International Program Student Handbook

EDUCATION ABROAD

EXPLORE • PREPARE • REINTEGRATE

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"Travel changes you.
As you move through this life and this world you change things slightly.
You leave marks behind, however small.
*And in return, **life** – and **travel** – leaves marks on you."*

~ *Anthony Bourdain*

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Dear International Program Participant:

Participating in an international program is one the most challenging, exciting, and rewarding experiences you can have during your collegiate career. A successful study abroad experience does not just happen, but rather requires much planning and preparation. The Education Abroad Office will lead you through pre-departure orientation, but you must also take the initiative to prepare yourself to go abroad. This handbook is designed to assist you as you plan and organize for your time abroad.

It is our hope your time abroad is truly transformative; challenging you in ways that promote intellectual and personal growth. We also encourage you to remember your journey does not end when you land back in the United States. There are countless opportunities to reintegrate your experiences back into your community and to engage cross-culturally with newfound interests and passions.

The Education Abroad Office is here to support you. Do not hesitate to contact us before you leave, while you're abroad and once you've returned. Our doors are always open.

With kind regards,

The Education Abroad Office

“Redhawk Returnee Reflections”

“It isn't going to be what you expect, no matter how much research you do. BUT do a lot of research so you know the feel of the program you're getting into and if it turns out to be different, be flexible enough to embrace it.”

“I can't get Italy out of my head and will forever be searching of ways to get me back there.”

“Studying abroad during college is one of the most important things we, as budding world citizens, can do nowadays. These are amazing experiences and I can honestly say there is not one experience that has not impacted me for the better.”

“I think cultural competency would be an overstatement but at the very least I sought to gain the ability to learn and move within a culture that was not my own. My ultimate goal was to be able to approach the people who lived in the country from a place originating out of their own culture and not out of my own“

“Studying abroad truly impacted my personal as well as academic growth in amazing ways. It was an incredible experience and I would strongly encourage anyone to go for it, provided they are genuinely willing to fully participate.”

“There is nothing like the feeling when you realize you are on the other side of the world living your life and being independent.”

“This experience was nothing like I expected, but it was better than I could have imagined. I've had insurmountable life experiences and have a clearer, more accurate account of cultures outside my own. It is one of the biggest adventures I have ever taken on, and I'm so thankful I did.”

“Learn, be flexible, be a human among humans.”

“Gaining a wider perspective of myself and the world at large, becoming a more globally competent citizen.”

“This is a growth and birth process that may seem frightening at times when facing unknown peoples, places and things but, know that when you consider what life will be like in a foreign country, there will always be people there to welcome you with open arms

PREPARING TO TRAVEL ABROAD

Photo by Kirsti Ruud

SU Responsibility

You will receive additional, more specific information on many of these topics from the Education Abroad Office, your SU program leader or the program provider. The information in this section is meant to be general.

PERSONAL CONDUCT

You are expected to abide by the individual and group standards appropriate to the cultural setting of your Program, including the laws and standards of the host country and of the host institution.

- You are responsible to comply with SU rules, policies and standards regarding behavior, including the Student Code of Conduct, whether or not such rules and regulations are specific to your Program.
- If your actions or behavior violate local or national laws and/or SU rules, policies or standards, or are judged to be injurious or an impediment to the Program, seriously offensive to the culture of the host country, in violation or threat to the rights or welfare of another and/or damaging to SU's reputation, the Program Director and/or SU leadership can impose sanctions up to expulsion from the Program.
- If your participation in the Program is terminated, you are responsible for all costs and fees associated with your early return to the U.S. In addition, you will not receive a refund of tuition and fees. Students terminated from a Program are subject to additional disciplinary action upon their return to campus, as provided in the SU Student Code of Conduct.

COMMUNICATION

EAO sends important messages to your SU E-MAIL ACCOUNT.

- **You need to regularly check your SU email while you are abroad.**
- If you use an alternative account, you will need to set-up your SU email to be forwarded to it.
- If you are interested in scholarships, fellowships, summer work opportunities, financial aid, etc., be sure to e-mail or write the appropriate parties and ask them to send you applications well in advance of deadlines.
- Compile a list of SU e-mail and snail-mail addresses of those you'll want to stay in contact with before you leave.

FINANCIAL AID

Be sure the Office of Student Financial Services knows where to send important documents (FASFA, loan paperwork, etc.) for the next academic year.

- You are encouraged to meet with Student Financial Services to discuss your study abroad plans.
- Arrange Direct Deposit with Student Financial Services prior to going abroad.

Power of Attorney

Allows you to legally designate someone you trust to act on your behalf in matters specified through the agreement.

- Consider assigning Power of Attorney to a trusted relative or friend.
- This provides authorization to that selected person to make financial decisions on your behalf in your absence.
- If you have financial aid, the P.O.A. may be able to sign forms in your absense - a **huge** time-saver as Financial Aid will not have to send forms abroad to you. Instead, your P.O.A. can sign the forms and you will avoid delays.
- The P.O.A. form is available on the Education Abroad website https://www.seattleu.edu/academics/education-abroad/
- A notarized signature is required. Notaries are available at most banks and the SU Law School Annex
- The form must be submitted to the **Office of Student Financial Services** prior to departure.

SU COURSE REGISTRATION FOR YOUR RETURN

While abroad, SU course registration will be accomplished through regular web-based procedures.

- Plan ahead! Discuss courses for your next quarter with your academic advisor prior to departure.
- If you do not have regular web access, your program office may allow you to use its internet to register or you can use an internet café.
- Don't forget you can register any time after your assigned registration time (according to Pacific Standard Time).
- **Make sure to clear all holds by maintaining contact with your advisor before and during your time abroad and be sure to pay any fees.**

SU CAMPUS HOUSING

Students who currently live on campus (and are not abroad) are given priority for room assignments.

- If you wish to live on campus after returning from your overseas program, try to set up your housing prior to leaving. Otherwise, be sure to e-mail the Office of Housing and Residential Life directly housing@seattleu.edu to get access to housing applications and waiting lists.
- Murphy fills fast!
- Consider Xavier Global House to maintain your global lifestyle and language skills.
- Pay attention to deadlines

Traveling Basics

AMERICAN EMBASSY ASSISTANCE ABROAD

What a U.S. Embassy/Consulate CAN do for You:

- **Contact you in the event of a national or personal emergency.**
    - If you are participating on an SU-Sponsored program, the Education Abroad Office registers you with the State Department prior to your departure.
    - If going abroad on a Non-SU Program, it is strongly recommended you register yourself. It's quick and easy: https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/travel-advisories/smart-traveler-enrollment-program.html
    - By registering with the U.S. Department of State, the in-country consulate staff will know how to contact you if a national or personal emergency occurs.
- **Re-issue passports to replace lost or stolen ones.**
- **Disappearances:** If you are not where you are supposed to be and a relative has reason to believe you should be there, a call to the **Citizens Emergency Center** in Washington, D.C., can be made.
    - It provides a 24-hour line at 1-888-407-4747 (from the U.S. & Canada) or 202-501-4444 (from overseas) which you or your relatives can call (collect if necessary) to get in touch with the U.S. embassy in the appropriate country.
    - They also maintain information in times of crisis with regularly updated reports from each embassy/consulate.
- **In the event of an arrest:** A consulate officer will be able to operate within the framework of the law of the host country:
    - Visit U.S. citizens in jail
    - Provide a list of local attorneys
    - Notify family and friends
    - Relay requests for money and other aid
    - Intercede with local authorities to make sure rights under local law are fully observed
    - Oversea the U.S. citizen is being treated humanely according to internationally accepted standards
    - Protest mistreatment or abuse to appropriate authorities.
- **Illnesses**: The **Citizens Emergency Center** can get in touch with relatives of Americans who become ill or injured while overseas. They may pursue various courses of action to ensure the traveler's safety.
    - First, the traveler's own funds will be used for his/her return and/or treatment.
    - If the traveler does not have funds, the **Citizens Emergency Center** may approach the traveler's family for funds.
    - In emergencies, the **Center** can provide small government loans for returning American travelers who are in distress until private funds arrive.
    - The **Center** can also send a telegram in the event of a death overseas, notifying the family and informing them they need to send money for the repatriation of the body.
- The **Citizens Emergency Center**, 1.888.407.4747 from within the U.S. or 202.501.4444

from outside, can get in touch with the appropriate U.S. embassy in the event that someone is missing, injured or ill.

What a U.S. Embassy/Consulate CANNOT Do for You:

- Demand immediate release or get anyone out of jail.
- Represent U.S. citizens at trial or give legal counsel.
- Pay legal fees and/or fines with U.S. government funds.

How to Avoid Problems:

- Keep a copy of the picture page of your passport with you while abroad, but always separate from where you keep your passport. Leave another copy with your family.
- Keep several extra passport-sized photographs with you to hasten passport replacement.
- Leave as detailed an itinerary—where you are traveling, the name of your hotel, hostel or bed and breakfast, and where it is located—as you can with host coordinators or friends whenever you travel. How will anyone know you're late in returning if they don't know when you left, where you went and when you were supposed to return?!
- Know your own itinerary, and know what time your plane or train is scheduled to leave, etc. If you are separated from your group, at least you can all meet up in the airport or train station if you know when you are scheduled to leave.
- **DO NOT PARTICPATE IN ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES.**

See the U.S. Department of State's emergency assistance website at:
https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/emergencies.html

PASSPORTS

You must have a passport to travel abroad.

- If you do not have one, or if yours will expire while you are abroad, please apply for one ***NOW***. Obtaining a passport can take several weeks, so plan accordingly.
- Some countries require your passport be valid up to six months after your return to the US in order to obtain a visa.
- If you are a U.S. citizen, a passport may be obtained through the **U.S Department of State's U.S. Passports & International Travel** site or through selected **U.S. post offices**. There are instructions and an on-line application at http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/ .
- If you are not a U.S. citizen, contact the consulate of your country of citizenship for assistance.

Keep your passport secure.

- Make at least **3 photocopies** of the first page of your passport – one to keep with you at all times, one to place in baggage while traveling and one to leave at home with family. This will assist in replacing your passport should it be lost or stolen.
- Scan and email yourself a copy , upload it to your Horizon account, or take a picture with your phone.
- Passports should be kept safely away and hidden from view when not in use.
- When out and about in the city/town where you are studying, carry a photocopy of your passport and leave the actual one behind in a safe place. (See money information below for a possible exception to this rule-of-thumb.)

If you lose your passport, replace it immediately.

- If your U.S. passport is lost or stolen while overseas, report it immediately to the local police and to the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.
- An embassy or consulate can issue a replacement passport, often within 24 hours.
- Links to contact information for U.S. Embassies and Consulates may be found at https://www.usembassy.gov/.
- As mentioned above, a copy of the original passport will help expedite the process. Two passport-size photographs will also speed up replacement.

VISAS

A visa is official permission to enter a country.

- The visa application process should be started early.
- Not all countries require a visa; it depends on **your country of citizenship and duration on stay** as to whether you are required to have one.
- Your program provider **may** be able to assist you in obtaining a visa.

- You should **consult the US Department of State's website** or the embassy of the country to which you are traveling to find out if a visa is necessary.
- You may be required to travel to another state to obtain your visa. Be sure to plan ahead and budget for this expense.
- It can be a challenge to speak with a consulate representative. Please refer to the appropriate consulate website and follow the visa instructions carefully.

Carry your acceptance letter from your school or program with you while traveling to your destination

- Even if you don't need a visa, you may be required to show this when you enter through immigration/passport control on arrival.

Contact the consulate or embassy of your host country to find out more about their specific rules and regulations.

- If possible, plan ahead in terms of personal travel once you are abroad. Entry and exit regulations vary. Some countries have restrictions on what can be brought into or out of the country.

IMMUNIZATIONS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has information on health and immunization requirements on the Web (https://www.cdc.gov/)

- It also has information on health risks specific to geographic areas and other health related travel advisories.
- There are costs associated with receiving travel immunizations.
- Vaccinations are available from your doctor, travel clinics, and sometimes the SU Health Center (located in Bellarmine Hall).
- It can take a while to get an appointment with a travel clinic. Some vaccinations require several steps to complete. **Plan Early!**

INSURANCE

Depending on your program type you will either have insurance through SU or your program provider.

- Students on Exchanges, French in France, Latin American Studies Program, IDIP, International Internships, Independent Study/Research, and SU Short-term Faculty-Led Programs will be automatically enrolled in the SU global medial insurance CISI by the Education Abroad Office.
- Insurance is provided by the program provider for the following programs; The Beijing Center, Danish Institute for Study Abroad(DIS), CIEE in Legon Ghana, St. Louis University in Madrid(SLU),

ILACA-Willamette University in Granada, and most Non-SU programs. Again, please contact your program provider if you have questions about your insurance.

- Consider purchasing property insurance to cover your belongings, travel cancellation insurance and baggage insurance. All of these insurances can be purchased separately.

TRAVEL PLANNING

Unless your program has scheduled a mandatory group flight, it is your responsibility to set your own itinerary and book your own passage.

- Ask if there are any **penalties for making changes** to your ticket; often there are.
- Purchase insurance for your ticket.
- Check on flying out of major U.S. cities like Seattle, Chicago or New York as flight selections and prices are better.
- Think creatively - sometimes good fares can be obtained by flying into one city and out of another.
- Check other options on the EAO website http://www.seattleu.edu/abroad/resources/
- Travel agencies should also be able to tell you about train and bus passes (Eurail, Flexpass, etc.), or other options for travel while you are overseas. Some of these discounted passes can **only** be purchased in the U.S. prior to departure (i.e. Eurail pass, some routes now available in Europe for purchase, contact Eurail, https://www.eurail.com/en/eurail-passes).
- **Youth Hostel Passes** http://www.hiusa.org/ may be helpful if you plan on travelling on the weekends or over breaks.
- The Lonely Planet Destination Guides are excellent resources for travelling independently and on a budget.
- ***Remember that you will be traveling on your own budget during breaks.***
- ***Ask for student discounts!***

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD

The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) may be required for your program.

- It is affordable and helpful in obtaining discounts on airfare, other transportation and attractions in many countries.
- Perhaps most importantly, it provides additional travel, medical and evacuation insurance.
- More information on this card can be found on: http://www.isiccard.com/.
- Your host university may provide you with a student I.D. card which will also make you eligible for student discounts. Take advantage of both cards for savings!

BAGGAGE

Planning your packing in advance can save you time, money and effort.

- Many airlines have a **weight limit** for baggage.
- Many also have excess baggage fees.
- Contact your airline via web or phone directly for its policies.
- Bring only the quantity of luggage you can comfortably carry on your own.
- Many countries do not have elevators. Pack what you can carry.
- Vehicles used for airport pickup may be small. Consider what can feasibly fit in a small car.

Four tips for choosing luggage:

1. Choose light-weight durable luggage.
2. Wheel/backpack combinations are good since wheels are great in airports and on the street, but backpacks are better in train/subway stations and on short excursions.
3. A large hiking backpack is another investment to consider for traveling. (Make sure you buy one with an internal frame, good hip belt, small side pockets for storing small items and good back support.)
4. A day-pack is useful, too! Many hiking backpacks include a detachable day-pack.

Six rules for packing:

1. Bring a change of clothes and any **essentials with you on the airplane** in your carry-on in case your checked luggage does not arrive with you:
    - **a.** Prescription medication
    - **b.** A copy of your travel itinerary and admission letter
    - **c.** Your destination address on arrival in country
    - **d.** Contact information at your destination
2. If you check two bags, distribute your things equally into the two bags in case one gets lost.
3. Label all your bags, inside and outside, with the address to which you want your luggage sent (your destination address) if it is lost.
    - **a.** If your luggage does not arrive at your destination with you, be sure to file a report with the airport baggage claim office before you leave the airport, usually in the baggage claim area.
    - **b.** Be prepared to provide a description of your missing luggage.
    - **c.** Consider keeping a picture of it in your phone.
4. Pack lightly! You will be hauling it around on your own!
    - **a.** **Start thinking about what you want to take with you well in advance**.
    - **b.** Because you will need to pack as lightly as possible, bring versatile outfits.

   c. Clothing should also be durable, comfortable and be able to be worn several times before being washed – remember you may not have access to the kind of washing facilities to which you're accustomed.
   d. Also, bring clothing you really like; you'll be wearing it a lot!

5. Research the weather**.**
   a. The weather may change during your stay. For example, you may arrive in summer but will still be there until early winter.
   b. You may want to buy some clothing there, made specifically for the weather. Plan accordingly.

6. Think twice about bringing American **electrical appliances** abroad as they are not compatible in most countries and will not work because of differences in current and outlet configurations.
   a. Consider purchasing inexpensive electronic appliances in country or bring battery operated ones (and plenty of batteries) with you.
   b. If you must bring appliances, they should be dual voltage or bring a converter (for electricity) and adapter (for the plug-in configuration).
   c. A wind up or battery operated alarm clock can be much more useful than an electric one.

MONEY

In addition to the academic and living expenses outlined in your program materials, you will need to plan for incidentals, extended vacation and personal travel.

- It is **your responsibility** to research the cost of living in your host country and create a daily budget.
- You may spend more money in the beginning as you find your way around to inexpensive shops. After that, it will become easier to budget.
- Find out when your program's vacation time is scheduled. Many programs do not cover housing, meals and travel during extended breaks. For instance, many universities in England have a 5-week spring break. Therefore, plan and budget accordingly.

Traveling with money

- It is best to arrive at your destination with some local currency.
- Most airports have foreign exchange offices just outside the customs area.
- You may be able to exchange money at your departure airport, but again offices may not be open at the time you depart.
- You will often find a better exchange rate by waiting to exchange until you arrive, but depending on the time of your arrival, offices may not be open.
- You have the option of exchanging money through your bank before departure. **This takes a few days, so plan accordingly.**

ATMs are widely available now in most countries.

- **Notify your bank and credit card company of your plans to be abroad, so your card isn't blocked for security reasons when you try to use it.**
- Most US ATM cards will work internationally using your numeric PIN; check with your bank first to be sure.
- You should also know your bank's maximum daily withdrawal.
- Before you leave, find out if your bank has partner banks where you're going to help avoid bank fees.
- Most ATM's will charge a fee; check your foreign transaction fee with your bank.
- The currency you receive from ATM's will be in the local currency, not U.S. dollars.

Credit cards are also widely accepted for purchases.

- Not all credit cards are accepted internationally, but major credit cards are generally accepted abroad including Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. If you are travelling to Europe you might need a credit card with a chip. Check with your bank.
- You'll often be required to show identification at the time of purchase.
- **Arrange for bill payment while you're abroad**, or use online banking, if available. Typically, you cannot sign up for on-line banking from abroad so be sure to take care of this before you depart the U.S.
- Some vendors and banks will ask for a numeric PIN for credit card purchases. You may need to contact your bank in advance if you don't know your credit card PIN.

Prepaid credit cards are available in many grocery stores and pharmacies here in the U.S.

- These work just like credit cards, but you don't have to worry about bill payment while abroad.
- Often, they can be reloaded online.

Further considerations:

Travelers checks: Travelers checks used to be widely accepted, but with ATMs and credit card use so widespread, their use has declined and fewer businesses accept them. Travelers checks act as secure cash while travelling abroad. They can sometimes be purchased in local currency, and can be replaced if lost. Research the situation in your destination country before deciding to purchase travelers checks. American Express still issues travelers checks.

Wiring money: In order to have money wired to you, you need to have a foreign bank account and there is usually a high fee for this. This option should probably be used as a last resort.

On-line Banking: You will **not** be able to check your savings and checking account balances on most foreign ATMs. It is recommended that you use on-line banking to monitor your account balances while abroad. You will need to set-up your on-line account before you leave the US if you are not already enrolled in your banks' program as you will not be able to do this while abroad.

PHONES

Overseas telephone calls can be very expensive.

- Look into getting a long distance telephone card, which is best purchased in your host country.
- You can rent or buy inexpensive mobile phones abroad as well.
- If you intend to use your cell phone overseas, check with your carrier to see if there are special requirements.
- Smartphones have free calling/texting apps worldwide such as Skype, Viber, or Whatsapp. This is also a good way to contact students who are studying abroad with you in your program.
- If you bring a laptop, tablet, or smartphone there are services such as Skype that make calling home inexpensive.

GIFTS FOR HOSTS

Here are some suggestions if you would like to show your gratitude with a gift. Research your destination country before you leave. Many countries have special restrictions on what can be brought in.

- Clothing and souvenir items with the SU logo or your state's name
- Scenic potholders, aprons, mugs, and glasses
- Typical non-perishable food items
- Calendars with U.S. scenery
- Drawings, paintings or professional-quality photographs of well-known areas of the U.S.
- Hand-made crafts, jewelry, soaps, or lotions.
- Photos of your family, home, university, etc.

Packing List

BEFORE YOU GO

- ☐ Passport identification page
- ☐ Airline ticket/reservation
- ☐ Driver's license
- ☐ Credit cards (Front & Back)
- ☐ Your contact information abroad
- ☐ Emergency contact information abroad
- ☐ Insurance information
- ☐ Extra passport sized photos
- ☐ Contact your bank to inform them of your travel plans. Be sure to know your credit limit and how to contact your credit card company from abroad
- ☐ Know the location and how to contact the fire, police station, and local embassy in your host country
- ☐ Create a wallet-sized card with the address of your residence and emergency contact information
- ☐ Contact your mobile phone carrier to see how, or if, your phone will work abroad. Inquire about the surcharges of calling/texting while overseas
- ☐ Arrange to get any needed immunizations, vaccinations, or medicines. Prepare to bring enough prescription medication for the duration of your stay
- ☐ Check with a medical professional to find out if your prescriptions are controlled or prohibited abroad– you may need a doctor's certificate attesting to your prescription
- ☐ Create an itemized list of all that you've packed in your luggage for insurance purposes in the event your luggage is lost

CARRY-ON

- ☐ Passport, visas (if necessary) and acceptance letter from the University or program provider

- ☐ Address/contact information to your in-country destination
- ☐ U.S. & foreign currency (preferably worn under your clothing in a pouch/money belt once abroad)
- ☐ Credit and debit cards
- ☐ Copies of important documents and emergency contact information (wallet-sized card)
- ☐ Driver's license
- ☐ Prescription medication in original containers, back-up supply, and a letter from a doctor (if necessary)
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Cell phone/charger (if bringing one)
- ☐ Extra change of clothing
- ☐ Eye glasses

CHECKED LUGGAGE

- ☐ Extra copies of important documents and emergency contact information
- ☐ Seasonally/culturally appropriate clothing, undergarments, bathing suit, shoes, and accessories
- ☐ Toiletries (be sure to bring an ample supply if travelling to a country where products may not be widely available)
- ☐ Additional Medications/Items (over-the-counter pain reliever, anti-diarrhea, allergy medicine, etc, contraceptives/condoms, and travel sized first aid kit)
- ☐ Nail clipper & Sewing kit
- ☐ Contact lenses and extra pair of eye glasses
- ☐ Travel alarm clock & Small flashlight
- ☐ Backpack and/or small purse/pouch
- ☐ Converter for 110-volt electronic devices/Plug adapters
- ☐ Host family gift/Photos of friends & family from home

HEALTH & SAFETY

Photo by Karena Chang

Health and Medical Care Abroad

The following section is a SAFETI Adaptation of the University of the Pacific Student Guide: Health, Safety, and Financial Issues Abroad reprinted with permission from Gary Rhodes, Ph.D., Director, Center for Global Education.

HEALTH & RESPONSIBILITY

The pressures of living and studying off-campus are considerable.

- In some cases, mild disorders can become serious under the stress of life and study in a new environment. The system of US health care may not be replicated in the host country. Therefore, it is important the Education Abroad Office be informed of any medical or emotional problems which might impact you while abroad.
- **You are solely responsible to disclose health conditions** to the Education Abroad Office and on-site staff in order to adequately discuss the impact of any serious health risks on those conditions.
- **It is your responsibility** to obtain and carefully evaluate health and safety information related to your program as provided by the provider, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the US Department of State and other sources.
- Please know **you are responsible** for the consequences of not following CDC or program immunization, vaccination or prophylaxis requirements.

MEDICAL CARE ABROAD

In the event you need medical care abroad:

- Seattle University has provided your program director with a copy of your medical history form if you are participating in an SU-Short Term Faculty Led program. If you are on a Non-SU program, please consult your provider to determine the best way to communicate medical needs while abroad.
- Many American Embassies and consulates have large travel agencies (e.g. Thomas Cook) and a number of the larger hotels will have lists of English-speaking physicians.
- If you have a pre-existing medical condition or are simply concerned about facilities while overseas, you must take steps to find out about health care in each country where you expect to spend any time.

PRESCRIPTIONS & OVER THE COUNTER DRUGS

If you are under the care of a physician or require regular medication or injections (e.g. insulin or allergy shots):

- Be sure to check with your personal physician concerning your welfare while abroad. Notify the on-site coordinator of any special needs.
- Students who need medications regularly must take an adequate supply.
- Persons, who have any physical condition that may require emergency care, should carry some kind of identification (tag, bracelet, or card) at all times indicating the specific nature of the problem, in case they are unable to communicate this information themselves.

- If you are not able to communicate your allergy in the local language, you can order a small card which can be presented in the local language to alert others to your allergy. Please visit Select Wisely to order this inexpensive tool: http://www.selectwisely.com/
- All prescription medicines must be accompanied by a letter from the supervising physician.
- Students who are required to take a medicine containing habit-forming or narcotic drugs should carry a doctor's note on office stationary explaining the need for the medication.
- Keep all medicines in their original and labeled containers.
- Make sure the name on the prescription matches the name on your passport.
- Laws may vary from country to country, so consult the embassies of the countries you will visit before departing the U.S. regarding transporting medications.

SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS

It is important to inform your program director and the Education Abroad Office of any of the following:

- Special needs including dietary restrictions and/or preferences, physical concerns, learning disabilities, allergies, or strict religious observances prior to your departure from the U.S.
- **Accommodations of special needs cannot be guaranteed.** However, with early disclosure to the program director and Education Abroad Office, you will allow for the appropriate amount of time to address your needs.
- *Once you are abroad it is too late!*

Maintaining Strong Mental and Emotional Health

SAFETI Adaptation of Peace Corps Resources "Maintaining Strong Mental and Emotional Health" module, Pre-Service Health Training for Volunteers Binder, Peace Corps Office of Medical Services reprinted with permission from Gary Rhodes, Ph.D., Director Center for Global Education.

RESEARCH PREDICTABLE STAGES OF ADJUSTMENT FOR STUDENTS

Experience tells us there are some fairly predictable stages most students go through during participation in study abroad. Knowing about them may help the student prepare and react more effectively. These stages are:

- Orientation and honeymoon (feelings of elation)
- Initial culture shock/confrontation
- Adjustment-crisis/depression-frustration-adjustment (cycle)
- Recovery-integration into host culture
- Re-entry and reverse culture shock

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

The difference between what you expect and what you actually experience may determine the level of distress you feel. It is helpful, therefore, to review your expectations and visualizations so you are not surprised or even shocked by what you find.

UNDERSTANDING INTERCULTURAL SKILLS

Students should understand that among the many intercultural skills required for successful adjustment in a different culture, intercultural specialists believe being aware of one's own culture is most important. "Understanding the culture you bring with you overseas helps you see the one you find much more clearly."

Other intercultural skills include:

- Being aware of one's limitations
- Respecting the other culture
- Learning from interacting
- Being non-judgmental
- Avoiding stereotypes
- Being able to communicate
- Listening and observing
- Tolerating ambiguity
- Being persistent

COPING CHOICES STUDENTS MAKE

POOR Coping Choices

When a student is in a low mood, he or she is vulnerable, and people who are vulnerable can make poor coping choices. Examples of these include:

- Resorting to heavy alcohol use
- Staying in bed
- Staying in your living quarters all day
- Eating excessively
- Avoiding friends and neighbors
- Escaping into sexual relationships

BETTER Coping Choices

The more coping strategies a student has identified and thought about before his/her struggles begin, the more likely he/she is to make good choices. Based on feedback from numerous students, the following six basic techniques are especially helpful in dealing with the stresses and strains of adjustment:

- Immerse oneself in study/reading that is satisfying
- Find a local person with whom one can talk regularly
- Get involved in the local community
- Practice one's faith through prayer, meditation, reading, etc.
- Write letters/e-mails (or make videos) to family and friends
- Visit fellow students
- Meet with Resident Director/Faculty to talk about the stress
- Exercise

SEEKING HELP

It is "normal" to experience stress in an international setting. However, when your usual coping mechanisms are not working for you or you find yourself making coping choices not in your best interest, realize you may need more support and seek help.

You should understand whether a discussion will be confidential and be familiar with all the available counseling and support services providers. Available support could include your resident director, local counseling and healthcare professionals at your host institution or health center, program administration representatives, and the counseling center at SU.

Signs of a serious problem you or fellow students recognize that would require intervention include:

- Prolonged depression
- Marked changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Excessive anxiety that interferes with the ability to function
- Self-destructive or violent behavior
- Alcohol or substance abuse
- Failure to comply with medical recommendation

Alcohol Use Abroad

SAFETI Adaptation of Peace Corps Resources "Dealing with Alcohol" module, Pre-Service Health Training for Volunteers Binder, Peace Corps Office of Medical Services reprinted with permission from Gary Rhodes, Ph.D., Director Center for Global Education.

ALCOHOL USE

Alcohol use and content varies by country.

- Alcohol may affect you differently abroad than it does at home.
- Stress, culture shock, peer pressure, and boredom can all play a role in your alcohol tolerance.
- Excessive alcohol consumption impairs good decision making.
- May not be culturally acceptable.
- **You are responsible** for yourself and your actions while you are abroad.
- Your actions while drinking can affect your status here at SU.
- If you plan on drinking, please do so responsibly.

ALCOHOL AND THE CULTURE

The use of alcohol is encouraged in some societies and prohibited in others.

- In most cultures there are methods for controlling drinking.
- These vary and may not be obvious to a person unfamiliar with a particular culture.
- Research the country and drinking culture prior to leaving.

RESISTING SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PRESSURES TO DRINK

Some personal strategies, which may help, include:

- Understand why you are choosing to use alcohol
- Make rules for yourself to guide drinking
- Set personal limits for drinking, stick to it, or drink less
- Provide more non-alcoholic than alcoholic beverages for yourself, friends and guests
- Maintain daily physical activity
- Drink only with meals
- Make yourself aware of the impact your drinking has on yourself and others

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

BACKGROUND

STDs are encountered all over the world; condoms are not.

- Depending on where you are going, medical resources may be limited and diagnosis and treatment may not be easily available.
- **It is your responsibility** to stay safe and healthy while you are abroad.
- Staying educated and informed is the best prevention.

Personal Safety

SAFETI Adaptation of Peace Corps Resources "Personal Safety" module, Pre-Service Health Training for Volunteer Binder, Peace Corps Office of Medical Services reprinted with permission from Gary Rhodes, Ph.D., Director Center for Global Education.

BACKGROUND

According to the Peace Corps, the number and severity of personal safety and security issues is rising in virtually all countries. Problems range from minor verbal harassment to theft and robbery to serious physical and sexual assault. These incidents are of concern to all students and staff. Try to obtain country and region-specific statistics on physical and sexual assault. Some incidents are not avoidable, but many are.

CONDITIONS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO RISK

According to records, the situations which place students at greatest risk are:

- Being new to the country
- Being intoxicated
- Being out after midnight or local curfew
- Being alone at night in an isolated area
- Being in a known high crime area
- Sleeping in an unlocked place
- Lack of local language skills
- Travelling to new places and making new friends
- Standing out in a crowd
- May not yet pick up the local cues and customs
- Have not established personal daily routines

STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING RISK

Your safety is ultimately your responsibility. Each person should actively develop his or her own personal safety strategies. Administrators can assist you in developing personal awareness and personal safety strategies. It is important to discuss with on-site program staff the extent to which these strategies are or are not applicable during your time abroad. Some suggestions include:

General:

- Listen for what is being said
- Keep watch for suspicious people and vehicles
- Know what hours of the night are more dangerous than others
- Stay in and walk only in those areas that are well lit
- Avoid being alone in unfamiliar neighborhoods
- Know where to get help (stores, phones, fire station, etc.)
- Avoid displaying valuables i.e. phone, camera, etc.
- Refer to SU's Public Safety Tips

On site:

- Establishing relationships with hosts, neighbors, and local authorities
- Improving structural security of residence (shuttered/barred window, door locks, etc.)
- Ensuring access to emergency medical care
- Developing emergency support/communications network
- Screening night visitors

While Traveling:

- Notify your program director, host family, and home family of your travel plans
- Wear practical attire
- Restrict night travel
- Project certainty of route and destination
- Avoid "high risk" regions
- Travel with a friend/ trusted other
- Inspect vehicle for safety (tires, overloading, brakes, seatbelts, etc.)
- Determine risk levels of varying means of transport (bus, train, taxi, hitch hiking, etc.)
- (Women) sit with other women or middle aged couples

Urban Area:

- Demonstrate vigilance/confidence/"street smarts"
- Be aware of surroundings
- Avoid "high risk" areas and identify “safe zones”
- Use the "buddy system"
- Carry a whistle or other personal safety device
- Locate safe hotels/guest houses
- Moderate alcohol consumption
- Carry only sufficient cash in safe place (pouch, money belt)

REPORTING CRIMES

If you are a victim of an assault, reporting this incident to the program administrator is important because:

- You may need medical attention
- You may need to or choose to talk with someone about what has happened
- You may want or need assistance in working with the local authorities
- You should be aware of whether the discussion is confidential.

Identity and Study Abroad

Adapted from Colorado State University's Pre-Departure Guide and CIEE's Knowledge Series: Women What You Need to Know Abroad and Disability Making Study Abroad Happen for You, Adapted from Michigan State University for "Multi-Cultural Students Studying Abroad and The Center for Global Education: An International Resource Center

BACKGROUND

Study abroad can have a life-long impact on an individual. As with anything new, study abroad evokes a change in the way you see yourself, the world, and most importantly, your place in the world. Placing yourself in a different context from what is your "normal" is an eye opening and enlightening experience. The SU Education Abroad website has resources available for diverse student populations: https://www.seattleu.edu/academics/education-abroad/students/

LGBTQ Students

Attitudes and tolerance toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) persons vary from country to country, just as they vary among U.S. cities and states. Most LGBTQ students encounter little to no problems while overseas, but it helps to be prepared and research your destination before you go.

We strongly encourage our LGBTQ students to come out to their Education Abroad Advisor. Your advisor will assist you in conducting country and culture-specific research. As with all advising sessions, student confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Before Leaving

Once you have selected a destination, consider the following points prior to departure to ease the transition into your host culture.

- What cultural attitudes and laws exist towards sexual orientation in the host country?
- What is the social perception of LGBTQ people in the host country?
- What is considered typical male and female social behavior, including gender roles and gender relations, in the host country?
- Can the program accommodate special housing requests such as single rooms, private baths, or other roommates?
- Does the program have any other resources available for LGBTQ students?
- Does the program assess hosts for their acceptance towards lesbian, gay, and bisexual students? Transgender and gender queer students?
- Is there a LGBTQ community nearby?
- Are there transgender-specific community, health care, and other resources nearby?
- How open will I be about my sexual orientation and gender identity with people in my host country? How might this impact my experience abroad?
- How important is it for me to find other LGBTQ students and friends while I am abroad? How will I connect with them?
- What kinds of LGBTQ-friendly establishments, organizations, or resources are available in my host country? How will I access them?
- What may make the coming-out process different in my host country compared to the U.S.?
- How will I incorporate my experiences abroad back into my life at Seattle University upon my return from abroad, especially if I have come out for the first time while abroad?

While Abroad

Whatever your own sexual orientation, please keep in mind there may be LGBTQ students within your study abroad peer group in the host country environment. Some will be 'out,' some not, and some may just be coming to terms with their sexual identity. Sensitivity to this diversity within your own group as well as the diversity of the host culture will further enrich your overall abroad experience. If at any point you experience assault or harassment, please inform your in-country Program Director.

Resources and Organizations:

- Amnesty International: Sexual orientation and gender identity: https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/discrimination/lgbti-rights/
- Diversity Abroad: https://www.beglobalii.com/articles/lgbtq-students-abroad
- International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission: www.iglhrc.org
- International Lesbian and Gay Association: www.ilga.org
- NAFSA and Education Abroad: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/lgbtqi.html
- NAFSA Rainbow Special Interest Group – resources for staff, faculty, students, families. https://www.rainbowsig.org/resource-center/study-abroad/

Students of Color

As a student of color, you may be concerned about facing potential racial bias and prejudice without the comfort of your usual support system. On the other hand, you may be looking forward to being part of the majority population for the first time in your life. Or, you may be planning a self-discovery sojourn to the country or region of your family's heritage. Whatever reasons you have for studying abroad, you will find confronting and coping with your adjustment abroad, as painful as it may be at times, can be a positive growth experience. Unfortunately, no place is perfectly free of ignorance, racism or discrimination. Just like in the U.S., you may find various levels of acceptance by some people and discrimination by others while abroad. Students of color should be aware these problems do exist in various degrees in other countries, but this should not prevent you from traveling. There may actually be opportunities for you to be a positive influence on those you meet.

We strongly encourage you to reach out to your Education Abroad Advisor. Your advisor will assist you in conducting country and culture-specific research. As with all advising sessions, student confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Before Leaving

When you consider potential destinations, make an informed choice that takes into consideration all facets of a culture, including possible racism.

- Research the political, cultural and historical context of the country where you will be studying to find information on the racial climate, and be prepared for what you may face.
- Visit the Education Abroad Office (EAO) to talk with an Advisor.
- If you would like to speak with a student of your same racial or ethnic background, the office may be able to put you in touch with students who have studied abroad and expressed an interest in talking to future study abroad students.

- Be aware of possible discrimination and racial prejudices that exist in your host culture. Just as the situation may be uncomfortable in America, certain situations may arise abroad that you should be aware of, and able to overcome. Methods of overcoming discrimination abroad can be similar to the methods you use at home.
- Although these assets may not be at your direct disposal, finding new support groups and adjusting to a new comfort zone are things ALL participants face in study abroad.
- You can prevent tension by researching the host culture PRIOR to departure.

While Abroad

The Education Abroad Office is aware of many cultural dynamics abroad and wants to make your experience as positive as possible. EAO realizes understanding cross-cultural differences, including those that may be offensive, are an integral part of the entire study abroad "experience." There are various methods to assist your immersion into a new culture, and should be recognized as assets to help maintain comfort and security abroad:

- Do not be afraid to ask for help or report assault or harassment to your program director.
- Research possible connections with minority student organizations on your host campus.
- Be informed of your legal rights as they pertain to discrimination abroad.
- Be in contact with organizations that combat discrimination in the immediate area.
- File complaint reports with local police departments or the U.S. embassy if needed.
- Always carry proper identification, in case local officials unexpectedly stop you.
- Maintain pride and self-confidence by acting tactfully in addressing possible situations.
- Remain in contact with on-site program directors and counselors.
- Use your network of friends, both abroad and at home.
- Talk to your host families (if applicable).

Resources and Organizations:

- The Center for Global Education: An International Resource Center: http://allabroad.us
- Diversity Abroad: https://www.beglobalii.com/
- Michigan State University Information for Multi-Cultural Students Studying Abroad: https://educationabroad.isp.msu.edu/explore/identity-and-diversity-abroad/ethnically-racially-diverse-students/

Women Abroad

The majority of students who study abroad are women and most have had rewarding experiences. However, in certain locations, women may have a difficult time adjusting to attitudes they encounter abroad. In some countries (even in the U.S.) some men openly demonstrate attention to women in ways many women find offensive. Such behavior could include, being honked at, stared at, or verbally assaulted for simply being a woman.

We strongly encourage you to reach out to your Education Abroad Advisor. Your advisor will assist you in conducting country and culture-specific research. As with all advising sessions, student confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Note: These may be questions to consider for gender non-conforming individuals who may or may not identify as women. Ex: effeminate gay men, trans* students, gender non-conforming people.

Before Leaving

Research the country and culture in regards to gender roles and cultural norms. If possible, talk to women from the host culture before leaving or women who have recently returned from the country.

While Abroad

The SAFETI Clearinghouse http://www.globaled.us/safeti/ suggests the following for women to minimize risk while abroad;

- Make friends with local women
- Learn from local women about self-protection
- Dress according to local customs
- Observe and Interact with men according to local customs
- Stay in control; staying sober and alert keeps your sense in place
- Have a buddy system: having at least one other trustworthy person with you can help you in regular circumstances as well as in problematic situations (what if someone spikes your drink?)

Resources and Organizations:

- Information for Women Travelers; http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go/Women.html
- Diversity Issues in Study Abroad (Brown University): http://www.brown.edu/academics/college/special-programs/international-study/student-resources/while-abroad/diversity-while-abroad
- Her own way - a woman's safe-travel guide: http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/publications/her-own-way
- Journeywoman (site is dedicated to giving women a space to share their thoughts, experiences and advice about world travel): www.journeywoman.com
- Women Abroad: http://www.internationalcenter.umich.edu/swt/diversity/women.html

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities can occasionally be the subjects of prejudice and stereotyping while abroad. U.S laws and society recognize different physical, mental, learning, and health abilities, but not all of these are formally recognized everywhere in the world.

We strongly encourage you to reach out to your Education Abroad Advisor. Your advisor will assist you in conducting country and culture-specific research. As with all advising sessions, student confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Before Leaving

- Be sure to disclose your needs early to the Education Abroad Office, Disabilities Services, and your program provider so accommodation possibilities can be explored.
- Available services may vary from country to country; wheelchair ramps, handicap parking, accessible restrooms, Braille signs, and other aides may be non-existent in parts of the host country, especially in rural areas.
- Prepare yourself with the language skills to talk about your disability with those on your program and in your host country.

While Abroad

- Be flexible and keep an open mind about different kinds of support and accommodation.
- Be realistic about challenges as well as open to new experiences.

Resources and Organizations:

- Disability Rights and Education Defense Fund: https://dredf.org/
- Diversity Issues in Study Abroad (Brown University): http://www.brown.edu/academics/college/special-programs/international-study/student-resources/while-abroad/diversity-while-abroad
- Global Access
- Mobility International: http://www.miusa.org
- The University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center: Access Abroad www.umabroad.umn.edu/students/identity/disabilities/prepplanning
- Transitions Abroad: Disability Travel: http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/travel/disability/

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Photo by Parker Tinsley

Adapting to a New Culture

Adapted from University of Massachusetts Amherst's Guidelines for Education Abroad: Pre-Departure Handbook

LIVING WITH UNCERTAINTY

Study and travel abroad involves a good deal of uncertainty.

- Trying to become part of an academic system and a society different from home can be challenging.
- Frequently, certain kinds of academic information cannot be obtained until your arrival overseas.
    - Entrance to a desired course cannot be guaranteed.
    - Detailed course descriptions are not published in catalogues.
- The best advice in these situations is to be **FLEXIBLE** and **RELAXED**, things will usually work out.
- Be aware there are things you will not know. This will help you approach your period of study abroad with patience as you cope with the details of preparation.

FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH YOUR NEW HOME

Study abroad requires you to adapt not only to a new academic setting, but also to a new culture, political system, and society.

- You need to familiarize yourself with the country that will be your temporary home.
- You must **TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY** of preparing yourself by researching before you depart the U.S. and talking with citizens of your host country, or other students who have been there.
- When you learn all you can in advance, you will become more aware of the people and life of the host country and be better prepared to take advantage of your stay overseas.
- You will also be better equipped to avoid situations that might be embarrassing or dangerous.

WHERE AM I COMING FROM? U.S. AMERICAN "CULTURE"

Culture: The learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors of a group of interacting people. Many times Americans don't recognize their "culture".

Who am I?

There are multiple cultures in the world. This fact helps you find ways to recognize your own "home culture" is important. Sometimes it takes the act of leaving home to actually confront the reality that there is a U.S. American culture which is distinct. Culture includes not only those aspects of society and behavior that are easy to identify, but also those customs and habits we take for granted as "normal" and "natural" until we are confronted with another world view and a different set of norms.

In the U.S., one of our cultural norms is the growing recognition and importance of the U.S. as a multicultural society. We are all affiliated with many cultural groups, including our national identity. Think about the following categories of U.S. culture, broadly defined, and see how you identify yourself:

- *National*
- *Ethnic*
- *Regional*

- *Gender*
- *Socioeconomic*
- *Physical Ability*
- *Religion*
- *Sexual Orientation*
- *Age*
- *Group/Club Affiliations*
- *Major Field/Professional Goals*

    - **Are there categories important to your self-identity not on this list?**
    - **How many different ways do you identify yourself?**
    - **Which of the above have no meaning for you?**
    - **When you think of introducing yourself to a stranger, what is most important to you about who you are?**
    - **What do you think may be most important to others?**

Notes:

U.S. VALUES: THE MAJORITY CULTURE AMERICANS LIVE BY

Many scholars have extensively researched intercultural issues, values and beliefs of cultures from around the world. The following list describes some traits that seem to describe aspects of majority American culture and come from the work of Dr. L Robert Kohls, and J Daniel Hess, in "The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning."
Consider these questions and look through the list and see:

- Which US American values seem to fit your world-view?
- Which do NOT describe your values?
- What can you start to generalize about your host country?

Personal Control Over The Environment: People can/should control nature, their own environment and destiny.
Contrast: Destiny. Life happens; destiny is pre-determined; people must accept what comes their way.

Change/Mobility: Change is positive, good and indicates progress, growth, and improvement.
Contrast: Change should be resisted unless there is an obvious good to be gained from abandoning tradition.

Individualism, Independence, Privacy: People are seen as separate individuals, not group members. People need time alone, independent thinking and achievement is valued, privacy protected (i.e. "on her own merit", "need for privacy").
Contrast: Dependence. Many cultures have no word for "privacy." It is proper to remain dependent upon the family and group, the group must be successful and no one person's achievement praised.

Materialism: Material goods are seen as just rewards of hard work and a sign of success.
Contrast: Spirituality. Spiritual growth is more important than amassing wealth. Material possessions can be a sign of poor spiritual health and be disruptive to society.

Equality/Egalitarianism: People have equal opportunities; people are important as individuals and not because of family they come from.
Contrast: Hierarchy & Rank. Society is better organized if there is rank, status, hierarchy. Class, caste, status is important.

Informality: Formality is un-American (i.e. "call me…Sally, Duane…"). To be formal is to show superiority and arrogance.
Contrast: Informality. Can be intrusive and can result in loss of respect for a superior. The Professor has all the answers.

Directness, Openness, Honesty: One can only trust people who "look you in the eye" and "tell it like it is." Interpersonal conflicts should be discussed directly. Truth is a reality, not a function of circumstance.
Contrast: Indirect Questioning. Direct questioning is rude and intrusive. Do not look a stranger in the eye. Do not disagree in explicit terms.

Rational, Scientific Thinking: The most productive thinking is linear, cause and effect, and rational in

nature. It is based on concrete evidence and facts.
Contrast: Intuitive Thinking. Intuitive, creative thinking is most highly valued a holistic approach includes mind, body, spirit, as well as seen and unseen elements.

WHAT IS CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT?

Reflect on major transitions you have already made with in your life and consider what you learned about yourself in the process. A common parallel to a study abroad experience would be past experiences with your family moving to a new city or neighborhood, or when you left home to go to college. You will probably realize that you have already developed some helpful strategies for dealing with the transition to a new environment. These strategies are your coping skills and may include some of the following:

- Being open to new experiences.
- Getting better at sizing up another person's character and intentions.
- Excitement about exploring a new area, a willingness to try new foods.
- Good sense of humor and an ability to not take yourself too seriously.
- Better sense of when you are tired and need to retreat.
- Knowledge of what activities help you re-charge.

What can make cultural adjustment difficult is although you have a sense of who you are as an individual, you will soon be in a situation where the people around you are operating according to different cultural guidelines. Many aspects of the new environment, from what people eat for breakfast to their understanding of what it means to be friends will be different than what you were used to at home. **Often there is so much difference you feel shocked by the amount and range of differences - hence the term "culture shock."**

POSITIVE BENEFITS

In addition to understanding the typical stages of culture shock before you leave home (see Figure 1) it is important to consider the **positive benefits of culture shock**. When usual ways of thinking and acting are confronted by different ways of thinking and acting you can find yourself in a state of disequilibrium, unbalance, and confusion, and may feel as though the rug has been pulled out from under you.

Although this can feel very confusing, if you maintain an **open-minded attitude** you can learn:

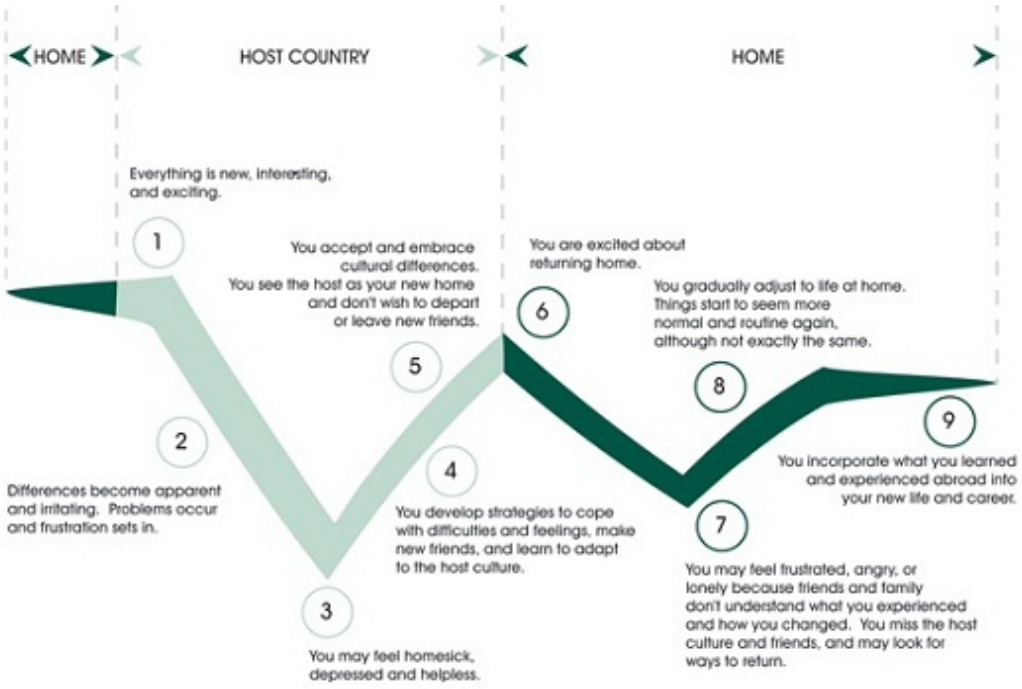
- Different ways of thinking and behaving.
- Compare them with what you are used to at home.
- Become more knowledgeable about the new culture and your home culture.
- Analyze and consider the pros and cons of different ways of doing things.
- Express your thoughts both orally and in writing which are skills you need to be a valuable employee down the road, as well as a valuable and well-functioning member of your community.

The stages of culture shock can be briefly summarized (see Figure 1):

- Sense of tremendous excitement and interest
- Experiencing difficulties functioning in the new culture
- Sense that the new culture (or sometimes the home culture) has a lot of problems

- Sense of greater knowledge about how the culture functions
- Stable emotional state and greater confidence about engaging in the new culture.

Figure 1: The Stages of Culture Shock Ways to Cope with Culture Shock



From W Curve Missouri State University Website

Remember, culture shock is a form of stress and is normal. You have been through stresses in your life before and managed well. Below is a list of ideas that may help you through the stresses in your new home. Think about how you cope with stress at Seattle University and how you can take these coping strategies with you.

- Take pictures from home
- Make sure you have your favorite music, snacks, shoes
- Remind your friends and family to write to you so you can keep up with news at home
- Exercise-walk, run, find a gym
- Get out and meet new people, go to new places
- Keep a journal

CULTURE KNOWLEDGE: 101

What Do You Know About Your Host Country?

There is only so much information that can be covered in a structured orientation program. In order to facilitate your own independent learning, these questions may help you prepare yourself to face the challenges and maximize the educational rewards of your experience. Answers to these questions can be found from a range of resources -- written materials, the internet, former participants and current international students on campus.

History

- Who are prominent people in your host country? (political, religious, artistic, etc.)
- Who are the country's heroes and heroines?
- When was the country founded, by whom?
- What dates are significant in the history of your host country?

Politics

- What is the political structure of the country? How long has the structure been in place? Who is the president/prime minister/king/etc.?
- Is military training compulsory? For whom?
- What is the history of the relationship between this country and the U.S.?
- Have many people emigrated from this country to the U.S.? When? Why?
- What is your political position as a foreigner in this country? As an American?

Religion

- What is the predominant religion of the country? Is it a state religion?
- Are you familiar with any of its sacred writings?
- What are the most important religious observances and ceremonies?
- How regularly do people participate in them?
- What other religions are practiced in the country?
- What is the attitude of members of the predominant religion towards other religions?

Values/Attitudes

- What is the attitude in this country towards alcohol?
- What things are considered taboo (or frowned upon)?

Language

- Are there other languages spoken besides the dominant language?
- What are the social/political implications of language usage?
- What type of language instruction will be available to you?

Family

- What are the most common forms of marriage practice?
- What is the attitude toward divorce? Extra-marital relations? Pre-marital relations?
- At what age is it common to marry?
- What is the typical family size?
- What games do children play? How are children disciplined?

Dress

- What is the usual dress for women? For men?
- What is appropriate dress for you, as a foreigner?

Social Etiquette

- What are the special privileges of age? Of gender?
- If you are invited to dinner, should you arrive early? On time? Late? How late?
- On what occasions would you present (or accept) gifts? What kinds of gifts are appropriate?
- Do some flowers have a particular significance?
- How do people greet one another? Take leave of one another? Are there variations?
- What are the social norms surrounding dating? Mixed gender friendships?
- Are there cultural differences in nonverbal behavior such as personal space, gestures to avoid, etc.?

Leisure

- What are the favorite recreational activities of adults? Students?
- What sports are popular?
- What kinds of television programs are shown? What social purposes do they serve?
- How are important holidays observed?

Transportation/Travel

- How will you travel to your host country? To your host university?
- What types of public transportation are available? Do people of all classes use it?
- Who has the right of way--vehicles? Animals? Pedestrians?

Health

- What health/beauty items should you take with you?
- What kinds of health services are available? Where are they located?
- Where can medicines be purchased?
- What precautions should you take to remain healthy? (food, water, sexual practices, etc.)

Living Arrangements

- What options are available to foreigners?
- What costs should you anticipate? Restrictions?
- Will arrangements be made for you? Where will you go upon arrival?

Academic Considerations

- Is education free in the host country? Compulsory? Are children segregated by race, class, gender?
- What are the common teaching/learning methods?
- What are the important universities? Who goes to university?
- How does university course work relate to our university system?
- What academic load should be taken to gain both academically and culturally?
- What is the university calendar? How/when do you register for on-site classes?

Daily Life

- Is the price asked for merchandise fixed? If not, how is bargaining conducted?
- What is the normal daily schedule for a student? A family? Meal schedule?
- Is there a daytime rest period?
- What is the customary time for visiting friends? Should such visits be scheduled?
- How does the banking system work? What is the best way for you to handle money? Receive it from home?

On Being Foreign

- How will your financial position/living conditions compare with those of the majority of people living in the country?
- Are there many U.S. expatriates in the country?
- How do you retain your own identity while adapting to the new culture?
- Should you register with the U.S. embassy? With the police?
- What are the visa requirements? What if you plan to travel to neighboring countries?

Some of these questions were adapted from the Survival Kit for Overseas Living, L. Robert Kohls, Chicago: Intercultural Press, 1979.

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR YOUR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

- Centers for Disease Control: http://www.cdc.gov
- Cornes, Alan. *Culture from the Inside Out Travel and Meet Yourself*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 2004.
- Study Abroad Guide https://toolkit.bootsnall.com/study-abroad-guide.html

- Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Online Cross-Cultural Workbook: https://files.peacecorps.gov/multimedia/pdf/library/T0087_culturematters.pdf
- Gay, Lesbian, & Bisexual Interests:
- http://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov/
- Mobility International: http://www.miusa.org
- Paige, R. Michael, Andrew D. Cohen, Barbara Kappler, Julie C. Chi and James P. Lassegard. Maximizing Study Abroad: A Student's Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 2002.
- Passport Services: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html
- US State Department Warnings: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html
- Welcome to Travel Health On-Line: http://www.tripprep.com
- What's Up With Culture University of the Pacific http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/index.htm

STUDY ABROAD
Urgent/Emergency Notification Procedures
STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Purpose

To ensure that in urgent or serious situations Seattle University study abroad & exchange participants receive prompt, appropriate and thorough care, intervention or referral from both program staff and Seattle University officers.

Situations

Any situation or condition which jeopardizes the Seattle University student(s)' physical or mental health, safety, well-being or program participation and/or requires the intervention of program staff. Such events or occurrences may include, but not be limited to: civil disturbance, natural disaster, severe or prolonged illness or injury requiring hospitalization, disciplinary action, emotional or behavioral disorders, illegal actions (i.e. drug use), absence from program site, academic probation, etc.

To assist program directors and staff in addressing or resolving an urgent or emergency situation, it is vital that a Seattle University official be promptly notified.

24 Hour Public Safety +1.206.296-5911

Notification Procedures

Public Safety will contact SU's crisis response team including:

Gina Lopardo, Director, Education Abroad
Office: 206-296-6460 Fax: 206-296-6988 glopardo@seattleu.edu

Alvin Sturdivant, Associate Vice President for Student Development
Office: 206-296-6066 Fax: 206-296- 6063 sturdial@seattleu.edu

Notification Information

Please provide the following in any notification:

- Student(s) name(s)
- Date and time of occurrence/condition
- Description of occurrence
- Action taken by program staff
- Action requested of SU officers (if appropriate)
- Your return contact information