



## **PROGRAMS ABROAD HANDBOOK**

**Congratulations** on your decision to study abroad! A successful international experience requires much planning and preparation and the Center for International Education (CIE) and Programs Abroad Office (PAO) are available to assist you in making the most of your study abroad experience. Feel free to stop in or email us with your questions and be sure to attend our pre-departure orientation where many of your questions will be answered by our staff and study abroad alumni.

This workbook is intended to provide general information to help you prepare for your time abroad. The organization sponsoring your program will also provide you with information and many offer an orientation upon arrival that is specific to their program and the host country.

## **BEFORE YOU GO**

### **Introduction**

#### **Academic Issues**

- Registration at Your Host Institution
- Studying Abroad Your Last Semester
- Transfer Credit/Transcripts
- Registration at UT

#### **Money Matters**

- Study Abroad Fees and Refund Policies
- Program Billing
- Using UT Financial Aid for Study Abroad
- Managing Your Money

#### **Preparing to Go**

- Travel Documents
- Packing List
- Choosing Health Insurance for Study Abroad
- Immunizations
- Bringing Medication Abroad
- Housing for Your Return

## **WHILE ABROAD**

### **Adapting to a New Culture**

- The first days
- Culture Shock
- Responsibilities of Participants
- Special Considerations for:
  - GLBT Students
  - Students of Color
  - Women
  - Students with apparent and non-apparent disabilities



**Strategies for Academic Success**

**Sending and Receiving Money**

**Health & Safety**

- Staying Safe
- Food & Water
- Locating a Doctor and/or Pharmacy

**Communicating with Family and Friends**

**Traveling in the Host Country and Beyond**

**RETURNING HOME**

**Re-Entry**

- Program Evaluation
- PAO and CIE Welcome Back Activities
- Buddy Program
- Working at CIE

**Internationalizing Your Education at UT**

**APPENDIX**

**UT Contact Information**

- PAO
- Emergency Numbers
- Financial Aid
- Housing
- Academic Advisors
- Bursar
- Registrar

**UT Sexual Harassment Policy**

**List of Health Insurance Companies**

**Checklist for Preparing to Study Abroad**

**Study Abroad Timeline**

- Semester/Year
- Mini-Term
- Summer



## EXPECTATIONS

You are on your way to another country. Why? Because you are adventurous and want new experiences. Expect things to be different, because they will be, and that is why study abroad is such an exciting time.

Below we address some common challenges students face. Not all students face all of them, and some students will not experience any, but better to know before you go.

## STUDENT SUPPORT ABROAD

Some study abroad students find that the level of student support on campuses outside the U.S. is noticeably different. Some campuses will have an office similar to The Center for International Education at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, which provides support for both incoming and outgoing students. Other campuses will have one staff or faculty member who works with incoming international students - in addition to their regular responsibilities—because they believe in the value of international exchange programs. Because of these many obligations their time is very limited so you might be expected to be more independent than you are here.

Campuses may not have a student center, counseling center, trained residence hall staff, a recreation center and often not a health center. Many of these services are available to you but you will have to find them on your own and to find them you will have to ask questions.

Often it is best to begin your search for answers by asking students from the host institution. They have learned the ropes like you have learned them at UT, and are willing to share their knowledge. If you talk to staff or faculty, do as much work as you can in advance of your meeting with them and be ready with direct questions. It is important to present yourself as mature and professional. Quite frankly some people abroad see U.S. students as 'coddled' and 'demanding' and will often react to your questions with exasperation. You have to be willing to persist to get answers. If all else fails contact our office but first give it your best effort.

**Attend Pre-Departure ORIENTATION.** Orientation is offered for all students planning to study abroad during the coming summer, semester or for the academic year. This orientation covers a wide variety of essential issues such as: living abroad, food, health, safety, communication, cultural adjustment, insurance, traveling, and packing. University of Tennessee study abroad veterans will be there to answer your questions and share their experiences abroad. Attendance at the detailed pre-departure orientation is fundamental to the success of your experience abroad and therefore is required.

**Obtain a PASSPORT NOW.** You must have a passport before you can get a visa, which you may also need. If you already have a passport, check now to see if its expiration date extends six months beyond the end of your time abroad. If not, you may need to renew your passport, depending on your country of destination. Information about obtaining a passport can be found at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) and in this Handbook. To determine if you need a VISA - permission to enter the country – consult the web page: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). The process for both could take several months, so begin now.

**Book an AIRLINE TICKET** if your program does not include a group flight. Check the PAO web page at [www.UTabroad.org](http://www.UTabroad.org) for links to on-line travel sites. Booking early can often mean discounted prices. Consider booking through an agency that offers you the opportunity to change your flight arrangements for a nominal fee. You may want to change



your return travel and do not want to be locked in to a flight because it costs too much to change. The International Student ID Card (ISIC) card includes the option of booking your flight with STA Travel. This organization provides reasonably priced tickets for students. STA is located in the UT University Center, next to the Post office.

## **BEFORE YOU GO**

### **REGISTRATION ABROAD**

You conquered UT so you can figure out your host institution too, particularly with the help of other students. Registration abroad is different and seldom relies on the computer system you are used to here. Prepare to run all over campus visiting each instructor for their signature, and/or stand in lines at a central registration location. Think of it as one big drop/add for every class. Again don't hesitate to ask for help.

### **EXCHANGE AND WHAT IT MEANS**

You may be exchanging places with a student from another university but this does not mean that what you pay for here is exactly what you can expect to receive abroad. Be comforted knowing that they won't be getting exactly what they're used to either. Most universities abroad do not have the student recreational facilities we have in the U.S. On the other hand, most students in university housing abroad have a private room and are rather surprised to come here and find they have to share a room with someone else.

A meal plan here may mean that you can eat as much as you wish, but this may not be true on your host campus where you go through the line once and someone serves you a portion. Fortunately some universities are located in the middle of very old and very historic cities. Because the campuses were built centuries ago the residence halls, which are much newer, are 45-minutes away from campus by bus or bike. Again this is part of the experience of living abroad that might require some adjustment.

Be sure to read through program materials for information about where the housing is located in relation to the campus and if you find that you will be on a bus each day think about ways to pass the time. You could attempt to engage other passengers in conversation— you might learn more about their city like the names of good restaurants or their favorite place for coffee. Use the time to listen to language tapes, books on tape, music, read, or just sit back and enjoy the view.

**NOTE:** Students on exchange. Though you have paid fees for the time you are abroad, the services those fees provide for are taken by the student with whom you have exchanged places. Therefore, you cannot access the UT Student Health Service, Student Counseling Service, TRECS, etc. without paying. You can pay on a per use basis for some services and facilities such as the Health Service, Counseling Service and TRECS. You should check directly with these services about their current fees.

**NOTE:** Students on direct programs. You will not pay the regular student fees to UT during the time you are abroad and therefore will not have direct access to UTK facilities or services after the semester prior to your departure for study abroad. You can pay on a per use basis for some services and facilities such as the Health Service, Counseling Service and TRECS. You should check directly with these services about their current fees.

### **WEATHER**

It's different from Knoxville. Look at one of the travel books in our office or search the



Internet to find out what the 'normal' weather pattern is for your host country during the months you will be there. Be sure to take rain gear, a sweater or sweatshirt, a pair of waterproof shoes, a hat, swimwear, and a smile, and you'll have a good time no matter what the weather.

#### TIPS FOR PREPARING

Before you go, spend time talking with students from your host country and/or UT students who have studied there. They are your best sources of information. Ask about registration, housing, classes, weather (expect it to be different from the weather when they were there, it always is), recreational facilities, food, what they found to be some of the things they had to adjust to and how they did that.

Also, if a student host program is offered be sure to register. Some universities have programs that provide you with a 'buddy' before you leave UT. This person may also meet you upon arrival and help you get adjusted to your new home. Often these are students who have been abroad and like meeting and greeting new international students. We hope that when you return, you will also be interested in helping new international students adjust to UT and that you will participate in the PAO Buddy Program.

It is important that you make an effort to read and educate yourself about the country you will call "home." If you know someone who has studied or lived in the country seek them out or check with the PAO for a list of possible contacts. Read international newspapers on-line, particularly papers from your host country.

The International House also has printed newspapers that you are welcome to read. Politics is often a topic of lively conversation in most countries and you will want to be prepared to participate so in addition to learning about your host country, it is equally important to know about your own country. Be sure you know the basics of U.S. government and U.S. foreign policy, particularly as it relates to your host country. Take a look at your old civics books, go on-line or visit the library. It will be time well spent.

#### SUMMARY

Expect the first few weeks to be challenging just like the first few weeks at UT were challenging. This time you are not only adjusting to a new campus but also to a new culture and in some cases a language you thought you knew but now you aren't so sure. Be patient with yourself, with your host university and the people. Ask questions and you'll find that just like here people enjoy talking about their home and are usually very willing to help you. Avoid being the ugly American. Show interest in learning about their country, not telling them how they could do \_\_\_\_\_ better (in other words like we do in the U.S.). For those of you studying in a different language be prepared to be frustrated. Hang in there and it will pass. Spend your time around native speakers and others who want to learn and use the language, and you will return with a solid grasp of your second (or is it third?) language.

Approach this like everything else in life; expect the unexpected, remember to be flexible, and enjoy the experience.

#### DOCUMENTS

##### PASSPORT

If you do not have a U.S. passport you must apply for one immediately as it may take six weeks or more to get. The passport is valid for ten years and is your official identification as a citizen of the United States. It will be checked upon leaving and entering every country



including the U.S. and provides official identification.

Students participating in study programs in Canada are required to obtain a passport. You may need a study permit to study in Canada. See the Visa section below for the Visa website. Passports are not required for entry into Mexico but most universities will not issue an official transcript unless you have a passport. Consequently, you should obtain a passport for study in Mexico.

NOTE: If you already have a passport make sure it is valid at least six months beyond the date of your return to the U.S. Passport applications can be obtained on-line at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). You can also find information about the services of the processing center nearest you. Passport photos are taken at STA Travel in the UC (865-974-9200), AAA, Kinko's, or Walgreen's. There is a charge for this service. Also some of the passport processing centers will take photos and you can find this information on the aforementioned website.

The completed application must be submitted in person to one of the agency offices and must be accompanied by additional documentation. Again this information can be found on-line at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). The current passport fee is \$97 for a new passport or \$67 for renewing a passport. This fee includes both the price of the passport and the processing fee. Before going to the processing center nearest you—call them. Some locations do not accept personal checks and may require exact change. Also some locations may require you to pay for the passport fee and processing fee separately because the processing centers keep the processing fee.

Passports usually take about six weeks to process. Upon receipt of the passport make three photocopies of the page with your picture and passport number on it. Leave one at home with your designated representative, give one to the Programs Abroad Office and carry the other copy with you separate from your passport. If you lose your passport, having a copy will make it easier to get a replacement.

NOTE: If you lose your passport while abroad up to \$500 in replacement costs will be covered by your International Student Identity Card (ISIC).

#### VISA (not the credit card)

You must have a passport to get a visa. A visa is official permission to visit a country and is granted by that country. Most countries require a student or long-term stay visa; some countries do not. To learn about the requirements and the process for obtaining a visa for your host country and any countries you might visit while abroad go to [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). You generally apply to the consulate which serves the state of your permanent residence. Required documentation might include a statement from the host institution that you have been accepted to study at the university, a statement from your program that fees have been paid, a bank statement reflecting sufficient financial resources to cover your stay, and your financial aid award letter to show the funds you are to receive and/or a statement that you have accommodations in the host country. Of course, other documentation might be required so carefully read the instructions. If you have questions immediately speak with a Programs Abroad Advisor or your program provider.

NOTE: You must have a passport to get a visa. Obtaining a visa could take as long as three months, so begin early. Prior to sending your visa application and passport to the embassy/consulate, make a copy of the photo page of your passport and all copies of all



documentation you send.

#### ACADEMIC ISSUES

##### EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY ABROAD

Universities outside of the U.S. almost universally operate with the European education philosophy which is very different from that of the U.S. In general students are expected to be much more independent and more actively involved in the education process. The bulk of the learning process takes place outside the classroom through reading, research and writing. The class lecture is designed to give you the framework necessary to explore the subject on your own. While you are expected to do extensive work outside the classroom there are few if any of the mechanisms used in the U.S. to ensure that you are doing the work (i.e. required class attendance, quizzes, tests, required homework and/or papers). The assumption is that you are there by free choice and that you will do what is necessary to learn the material. Your semester/year grade may be based entirely on a comprehensive final exam with oral and written components or on a final paper.

This system can lead an American student to a false sense of security. Students have returned to the U.S. talking about the "easy" classes only to find that they received grades at or below a "C-". Remember that for transfer courses to be accepted and count toward your graduation requirements you must receive a "C-" or better. Be prepared. This system requires self-discipline and no one except you will monitor your progress.

##### REGISTRATION AT YOUR HOST INSTITUTION

Prior to leaving UT you should complete the Transfer Credit Planning Form (pink) found in your Programs Abroad forms packet. UT students participating in study abroad are required to take a full course load which is the equivalent of 12-credits at UT during the semester and 6-credits at UT during the summer. Actual registration for courses abroad may take place before or after arrival at the study abroad location, depending on the program.

Tip: Take your academic adviser's e-mail address and phone number with you. You will need this information if you make changes to your planned list of classes. If you plan to use a course abroad to fulfill a general education requirement, contact the advising center for your college. Emails for course approvals should include the course description, number of credit hours it is worth at the host institution, and the UT requirement you would like the course to fulfill. Keep copies of all email communications and forward a copy to our office at [studyabroad@utk.edu](mailto:studyabroad@utk.edu). (It's always good to have a printed copy as back up.)

##### STUDYING ABROAD YOUR LAST SEMESTER

UT requires that your last 30-credits must be earned in residence at UT. Prior to going abroad you can petition this requirement through your academic advisor. Petitions to substitute study abroad credits for residence credits are usually accepted so don't let the 30 credit rule stop you. If you have questions please contact the PAO; we are happy to assist you.

To graduate at the end of your semester abroad your host institution transcript must be received within two weeks of the UT graduation date and this seldom happens. Your grades will be posted to your UT transcript as soon as they are received but your official graduation date will be the following semester. If this presents a problem please see the PAO staff.

##### TRANSFER CREDIT/TRANSCRIPTS



## 2006 ISEP Conference Review & Proceedings

You must request that after the completion of your program the transcript for your study abroad be sent to the PAO, 1620 Melrose Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37996-3531

### Quarter Credits to Semester

The standard formula used for converting quarter credits to semester credits is to divide the quarter credits by 1.5. Ex: 5 quarter credits = 3.33 semester credits.

### UT Academic History

UT accepts transfer credits from accredited universities abroad as Satisfactory Credit (no grade recorded) providing courses are not duplicative or remedial and your grade is a "C-" or better.

UT accepts transfer credits from accredited universities in the U.S., recording the grades on your academic history, providing courses are not duplicative or remedial and your grade is a "C-" or better. Transfer grades from study abroad are not calculated in your UT GPA. (Note: Carefully read the next section about the TELS calculation which is different from the UT GPA.) You are strongly encouraged to return from abroad with course materials which document the content covered (i.e. course syllabi, list of reading materials, papers, exams, etc.); this will facilitate the awarding of appropriate transfer credit.

### TELS CALCULATION

TELS (Lottery Scholarship): When determining your continued eligibility for the scholarship all of your credits and grades from abroad will be included in the TELS calculation. If you have questions, speak with your financial aid counselor. If you do not know the name of your counselor, you can find it at <http://web.utk.edu/~finaid/> under 'Who Do I Contact?' Counselors are assigned based on the first letter of your last name.

### TRANSCRIPT PROCESS (Upon your return)

Upon receipt of your transcript the PAO will contact you to pick up a copy of your transcript and an instruction sheet from the PAO. We will make a copy of the transcript for your file in our office and send the original to the transfer credit evaluator. Provided you received a grade of 'C-' or better the credits are entered in the system as agreed to on your Transfer Credit Planning Form. If you took courses, which you did not have approved in advance and you wish to have the credits fulfill specific requirements, meet with your advisor who will assist you with the petition process. Be sure to take all course materials with you.

What are the academic requirements to stay in good standing with financial aid? (TELS see next question)

Students must be enrolled in 24 credit hours over the course of an academic year to remain in good standing with financial aid. How will study abroad affect my TELS money? When determining your continued eligibility for the TELS (Tennessee Educational Lottery Scholarship) your credits and grades from abroad WILL be included in the calculation. If you have questions speak with your financial aid counselor. If you do not know the name of your counselor, you can find it at [www.web.utk.edu/~finaid/](http://www.web.utk.edu/~finaid/) under 'Who Do I Contact?' Counselors are assigned based the first letter in your last name.

### REGISTRATION AT UT

UT Registration for Exchange Program Course Academic year and semester students: You will be enrolled at UT in the programs abroad course for the term (s) spent abroad. Enrollment in this course maintains your UT student status. You do not pay UT tuition or fees while abroad unless you are participating in a UT or ISEP reciprocal exchange program. Students participating in a UT or ISEP direct program will be billed appropriate program



costs by UT, but will not pay UT tuition or fees.

Faculty Led Summer or Break Programs: You will enroll in the course taught by the faculty member not in the programs abroad course and you do pay UT tuition.

What should I do if I decide to withdraw from my study abroad program? If you withdraw from your study abroad program you must inform the Programs Abroad Office immediately. The PAO will contact other offices on the UT campus.

#### Planning Your Registration for the Semester after Studying Abroad

You can register yourself for the coming semester through Circle Park On-Line at [www.cpo.utk.edu](http://www.cpo.utk.edu). The PAO will send information about the registration process to you as soon as the course schedule for the coming term is available on-line. This will be sent to the email address we have for you which is another reason to be sure we have an accurate email address.

If you cannot register yourself, ask a friend or family member to do this for you. You will register at your regularly assigned time (you don't get to register early because you are abroad) so you will need to calculate the time difference between your host country and Knoxville.

#### THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

(For participants in ALL study abroad programs whether sponsored by UT or another organization)

#### ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROGRAMS ABROAD

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville has charged the Programs Abroad Office (PAO) with the responsibility of coordinating the administrative process for students participating in any type of international program. Hence it is our responsibility to have information available about suitable opportunities, advice and help you in the pre- and post-application processes, acquaint you with UT procedures, provide you with an orientation session and materials, and troubleshoot on your behalf as necessary while you are abroad. Should any problem arise with your program or should complications arise here at UT please contact us, or have your designated representative (the person you have left in charge of your affairs while you are abroad) contact us.

Please remember that while the PAO is here to assist you with administrative details, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to make sure that the required forms and procedures are complete. The more thorough you are and the more active a role you play in these matters the more smoothly things will go.

NOTE: Here and abroad we communicate with you via your UT email address so be sure to check this account often or forward your UT account to the account you normally use. (See the OIT web page for instructions on how to forward your email to another account.)

NOTE: We recommend that you make copies of all paperwork submitted to this office and to your program sponsor. Leave the copies with the person you have chosen to act as your representative and/or take copies with you.

Deadlines for UT paperwork:

November 1st for spring study abroad programs.

May 1st for fall, academic year and non-UT faculty led summer study abroad programs



The due date for faculty led program materials vary by program and can be found on the cover letter of your forms packet.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE FEE

The administrative fee charged to UT students while on study abroad directly provides for continuous enrollment at UT while you are on programs abroad and supports the administrative functions of programs abroad within the CIE. The fee is \$175 for programs 8 weeks or over in length/\$90 for programs less than 8 weeks in length. Students can pay this fee when you submit your paperwork (check, cash or money order only), or you will be billed through VolXpress. Students on most UT faculty led programs do not pay this fee to the office. It is included in your program fee. In addition to the benefit of continuous enrollment the money collected from the fee directly supports the PAO and its many functions. These funds pay for programs abroad personnel, development of new programs abroad, computers, office supplies, programs abroad publications, the purchase of resource materials such as travel guides, FAX and phone communications.

#### UT RESIDENCE HALL CONTRACT

If you wish to secure on-campus housing at UT for the semester after study abroad, you must consult the Housing Office directly, 405 Student Services Building, at (865) 974-2571 or via email at [housing@utk.edu](mailto:housing@utk.edu). It is your responsibility to make such arrangements prior to your departure.

#### FINANCIAL AID

If you normally qualify for financial aid at UT you may apply most of this to the cost of an approved study abroad program. All federal financial aid can be utilized on approved programs but check with the Programs Abroad staff about other types of aid. Prior to going abroad you must complete the Study Abroad Financial Aid forms packet.

#### FEE POLICIES

##### UT EXCHANGE AND DIRECT PROGRAMS APPLICATION FEE

Application Fee for UT Programs:  
The UT Application Fee is \$25.

Refund Policy: This fee is non-refundable unless UT cannot place the student or the program is cancelled.

##### STUDY ABROAD ADMINISTRATIVE FEE:

You will include a \$175 (or \$90) check with your Decision Form accepting placement on your program Refund Policy: If the student withdraws by Nov. 15th for spring or May 1st for fall or academic year programs they receive a full refund of the Study Abroad Administrative Fee. If you withdraw after the deadline and before the program has begun, you will receive a \$125 refund.

Semester in Wales Deposit: students pay a non-refundable deposit of \$500.00 by May 1st, which counts towards their program fee

Refund Policy: A full refund is given if the student withdraws before May 1st. Students who withdraw after May 1st will receive a \$125.00 refund.



#### PROGRAM FEE REFUND POLICY

##### UT Exchange/Direct

If the student withdraws by Nov 15th for spring or May 1st for fall or academic year programs they receive a full refund. If the student withdraws from the program or if the placement is terminated after the above dates there is no refund of any fees that have been expended or committed on behalf of the student.

##### UT Faculty-led/short term

Students do not receive a refund of the \$300 deposit. Students pay a \$90 Study Abroad Administrative Fee which is refundable before May 1st if a student withdraws from a summer or mini-term program. Students will receive a refund of money not expended or committed on their behalf at the date of withdrawal.

#### ISEP PROGRAMS

##### APPLICATION FEE

Exchange: \$340 (\$315 to ISEP, \$25 to UT) for students who apply for exchange programs or both the exchange and direct programs.

Refund Policy: This is non-refundable unless ISEP is unable to place the student, in which case \$240 is refunded. Direct: \$85 (\$60 to ISEP, \$25 to UT) for direct only applications.

Refund Policy: This is non-refundable.

#### DEPOSITS

ISEP direct participants pay a \$500 non-refundable program deposit that is due within three weeks of their placement confirmation notice (PPAF) which they receive from the ISEP Coordinator. The \$500 deposit will be applied to the full program fee.

NOTE: ISEP requires advance payment for insurance which is approximately \$45 per month abroad. Please see the ISEP web page at [www.isep.org](http://www.isep.org) for specific information for your host country.

#### ISEP PROGRAM FEE REFUND POLICY

The ISEP cancellation/withdrawal policy is explained in the Participant Placement Acceptance Form (PPAF).

##### Third Party Programs (not UT or ISEP)

Students pay a \$175 Study Abroad Administrative Fee for semester or academic year programs. This can be paid by check directly to the Programs Abroad Office (made payable to UT) or can be billed on the VolXpress statement. Students going for the summer on a third party program pay a \$90

##### Study Abroad Administrative Fee.

Refund Policy: If you withdraw by Nov. 15th for spring or May 1st for fall or academic year programs, you will receive a full refund of the Study Abroad Administrative Fee. If you withdraw after November 15<sup>th</sup> or May 1<sup>st</sup> (and before the beginning of the program) you will receive a \$125 refund. The \$90 summer program Administrative fee is non refundable.

#### INSURANCE

Some programs require that you register for a health insurance policy that they make available and they include the insurance cost in the program fee. If your program does not



include insurance we highly recommend that you carefully check your current health insurance policy for information on benefits when you are abroad including medical evacuation and repatriation. Read the policy and/or call the provider. Some insurance companies do not provide coverage when you are away for an extended period of time. Other companies have providers abroad (usually in larger cities) and you may be required to use these providers to qualify for coverage. Check with your insurance company for details.

Before you travel, be sure you know your insurance company's procedures for securing health care and making a claim. The process varies by company and it is important to know the procedure before you need to use it. Write down the instructions along with your insurance agent's name and phone number. Take them with you and leave a copy at home with someone you can call should you need the information.

Additional insurance is available with the International Student Identity Card (ISIC). Information can be found at [www.myisic.com](http://www.myisic.com).

The card includes:

- Medical evacuation and repatriation insurance
- Sickness and accident insurance
- 24-hour global emergency assistance
- A variety of benefits and discounts wherever you go
- Discounted student airfares

You can purchase the card and get more information about benefits in the PAO or you can visit STA Travel at their office in the basement of the University Center on the UT campus. The PAO also has information on other student insurance policies and this can be found at our web site [www.UTabroad.org](http://www.UTabroad.org).

#### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities have successful study abroad experiences if they choose the study abroad site thoughtfully. Not all foreign institutions can accommodate students with disabilities. However, the PAO will assist you in program selection and communication concerning your needs. If you currently require accommodation, and/or will need accommodation while abroad, please contact an advisor in the PAO and also visit the Office of Disability Services as you plan your study abroad experience. Although the University may not be legally required to provide accommodations for study abroad programs, if accommodations are feasible, the University is willing to consider them.

#### HEALTH ISSUES

Participants are responsible for considering their physical and mental health, and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program. Traveling and studying abroad can be stressful. To make the most of the experience you want to be healthy. Make available to the sponsor accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal information that is necessary in planning for a safe and fulfilling study abroad experience.

#### PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

It is best to have a complete physical examination by your physician prior to departure. Physical exams are available for students through the Student Health Service. At that time you may want to alleviate any discomfort. Ask your physician for a copy of your health exam report. In some countries you might have to provide this information upon entry into the country. Some countries now require proof of a recent AIDS test.



See below for sources of information on individual country health requirements.

#### INFORMATION FROM THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC)

Before you go be sure to visit [www.cdc.gov/](http://www.cdc.gov/) for health information for the country where you will live and countries you will visit. In this site you will find:

- Vaccination Requirements
- Food and Water Precautions
- The Blue Sheet - lists countries infected with cholera, yellow fever, plague, etc.
- Geographic Health Recommendations
- Disease Outbreaks

#### IMMUNIZATIONS

Some countries require immunizations for entry. Please consult with the staff of the Travel Immunization Office in the Student Health Service on UT's campus for information on any required immunizations for your host country and any other country you plan to visit. Talk with your family physician to inquire if it is necessary to update your immunizations, such as for tetanus. You may wish to visit the Center for Disease Control's website for information on immunizations required or recommended for each country.

#### IF YOU BECOME ILL AFTER YOUR RETURN FROM ABROAD

If you become ill within 12 months after you return from abroad, be sure to let your physician know that you have been traveling and where you have traveled. This information could be important to diagnosis and treatment.

#### SAFE SEX AND HIV/AIDS

Excerpt from the brochure *Travel Safe: Aids and International Travel* produced by CIEE. The risk of getting HIV depends on you. Here are some general precautions you can follow regardless of where you are in the world:

- Avoid exchange of semen, blood, or vaginal fluids with anyone. Either abstain from sexual activity or practice safe sex.
- Use a condom. Both men and women should carry their own condoms. You may have trouble finding reliable brands of condoms abroad; some countries may not even sell condoms.
- Use water-based lubricants/jellies containing a spermicidal in addition to a condom during vaginal and anal intercourse.
- Do not use illicit drugs. Do not use needles and syringes that may have been used previously.

Remember: one acquires HIV rather than "catches" it. With proper precautions you can virtually safeguard yourself from the virus. Additional information is available on the net: [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel).

#### TRAVEL

##### FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

Most programs require you to make your own flight arrangements. The Programs Abroad Office has information about travel agencies that work specifically with student travelers including STA, with an office in the University Center or on the Internet at [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com). Quotes from several agencies (locally or via the internet) will allow you to comparison shop for the best price.



E-tickets or Airline Reporting Commission (ARC) endorsed tickets are the best way to go because the ticket is completely paid for prior to departure. Some student travel agencies sell their own paper tickets for air travel. These are sometimes called 'voucher-like tickets' allowing the agency to issue their own tickets and reimburse the airlines for those tickets only after the customer's travel is completed (from [www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com)). It is sometimes difficult to change these tickets. E-tickets, which reside in the airline's reservation system and ARC tickets don't have these problems. Be sure to ask for information regarding ticket restrictions and the price for changing the flight time and/or date should this be necessary.

To get the best price on a ticket begin working this process as soon as possible. Two- to three-months in advance is NOT too early.

NOTE: When changing flights realize that you will be booked based on availability so be flexible

Make a copy of your ticket, leave a copy with your family or friends and carry a copy with you separate from the ticket.

#### TRAVELING FOR THOSE WHO ARE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

With adequate preparations and precautions, much of the world is accessible to the disabled traveler. Mobility International publishes a quarterly newsletter "Over the Rainbow" (approximately \$10/year) and a booklet "A World of Options" (approximately \$16) that provide useful information about both travel and study. Order them from Mobility International, P.O. Box 10767, Eugene, OR 97440, Phone: 503-343-1284 (voice and TDD), [www.miusa.org](http://www.miusa.org), FAX: 503-343-6812, E-mail: [miusa@igc.apc.org](mailto:miusa@igc.apc.org).

#### U.S. CUSTOMS INFORMATION

Before you go be aware of the customs regulations for reentering the U.S. To learn more about these regulations visit [www.customs.ustreas.gov](http://www.customs.ustreas.gov). Read 'Know Before You Go', take the quiz and follow the recommendations.

#### REGISTERING VALUABLES

You can register certain items with Customs before you depart -including watches, cameras, laptop computers, firearms, and recorders - as long as they have serial numbers or other unique, permanent markings. Take the items to the nearest Customs Office and request a Certificate of Registration (Customs Form 4457). It shows Customs that you had the items before leaving the U.S. and all items listed on it will be allowed duty-free entry.

Customs inspectors must see the item you are registering in order to certify the certificate of registration. You can register items with Customs at the international airport from which you're departing. Keep the certificate for future trips. On a side note, remember that many items are banned from carry-on luggage. If you don't want to part with that beloved corkscrew be sure not to carry it on the plane. They will confiscate these and many other seemingly harmless items.

Check with your airline for details.

#### LUGGAGE

Most airlines operating international flights will permit you to check through two pieces of luggage. Check your ticket envelope, with your travel agent, or the web for specific luggage dimensions and weight. This may not seem like much space to pack all that you will need to



survive for the time you will be away but when you are maneuvering through airports and on public transportation you will find that it is more than enough to handle.

#### PACKING

There are many packing list sites on the Internet and most travel books have packing lists but the best idea is to talk with someone who has visited or lived in the country. They can tell you what they packed and didn't need and what they wished they had taken and why. The Programs Abroad Office has lists of students who have been abroad and would be happy to help you, just ask.

TIP: Pack one week before you leave then carry your packed luggage around the block. If you have trouble carrying the load, you have packed too much. Lighten your load and lessen your hassles. Many students recommend backpacks for ease of carrying.

#### Clothing

This is where you definitely want to talk with someone who is from your host country or visited there during the time you will be there. The best items of clothing to take are lightweight, washable and can be layered. Limit your clothing and be creative! Think in terms of being able to combine clothing in such a way as to dress up or down as the occasion warrants.

You will probably buy clothing while abroad so consider this when packing.

#### Medicine

Pack medicine in your carry-on luggage. If your checked luggage takes a side trip you will have your medication with you.

- Prescription medicine (Keep it in the original bottle and carry a copy of the prescription and/or a letter from your doctor.) If you are taking products containing narcotics such as codeine, you must have a letter from your physician.
- eyeglasses and eyeglass prescription (and an extra pair of glasses-maybe an old pair that you can use temporarily)
- contact lenses and prescription (an extra pair of contacts)
- lens cleaning solution
- contraceptives/condoms
- aspirin
- Any other over-the-counter medications you use (Be sure to keep them in their original containers and pack them in your carry-on luggage.)

#### Toiletries

Take small amounts of personal care items unless you have a favorite you can't live without. Personal care items ARE sold in other countries. In some cases the brands will be different and may cost more but the alternative is carrying these items in great quantity.

- toothbrush and toothpaste
- soap and shampoo
- sunscreen, moisturizer, cosmetics
- deodorant
- first-aid kit
- tissue (theirs may be a little rougher than you are used to)
- tampons
- razor blades
- sunglasses
- comb and brush



- washcloth
- hand sanitizer

#### Documents

Money belt or neck wallet filled with the following (DO NOT PACK DOCUMENTS IN YOUR LUGGAGE):

- passport
- tickets and rail passes
- student ID card
- cash (if possible, some local currency – you can purchase this at the airport), ATM card, traveler's checks, credit card

#### Miscellaneous

- camera and film
- Swiss® army knife (in your checked luggage)
- flashlight
- books, guides, and maps
- sewing kit
- Stuff bags/plastic storage bags for wet clothes and liquid filled containers like shampoo bottles (Ziploc® type bags work well because they are light and, don't take up any room in your luggage.)
- umbrella
- luggage tags (on your luggage both inside and out)
- battery-operated alarm clock
- any batteries you may need (they are more expensive abroad, may be different than what you need, and may not last as long)
- hand sanitizer
- Pictures of your family and other people significant to you. (Your new friends will want to see the people you are talking about.)
- cable lock if you are planning to stay in hostels (you can secure your backpack or luggage to your bed frame)
- bi-lingual dictionary (if going to a non-English speaking country)

NOTE: Adapter and voltage converters are best purchased abroad.

#### TIPS FOR SECURING VALUABLES DURING TRAVEL

- Don't carry everything in one place. Example, do not carry your traveler's checks with your list of traveler's check numbers, your ticket with the photocopy of your ticket, passport with the photocopy of the passport. Some veteran travelers use two travel pouches in two different hiding places.
- Always put medications and anything else you MUST HAVE in your carry-on luggage. This might also include toothbrush and toothpaste, a clean shirt/blouse and several pair of underwear. If your luggage goes somewhere without you, you will have at least a few essentials with you to make you comfortable while you wait for it to return.
- Never carry large amounts of cash. Carry a small amounts of cash in your pocket to buy snacks, a newspaper, etc. and the remainder of your cash in your money belt or neck wallet. The less often you have to go into your money belt or neck wallet the less you will be displaying your documents, money, traveler's checks, credit card, etc. Some travelers recommend going into the restroom or some other private place when accessing your money belt or neck wallet. (You don't have to tell anyone, just excuse yourself.)



## 2006 ISEP Conference Review & Proceedings

- Always check your luggage tags to ensure you have the correct luggage. Put a copy of your itinerary and the address of your destination in each piece of luggage. Be sure your luggage is tagged with your name and address.
- Mark your luggage so it is easily distinguished as it goes through the conveyor belt—a piece of colored tape on the side, a ribbon on the handle, a sticker from another trip.
- Check the tags as you pick up your luggage and always count your bags as you move through the various transfer points. Many people have similar if not identical luggage and it is very easy to pick up the wrong piece; always check the tags each time you move.

### CULTURAL CONCERNS FOR GLBT STUDENTS

While some countries are known for their wide acceptance of homosexuality the intolerance of gays, lesbians, bisexual and trans-gender students may be extreme in other locations. Please take time to understand the cultural views held towards sexual differences before you leave the U.S. and consider how you will address this challenge. Don't be afraid to discuss your concerns with a programs abroad advisor or with your program sponsor. They can assist you in learning as much as you can about the resources available in your host country.

A bibliography of resources for GLBT travelers can be found at; [www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/biblio.html](http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/biblio.html). In addition, Planet Out has a useful website with a section that focuses on international travel at [www.planetout.com](http://www.planetout.com). This site includes information on gay friendly accommodations, restaurants, bars, events and organizations around the world.

### JET LAG

As you know, each of us has peak periods during the day and times when we have less energy. This cycle is called the circadian rhythm and the disruption of this rhythm results in jet lag. Some of the changes experienced from jet lag are that you feel energetic at 4 p.m. rather than at 8 a.m., you need to use the bathroom more in the middle of the night and you are hungry at times other than the usual breakfast, lunch and dinner hours. Of course, not everyone has the same experience with jet lag and length of recovery differs from one to several days.

There are many different suggestions for dealing with jet lag but here are a few things to remember.

- Be patient with yourself. After traveling for a long period of time it is not uncommon to feel exhausted, easily confused, frustrated, etc. It is said that time change adjustment takes one day for every hour, so a five hour time difference means it could be five days before you are back to your old self.
- Prior to leaving, try to have an idea where you will spend the first night and how to get there. Write down this information. Knowing that you have a place to rest and how to get there will lessen the stress. There are many different recommendations for eating before and during your flight. Do a little research and decide which is best for you. None is a magic pill; you will still have some adjusting to do.

There are a few things all plans agree on:

- Avoid alcohol, sleeping pills and tranquilizers before and during the flight as they only increase fatigue without making you sleep better. Ignore the parade of free drinks that are offered on most international flights. You are better off with water



- and you won't start your first day in a new country feeling like a pair of old sneakers.
- Avoid smoking; the combination of carbon monoxide in your blood and altitude also increase feelings of fatigue.
- Again, drink lots of water. It can make a huge difference in how you feel even though you might have to get up several times during the flight. Which is also good as it keeps you from getting leg cramps. NOTE: Speaking of leg cramps get up and move around during the flight and practice the exercises provided in most of the in-flight magazines. Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) can and has happen to people 20 years old and you don't want it to happen to you.

#### UPON ARRIVAL

- Begin to operate on local time as soon as you arrive. If you arrive in the morning, go to your accommodation, and then do a little exploring. You might want to take a nap mid-afternoon. Make sure you set the alarm to wake up after an hour or so, or you will probably sleep quite a while before waking up at midnight ready to begin a new day.
- Exercise helps the body adjust and relieves some of the stress of travel and adaptation to a new place. A good way to exercise is to get out and walk around the area where you will be staying. You will become familiar with the area and provide your body with a non-stressful workout. If your new host country has sun, expose yourself to it in the morning to reset your body clock. Be careful in tropical climates as sunburn can happen in just a few minutes.

#### WHILE ABROAD

##### CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

For some people there are several phases to the study abroad experience consisting of highs and lows. You may experience some of these, all or none. If you are aware of these they will be easier to identify and hopefully you will find it easier to cope.

1) Initial Euphoria (Honeymoon phase): After the stress of deciding to go on study abroad, deciding where to go, and completing what feels like a ton of paperwork, you prepare to leave. There is the anticipation of spending time in a new country mixed with the sadness of leaving family and friends.

You find yourself stepping off the plane and into a new place. Everything seems different, new, and exciting. The language is different, the food is interesting, the buildings are charming, and everything is wonderful, the "perfect" place. This is the first phase of many new experiences, excitement and adoration.

This is a wonderful phase that makes you feel great and is the perfect way to start your time abroad. Also known as the 'rainbow and roses' stage, many people who travel abroad for short trips never leave this stage.

2) Culture Shock: No, not the kind of shock someone experiences when they stick their finger in an electrical socket, but the kind that sneaks up on you making you feel disconnected, confused, and/or anxious. Some people experience this fully, others not at all, most fall somewhere in between. If it occurs it is usually at about three to six weeks into your time abroad when the things you may have found exciting and wonderful begin to appear as more of a problem. The language is a challenge and sometimes translation can be tiring, you long for U.S. food (this is much easier to find now than it was several years ago)



and you decide that the charming building doesn't have all the conveniences you are accustomed to at home.

Recognize this phase for what it is a bump in the road. Get out with others who are upbeat. Go to events you enjoy, exercise, write in your journal, listen to music, and just relax. If you are thinking of going home, don't give up. This phase passes quickly for almost everyone and once on to the next phase you will be happy you stayed.

3) Cultural adjustment, adaptation or bi-cultural: The final stage comes when the differences are narrowed down to a few of the most troubling. You have adjusted to these differences, and may not want to go home. You have made friends and may feel that your language skills are really just beginning to develop as you had hoped. You are not sure you want to trade the excitement of living abroad for the routine of home. You know you have changed, but wonder if your friends at home have changed. On the other hand you look forward to seeing family and friends and catching up on events. This is the phase that causes Reverse Culture Shock; something most students report is more difficult than their adjustment to the host country.

#### SAFETY

Travel to another country is not inherently dangerous; the fact of the matter is that most US citizens are safer traveling overseas than in the US. However no matter where you go you inevitably stand out as a stranger, a "tourist", and therefore as a target to the local criminal. You cannot rely on your seemingly instinctual knowledge of danger, of what is permissible, of what is and isn't 'asking for trouble' as you do at home. The best way to avoid problems is to do your utmost to blend in.

Americans are known for being more gregarious than people in many other cultures. When in another country it is best to be a little more reserved until you have the chance to observe behavior. Do people look one another in the eye when passing on the street, do they smile at someone they don't know, and are they quieter, more formal around strangers? Observe clothing, is it simple, monotone, vibrant, trendy, jewelry or no jewelry. No doubt once you begin to observe you will notice other cultural clues that you can follow. The advantage of this behavior is that it makes you really look at the differences and try to assimilate into the culture thus providing the opportunity for you to really experience more of the culture than you would if you were simply being an American abroad.

We highly recommend checking the U.S. State Department [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) website (See Appendix I for an outline of the information on their web page.) for information about any country you will visit. Bookmark this site and check it often as situations change. Feel free to call the PAO to discuss anything that might be of concern to you regarding your abroad experience.

#### Safety Tips

- We recommend that you register online with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). Should you need their assistance they will be familiar with your name.
- Read the local newspapers and keep up on what is going on in the area around you.
- If you are living with a host family find out how host families are screened and what the procedures are for dealing with problems. Get several phone numbers to call in the event there is a problem that occurs during non-office hours. If at any time you feel physically threatened contact the international office of the host campus or the



program representative and make arrangements to leave immediately. If you cannot get in touch with someone immediately, you may want to stay with a friend or stay in a hotel for the evening until you can visit the office in the morning. E-mail or call our office and let us know what is going on. We will do all we can to help ensure your safety.

- Find out which staff member on site is responsible for safety, health and security and find out what procedures are in place to handle emergencies. Example, where will the group meet if there is a crisis.
- Ask about health and safety standards applied to providers of transportation, tours, cultural programs and housing.
- Find out where the fire exits are in the building. Many countries in the world do not have the same fire codes as the U.S.

#### When traveling

- Keep your host institution program administrator informed about your travel plans.
- Carry your own luggage; don't let a stranger carry it or it may get carried away
- Never put your luggage in the trunk of a car, you may need to get out of the car quickly.
- Important documents such as passport, travel documents, traveler's checks, money, credit cards should be kept in a money belt or neck wallet under your clothing to keep them out of the reach of a pickpocket. If your money belt is difficult for you to access, it will also be difficult for a thief to take. Keep small amounts of money in a more accessible place so you don't have to go into your money belt or neck wallet for cash for a soda. You do not want to display your cash or valuable papers any more than necessary.
- Know the people you are traveling with and always leave your itinerary and your approximate time of return with a friend or your host family.
- In many countries they drive on the left side of the road. Be sure to LOOK BOTH WAYS before you step off the curb.

#### Additional Tips

- Do not walk alone at night; always travel in pairs or larger groups. In large cities this may also be true during the day. This does not guarantee your safety but it can help.
- Wear clothing appropriate to the location. Example: In some cultures shorts are very inappropriate as are bare arms. Know the culture of the country and conform to it.
- Do not give money to beggars. They may not be satisfied with the amount you give them and may demand more by using force.
- Do not carry large amounts of visible cash and do not place anything valuable in your fanny pack or backpack (see next item). Wear your fanny pack in front of you where you can see it and hook the straps through your belt loops.
- We know you have heard it before, but DO NOT hitchhike. You know the consequences and they can be deadly.
- One of the most common crimes is robbery, which sometimes becomes assault. Think about things you might do to avoid being a victim and what you might do if you are robbed.
- If you hang your coat on the back of your chair or on a coat rack, remove all of your belongings first.
- If you have a bag or purse with you keep it on your lap or between your feet.
- Do not advertise expensive belongings--it is recommended that you not wear extravagant jewelry, watches, carry expensive camera or video equipment, etc.



- Never leave your food or beverage unattended.

If a situation feels uncomfortable stay calm and think of ways you can get out and away from the area. This might be by hailing a taxi or getting into a more public area. Remember your life is worth far more than anything you have. If need be throw your stuff away from you and run in the opposite direction, scream "FIRE", run around in circles, act out a seizure, act out of control, throw-up, cause a scene, do whatever you need to do to draw attention to yourself and to get to a safe place.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND STUDY ABROAD

Cultural differences in interactions on romantic or sexual levels can be a problem area: some behaviors might be very inappropriate in the U.S. but considered perfectly acceptable in the culture in which you are living and vice-versa. Some of the new behaviors will be relatively easy to adjust to but others pose more of a problem.

Sexual harassment is a particularly difficult area because of the extreme variance in acceptable behavior between cultures. Combined with the different social and legal responses to such behavior sexual harassment when abroad can be a difficult scenario to deal with. Fortunately there are ways to prevent or lessen the negative consequences. Harassment normally falls into one of two categories the first being when a person requests sexual favors or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It often includes a trade relationship such as "you do this for me, and I'll do this for you." This type of harassment is quite serious and even one incident should be reported immediately.

The second category consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed toward a person because of her or his gender. This type of harassment usually takes place repeatedly over a period of time and creates an intimidating, hostile and offensive environment, plus may unreasonably interfere with a person's academic performance.

The most important thing to remember is to stay safe. If you do not feel safe in a particular situation remove yourself or distance yourself from that situation immediately. Go to the in-country program director, a foreign student adviser and go stay with a friend you can trust. Contact the PAO as soon as possible.

Do not wait to contact someone in the hope that the situation will improve. Maybe you can work things out but do it with the assistance of the program director and someone in the PAO. Until you know a place and a culture you may be in danger of misjudging the situation. Listen to your instincts and think and act on the safe side even if that may not be the most "exciting" side.

Most importantly do not abuse alcohol while in a foreign culture. Losing full use of your faculties can cause errors in judgment and other situations that may lead to unwanted sexual harassment or assaults.

#### UT Sexual Harassment Policy

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is committed to providing an environment free of sexual harassment, and this commitment extends to study abroad programs. Sexual harassment by any member (faculty, staff, student) of the University community is a violation of United States and Tennessee state laws as well as University policy.



#### Sexual Harassment Definition

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or status in a course, program, or activity.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment or academic (grades, academic progress, internships, etc.) decisions affecting the individual.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance, academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. (Section 703, Title VII Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX, Educational Amendments of 1972).

What to do if you are sexually harassed during a study abroad program:

- Know your rights. Sexual harassment is illegal in the United States and the State of Tennessee, and University policy prohibits University employees and students from engaging in sexual harassment.
- Get assistance. An employee or student may obtain information and assistance by contacting the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or the Office of Equity and Diversity.
- Contact information at UT. Office of Equity and Diversity 1840 Melrose Avenue, (865) 974-2498 and Vice Provost for Student Affairs, 515 Andy Holt Tower, (865) 974-7449

#### A SPECIAL NOTE FOR WOMEN TRAVELERS

Unfortunately fair or not the stereotype of "the easy and liberated American woman" is prevalent in many cultures. Because of this perception you may unwittingly find yourself the object of unwanted attention whether it be through whistles and stares or through more direct propositions.

If possible talk to women from the host culture before leaving the U.S. Ask them what it is like to be a woman in their country. What are their perspectives of women's issues and rights? Depending on the culture some women may feel more or less comfortable talking about gender issues. Try to respect the situation they are coming from but don't feel that you have to put aside your beliefs and embrace their cultural values.

There is much information for women travelers in books and online. One on-line magazine is Journeywoman [www.journeywoman.com](http://www.journeywoman.com). This site gives women a place to share their thoughts and experience, and it provides advice about world travel.

#### FOOD AND WATER SAFETY

In areas where chlorinated tap water is not available or where hygiene and sanitation are poor, be advised that only the following may be safe to drink:

- Beverages made with boiled water such as tea and coffee
- Canned or bottled carbonated beverages, including carbonated bottled water and soft drinks
- Bottled water
- Beer and wine

Where water may be contaminated ice and containers for drinking should also be considered



contaminated. It is generally safer to drink directly from the can or bottle of a beverage than from a questionable container. Food should be selected with care to avoid illness. In areas of the world where hygiene and sanitation are poor, you are advised to avoid unpasteurized milk and milk products such as cheese and cream, and to eat only raw fruits and vegetables that you have peeled.

#### PHYSICIANS ABROAD

If you find yourself in a situation where you require a physician, you are not on your host campus, and you are not fluent in the language of the country contact one of the following for a list of doctors/dentists who speak English: the U.S. Embassy or Consulate, a large travel agency such as Thomas Cook or American Express, or go to the front desk of a large hotel. They can help you find an English speaking physician. When it comes to your health you do not want a communication breakdown so be sure to seek an English-speaking doctor/dentist.

Other sources of information on physicians and hospitals are:

The Bureau of Consular Affairs website at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov), click on Lists of Doctors/Hospitals Abroad.

#### COMMUNICATING FROM ABROAD

##### E-MAIL

All future communication from the Center for International Education will be via e-mail addressed to your UT account. E-mail is more efficient and cost effective for two-way communication than surface mail or phone.

##### POSTAL ADDRESS

If you want to get mail during the first week or two of the program but do not yet know your address ask if you can have mail sent to you in care of the program office. As a courtesy to your program provider contact them before you leave and confirm that the office will accept mail addressed to you.

Your name

C/O Program Name

City, Postal Code

COUNTRY

##### PHONING HOME

One option for calling is a phone card. Many phone cards are offered through a variety of companies and some come with additional benefits such as voice mail, free email service, storage for important information from documents such as your passport, credit card numbers, phone numbers, etc. Some students purchase a cell phone while abroad. In some cases it works out to be less expensive than using pay phones and is certainly a lot easier. Many safety-minded students often find this an attractive option. If you do purchase a phone be sure you can use it to make and receive international calls. Not all phones have this capability.

##### RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE HOST COUNTRY

While abroad you are the visitor and subject to all rules and regulations of the country and as a UT student you are also subject to the rules and regulations found in Hill Topics. There is a myth that the United States government can automatically get you out of jail in a foreign country. They can't. If you are arrested someone from the U.S. Consulate/Embassy



will visit you with a care package and can recommend an attorney. However, being a U.S. citizen is not a get-out-of-jail free card.

#### DRUGS

Drugs which are illegal in the U.S. are also illegal almost everywhere else in the world, including the Netherlands. The penalties in some countries can be very stiff, even life threatening. If necessary check out your host countries drug laws and the penalties for violating them before you go.

#### ALCOHOL

Socializing in pubs is the norm in many parts of the world as is drinking responsibly. We won't tell you not to drink. That's your decision as an adult in the eyes of the law abroad, but becoming drunk can have hazards. If you are drunk and cannot find your way home you may become a victim of robbery or assault. If you are drunk in public you might be arrested and put in the "drunk tank" for the night. These are not the kind of intercultural experiences you want. U.S. students already have a reputation abroad as "drinking to get drunk" and acting obnoxious. Help dispel that stereotype and avoid problems through responsible behavior. Besides protecting yourself, it's just being respectful of your hosts and their culture. Believe it or not, you can still have a great time abroad without having a hangover every weekend. You might even enjoy it more.

#### CRISIS ABROAD

A crisis can be a hurricane, earthquake or political unrest, anything that changes the circumstances of the country you are in at the time. It is important that you are prepared.

- Stay informed. Know what is going on in the world, your host country and any countries you plan to visit. Read newspapers, check the Internet, visit the US State Department website to view the Consular Information Sheets and to view travel advisories and warnings at <http://www.travel.state.gov> (See Appendix I for an outline of the information available on their page.)
- Keep your host institution program administrator informed of your travel plans.

Carry a card with you which lists information for:

- Local police
  - Host institution program administrator
  - Emergency contact at home
  - UTK programs abroad office (865-974-3177) and
  - UT police (865-974-3114) . UT PD will contact
  - the appropriate person at UT and that person will
  - get in touch with you.
  - US embassy or consulate in the host country
  - Insurance contact information
  - Nearest hospital
  - Physician at home
- 
- The program administrator should identify a gathering place and you should visit this place early so you know where it is.
  - Avoid crowds. You don't know what is going on and you don't need to. Stay away and read about it in tomorrow's newspaper.
  - Try as much as possible to blend in or at least do as little as possible to draw attention to yourself. Dress like a native. Talk to someone who has been to the country and ask what people wear. Don't wear expensive jewelry, clothes with US



symbols, etc. Do walk like you know where you are going.

If a crisis occurs:

- Know where you are to meet your program administrator and others in the program and attempt to get there providing you can do so without risking your personal safety. If this is not possible, try to get in touch with someone from the program, tell them where you are, how long you plan to stay, where you can be reached, and let them know when you will contact them again. If you can't reach anyone from the program call PAO or the UT police who will contact someone in our office. We will work with your program in the US and contact your emergency contact at home.
- Call your emergency contact at home and let them know you are safe, where you are and how they can get in touch with you.
- If there is a crisis, register with the US embassy or consulate to let them know where you are. This will let them know that you are o.k. and they will then have your current contact information.
- If a crisis happens in your host country while you are visiting another, get in touch with the US embassy or consulate in the country you are visiting. Try to contact your program administrator. If you cannot, ask the embassy to contact your host country embassy and get word to the program administrator that you are safe and where you can be reached. Call someone at home and the PAO as soon as possible.

## MONEY

### CURRENCY EXCHANGE

#### Exchange Rates

Prior to leaving it might be useful to know the current exchange rate for the country you plan to visit. Information on exchange rates can be found on our Web site:

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

#### Exchanging money

If possible you might want to have a little local currency with you upon arrival. You might be able to purchase local currency at international banks or work with a local bank that has international bank connections. Getting foreign currency can sometimes take a week or more so plan ahead. Often US banks do not carry foreign currency. You can purchase local currency from a currency exchange booth located in the international terminal of either your departure or arrival airport. The exchange rate at some exchange booths may not be as favorable as it usually is at an ATM so first look for an ATM. If you exchange money plan to exchange only enough for a few days expenses.

### INDIVIDUAL TRAVEL EXPENSES

When traveling, it is said that you should take half as many clothes and twice-as-much money. You may not be able to take twice-as-much money but do not underestimate how much you will need. It is a good idea to talk with someone who recently visited the country or check student-directed travel books (Let's Go, Berkeley Guides or Lonely Planet) for information on travel costs such as hostel/hotel accommodations, food, transportation, sightseeing, etc.

### INCIDENTAL EXPENSES

You will be responsible for personal expenses including personal care products, entertainment, and transportation. These expenses will vary depending on your individual lifestyle. During orientation you will be able to discuss these costs with former participants. Evaluations from past study abroad participants contain this information and are available in



the evaluation binders in the Programs Abroad Office. If you have never created a budget for yourself this could be the time to start.

Keep in mind your money must last the whole semester regardless of how much cool stuff there is to do right at the beginning. So take the stress out by planning ahead.

#### ALTERNATIVES TO CASH

Whenever you travel it is never wise to carry large sums of money on your person. Below are some alternatives.

##### Debit Or ATM Cards

ATM cards can be used in most countries but it is wise to talk with someone who has recently been to your host country to confirm that machines are available. There is generally a charge associated with using ATMs but students report it is still the most effective and least expensive way to access money. Prior to leaving ask your bank about charges associated with using ATMs abroad.

##### Opening A Bank Account In Your Host Country

Ask your bank if they have a partner bank in your host country. If not upon arrival ask the staff at the host institution if they can recommend a bank that other international students have used in the past. Banks with experience working with international students will be happy to help you.

##### Credit Cards

If you plan to take a credit card, which is a good idea, speak with someone who has recently visited the country to find out which card (Visa, Mastercard etc.) they would recommend. Most cards charge an additional fee for each international transaction (2.5 to 7.5% per transaction).

Prior to departure check with your credit card company about their fees.

NOTE: The cards offer cash advances for which a bank commission is charged and interest on a cash advance begins the moment you receive the cash. You can cash your own personal checks at most American Express offices if you have an American Express card. Contact American Express to find the location of the office nearest your program location and to learn about the terms related to check cashing. (See Money Transfer below for the phone number.)

TIP: It is best to limit the number of credit cards you carry and to keep a list of your card number (s) and the company (ies) phone number. Leave a copy at home in the U.S. If you lose the card (s) you or your designated representative can call the company to report the loss.

TIP: Notify your ATM and credit card issuer in advance because some of them block foreign use by default and have to "unlock" the block.

TIP: Carry your ATM and two credit cards. If you can't use one, hopefully you can use another.

Travelers Checks and the Travelers Check Card Another option is to carry travelers checks and/or the travelers check card. To learn more visit websites for the various agencies that sell travelers checks including American Express.



NOTE: More and more often we hear that travelers checks (not the card) are not as widely accepted as they used to be so talk with someone who has recently visited your host country.

TIP: Make several lists of your travelers check numbers and keep them along with the company's phone number in different locations. Record when and where you cash them. If they are lost or stolen you will have a record of which checks need to be replaced.

#### MONEY TRANSFER

Based on student comments the safest, most efficient and least expensive way to get money is to have someone deposit funds in your ATM account. You can have someone deposit money in a travelers card account. Each time money is deposited there is a small fee. You may receive money from home by using an international postal money order. This service is available at most post offices but check with the post office before you leave to ensure that the country you are going to will accept these. In some countries you can have money transferred to you by Western Union. Contact Western Union at 1-800-325-6000 or [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com) to verify if this service is offered at your program location. Again, there are charges associated with money transfers.

#### SENDING MONEY THROUGH THE MAIL

It is not recommended that cash or personal checks be sent via the mail service. Money can be stolen, mail may be delivered more slowly than anticipated and U.S. checks are difficult if not impossible to cash.

#### IDENTITY THEFT

If your credit card, social security card, checks, etc. are stolen you should immediately contact the issuing agencies but also contact the credit bureau fraud departments of the credit reporting agencies: Trans Union, Equifax and Experian. You can find their phone numbers and addresses at: <http://www.transunion.com/content/page.jsp?id=/personalsolutions/general/data/ReportingFraud.xml>.

#### TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD

##### Rail Passes

Combining convenience with inexpensive rates, perhaps the most widely used form of transportation abroad is the railroad. Information and application for rail passes (Britrail, Eurail, Japan Rail, Korean Rail, etc.) can be obtained from a travel agent, through a student travel organization or on the web. One site we recommend is [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com). STA also has an office in the University Center on the UT campus. Rail passes can only be purchased in the U.S. and are the equivalent of cash and therefore cannot be replaced if lost or stolen. In most cases you must purchase the pass before leaving the U.S. or have someone purchase one for you in the U.S. and send it to you in your host country via registered mail. You may be able to purchase passes abroad but they will most likely not offer the same level of discount.

In some countries and some circumstances it might be best to purchase tickets as you go. Be sure to show your International Student ID card as you might receive a student ticket at a cheaper fare.

##### Bus Passes

Another option for the budget conscious traveler is the bus. Bus travel is often cheaper and



more frequent than train travel and is particularly good for travel in Scotland and Ireland as train service is not as strong as in England. STA travel in the UC or on the Internet at [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com) has bus passes available or check the Internet for information about purchasing a bus pass.

#### Road Travel Via Motorized Vehicles

Roads in the rest of the world are often narrow, have many curves, are poorly maintained, used by bicycles, motorbikes, motorcycles, animals, carts, etc. Vehicles may travel at speeds that exceed what is safe. Buses and rental cars may not be maintained at the level of those in the U.S. Be aware of the road conditions in the country (ies) you are visiting. Ask others who have traveled in the country, read the various guides: Lonely Planet, Berkeley Guides, Let's Go, Fodor's, Rick Steve's, etc. or visit the U.S. State Department page: [www.travel.state.gov/](http://www.travel.state.gov/). Each resource will have a motor travel section addressing potential problems in the country you are visiting. If you do rent a car be sure your auto insurance covers you in a rental car and in another country. Many policies do not. Be aware of the potential problems associated with driving abroad and use good judgment when making travel decisions. Motorcycles should be avoided at all costs as motorcycle accidents are one of the leading causes of fatalities for travelers abroad.

#### Bicycling

Biking is popular in many countries and they are ready to accommodate the biker. For informal day biking, bicycles are available for rent all over Europe and parts of Asia. Train stations sometimes have bicycles for rent that you can pick up and drop off along your route. Check a travel guide or the Internet to learn more about biking in your host country.

We recommend that you familiarize yourself with traffic laws of the city including those pertaining to biking. Also be aware of traffic conditions in the city you are visiting and make an informed decision about the safety of biking. When biking always wear a helmet.

NOTE: You may take your own bike but it will count as a piece of luggage and may quickly "disappear."

#### Hitchhiking Abroad

When hitchhiking you put your life in the hands of someone you don't know, this is not wise. DO NOT HITCHHIKE! it is not worth the risk.

### **RETURNING HOME / RE-ENTRY**

At the midway point of any experience time begins to quickly slip away. It seems like you just arrived and it's time to go home and often returning to the U.S. is the biggest adjustment.

It's tough to leave a place that is now 'home' yet you want to see family and friends back here. It's tough to be back home because you expect others to be excited about your wonderful experience but you find that after a few minutes they begin to view your conversation as the equivalent of looking at someone's vacation slides. (We know that's tough to hear, but true.) Again, this is going to take some adjustment; more for some of you than others. If you find you are having a tough time, stop by and chat. We've been there ourselves and might be able to help.

Re-entry shock is a state of disequilibrium. You have had a wonderful experience that has taught you many things but somehow the new things that you have learned may not fit into your everyday world. You want to tell people about what you experienced but many friends



would rather tell you what happened while you were away. People may see you as being more critical of things in your own culture and country and feel betrayed when you say you might want to go back to your host country someday. You prefer the company of those who shared your experience, and in some cases your international experience takes on ideal qualities that can't be matched at home.

Re-entry adjustment requires that you and those who care about you recognize its symptoms and origins. You are a different person after being abroad and instead of undoing all of the changes that have occurred in you:

- Take time to evaluate the two cultures and think about how you can incorporate parts of both into your lifestyle.
- Talk to family members and friends about how you think you have changed and listen to their ideas.
- Listen to the stories of what happened at home while you were away, and then share some of your own experiences.
- Seek out others who have been abroad for extended periods.
- Volunteer for intercultural activities, activities with international students at UT, or for activities through the PAO, which will give you a chance to discuss your experiences with people who really want to hear about them.
- Try to keep perspective, recognizing that some of the opinions you return with will change in the next several months as you readapt to your own culture. It's a great time to keep a journal. Remember that the uneasy feeling of being home that many students have usually passes in a few months.

#### WELCOME BACK ACTIVITIES AT THE PAO

At the beginning of each semester the PAO provides opportunities for you to get together with other study abroad alumni and new international students. Watch for emails announcing the events. They are a great way to meet other students with your international interests and to learn how to make the most of your study abroad experience even back in the States.

#### INTERNATIONALIZING YOUR EDUCATION ON THE UT CAMPUS

##### FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY

Even though a foreign language is not a requirement for most majors at UT, we encourage you to study a foreign language while here. Gaining insight into a foreign culture through proficiency in its language and familiarity with its literature furthers intercultural understanding and international perspective in a student's total program of study. Being able to communicate in a second language can also increase your chances in the job market. For more information contact the Department of Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures, 701 McClung Tower, 974-2311.

##### GLOBAL STUDIES AND AREA STUDIES PROGRAMS

Combine your general education electives and receive a certificate in Asian Studies, Latin American Studies, or Judaic Studies. This is a great way to merge your interest in the world and your general education credits to receive a certificate that displays to potential employers your awareness of global issues and knowledge of other cultures.

In addition to the above programs, many departments offer courses that have an international focus. Check the courses offered in your major to find the possibilities



appropriate for your interests. Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience.

#### EXPERIENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

You might want to consider adding work, volunteer, internships or field study to the time before, during or after your study abroad. An experiential component allows you to become more involved in the culture as you live and work with the citizens, learning the language and learning about daily life in your host country. An alternative is to choose a specific time outside of your study abroad to take advantage of the many opportunities available.

Work abroad is a paid experience but know that the wages are low and the jobs are usually entry-level restaurant or clerical/administrative jobs. More information about work abroad opportunities is available in Programs Abroad Library or visit our website at [www.utabroad.org](http://www.utabroad.org) (See the information below about obtaining a work permit.)

#### Volunteer, internship or field study opportunities

The PAO library has information about such opportunities and more information is available on our website: [www.utabroad.org](http://www.utabroad.org). Some programs provide room and board, but not all, and travel to the country is almost always at your expense. In many cases you pay the sponsoring organization a fee to participate in the program, some of which is used to secure a work permit for you. You will need a work permit to intern or volunteer abroad. (See the information below about obtaining a work permit.)

#### How to secure a Work/Volunteer permit if you don't yet have a job

The first thing to do is to check the embassy/consulate page for the country where you plan to work/volunteer for information about obtaining a work visa. You can do this at <http://www.travel.state.gov/>. Volunteer organizations should help you obtain the necessary work documents. If not, this might be an indication that you should consider another agency. If you would like to work abroad, check out BUNAC (Australia, Britain, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand), [www.bunac.org](http://www.bunac.org). This organization issues work permits for mentioned countries

and have an office in each country where jobs opportunities are posted (similar to a job service office in the U.S.). They do not guarantee you a job but provide you with lists of job openings. If you wish to work in a country not mentioned visit the <http://www.travel.state.gov/> website to learn about the requirements for obtaining a work permit for that country.

We hope that you have found this information to be useful and will share it with your family. We wish you the best of luck in your abroad experience; we look forward to hearing about it when you return.

Programs Abroad Office Staff, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Credits:

- Colorado State University, Office of International Programs
- Emory University, Center for International Programs Abroad

Information presented is accurate on day of printing and is subject to change.



**The University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

Center for International Education  
1620 Melrose Ave.  
Knoxville TN 37996-3531  
Phone: 865-974-2168  
(Monday – Friday, 8 am-5 pm, Eastern Time)  
Fax: 865-974-2985  
Email: [studyabroad@utk.edu](mailto:studyabroad@utk.edu)  
Website: [www.UTabroad.org](http://www.UTabroad.org)

**Emergency Contact**

**UT Police Department  
865-974-3114**

University of Tennessee Police Department  
(They have a list UT staff and home phone numbers and will contact the appropriate person.  
Be sure to leave a number where you can be reached and the time you will be there.)

**Additional Contact:**

Dr. James N. Gehlhar  
Director, Center for International Education  
1620 Melrose Avenue  
UT, Knoxville 37996  
Home: 865-523-0862  
Cell Phone: 865-548-5731

**Top 12 Tips For Study Abroad!**

1. It isn't better, it isn't worse, it's just different.
2. Learn to accept – not expect.
3. Don't be afraid to ask directions.
4. Know about current affairs and US relations with your host country before you go.
5. Learn to budget your money.
6. Before you leave determine how and when you will communicate with people back home.
7. Be practical with your packing.
8. Be flexible – tolerate ambiguity.
9. Be respectful of different cultures.
10. Talk to the locals as much as you can.
11. Take lots of pictures and keep a journal or blog.
12. Don't worry about what's going on back at school or home; just enjoy where you are.



## STUDY ABROAD CHECKLIST

### **Once you've been accepted to your study abroad program:**

- Pat yourself on the back and share the news with your friends and family!
- Confirm your acceptance of program participation by completing the Acceptance form and returning it to the PAO within two weeks of your admission to study abroad.
- Complete all remaining forms in your acceptance packet and return to the PAO no later than the date indicated for your program
- Apply for a passport . Since the processing may take up to two months (unless you want to pay a lot of money), do so early.
- Apply for a visa, if required. Check with your study abroad advisor or with the consulate of the country to which you plan to study to see if you need a Visa (A stamp in your passport giving permission to enter and stay in a country). If you do need one, start the paperwork early. (Note: you must have a passport first to get your visa).
- Attend the required Study Abroad Orientation.
- Meet with your financial aid adviser and let him/her know about your study abroad plans and confirm the process for receiving financial aid while abroad.
- Complete and return The Study Abroad Financial Aid Forms Packet (available in PAO) to the Bursar's Office. (Only for students who receive financial aid).

### **Prior to leaving campus:**

- Complete the Transfer Credit Planning Form with your academic/major advisor and return form to the PAO.
- Confirm arrangements for your accommodations in host country.
- Send a copy of your airlines reservations, and pre-program travel plans to the PAO as soon as you have made them.
- Photocopy the picture page of your passport and send to the PAO.
- Visit your doctor and dentist for checkups and obtain copies of your medical prescriptions to take with you.
- Remove "holds" from your record (Circle Park online) and confirm that you are registered for study abroad for the upcoming term.
- If you live in the residence hall, talk with your hall director about cancelling your current housing (and meal) contract as well as your plans for your return housing.
- Check with your current insurance provider to determine if you have sufficient coverage while abroad and how to make a claim.
- Check to see if your ATM and credit card are functional in your host country. Plan to bring at least \$200 worth of local currency for initial expenses.

### **While you are abroad:**

- For students abroad during UT's spring term, complete the FAFSA (on-line) prior to April 1st (March 15th).
- Contact UT housing to confirm your housing/meal plan arrangements for your return.
- Obtain or request copy/copies of your official transcript from the host institution.
- Clear all outstanding housing expenses, library fines and other pending fees on your account at your host institution.
- Gather contact information from your new friends as you will want to stay in touch once you are home.
- Contact UT housing to confirm your housing/meal plan arrangements for your return.
- Obtain or request copy/copies of your official transcript from the host institution.



## 2006 ISEP Conference Review & Proceedings

- ❑ Clear all outstanding housing expenses, library fines and other pending fees on your account at your host institution.
- ❑ Gather contact information from your new friends as you will want to stay in touch once you are home.
- ❑ Complete your evaluation of your study abroad program experience. Do this on-line at [www.utabroad.org](http://www.utabroad.org), while everything is fresh in your mind.

### **When you're back on campus:**

- ❑ Check-in with your advisor in the Programs Abroad Office and let us know your back!
- ❑ Translate your transcript (if it is not in English or Spanish) when you receive an e-mail from the PAO indicating your transcript has arrived. Return the translation to the PAO after obtaining approval of the translation from a professor in MFL.
- ❑ Share your experience of study and travel abroad with other UT students.
- ❑ Become a "Buddy" to an international student (PAO)
- ❑ Speak at orientations, participate in study abroad fairs, become a PAO peer advisor or work study student, (PAO)
- ❑ Participate in campus international events (the International House has a long list of activities )
- ❑ Get to know international students on campus (remember your questions when you first arrived in your host country?) (I-House)
- ❑ Add your international experience and newly acquired language skills to your resume (see the PAO and/or the Career Services Office for information and help).