safety Tips

If you bring ATM, debit, or credit cards be sure to make a copy of the front and back of your cards. Keep this information stored separately from the cards. If the card is lost or stolen you have your account number, security code, expiration date, and customer service telephone number. Also you should make sure the toll-free customer service telephone number will work overseas. Some credit card companies have a separate telephone number for international callers. **Also never keep your wallet in your back pocket or your backpack as it is likely to be stolen. When at a café or restaurant do not put your purse or backpack under your chair without it being secured to you in some way.**

## Communications

Staying in contact with friends and family is helpful in warding off homesickness and will ease the worries of your family members.

The following are some tips to help you stay in touch with your friends and family.

• **CALL YOUR Parent/Spouse/Significant other as soon as reasonably possible after arriving!** They may be worried until they hear that you have arrived safely.

Be sure to let people know before you leave that it may take up to 48 hours after your arrival for you to get settled in and get access to a phone.

• **Know how to make an international call.** There are differences in how to dial from country to country. When calling other countries you must know the country code, city code, and then the phone number. Visit [www.countrycallingcodes.com](http://www.countrycallingcodes.com) for country codes and instructions for dialing to and from abroad.

• **Cell Phones** Most U.S. cell phones will not work abroad. In Europe, Africa and the Middle East you can buy a cell phone inexpensively. You pre-pay for your minutes in “units” and talk until your money runs out. You won’t have to deal with billing or going over budget and your parents will feel better knowing that they can reach you wherever you are.

• **Internet Cafes/Cyber Cafés** They are most everywhere in the world (except the U.S.!) Café’s usually charge somewhere between \$1-\$2 to use an online computer for 1 hour. Access to printers may vary. For an online internet café directory visit [www.cybercafes.com](http://www.cybercafes.com)

• **Public Phones** usually are not coin operated. You can buy pre-paid calling cards at newspaper and candy stands and the cards are inserted directly into the phones.

• **Private phones** can be quite expensive to use for international calls. If you live in someone else’s home be sure to have permission before using the phone.

• **Postal Service** Don’t forget about snail mail. There is nothing more personal than a handwritten letter with a foreign postmark on it. Send a postcard or two to your home address as a souvenir.



## WHAT TO EXPECT ACADEMICALLY

Attending school overseas can be very different than attending school in the U.S. Once you arrive, you should take a day and become oriented with the school and where your classes are going to be held before classes even begin. Many courses overseas are large lectures and do not require mandatory attendance. However, professors may not hold any exams or require homework throughout the course of the semester. Courses overseas may require only one cumulative paper or one final exam at the end of the semester that decides your entire grade. Therefore, we suggest you exercise caution when choosing when and when not to attend class. In addition, your grades from study abroad will transfer directly back to Roosevelt, and WILL be included in your GPA.

## CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is the stress you face when experiencing a new culture. It is the stress of immersion in a strange new place. You will experience culture shock as you eat different food, learn a new

language, experience new social rules, new fashion, new bathrooms (toilets can vary!), and so on. You will find things that you had previously taken for granted may now require a good deal of effort. You may find yourself feeling very childish when you don't know how to perform what would be simple tasks at home. You may also receive a lot of unwanted attention and stand out as a foreigner, or you may be ignored and everyone may seem rude. Have your parents and/or spouse read this section so they can understand what you will be going through. It is possible you may call them soon after arriving demanding to go home or sobbing from homesickness. This usually passes in about a week. Prepare your family members for this so they don't panic when you call during a temporary wave of homesickness.

### **Symptom and Reactions to Culture Shock**

Not everyone experiences culture shock in the same way, intensity, or at the same time. Every experience is different.

#### **Some common symptoms of culture shock include:**

- Difficulty sleeping/Sleeping excessively
- Lack of appetite
- Intense homesickness
- Very critical of host country
- Very critical of U.S.
- Increased stress
- Tension/irritability.

#### **Here are some common reactions to culture shock:**

- Avoiding contact with others. Becoming reclusive and studying all the time. Reading and sleeping a lot. Sending lots of e-mails home. Blaming host country and self for not having a good time.
- Always comparing the U.S. to host country. Host country not living up to the U.S. in the person's mind. Very negative and eager to share these feelings with others.
- Becoming very pessimistic about everything. The food, weather, people, teachers, and other students become intolerable. Nothing is right.
- Becomes a native. Everything American is bad, and host country is good. Wants to melt into the crowd and not have any contact with other Americans. Feels tempted to remain in host country forever.

### **Preparing Yourself for a New Culture:**

#### **Understanding Your Host Culture**

The best way to prepare yourself for a foreign culture is to learn as much as you can about the culture. Here are a few suggestions:

- Buy a guidebook. Lonely Planet, Let's Go, and Rough Guides are all excellent books. They will provide introductory cultural, political, and historical information. They will also have a good bibliography to find other sources.
- Read fiction by a native author. This will often give clues as to how everyday life is lived.
- Talk to students from the country you will visit. Get their input. Contact the Office of International Programs for other student contacts.
- Talk to a professor who specializes in the region you will visit. Ask for their recommendations regarding reading.
- Don't stereotype or make assumptions about the people you meet, regardless of what you have read. Imagine if someone read a short book about American culture. Do you think it would prepare them for what type of person you are and how you will behave? Instead use your research as a foundation and a knowledge base with which you can develop questions to learn more about the culture.

## **Understanding American Culture**

In order to understand why you may feel disoriented by another culture it is important to identify some of the traits of American culture. Many people are not aware that there are American cultural traits. Often cultural behavior is regarded as "natural" as you may not be aware that there are other ways of behaving or perceiving the world. Often cultural differences may be perceived as personality quirks. You may think that individuals are just rude, aggressive, stupid, selfish etc, when actually there is a lot of cultural miscommunication occurring. Remember that identical behavior can have many different meanings in different cultures. For example, looking away and not making eye contact may be a sign of respect in some cultures. In American culture this indicates someone is insecure, hiding something, or even dishonest, all of which are negative traits. See where the cultural clashes can occur?

## **Coping with Culture Shock**

The following are tips to help you deal with culture shock. Before you go, you may want to talk with a study abroad alumnus to hear about their experience with culture shock and how they dealt with it. The Office of International Programs can put you in touch with someone who would be happy to share his or her story with you.

- Keep a journal, it may help you keep some perspective on your experience.
- Do not isolate yourself.
- Set goals for traveling and/or learning more about the people and culture.
- Explore the city, don't be afraid to venture out.
- Make local and American friends, try not to socialize with Americans only.
- Remind yourself that rough and stressful times are part of the learning experience.
- Remind yourself that next week will be great, adjustment takes time.
- Talk to friends/program directors when you are having a difficult time.
- Be open-minded and keep your sense of humor.
- BE FLEXIBLE! Be prepared to accept whatever comes along.

## **SAFETY--GENERAL ADVICE**

Let's begin with a few all-purpose tips about staying safe abroad.

- Be alert. People-watching is part of the pleasure of foreign travel. It's also part of keeping safe.
- Trust your instincts. If you become aware of suspicious behavior or if you're getting bad vibes from someone on the street, put some distance between yourself and the situation.
- Be inconspicuous. One travels to see, not to be seen. Clothing or behavior that broadcasts "tourist" or "young American abroad" could bring trouble in your direction.
- Don't sightsee in large, English-speaking groups. It can be fun to wander about with a friend or two, but large groups of young American's (inevitably a bit boisterous) can attract unwanted attention and hostility. Of course one must violate this rule in program-sponsored outings.
- Avoid "American" haunts. Why hang around fast-food joints and tourist traps when quieter, more "authentic" areas beckon?
- Be discreet with your cash. Don't flash large sums for all to see.

- Probably, like most of our traveling students, you will be studying at an urban institution. Learn which areas are relatively "safe"--safety is always relative--and which are less so. For night trips choose your itinerary carefully. Stay away from suspicious types.
- Political demonstrations are always interesting. We suggest that you observe them from a distance and that you absolutely limit yourself to passive observation. If the demonstration has an anti-American tone, don't let your wounded pride lead you to shed your anonymity.
- Naturally you will want to make new friends abroad, and we would not want to discourage you from this. But don't let this quite appropriate goal lead you into an unwelcome intimacy. Allow yourself to be just a bit cautious with strangers. Friendships worth having are often slow to develop. Don't rush it!
- Once you have arrived at your temporary home-away-from-home, learn where the nearest police station and hospital is. This is not especially burdensome knowledge, and it might turn out to be useful. Also, remember to register at the nearest US Embassy once you arrive. This will help them know how to contact you in case of emergencies.
- Use public transportation wisely. By all means you will want to avail yourself of the subway, streetcars, and buses of your host city. But it's important that you know how the system works and where it's taking you. More about this under transportation safety below.
- Stay sober. Although you will likely find the drinking laws in your host country to be less restrictive than those back home, you are urged to be moderate in your consumption of alcohol. To incapacitate yourself with liquor (or drugs) is to make yourself vulnerable to mischance. Inebriation weakens your judgment, your self-protective inhibitions, and your observational abilities.
- Perhaps you have read about the confidence games known as "pigeon drops" in Chicago. If a stranger suggests a scheme by which a small investment on your part will lead to a handsome reward, be very suspicious.
- If you are fearful or confused about anything, share your concerns with the director of your program or the overseas study office of your host university.

## **STREET CRIME AND HOW TO AVOID IT**

Petty thievery is as old as cities themselves. Here are some thoughts about how to protect yourself from unpleasant encounters with the criminal element.

- Don't carry with you more cash than you can stand to lose. Travelers checks are probably the safest way to take money abroad.
- Money belts and travel pouches are useful devices for frustrating pickpockets. If you use a billfold don't put it in the hip pocket of your jeans or the inside breast pocket of your jacket. It's much harder for a thief to extract money from a front trousers pocket or a pocket inside buttoned-up clothing.
- Your passport can be just as enticing as your money. You should stow it, like your wallet, in a relatively inaccessible pouch or pocket. Or you may wish to leave it at home (that is, your residence abroad if it is a secure location) and carry a photocopy.

- Do make photocopies of your passport and other important papers. Make a list of your travelers' check and credit card numbers. Keep these documents in a separate pocket, pouch, or bag.
- If you carry a bag keep it close and keep it closed. In crowded or threatening situations hug it to your body. Use only a bag that closes with a snap, tie, zipper, or buckle. Never leave your bag unattended. If you place it beside you on a bench be aware of who's nearby.
- Pickpockets and purse-snatchers often work in pairs. Be aware that an importuning stranger may be a decoy engaged in distracting you from the malicious work of his or her associate. Sad to say, a child may be a partner in this sort of crime.
- Avoid crowds as much as possible. Public conveyances, because they tend to compress strangers into dense masses, are especially attractive to pickpockets. We would not ask you to avoid such transportation, but do keep your antennae up.

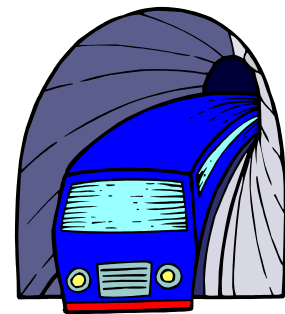
### **SAFETY IN YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME**

Student housing abroad varies from program-to-program and country-to-country, thus it is impossible to guarantee absolutely safe accommodations. In this regard you must do your part in keeping your temporary home secure. Here are some suggestions.

- Whether you live in an apartment, a residence hall, a pension, or with a host family, you need to take steps to keep your temporary home "off-limits" to strangers.
- Whether you are setting out or returning, you should get in the habit of locking your front door as soon as you close it behind you. If you have engaged in the dubious practice of leaving your Chicago dormitory room unlocked, you need to put that sort of naive behavior behind you.
- Don't admit strangers to your home. Repairmen should be asked for identification.
- As soon as you arrive in your new abode you should make an inventory of doors and windows and mentally map out a set of escape routes in case of fire.
- The telephone can be the means of invasive attentions and the harbinger of unsolicited physical contact. The only proper response to a prank caller is an immediate dial tone. If you experience a pattern of harassing calls, report them to the authorities just as you would in this country.

### **TRANSPORTATION SAFETY**

Getting from here to there, a significant aspect of life in general, looms very large indeed in study abroad programs. We want you to get around safely. These tips cover transportation at all levels: by air, by rail, and by public transportation within your host city.



- The admonition to "travel light" is not simply a matter of convenience. When you encumber yourself with excess baggage you make yourself less independent, slower, more vulnerable. The more bags you have, the more likely you are to "lose" one, and a snatched bag is difficult to recover when you're weighed down with others.

- Both in traveling to your host country and in returning to the States, be sure to arrive at the airport well ahead of your departure time and check your luggage in early. Try to avoid flight plans with very short layovers. Even if you make it from one plane to the next, your checked luggage may not.
- Never leave bags unattended. If you see an unattended bag in an air or rail terminal, report it to the authorities immediately.
- On trains you should either take your bags with you to the dining or lounge cars or leave a friend to look after them. A stranger you have just met is not, for these purposes, a friend.
- Don't agree to act as a courier for someone else unless you know the other person well and know the contents of the bag or package entrusted to you.
- In general everything that we have said about avoiding crowds, being wary of strangers, and staying alert should be applied doubly to airline and train terminals.
- Public transportation systems in most foreign cities are usually more convenient and user-friendly than ours (also less expensive), and you will certainly want to avail yourself of the buses, trolleys, and subways in your host city. But you need to know the system and where it's taking you. Subways especially, because their underground routes keep you from seeing the passing cityscape, can convey you into areas you would not normally enter on foot.



- Here are some tips about taxis. While they reduce to near-zero the risk of being pickpocketed, taxis can pose other dangers (you are, after all, entering an automobile controlled by a complete stranger). Make sure that your taxi is a "normal," properly licensed conveyance and that your driver's identification is in view (the degree to which this is possible will vary from country to country). Most guidebooks will contain some information about the taxi system and give you the means for making the important distinction between legitimate and illegitimate cabs. Before taking a taxi from an airport, take a second to size up how the cab dispatching system, if there is one, works. Look for an official cab line, perhaps with a dispatcher. Again, guidebooks are usually helpful in this regard. Be wary of drivers who are too aggressive in soliciting business. To avoid being driven in circles as a means of jacking up the fare, you may wish to reach a preliminary understanding with the driver about what constitutes a reasonable fare to your destination. This applies especially to meterless cabs. (Remember that, in some cities, nighttime rates are higher.) Obviously you want to avoid a dispute with your driver, and above all, you do not want a dispute to become violent. Look to police to mediate such altercations.
- Don't plan to operate a motorized vehicle abroad. Almost all of the overseas study abroad venues have two things in common: 1) public transportation is excellent and 2) strolling is pleasant and edifying. To saddle yourself with a rented motor scooter or automobile is to complicate your life unnecessarily. You add a distraction from the central mission of your program, and you put yourself in the way of a host of legal/medical problems. Walk, enjoy the air, take in the sights, and connect with your host culture. Don't drive abroad.

## GENERAL HEALTH

- Obviously the normal admonitions about eating right, getting exercise, getting sufficient rest, maintaining good personal hygiene and so forth, continue to have validity abroad. Because taking yourself abroad removes you from your daily routine in the most dramatic way, it may be difficult to maintain the good health habits that you have formed at home. Do make an effort to retain your good habits. Not to do so is to make yourself vulnerable to illness.
- In connection with the preceding comments we want to urge you to pay sufficient attention to stress as an element that can undermine good health and weaken the immune system. For the seasoned traveler and the novice adventurer alike, getting to and operating within a foreign country, and being a stranger in a strange land, can be very stressful. Stress can be a highly corrosive, if subtle, health problem. The professionals at the Counseling Center can be helpful in teaching stress-reduction techniques. Perhaps the simplest stress-reduction measure is simply to share your concerns and anxieties with friends or program officials.
- Although the state of one's general health is essentially a personal matter and a personal responsibility, we urge you to be open with study abroad personnel about your pertinent health history and areas of potential vulnerability.
- If you require a special medication, either in regular doses or as a special remedy for medical flare-ups, you should of course make sure that you have a quantity sufficient for the duration of your program overseas. Furthermore, we recommend that you take with you an extra supply of the medication (say, half again the minimum amount needed). Why? Because life is unpredictable, spills happen, bags are lost.
- Anyone who needs glasses needs two pairs of glasses. If you use prescription glasses you should carry abroad with you an extra pair as well as your optometrist's prescription (this of course applies equally to contact lenses).
- Most of the main study abroad countries require no special health precautions. Some do. If you have questions about the need for special preventative measures in a particular country or region, you should consult the web site of the federal government's Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>.
- In many developing countries and in certain areas of the developed world, travelers need to be wary of the local water supply. If you are in such a region, be sure to use bottled water (for tooth brushing as well as drinking) and refrain from eating uncooked food or food purchased from a street vendor (unless you wash it thoroughly with bottled water).
- In connection with the previous point, traveler's diarrhea is the most common complaint of those visiting a developing country. Normally this is a temporary condition whose chief danger--dehydration--is preventable by drinking plenty of fluids.
- Good health includes good mental health. To repeat what we said earlier, a full (confidential) disclosure of continuing or potential problems is vitally important and indeed expected. If you are or have been prey to emotional problems, we urge you also to take the prudent step of consulting with a therapist at the Counseling Center about your travel plans and about how to insure a trouble-free experience abroad.
- We're not doctors. To get sound advice before departure, consult your own physician.

## **POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

- The likelihood of one's falling victim to political terrorists is exceedingly small, especially in Western/Central Europe, Asia, Latin America or Australia, where most study abroad programs operate. On the other hand, because the use of violence to make a political statement knows no boundaries, it pays to keep your eyes open. If you notice anything suspicious, report it to the authorities. If you see a potentially dangerous situation developing, keep your distance. If you are interested in politics, stay away from extremists and zealots. By and large the virtues of wariness and alertness advocated earlier by this document also apply here.

## **BECOMING A CRIMINAL**

- The word here, a contraction, is "don't". Though we all have the best intentions toward you, there is very little that the University or the State Department can do for you if you land in jail in a foreign country. Generally speaking, it is not difficult to stay out of jail. You simply have to refrain from mischief, avoid political demonstrations (as an active participant), and obey the laws of the land. We want to especially warn you about drugs. While some countries are lenient about drug possession and commerce, others are very much the opposite. And since drug laws even in the lenient countries are complicated, we suggest that you conduct yourself at all times and places with great circumspection. We cannot state this too strongly. Using, possessing, or selling drugs in a foreign country is a highly dangerous game to play. If you are in the habit of using controlled substances, we suggest that you renounce this habit while you are abroad (and perhaps forevermore).
- You are a representative of Roosevelt University while you are abroad! What you do reflects upon Roosevelt University and the U.S.
- Should you find yourself in legal difficulty, contact a consular officer immediately. Consular officers cannot serve as attorneys, give legal advice, or get you out of jail. They can provide a list of local attorneys who speak English and who may have experience representing U.S. citizens. If you are arrested, consular officials will visit you, advise you of your rights under local laws and ensure that you are held under humane conditions and are treated fairly under local law. A consular officer will contact your family or friends, if you desire. When necessary, consuls can transfer money from home for you and will try to get relief for you, including food and clothing in countries where this is a problem. If you are detained, remember that under international treaties and customary international law, you have the right to talk to the U.S. consul. If you are denied this right, be persistent.



## **Help for American Crime Victims**

When a U.S. citizen becomes the victim of a crime overseas he or she may suffer physical, emotional, or financial injuries. The emotional impact of the crime may be intensified if the victim is in unfamiliar surroundings, far away from sources of comfort and support, and not fluent in the local language or knowledgeable about local laws and customs. Consuls, consular agents, and local employees can provide assistance to U.S. citizen crime victims.

If you become a victim of a crime overseas, contact the nearest U.S. embassy, consulate, or consular agency for assistance. Also contact local police to report the incident and obtain immediate help with safety concerns.

## WOMEN TRAVELERS

- Obviously everything we have said thus far applies to all students regardless of sex, and we urge women to heed the admonitions already given about public transportation, night travel, making friends, keeping one's home secure, and so forth. At the same time there are situations in which women, more than men, need to be especially on their guard.
- The problem of unwanted attention from a stranger can be especially vexing. Do not feel--we are speaking mainly to women now--that you must remain courteous and pleasant in the face of pests. It may be necessary to be firm, even rude in turning away an unwelcome advance. You may indeed have to "make a scene" to get your point across. If necessary, seek the help of the police. Sexual aggressiveness can take crude forms. The best response is to ignore the offender and leave the scene. Again, summon a police officer if you feel threatened. The best way to avoid trouble in the first place is to walk purposefully and with a body language that says "bug off!" Perhaps we are making our point by overstating the situation, but this advice is based upon talks with many women travelers through the years.

Interested in the safety profile of your country of destination? You might find the State Department's Consular Information Web Site to be informative ([http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis\\_pa\\_tw\\_1168.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html)). The State Department also publishes, on the web, a useful pamphlet entitled "A Safe Trip Abroad" that can be found at [http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety\\_1747.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html).

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

- Depending on the situation, contact your local study abroad program director first. They can be great resources for getting further assistance in your host country.
- US Embassies and Consulates abroad are also good emergency contacts and can offer assistance in political, legal, and medical matters. A list of US Embassies and Consulates can be found at [http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/embassies/embassies\\_1214.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/embassies/embassies_1214.html). Your host country consulate's address and contact information will also be listed on your Roosevelt International Student ID cards.
- Know the emergency number for police, fire, and ambulance services. Find out if there is an English-speaking emergency service.
- Contact the Office of International Programs whenever possible. The office can call your emergency contact, with the student's permission, or handle university issues.

## **HELPFUL WEBSITES**

### **U.S. State Department**

Locate a U.S. Embassy anywhere in the world, report a lost or stolen passport, travel warnings and advisories, emergencies abroad, traveling tips, how to register with the local consulate, etc.

[www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

### **Visa Information**

Need information about visa requirements for the country/countries you'll be visiting? These websites will help you find info on visa requirements all over the world and will even be able to download a number of visa applications if you should need them.

[www.embassy.org](http://www.embassy.org)

[www.embassyworld.com](http://www.embassyworld.com)

[www.travisa.com](http://www.travisa.com)

### **Center for Disease Control**

Travelers are strongly encouraged to find out about health conditions in the country to which they will be traveling. The websites below provide information on vaccinations, health advisories, and diseases in specific regions. The CDC also provides tips for avoiding traveler's sickness. Students are strongly encouraged to view this site before studying abroad.

[www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)

[www.cdc.gov/travel/foodwater.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/foodwater.htm).

### **Out of Country Dialing Codes**

Instructions for dialing abroad

[www.countrycallingcodes.com](http://www.countrycallingcodes.com)

### **International Phone Cards**

Phone cards are a great way to keep in touch with friends and family while abroad. Visit the website below for country codes and instructions for dialing to and from abroad.

[www.countrycallingcodes.com](http://www.countrycallingcodes.com)

[www.uniontelecard.com/](http://www.uniontelecard.com/)

[www.phonecardsavers.com/](http://www.phonecardsavers.com/)

### **ISIC Cards/Eurail Passes**

We recommend that student apply for an International Student ID Card before they study abroad. The ISIC card provides students with discounts on transportation, entertainment, cultural attractions, restaurants, and nightlife.

[www.myISIC.com](http://www.myISIC.com)

[www.eurail.com](http://www.eurail.com)

[www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com)

### **Travel Guides**

[www.lonleyplanet.com](http://www.lonleyplanet.com)

[www.fodors.com](http://www.fodors.com)

[www.letsgo.com](http://www.letsgo.com)

[www.ricksteves.com](http://www.ricksteves.com)

[www.escapeartist.com](http://www.escapeartist.com)

[www.bootsnall.com](http://www.bootsnall.com)

[www.travlang.com](http://www.travlang.com)

### **International News/Weather**

[www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)

[www.bbc.co.uk/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

<http://www.weather.com/common/welcomepage/world.html?from=globalnav>

### **Internet Café Directory**

[www.cybercafes.com](http://www.cybercafes.com)

### **Hostels**

[www.hostels.com](http://www.hostels.com)

[www.hihostels.com](http://www.hihostels.com)

<http://www.europeanhostelguide.com/>

[www.travelaholics.com](http://www.travelaholics.com)

### **Airline Websites**

[www.umich.edu/~icenter/overseas/travel/cheap\\_air.html](http://www.umich.edu/~icenter/overseas/travel/cheap_air.html)-this great tips on cheap flights!

[www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com)

[www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com)

[www.expedia.com](http://www.expedia.com)

[www.orbitz.com](http://www.orbitz.com)

[www.cheaptickets.com](http://www.cheaptickets.com)

[www.travelocity.com](http://www.travelocity.com)

<http://www.ryanair.com/site/EN/> this website provides information on cheap flights while you are traveling from country to country abroad!

### **World Time Server**

Curious about what time it is in the country you are traveling to? Visit this website for the current, correct and local time everywhere.

[www.worldtimeserver.com](http://www.worldtimeserver.com)

[www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/](http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/)

### **WEATHER ABROAD**

Make sure to check weather conditions abroad before you go. This will help you pack appropriately. To convert Celsius temperatures into Fahrenheit:

- Begin by multiplying the Celsius temperature by 9.
- Divide the answer by 5 then add 32.

### **Quick Conversion Chart:**

Degrees Fahrenheit °F	Degrees Celsius °C
90	32.2
80	26.7
70	21.1
60	15.6
50	10
40	4.4
32	0
20	-6.7
10	-12.2
0	-17.8

## COMING HOME

You may experience reverse culture shock when you return home. You may encounter feelings of disappointment, depression, or feelings of isolation upon your return home. Your experience and understanding of the world have grown a lot in the past months. Meanwhile your friends have remained much the same and may get tired of hearing about your experience. Or maybe you are having difficulty explaining how it was such a great experience. You may find yourself dreaming of returning or always comparing the U.S. to your host country. This is a common experience for study abroad alumni. We offer a few suggestions to help you stay connected with your experience in a positive way.

- Be a contact person for prospective students interested in your study abroad programs. You can utilize upon your own experience to help prepare someone else.
- Share your experience at Study Abroad Fairs and Pre-Departure Orientations. Help other students become excited about studying abroad by speaking about your own experience.
- Volunteer at the Office of International Programs. We are always looking for an extra hand when planning events such as International Day and Study Abroad Fairs.
- Contact the Office of International Programs upon your return and bring in pictures, we are always happy to hear about your study abroad adventures!

We wish to thank the University of Chicago, St. Xavier University, and the University of Arkansas Study Abroad Offices for some of the material in this booklet.