

Pre-Departure Guide

A Resource for Study Abroad Students at the
University of Pittsburgh



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Pittsburgh, PA 15260
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INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been created as a resource for you to use in preparation for your successful study abroad experience.

Be sure to take the link (www.abroad.pitt.edu/predeparture/index.html) with you as it contains useful information which you will need while outside the U.S. We have selected practical information on required pre-departure Pitt procedures, as well as suggested pre-departure and host country considerations. It is helpful to give this information to your parents as well.

This handbook is subject to change. As the purpose of this book is to give you practical tips and to relieve some of your and your parents' concerns, we are constantly revising the information and looking to you for assistance with information from your experiences abroad.

From everyone at the Study Abroad Office, we would like to wish you an exciting, rewarding and enriching study abroad experience!

DO NOT FORGET TO SEND US AN EMAIL OR A POSTCARD WITH YOUR ADDRESS SO WE CAN INFORM YOU OF ANY PERTINENT INFORMATION.

STUDY ABROAD OFFICE

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UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
PITTSBURGH, PA 15260
Phone: 412-648-7413
Fax: 412-383-7166
abroad@pitt.edu

CBA STUDY ABROAD OFFICE

2600 SENNOTT SQUARE
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
PITTSBURGH, PA 15260
Phone: 412-383-7489
Fax: 412-383-7415
saocba@pitt.edu

STUDY ABROAD OFFICE FOR ENGINEERS

B80-G BENEDUM HALL
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
PITTSBURGH, PA 15261
Phone: 412-624-5942
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saoe@pitt.edu

*A complete copy of this pre-departure guide may be found online at www.abroad.pitt.edu

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Pitt Police 412-624-2121	police@pitt.edu

Your departmental academic advisor: _____

Other contacts you will need when abroad _____

All information in this handbook is subject to change.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PITT-RELATED PROCEDURES AND OBLIGATIONS

1. Study Abroad Contract.....	5
<i>Credits, Course Approval, Pre-Registering, While You Are Abroad.....</i>	5-6
2. Your Pitt Tuition Bill.....	7
3. Financial Aid	7
4. Housing and Meals	8
5. Changes while abroad	8-9

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

1. Required Documents	10
<i>Passports, Visas, Customs</i>	
2. Optional Documents	11
3. Things to Think About	11
4. Health Issues	11-14
<i>Immunizations, Medication, Tips For Staying Healthy, Sexual Safety</i>	
5. Support Services.....	14-15
6. Health Insurance	15-16
7. Safety Issues:	16-20
<i>Emergencies, Crime Prevention Hints, The American Embassy Overseas, Drug Arrests</i>	
8. Money	20-21
<i>Banking, Wiring Money, Common Sense Security</i>	
9. Travel Issues	21-24
<i>International Driving Permit, International Student ID Card, International Youth Hostels, Alternatives to Youth Hostels, Railpasses, Travel Advice, Tips for Homestay, Ways to Save Money</i>	
10. Researching Your New Home	24
11. "What Do I Pack???"	24-25
12. Communications with Home	25

CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES

1. Cultural Adjustment	26-27
2. A Note to Women	28
3. A Note To Men	28
4. The Journal	28-29
5. Homesickness/Coping	29
6. Coming Home	30
7. Remaining A Citizen of the World, In the USA	30-31

PRE-TRIP PLANNING CHECKLIST.....

Appendix A: Customs Information	32
Appendix B: Planning for a Healthy Journey	33-34
Appendix C: International Health Insurance, Suggested Reading List	34-37
Appendix D: Suggested Reading List	38
Appendix E: Offenses Related to Welfare, Health, or Safety	39-41
Appendix F: Passport and Visa Services.....	42
Appendix G: Getting the Most out of Your Experience.....	43
	44-47

PITT-RELATED PROCEDURES AND OBLIGATIONS

1. STUDY ABROAD CONTRACT

All students who are participating in study abroad programs through the University of Pittsburgh **MUST** complete a Study Abroad Contract during the term prior to the term of their intended study abroad experience. If you have not done so, please stop by, or call the Study Abroad Office to sign-up for a [Contract, Health, Safety, and Security Meeting](#). This Contract is essential to receive credit for the coursework you complete overseas. You must complete this contract – Study Abroad Office staff members are not permitted to complete this for you. Students must turn in their original Study Abroad Contract to the Study Abroad Office before leaving campus. You should make a photocopy of these materials for your records **BEFORE** you submit the originals to the Study Abroad Office and *take a copy with you when you go abroad.*

A. REGISTERING FOR CREDITS:

As part of the Study Abroad Contract, you will be registering for a course entitled "Study Abroad in...Country X". In all cases you will be registering for a block number of credits for this course, usually 12- 15 credits per semester. If the number of credits for which you register differs from the actual number of credits you end up taking, you must notify the appropriate Dean's Office for your school/college and the Study Abroad Office immediately. Changes in the number of credits for which you are registered **CANNOT** and **WILL NOT** be made after the end of the term. A failure to notify the above offices will result in either: a) a loss of credits for the additional credits you took but did not register for, or b) an incomplete for the number of credits you registered for, but did not complete.

B. TRANSFERRING CREDITS

Students must receive a grade of a "C" or better for credits to transfer. A grade of a "C-" or below will result in an "Unsatisfactory" or "U" grade for the number of credits that the course is worth. This "U" grade can never be made up or erased from your Pitt transcript. Only credits will transfer to Pitt, **NOT** your grades. However, if you plan on applying to graduate programs, these institutions will want a copy of your study abroad program transcript which does show your grades.

Exceptions to this rule:

For students studying on any of the Panther Programs Abroad (i.e. Pitt in London, Pitt in Italy, etc.), both credits **AND GRADES** will count as if you were still on campus. Your courses and grades will show up on your transcript and will factor in to your GPA.

C. APPROVAL FOR COURSES

As part of the Contract, you will have certain courses approved by your academic advisor and/or the appropriate Dean's Office. If you decide to take a different course (other than your pre-approved ones) **AND** want that course to fulfill a requirement towards a major, minor, related area or certificate, contact your respective academic advisor for approval. (For Arts & Sciences students, an Arts & Sciences academic advisor will approve courses to fulfill General

Education Requirements and electives.)

D. PRE-REGISTER FOR PITT CLASSES

Non-Arts & Sciences students, see your individual academic advisor and/or Dean to pre-register, as specified on your Study Abroad Contract.

Arts & Sciences students only: as part of the Contract you have the option of pre-registering for classes at Pitt for the semester after you return. The Arts & Sciences Advising Center will assist you with study abroad pre-registration.

If you are graduating while abroad, prior to departure you must obtain permission from the appropriate Dean's office and complete the application for graduation before leaving campus.

E. WHILE YOU ARE ABROAD

Save your work: You are strongly advised to keep course syllabi, term papers, exams, even lecture notes, in order to document overseas learning.

Request a Transcript: It is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** that you obtain an official transcript from your study abroad program.

Arts & Sciences and General Studies students: please request, in writing, that your program send your official transcript to:

Study Abroad Office
University of Pittsburgh
802 William Pitt Union
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Phone: 412-648-7413

CBA students please request that your transcript be sent to:

Study Abroad Office
University of Pittsburgh
Attn. CBA Advisor
802 William Pitt Union
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Phone: 412-383-9600

Engineering students please request that your transcript be sent to

Study Abroad Office
University of Pittsburgh
Attn. Engineering Advisor
802 William Pitt Union
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Phone: 412-648-7413

Graduate Students send a transcript to your Dean and/or registrar.

2. YOUR PITT TUITION BILL

A. STUDENTS ON *NON-EXCHANGE* PROGRAMS & NON-PITT-DEVELOPED PROGRAMS

Under the PeopleSoft system, you will need to notify your parents or someone who can check your student account. As part of your SA Contract, you will register for credits at Pitt. This registration automatically produces a Pitt tuition bill. It is possible that if there is a large time delay between the time you register and the time you go to Student Accounts when you are completing your SA Contract, you may receive a tuition bill on your PeopleSoft account. **You do not pay tuition and fees to Pitt (except the Administrative Fee of \$350.00).** If you have already completed the SA Contract, either (1) go to the Student Accounts Office with your SA Contract or (2) call the office and explain the situation. The Office of Student Accounts will correct the account. If you have not completed the SA Contract, then simply go to the Student Accounts Office to complete this section. For Panther Programs Abroad (Pitt in London, China, etc.) your Pitt bill must be paid as usual by the date indicated on the Pitt invoice. You will be billed for program tuition and all other fees as outlined on the program brochure. *Do not ignore the tuition bill!*

B. STUDENTS ON EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

(Aberystwyth, CPE-Lyon, Kansai Gaidai, Monterrey, Ritsumeikan, Sheffield, Sussex, etc.) Your Pitt tuition bill must be paid as usual by the date indicated on the invoice. You will be responsible for full time tuition, plus any required fees. Depending on the exchange program, you may also be responsible for housing and meals to Pitt. The invoice for housing and meals may come much later and under separate cover from your tuition bill. Please pay each invoice on time to avoid any problems and late fees.

3. FINANCIAL AID

A. IF YOU RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID, ARE STUDYING ABROAD DURING A FALL OR SPRING TERM, AND YOUR PROGRAM ENDS LATER THAN PITT'S TERM

Your financial aid for the following term may be delayed. This is because Pitt may not receive a transcript from your program showing that you are making academic progress by the time Pitt students on campus complete their coursework. If you receive a letter at home saying that your financial aid cannot be processed because of lack of academic progress, please contact the Study Abroad Office immediately. We will request that the appropriate Dean write a letter to the Financial Aid Office saying that you are indeed making academic progress and to process your aid.

A. IF YOU RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID, ARE STUDYING ABROAD DURING A FALL OR SPRING TERM, AND YOUR PROGRAM ENDS LATER THAN PITT'S TERM

Please contact the Office of Admissions & Financial Aid (OFA) - www.pitt.edu/~oafa or 412-624-7488) to discuss any financial aid questions. Be sure to have their contact information while you are abroad in case you have further concerns.

4. HOUSING AND MEALS

A. IF YOU LIVED ON CAMPUS DURING THE FALL SEMESTER AND ARE STUDYING ABROAD DURING THE SPRING SEMESTER

You need to inform Panther Central that you are leaving. You will need to obtain and complete the necessary forms at Panther Central Office stating that you are participating on an approved study abroad program in order to release you from the housing/meals contracts. The Study Abroad Office can draft a letter of support if Panther Central indicates that such a letter is necessary. Someone will be placed in your room for the second semester while you are gone.

B. UPON RETURN TO CAMPUS

If you are currently living on campus and want to live on campus when you return, it is possible to join the lottery and reserve a room via the lottery process. If you are currently living off campus and want to live on campus when you return from studying abroad, your name can be added to the waiting list, but you will not be in the lottery. This is the same for students who study abroad or stay at Pitt. To add your name either to the lottery or the waiting list, see the Panther Central Office in the Towers Lobby before you leave for your term(s) abroad. The internet address for off-campus housing is <http://www.ocl.pitt.edu/>.

5. CHANGES WHILE ABROAD

A. TO CHANGE THE NUMBER OF CREDITS YOU REGISTERED FOR AT PITT

In order to change only the number of study abroad credits for which you are registered at Pitt, contact your academic advisor(s).

B. TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR A COURSE NOT PRE-APPROVED

Please contact the appropriate academic advisor for any course you wish to take but was not pre-approved on your contract.

COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW AND TAKE IT WITH YOU:

My major advisor: _____ Second major advisor: _____
Address: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Phone: _____
Fax: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____ Email: _____

Minor advisor: _____ Other: _____
Address: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Phone: _____
Fax: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____ Email: _____

C. TO CHANGE YOUR PRE-REGISTRATION

Arts & Sciences students: Should you wish to change the courses for which you are pre-registered to take upon returning to Pitt, you may do so by contacting the Arts & Sciences Dean's Office. This can be done only **BEFORE** registration begins at Pitt, so be sure to check the date before you leave. You may also wait until you have returned to Pitt, and alter your courses for that semester during the add/drop period.

Engineering students, contact your department secretary or academic advisor to notify them of any changes you would like to make.

ALL OTHER STUDENTS (CBA, CGA, Nursing, etc.), contact your academic advisor or department.

D. FOR FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

You may obtain information about your financial aid from the Financial Aid Office. The contact information is:

Office of Admissions and Financial Aid
Alumni Hall
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Phone: 412-648-1100
Fax: 412-648-1170
Email: oafa@pitt.edu

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

1. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

A. PASSPORT

If you do not already have a passport, apply for one **IMMEDIATELY**. There are several ways to apply for a passport:

- In person at the Allegheny County Courthouse. Detailed information is available on the county website: <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/cofc/pass.aspx>
- By mail using a passport application from a US Post Office
- By mail using a passport application or passport renewal form downloaded from the State Department website: www.travel.state.gov/passport

Be sure to follow the instructions carefully. It may take four to twelve weeks to receive your passport, so apply early. If you were born in Pennsylvania, you can receive a copy of your birth certificate at the Pennsylvania State Office Building in downtown Pittsburgh. You can have passport photos taken at the Passport Agency for \$ 10.00, but any pharmacy with photo services can take them for you for the same amount or less. For more information, the Passport Services number at the courthouse is 412-350-6071.

If you already have a passport, please check that it has not expired and that it will be valid for at least **SIX MONTHS** beyond your planned return to the United States. If you applied for a passport when you were 18 years old or older, it will be good for 10 years.

Make a copy of the front page of your passport (be sure that your picture and passport number are clear) and keep it in a separate location from the passport itself. You should also leave a copy with your parent or guardian. This will help if your passport is lost or stolen. The nearest consulate or embassy will be able to process a new passport for you much quicker with the copy.

B. VISA

A visa, usually a stamp on a page of your passport, is the official permission to visit or study in a country granted by that government. There are different types of visas; the most common are study, work and tourist. Be sure that you understand the type of visa you need. The visa may require you to leave the country after a specified date or forbid you from working for money. Fees for visas vary from country to country. Foreign entry requirements can be viewed online at:

www.travel.state.gov/visa.

PLEASE FOLLOW ANY INSTRUCTIONS/ADVICE ON VISAS PROVIDED BY YOUR PARTICULAR STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM!

C. CUSTOMS

For all customs issues, please see the following website:

www.cbp.gov/

2. OPTIONAL DOCUMENTS

The following documents are optional and are described in detail in the "Travel" section (p. 17) of this handbook.

- International Driving Permit
- International Youth Hostel Card

3. THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

A. ABSENTEE VOTING

Before you may vote from abroad, you must be registered to vote at home. Check with your local city or town hall to obtain information on procedures for voting by absentee ballot. Remember to make note of your party, ward, district and voter registration number. If necessary, your absentee ballot can be notarized at a U.S. embassy or consulate.

B. INCOME TAX INFORMATION

Attention: Year Abroad and Spring Semester Program Participants - If you have earnings which require you to file federal and state income tax returns, you must remember that you will be out of the country between January 1 and April 15. Persons temporarily living abroad may normally request an extension on the deadline for filing federal income tax. The extension is usually until June 15. The best advice is to contact the American Consulate or Embassy in your host country for information on your tax obligations; they may have 1040 forms and may even be willing to help you with questions. You can file from abroad if you make arrangements with your parents to send you necessary state and federal forms and other documentation. The Study Abroad Office cannot provide this service.

C. POWER OF ATTORNEY

If your signature will be needed for any official or legal documents, such as financial aid papers, you should make arrangements for a power of attorney to be held by an appropriate person to act in your behalf. You can do this by writing out in detail the specific duties that the person you choose will execute. Take this to a notary and have it notarized.

D. PROPERTY INSURANCE

Student travelers should consider having insurance to cover any loss of money because of trip interruption or cancellation as well as loss of baggage and personal effects either while traveling or living abroad.

Property loss/theft insurance - Note that many homeowner's insurance policies contain a clause about this coverage extending worldwide. Normally a copy of a police report filed at the time of loss or theft will be required by the insurer before any claim will be considered.

4. HEALTH ISSUES

Everyone's body reacts differently to new foods and eating habits, as well as to new environments. Some people gain weight, others lose it. Some get a little sick from trying new foods, others can eat anything and not get sick. It may take a few weeks for your body to adjust to the new ingredients you will be eating. But don't let your fears get in the way of

tasting new foods; that is half the fun of learning the new culture. Pepto Bismol or other medications usually do the trick when you are sick. You may want to take your favorite over-the-counter medicines (i.e. aspirin, Tums, etc.) for the first few weeks until you are comfortable with the surroundings and language. If you are ill the first few days, it may be too stressful to try to find the items you need while attempting to negotiate your way in a new country.

A. IMMUNIZATIONS

Some vaccinations may be required to enter certain countries. Other vaccinations may not be required but suggested. Check with your local county health department and/or your family physician for suggested and required vaccinations to enter countries where you may be traveling. The Allegheny County Health Department can be reached at (412) 687-ACHD. The Center for Disease Control has a comprehensive website that lists required and suggested vaccinations as well as general information on health concerns in all parts of the world:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
(800) CDC-INFO
<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>

Allegheny County Health Department
333 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 687-ACHD
www.achd.net/

Also www.who.int/ith/en/ has a detailed listing of problems in specific countries.

B. MEDICATIONS

If you are currently taking medication, be sure to take enough for the duration of your stay. You may not be able to find the same medication overseas. For customs purposes, it is advisable to leave all prescriptions in their original labeled containers. Also, keep an original copy of the doctor's prescription with your passport. These measures should assist your processing through customs and insure that you won't break any laws of the country you are entering. If the medication you are taking contains narcotic substances, you may want to consult the consulate of the country where you will be studying to see if it's legal.

MEDICAL HINTS

- It is advised that you take your own syringes if you require regular injections.
- If you have a special medical condition, it is a good idea to buy a medical alert bracelet.

If you use any kind of specific, over-the-counter medications, ointments, acne cures, etc. *(that you cannot live without)*, take enough to last your entire trip.

You can also find listings of travel medicine clinics and providers at the following websites:

International Society of Travel Medicine: (ISTM) www.istm.org

Travel Health Online: www.tripprep.com

Allegheny County Health Department
3333 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 687-ACHD
www.achd.net/

C. HIV INFECTION AND SEXUAL SAFETY

While studying abroad, we receive mixed messages about sexuality. Be aware of the messages you are receiving and have enough self-respect to take care of yourself. While studying abroad, you will no doubt be exposed to all kinds of new experiences that you may want to try. Remember that HIV/AIDS is everywhere around the world, and only your behavior can prevent you from acquiring the disease. Specifically, students studying abroad should be aware of condom quality, HIV antibody testing, clean blood supplies, sterile needles, and medical facilities in the target country.

- **Condom Caution**

Condoms can be difficult to acquire in parts of the world. In addition, the ones you do find may be of lesser quality than the ones to which you are accustomed. Take responsibility for yourself. The best prevention is abstinence. You may, however, want to bring condoms with you, even if you are not planning on being sexually active while abroad.

- **HIV Antibody Testing Requirements**

Some countries screen incoming travelers (especially those on extended visits and students) and prohibit entry of those with AIDS and those who have tested positive with HIV. Any country may reserve the right to require HIV testing from any visitor. Make sure you are aware of each country's policy to which you will be traveling. This information is available from the consular officers of individual countries or by calling 202-647-1488, which is the U.S. State Dept. Office of Public Affairs.

The web site www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1230.html has more information on HIV/AIDS screening.

- **Clean Blood Supplies and Sterile Needles**

In the U.S., Australia, Canada, Japan and Western European countries, the risk of infection with HIV through a blood transfusion is greatly reduced through mandatory testing of all donated blood for the presence of antibodies to HIV. In some countries, especially less-developed nations, there may not be a formal program for testing blood or biological products for antibodies to HIV. See the above mentioned website for how to deal with this situation. Diabetics and other persons who require routine or frequent injections should carry their own supply of syringes and needles sufficient to last their entire stay

- **If You Think You May Have Been Infected With HIV**

Knowing your status will help you in planning your trip. While pre- and post-counseling are required for persons being tested in the U.S., this is not true of many countries. Therefore, you may consider being tested before leaving the country. Special medical facilities may be needed and this is information you should seek out before you begin the program. Your program director can help you locate the medical facilities you need. Free, confidential testing is available at the Allegheny County Health Center on Forbes Avenue. The Student Health Center here at Pitt also performs HIV/AIDS testing and counseling as part of your Student Health Fee.

- **Additional Resources for Information**

In addition to those already mentioned, the following hotlines are valuable sources of more detailed information:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – (877) 696-6775 www.os.dhhs.gov
- Center for Disease Control National AIDS Information – (800) 342-AIDS
<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>

D. ENGLISH SPEAKING DOCTORS

Join the International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers to get a worldwide directory of English speaking doctors to carry with you. Get information online at www.iamat.org.

TIPS FOR STAYING HEALTHY

- Moderation is the key. Don't run yourself into the ground by trying to do too much all at once. Sickesses occur more frequently when you are tired and worn down.
- Eat well-balanced meals.
- Watch what you eat. If you are wary of the quality of the food and drink, make sure everything you eat is thoroughly cooked or boiled to kill any bacteria.
- Take measures to reduce the risk of STDs (sexually transmitted diseases).
- If you drink, consume alcohol in moderation. Intoxication can lead to unsafe and potentially deadly situations.
- Be informed! Know where to get treatment. When you settle in, find out where health care facilities are located. Check with your on-site program director for the name of a doctor and hospital.
- Depending on the region, you may need water purification tablets, salt tablets and/or insect repellent.
- Women may want to pack feminine hygiene products if they are not sure of the type available where they are traveling, though familiar products are available in most foreign countries.

5. SUPPORT SERVICES

A. AA WORLD SERVICES

AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) World Services is located in New York City. Their phone number is (212) 870-3400 and their website is www.alcoholics-anonymous.org. Members of AA who are going overseas may write to the following address and receive a copy of the International AA Directory (cost approximately \$1.80):

P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

Only AA members may receive a copy of this directory; therefore it is not available to the public. The directory lists AA chapters worldwide with contact names and phone numbers.

B. COUNSELING SERVICES

If you are currently seeing a counselor for any reason, it is important to inform your Study Abroad Advisor and counselor prior to departure. This is to ensure that the proper services are available at the host institution for you. The University of Pittsburgh Counseling Center is located in 334 WPU and their phone number is (412) 648-7930.

C. DISABILITY

If you have a disability, you are advised to consult with a Study Abroad Advisor and an advisor in the Office of Disability Resource Services (located in 216 WPU www.drs.pitt.edu 412-648-7890) to determine the most appropriate Study Abroad Program for you. Disclosure of a disability does not preclude you from participating on a study abroad program. Disclosure enables the Study Abroad Office staff to assist you in finding a program which will be able to accommodate your needs.

In addition, Mobility International provides helpful information for students with disabilities including: International Study and Travel Resource Guides for Students with Disabilities "A World Awaits You" - A Journal for International Exchange for people with disabilities. For more information on Mobility International, please contact:

Mobility International USA
PO Box 10767
Eugene OR, 97440

Phone: (541) 343-1284
Fax: (541) 343-6812
E-mail: info@miusa.org
Website: www.miusa.org

6. HEALTH INSURANCE

All Pitt study abroad students are required to have health coverage while abroad and must provide proof of coverage at the time of contract completion. Some study abroad programs include health insurance; refer to your program description and fees to see if health insurance is included. If not, check with your U.S. health insurance policy regarding international coverage. Some insurance companies offer coverage for serious illness or death abroad. You will want to carry your insurance policy card and take a few insurance claim forms with you.

If you have no medical coverage, inquire with various health insurance companies to purchase insurance. They are listed in Appendix C Misc. Information/Suggested Reading List.

A. BASIC INSURANCE COVERAGE

The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) provides the minimum insurance coverage required by Pitt. You will receive a current copy of your ISIC insurance coverage information when you purchase your ISIC card.

Note: Emergency evacuation and repatriation of remains can be extremely expensive and are often not covered by traditional health insurance plans. Your ISIC will cover this.

To obtain the ISIC, check out www.statravel.com for the details online.

According to the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs, the Social Security Medicare Program does not provide for payment outside of the U.S.. The Veterans Administration will only pay for hospital and medical service.

For a sample list of Travel Insurance companies see Appendix C

B. USING YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE WHILE ABROAD

It is essential for you to be familiar with the international insurance coverage that you have and the procedures you will be required to follow while you are out of the U.S. Begin by answering the questions listed below. If you cannot answer them, contact your insurance company directly. By learning more about your insurance now, you will be better prepared to get routine or emergency care when out of the U.S.

1. In most cases, students abroad are required to pay for medical services up front and file a claim for reimbursement from the U.S. carrier. As such, you will need to know the following answers:
 - a. How do you file a claim from abroad?
 - b. What paperwork are you expected to submit to the insurance company?
 - c. Can you get a supply of claim forms to take with you?
 - d. Will a notarized translation be required if supporting documents are not in English?
 - e. How long will it take for the claim to be processed and for you to receive reimbursement?
 - f. Will the insurance company send the reimbursement to your U.S. or to your foreign address?
2. What category or option (e.g. out of "network") of your insurance plan will you utilize when you seek health services abroad and what costs (e.g. co-insurance) are you expected to bear under this option?
3. What is the basic medical deductible amount and what is included in it?
4. If you need to get a prescription overseas, will your insurance company reimburse you for all or part of the cost of the drug? What documents will you need to submit to the insurance company in order to obtain such a reimbursement?
5. Do you anticipate needing routine, non-emergency health services while abroad? Are those services covered by your medical plan?
6. To what extent does your insurance cover hospitalization?
7. Does your insurance cover medical evacuation?
8. If immunizations are required prior to your departure, will your insurance company cover them?
9. Does your insurance include dental coverage or do you have separate dental coverage?
10. Does your insurance include eye care?
11. Is a copy of your insurance policy available in the language of your host country?
12. Are sports injuries excluded from coverage under your insurance policy?
13. Make sure you have your prescription or extra pairs of eyeglasses/contacts.

7. SECURITY AND SAFETY ISSUES

Since you'll be doing a good bit of traveling to get to your study abroad destination, it is wise to be concerned about the things that you bring with you as well as yourself. Check if your belongings are covered by your parents' or your homeowners or renters insurance policy. If you wish, you may purchase a "rider" or "personal articles floater" itemizing any high-value items with which you are traveling (i.e. laptops, jewelry, etc.). This extra coverage is inexpensive and will cover the replacement cost of the item, not just the depreciated value. While the parents' coverage may extend to the U.S. campus dorm room, it does not extend to study abroad unless there is a special rider or floater. However, with the rider or personal articles floater, the specified items are covered anywhere in the world.

Leave a copy of all information at home and keep a copy with you in a safe place. Items include: copies of the first two pages of your passport, pages containing current visas, traveler checks numbers, credit card numbers, ATM card numbers, medical eyeglass/contact prescriptions, and any other essential documents.

Register with an American Embassy when you arrive so they know you are there in case an emergency arises. This is especially important in high-risk areas.

If your passport is lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the nearest Foreign Service post (<http://usembassy.state.gov>) and to the local police. If you can provide the consular officer with the information contained in your passport, it will speed the issuance of a new passport (memorize your number). Keep a Xerox of your passport data page in a separate place from where you keep your actual passport.

A. DOCUMENTS

- Take good care of passports, travel tickets, and any other important documents.
- When traveling to your overseas destination, keep your passport with you at all times, preferably in a money pouch that you can wear on your body. You should also keep proof of citizenship (an expired passport copy or copy of your birth certificate) and proof of identity (any type of photo ID), as well as a copy of your passport and serial number, in a separate location; this will expedite the administrative process in the event that your passport is lost or stolen.
- At your program site, it is advisable to carry photocopied information with you at all times. When cashing travelers checks, you will need your passport.

B. PERSONAL SAFETY

- Don't stand out: while "safety in numbers" is a good rule to follow, traveling as an identifiable group of U.S. students will attract attention and possibly cause problems. Try to fit in with the surroundings.
- Whenever possible, speak in the local language.
- Report suspicious events immediately: Contact the study abroad coordinator/resident director at your study abroad campus if you observe suspicious persons within the premises of your educational environment. Act similarly if anything might indicate threats or an actual terrorist attack on the premises or on student activities.
- Careless talk - Do not be free with information about other students. Be wary of new people. Do not give out yours or anyone else's address or phone number to strangers.

- Don't give away your class or field trip schedule.
- Official contact - Your resident advisor may have an agreement with you as far as leaving the campus site and staying with others. Do let your advisor and host family, if applicable, know if you will be staying overnight somewhere else, especially in case of an emergency.
- *You should dress and behave inconspicuously in public. Try not to "advertise" that you're a foreigner by wearing your college sweatshirt or hanging out in typically American bars and pubs.*

If you are concerned about safety issues abroad, or are worried about the status of student travelers in times of terroristic threats or national crises, you may phone the Bureau of Consular Affairs, Office of Emergency Citizen Services in Washington, D.C. at 202-647-5225 for a recorded message, or 202-647-5226 to talk with a departmental official. Do not be alarmed when you hear travel advisories at first. These advisories are information the government has received and the government is obligated to make it publicly known. Listen to and read all travel advisories carefully. Then make the best judgment with a clear head whether or not there is reason to be alarmed. U.S. Travel Advisories can also be accessed from the following website:

www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html or www.travel.state.gov/travel, click on Travel Warnings.

More student travel safety information is available from Scholastic Overseas Services at www.internationalsos.com.

C. EMERGENCIES ON SITE

Most study abroad programs have pre-planned procedures for emergency evacuations in times of crisis. However, you may not be made aware of the specific procedures due to national security. If a situation should occur in which these plans need to be activated, you would be informed about how to proceed. Remember, at any given time, in any given place, a situation could occur. For this reason, students should take general precautions while living overseas. For example, be alert to the possibility of being under surveillance and report anyone loitering around your residence, following you, or acting suspicious. Also, pay attention to daily news reports.

D. CRIME PREVENTION HINTS

- Do not take valuables on your trip which you may have difficulty replacing.
- Take major credit cards, ATM cards, or travelers checks, **NOT** large amounts of cash.
- Find out which parts of town the locals consider "risky."
- Stay alert in crowds, especially in areas frequented by tourists.
- You can NEVER be too careful with your money and belongings. Use extreme caution at all times. Possibly the best way to carry your money and passport is in a belt tied around your waist in the inside of your pants, or around your neck, under your shirt.
- Limit your consumption of alcoholic beverages (drink responsibly) and stay away from banned/illegal substances. **YOU** are ultimately responsible for your own behavior and choices
- Do not just set your bags down next to you; make sure they are touching some part of your body.

- It will be your first instinct to trust many people you meet, but using common sense is not distrust – it is smart.
- Fanny packs can be easily cut off of you on crowded trains and buses. Even in church/religious sites, never let your belongings out of your sight.
- Be especially careful when taking pictures as your attention is focused on your subject and camera, rather than your belongings.
- "When you least expect it - expect it." Above all, use common sense at all times. If something does not feel safe, it probably is not.

E. THE AMERICAN EMBASSY OVERSEAS

American embassies overseas will assist you in times of national crisis or threatening circumstances. Embassies will not assist you if, by virtue of your own actions, you break the laws of the country in which you reside. If you are arrested and taken to jail for a crime you have knowingly committed, the embassy is not responsible for your release. The U.S. government has no funds for your legal fees or other related expenses.

If you experience difficulties with the local authorities, remember that American officials are limited by foreign laws, U.S. regulations, and geography as to what they can do. Should you find yourself in need of legal counsel, contact the nearest consular office and they can provide you with a list of attorneys and other services. Consular offices will do whatever they can to protect your legitimate interests and insure that you are not discriminated against under local law. But they cannot get you out of jail. See Appendix D in the back of this Handbook for a list of what services a Consular office can and cannot provide for you.

Information concerning international legal assistance can be viewed at:

www.travel.state.gov/law/info/judicial/judicial_702.html or www.travel.state.gov, click on "Law and Policy" then "Judicial Assistance".

If you are arrested, immediately ask to notify the nearest U.S. Embassy. You have the right to contact the American Consulate. If you are unable to do this, try to have someone contact the embassy for you. The Consulate should visit you, contact family and friends and can assist in the transfer of money, clothing and food.

F. OFFICE OF OVERSEAS CITIZENS SERVICE

Should your family need to contact you while you are traveling (e.g. after the program is over), emergency assistance is available through the Pitt Study Abroad Office and the Citizens' Emergency Center of the Office of Overseas Citizens Services (OCS) operated by the State Department's Bureau of Consulate Affairs. That office is open from 8:15am to 10:00pm Monday through Saturday and can be reached at (202) 647-5225. Emergency communication after hours and on Sundays and holidays, contact can be made through the Overseas Citizens' Services duty officer at (202) 647-1512. They can, for example, transmit emergency messages from your family, provide protection in the event of an arrest or detention while abroad, transmit emergency funds to destitute nationals when commercial banking facilities are not available, etc.

It would be wise for you to provide your family with at least a tentative itinerary so that in an emergency, they can give the State Department some idea where to begin looking for you. Keep in contact with your parents on a regular schedule.

G. DRUG ARRESTS

Drug arrests and convictions among Americans are on the rise. If you are caught with illegal drugs overseas, you are subject to local, **NOT** U.S. laws. If you are arrested, you must realize:

- Few countries provide a jury trial
- Some countries employ the death penalty, with no questions asked
- Most countries do not accept bail
- Pre-trial detention can often last months
- Inhumane conditions may exist in the prisons
- Officials may not speak English

The rights an American enjoys in the States do not apply to travel abroad. Each country is sovereign and its laws apply to everyone who enters regardless of nationality. The U.S. government cannot get Americans released from foreign jails. However, a U.S. consul will insist on prompt access to an arrested American, provide a list of attorneys, and provide information on the host country's legal system, offer to contact the arrested Americans family or friends, visit on a regular basis, protest mistreatment, monitor jail conditions, provide dietary supplements, if needed, and keep the State Department informed.

In addition, as you are still a Pitt student and subject to the Student Code of Conduct while abroad, you may be subject to disciplinary proceedings at the University of Pittsburgh if you use, possess, distribute, sell, or are under the influence of illegal drugs or are knowingly present during the commission of the aforementioned violations while abroad. See Appendix D of this Handbook for a full listing of Offenses Related to Welfare, Health, or Safety (taken from the University of Pittsburgh's Student Code of Conduct). You are ultimately responsible for your behavior and choices at all times.

8. MONEY

A. BANKING

You may want to bring with you an amount of money you will need for the semester/year/summer. A way to travel with large amounts of money is via traveler's checks. Keep a list of the checks' serial numbers (and give a copy to your parents/guardian) and record where and when you spend each one. If you lose them, you will then know which are missing in order to have them replaced easily.

It is **NOT** recommended that you open a bank account in your host country. You should only consider doing so if it is strongly recommended by your program.

Many credit cards, debit cards and bank cards can be used for cash withdrawals at ATM machines and usually with good exchange rates. American Express also offers many services to travelers including quick and easy replacement of traveler's checks and the cashing of personal checks, if you are a cardholder. By having an ATM card with you, you can withdraw funds as well as make arrangements to have persons in the state supplement your funds.

It would be very wise to carry at least one credit card with you in case of an emergency. You may even carry two, i.e. American Express and Visa, but put them in two different places. In this way if you are robbed at any time, you will have a "Plan B."

Some large banks and American Express offices provide foreign currency traveler's checks. This service can alleviate high conversion fees, waiting in lines and are protected against loss and theft. Once you have opened a bank account overseas, it is possible to deposit the traveler's

checks directly into your account, avoiding the cost of wiring money and the wait time usually attached to U.S. bank cashier's checks.

Worldwide MasterCard ATM Locator:

<http://www.mastercard.com/atmlocator/index.jsp>

Worldwide Visa ATM Locator:

<http://visa.via.infonow.net/locator/global/jsp/SearchPage.jsp>

B. WIRING MONEY

Wiring money is fairly fast and very expensive. You could receive money from home within hours, but most banks worldwide will charge you to receive the money. In addition, most banks charge to send money. Charges at either end can be very high. For information about wiring money through Western Union, call (800) CALL-CASH.

9. TRAVEL ISSUES

A. INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMIT

If you expect to be driving while overseas, it is recommended that you have an International Driving Permit (www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1179.html). While some countries recognize a U.S. driver's license, others do not and may have restrictions such as age requirements or proof of insurance. Verify with your in-state insurance carrier what your insurance options are. First check with the nearest embassy or consulate to find out the specifics. To obtain an International Driving Permit, contact any AAA Office. The University does not recommend that you drive while overseas.

B. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD

There are a number of discounts, special fares, etc. available to students while traveling or studying overseas. In order to qualify for the special rates, you must prove that you are a student. The International Student Identity Card (ISIC), sponsored by the International Student Travel Conference and issued through the Council on International Education Exchange (CIEE), is one of the most widely recognized forms of proof of student status. Also, check the ISIC website for all offerings (www.isiccard.com). The discounts are usually very useful for most European countries, but usually do not apply to other parts of the world.

In addition, the ISIC provides the minimum health insurance coverage required by Pitt while abroad and access to a toll-free hotline that can provide assistance should a medical, financial, or legal emergency arise while you're abroad (see the Health Insurance section of this Handbook). ISIC cards also provides coverage of emergency evacuation and repatriation of remains coverages. To purchase a card, you will need to take \$25, a passport photo (you can get this at STA Travel), and your Pitt ID card to STA Travel at 118 Meyran Avenue .

C. INTERNATIONAL YOUTH HOSTELS

Staying in Youth Hostels is one of the most inexpensive ways to travel while abroad. Hostels are similar to dormitory style arrangements. usually men and women are separated and you share a room with other travelers. You can obtain a membership through the Hostelling International online www.hiayh.org (apply online or print out a faxable/mailable form) or through CIEE, or at the STA Travel on Meyran Avenue. A one-year membership costs \$28.

While most hostels do charge a higher fee for non-member, if you are only going to stay for one or two nights, it may not be worth the expense. You can also purchase International Hostel Directories and get information on making hostel reservations on the Hostelling International website (www.hiayh.org).

The Pros and Cons of Youth Hostels

Pros: Good if traveling alone, excellent opportunity to make friends, inexpensive and may offer cheap dining facilities.

Cons: Some hostels have early check-ins and nightly curfews; some do not take reservations; and if you don't have a membership, you may have to pay more or will be unable to access their services.

D. ALTERNATIVES TO HOSTELS

Look for family run hotels or "bed and breakfasts." These types of establishments offer inexpensive arrangements and usually include some meals. In different countries such inexpensive accommodations are called various names.

The following is a short list of these accommodations referred to in the native language for that country.

Great Britain - Bed and Breakfast
Scandinavia - Hus Rom
Germany - Zimmer
France - Chambre d'Hote
Italy - Camere Affita
Yugoslavia - Sobe
Greece - Dhomatia
Spain - Casas Particulares
Portugal - Quartos
Eastern Europe - Zimmer or Rooms
Japan - Ryokan
YMCAs also provide cheap rooms.

E. RAIL PASSES

If going to Europe, it might be useful to buy a Eurailpass (www.railpass.com/new/) which is good for unlimited travel throughout 17 countries. Do your homework to see if it is a good deal for you. Several types of Eurailpasses are available and all offer discounted rates. There are also "Britrail" and "Oz" passes for the U.K. and Australia. They can be purchased only in the United States. For more information go to a travel agency such as STA Travel (www.statravel.com) on Meyran Avenue.

F. WAYS TO SAVE MONEY

- Share traveling expenses
- Pack lunches from grocery stores for long trips or for everyday.
- Eat where the locals eat, which is often at home.
- Stay away from "western" hotels and restaurants; they are typically very expensive.
- Ask local people where the cheap places are, and the best ways to travel.

- Do not make phone calls from hotels; calling cards are the least expensive way to make phone calls.
- Beware - Postage is very expensive in most countries, including postcards.
- Courier Travel is often less expensive than traditional airline companies, although travel dates are very restricted. Be sure to check out the agency prior to contracting with them.

G. TRAVEL ADVICE

- Trips – Do not plan trips within or near a war zone or in an area where the inhabitants are unsympathetic to a U.S. cause.
- In large cities and other popular tourist destinations, avoid possible terrorist target areas, especially places frequented by Americans (e.g. American banks, American schools or churches, U.S. embassies and consulates, American Express, American-style eating places).
- Keep all valuables on your person in a discreet place, preferably stowed away in a money belt or a pouch that hangs around your neck and under clothing.
- Try to avoid arriving late at night to cities with which you are not familiar, and take along a reliable guidebook that lists restaurants and hotels/hostels.
- It is preferable to travel with another person. It is not advisable to sleep on a train if you're traveling alone.
- Do not agree to watch the belongings of a person whom you do not know.
- Do not borrow suitcases and ensure that nothing is inserted into yours.
- In all public places, remain alert.
- Remember that hitchhiking can be as dangerous as in the U.S. Hitchhiking is not advisable.
- Do not skimp on personal safety to save a few bucks. If where you are intending to stay does not look or feel safe, spend the extra money and time to find more comfortable lodging.

H. HOME STAY

Here are some suggestions:

- Be natural. Be you.
- Always keep an open mind and observe, observe, observe.
- Spend time with your host family/students in your residence from the start. Some families are going to be more open than others.
- Pictures of your home and family are a great icebreaker, and lead to great conversations.
- Do not run up to your room after dinner. Get involved. Stick around, watch TV, and chat with the family/students. Ask a lot of questions—take an interest in your city/country!
- Try to be as flexible as possible and your anxiety will decrease. Always remember that your family is in the same position as you are.
- Do not be tense. The first week will seem hard and you may be a little nervous, but just ask questions no matter how stupid the question seems to you.
- Talk openly with family members/students, especially if there is a problem.
- Be assertive. Do not wait for them to ask you everything - ask them too. They will not bite! Try to feel at home.
- Be conscious of the way your host(s) likes to live and be considerate of that.
- Remember that you are always a guest in your host's home, treat them with respect.
- Don't be bothered by first reactions or tone of voice. Inflections in certain languages could seem stern or disapproving.
- Remember that other cultures have different expressions (facial, body) which may seem

- rude by American standards, but may be perfectly normal in their own culture.
- Avoid conflict. Observe a lot the first few days and try to adapt or fall into the host's way of life (i.e. eating times and habits, sense of humor, etc.)

At first, living with a host family may be frustrating and difficult. Once your hosts know you're interested and are really trying to get to know them and the host country, they will help a lot. The student should make an effort. Do not be afraid to speak another language. After all, that's probably one of the main reasons you are studying abroad. It is very important to accept corrections and not care that you make mistakes. Try to speak with the family as often as possible.

10. RESEARCHING YOUR NEW HOME

One of the most common regrets students have about their study abroad experience is not preparing themselves in advance for what lies ahead. We strongly suggest that you research your country thoroughly before you leave - everything from ancient history to current events. Knowing the history of a country and its people will most likely provide you with an insight to every "why" question you ask. We can't cover every culture to which Pitt students are headed in our orientations so below you will find some great ways to find the information on your own.

Some resources to help you get started:

- The Internet. Right at your fingertips is perhaps the most up-to-date source of information for your country. Check out <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/> for current information on the people, history, government, and economy of a country.
- The library - Check out the Suggested Reading List in Appendix C. Read old articles from major newspapers and magazines, such as *The New York Times* and *Newsweek* to catch up on the current events of your host country and the U.S.
- Professors in the History/ Anthropology/ Literature/ Business/ Art/ Architecture/ etc. departments. Many professors have lived abroad and/or can advise on books to read.
- The Study Abroad Office has some evaluations of former participants. Contact someone who has studied in the country and even on the same program to which you are headed.
- The Office of International Services (OIS) and also the Study Abroad Office assist many students from other countries who study at Pitt. Both offices may be able to put you in touch with these students.

11. "WHAT DO I PACK???"

Your first urge will probably be to pack everything you own. After all, you are going away to college for an entire semester, and you always bring everything you own to school. This seems logical, unless you are going to college overseas and you have to carry, all by yourself, everything you bring. Not to mention, most airlines prohibit you from checking in more than two bags and airlines have very strict weight limitations (check with your specific carrier).

One piece of advice - Pack everything you **THINK** you will **NEED** one week before you leave. Then, the day before take off, unpack exactly half of it and leave it at home.

The moral of the story is to **PACK LIGHT**. U.S. students tend to want to wear something different every day of the week. You will find that in most every other country, this is not the case. Usually no one cares if you wear the same thing two or three days in a row. A good supply of socks and underwear are the main things you will need. It is not necessary to buy

tons of new things that you think you will need for your trip. Purchase them there and **TRAVEL LIGHT**. You will probably want to buy some new clothes in the local fashion when you arrive anyway. Bulky things can usually be mailed ahead of time. Comfortable, water-resistant shoes are a must. You will most likely be doing a lot of walking - wherever you go.

Be aware of how people treat you according to your dress, and then dress according to how you want to be treated. For example, dressing to advertise that you are from the U.S. may make you less approachable by the natives and more of a target for thieves. If you want to assimilate into the culture, and speak the language as much as possible, be aware of the cultural nuances of clothing, dress, and style.

Your new host country friends will probably enjoy seeing where you live - bring a postcard from home, or a picture of your house. A small map of the United States will help you explain where Pittsburgh or your home is located. A few of your favorite pictures of your girlfriend, boyfriend, family, dog, and/or friends, could also help you with those moments of homesickness. Keep a travel journal or diary even if it is the first time you have ever done this. Students report that they have forgotten events, people, places that they were certain they would not just a semester later.

For questions about bulk/surface mail, call: U.S. Postal Answer Line at 1-800-725-2161. Additional information about bulk/surface mail is also listed in Appendix A: Customs Regulations. Or check their website <http://www.usps.com/>.

12. COMMUNICATIONS WITH HOME

A. Telephone

Calling home from other countries can be very expensive; often more expensive than calling from the U.S. to these countries. Several companies such as AT&T, MCI, and Sprint offer calling cards which can make calling home easier and less expensive. Consult your telephone directory or the World Wide Web for information about these cards. In addition there are often prepaid calling cards available in foreign countries. The rates vary widely, but some students have found that this method is more cost effective. In some countries, you may be able to find a short term cell phone plan that is reasonable. In any case, these options are worth checking into once you have arrived in your country of study. **Note:** Parents/guardians are anxious to know that you have arrived safely in your host country. A phone call upon arrival is typically much appreciated and money well spent.

B. Email

For a really inexpensive way to communicate with friends and family back home, check into establishing an email account abroad. Although students receive an email account as part of Pitt's university services, this may not be true in your situation abroad. Be sure to ask what kind of arrangements for email are available. Should you not receive email access through your academic institution, there are often cyber cafes available where you can set up an account for a monthly fee. Even with the fee, email can be much less expensive than phone.

One caution about email: this quick and inexpensive way to keep in touch with everyone at home can be very tempting. And while it's important to keep in touch with your friends and family, be careful not to spend all of your time in front of a computer! Get out and experience the country that you are in and spend time with your new friends. After all, isn't that why you're there?

CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES

1. CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Wondering about what your initial experience might be like in your host country? Getting anxious that you'll do everything wrong and won't be prepared to understand what is happening around you?

The following are a few disconcerting situations that even "well prepared" study abroad participants experienced:

- Not knowing how to set the dinner table.
- Making embarrassing hand gestures without even realizing it.
- Misinterpreting hand gestures.
- Not getting innuendoes.
- Not understanding what people are saying even though they are speaking English.
- Ordering chips and getting fries.
- Knowing when to kiss and when not to.
- Living in the host country for 6 months and still getting gasps of surprise from host nationals when you say a basic greeting and order food in a restaurant.

All of the above mentioned situations and many others that you may experience are all a part of the learning process. How you react to these situations will guide your process of cultural adjustment. Culture shock/adjustment is anxiety experienced by those who attempt to go about normal, daily activities in the absence of familiar patterns of communication and social interaction. Our expectations of the host culture, shaped by our own patterns of behavior or culture, sometimes 'clash' with the reality of the host country's culture. Initially many travelers experience feelings of anxiousness and excitement, which turn to feelings of discomfort, frustration, or anxiety over the absence of familiar patterns. Eventually these feelings change again and mellow out as you begin to accommodate and integrate new cultural norms.

Three Responses to the Process of Cultural Adjustment: Fight, Flight, and Adaptation. The disease called "always being right" best expresses the response **FIGHT**. This is wanting to show the natives a better way of doing something; more effective, quicker, etc. Be very conscious of some of your responses and behaviors. You may have engaged in "Fight" and have been unaware of it. Your journal can assist you here because you can analyze your daily interactions.

You may notice U.S. students hanging out together a lot while studying abroad. These students are engaged in **FLIGHT**. That is, avoidance of the host culture and things that make them feel uncomfortable by surrounding themselves with only familiar people and things.

ADAPTATION basically represents the **PROCESS** of adjustment, i.e., understanding the culture of your host country, accepting new ideas and integrating new concepts into your existing patterns of interaction. During this process you may find yourself compromising. There is nothing wrong with that. You must decide for yourself what actions are right for you. You may realize that for your acceptance into your new community you may do things that you would not do at home. That's okay, because you are not at home and the rules are different there.

Here's an example: "In my host family, the expectation was that the father was always served by a female member of the family during meals. On one occasion all of the

women, except for me, were out and I was to take care of dinner. From my American and personal point of view, I find it very difficult to be expected to wait on someone, particularly in a family setting. However, I served my host father out of respect for him and the community I was living in. I could have made other decisions about this situation and held to my personal values, but that might have created an uncomfortable situation.”

Remember, the emotional highs and lows of studying abroad are NORMAL. It happens to everyone, though some experience it more severely than others. Studying abroad is similar to surfing, some days you have great curls and other days you have bumper waves. Over time it all evens out, as you adapt to your new cultural environment.

Helpful websites for understanding different cultures:

<http://escapeartist.com> www.fodors.com www.lonelyplanet.com www.ricksteves.com

2. A NOTE TO WOMEN

You may find that stereotypes about American women abound overseas. The stereotypes, as you can imagine, are not always flattering. Rather, they tend to suggest that U.S. women are very sexually active, most likely using TV and movies as examples.

Words of wisdom from women travelers:

- Be careful of talking about sex. It may equate as a come on.
- Be careful in asking men to dance in clubs.
- Be aware of going to clubs alone. This may be interpreted as an "open invitation".
- Do not hitchhike alone and think twice about doing it in pairs.
- Do not respond to the many catcalls you may receive. Just walk on.
- Be firm and assertive when you say **NO**. Be clear and direct to be certain that your intention and the words are understood.
- Be aware that things which may appear as normal to you, such as getting drunk or asking someone to walk you home, may be misconstrued as an indication of poor character and place you in uncomfortable situations.

Violence against women is a growing concern all over the world. Sometimes when women are out of familiar environment, guards are let down. Always be alert and use the same safety precautions as you would in Pittsburgh, no matter where you are going. If something negative should happen to you, go to someone related to your program for assistance. Unfortunately, in many countries the issue of female harassment is handled quite lightly and you may be treated accordingly.

On the same note, women are subject to the same kinds of dangers abroad as they are in the United States, including the danger of rape. The occurrence of rape is often accompanied by the use of date-rape drugs, such as roofies and GHB (also known as Liquid Ecstasy, it produces a state similar to that of being drunk). Again, use the same precautions abroad that you would in the U.S., and think about these three simple common sense measures that could prevent you from being drugged:

- Do not leave your drink unattended or exchange drinks with anyone else.
- Don't accept a drink from anyone, no matter how nice they seem.
- Avoid drinking from a large open container (no bathtub gin!)

3. A NOTE TO MEN

Many of the above concerns apply to men as well as women. Again, the actions which seem perfectly normal and natural in the U.S., can easily be misconstrued or out of place in another country. Be aware of the accepted, cultural norms which surround the country you are in. You are ultimately responsible for your own well-being.

4. THE JOURNAL

When many study abroad participants return home, they experience difficulty in articulating their experiences in meaningful ways. They find that most people really are not interested in their adventures. So many times their experience is summed up as, "It was great," or something similar. To say the least, this situation can become very frustrating.

Your journal can be one way of working through this frustration before you return home and can take many forms. Depending on the type of journal you choose for yourself, it will elicit different "ways of seeing" or making sense out of the cultural milieu you are experiencing. In the following paragraphs we will explore a few different types of journals and the benefits of each. Three types of journals are discussed: interpersonal, ethnographic, and creative.

A. INTERPERSONAL

The conventional interpersonal or psychological journal is similar to the traditional diary you might have kept when you were young. Topics for entries would center on how you are feeling, what your day consisted of, etc.

B. ETHNOGRAPHIC

The ethnographic journal is concerned with 'objective' observations and descriptions of cultural interactions occurring around you and involving you. This type of journal assists the writer with developing themes or categories from which to organize and understand the culture in which you are living. The method used for collecting information for this type of log is called 'participant observation.' This basically means that the 'researcher' lives among the people s/he is trying to understand, takes part in their social life, watches what happens, and asks questions when s/he doesn't understand. Early on in this process one does more observing of events, behaviors, and activities rather than asking questions. This process can be best understood as a circular process, i.e, making observations, asking locals about those observations, checking what they say against more observations and so on. Through this process you may develop themes or categories to begin making sense out of the culture you are experiencing.

C. CREATIVE

The last category of journals is the creative journal. This format would be used to collect interesting antidotes, experiences, oral histories, etc. These would be for later uses in short stories, newspaper or magazine articles, playwriting ideas, etc. It can also become a media format. In this case you might make a photographic exhibit highlighting specific cultural themes, points of cultural conflict, or political statements. Similarly, you could produce a video documenting different aspects of your experiences. You might decide to do a combination of all three types of journals. Some students have commented that if you write enough detail about the events that happened to you, then you will not have to write about your feeling because when you reread your journal entries the feelings will all come back again.

5. HOMESICKNESS/COPING

Almost everybody experiences it. It is completely normal. Dealing with it is important so that it does not hinder your valuable time in your new home.

Be nice to yourself. Cry a little, take some time out to be alone, write a long letter to someone you miss, but try to concentrate on the good things that you are doing and seeing. Then pick yourself up and go out and have some fun. Try not to let yourself be in a slump for a whole day. You're in a very exciting place with so much to see and do and so little time. You may want to develop some of your pictures and send them home, so that you can be reminded that you are indeed experiencing something unique!

6. COMING HOME

*Leaving your friends to go back to your friends,
Leaving your family to go back to your family,
Leaving your home to go back to your home.*

Coming home can be a challenging experience for study abroad participants; feelings of anxiety begin well before the day you actually return to the U.S. It is another adjustment to make which involves many conflicting feelings and which will require time and understanding by you, your friends and your family. This last adjustment process, known as "reverse culture shock" or "re-entry shock," is sometimes worse than the original culture shock you experienced when first entering your host culture. This is because upon return home you won't be experiencing that wealth of newness and feeling of adventure like you do when you first go abroad.

While preparing to return home you may be very excited to see your family and friends. At the same time however, you will probably be upset to leave your new found home and friends. You will probably only then realize how close you've grown to your friends and/or host family. You will realize that life has gone on without you back home, but that it was not nearly as exciting or adventuresome as your time was overseas.

Your return home may also be as uncomfortable for your friends and family as it is for you. Give them time to re-learn you and take the time to re-learn them—after all, you've all changed! You may use words that are unfamiliar, feel insecure away from your surrogate family and friends, feel superior for what you have accomplished and learned, experience a shift in political ideas, have difficulty communicating what you have learned, and experience identity issues as you try to fit back into life at home.

It will be easier for all those involved if you keep them well informed of what you have been going through throughout the semester or year. Talking to your friends and family about this readjustment process before you return home can be beneficial.

It is very important to remember that all of these feelings are very normal, and it will simply take time to readjust.

7. REMAINING A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD IN THE U.S.

International Outlets on Campus

There are a number of things that you can do to make the transition between abroad and home a pleasant one. You can make use of your experience in a number of ways:

- Become an Intern in the Study Abroad Office - Interns advise students on study abroad opportunities and complete special projects such as chatting on line to Pitt students abroad and helping with promotional events.
- Expand your academic interests to encompass your experiences, i.e., a minor in Art History or an area studies certificate.
- Communicate with others sharing similar experiences in order to verbalize thoughts, feelings, reactions and difficulties encountered at home.

- Read your journal.
- Rework your resume to highlight your study abroad. Be specific and explain some of your highlights, i.e., guest lectures, historical events witnessed, etc.
- Take part in the annual "Pitt Around the Planet " photo contest during International Week (information available in the Study Abroad Office).
- Start researching your next adventure abroad - study, work, intern, or volunteer overseas again!
- Talk to Career Services about how to make the most of your international experience.
- Remember, you are a role model to students who have not been out of the country. Share your experiences and inspire them to follow your example.
- Enter the Transitions Abroad Travel Writing Contest (www.TransitionsAbroad.com).
- Write for the literary journal edited by study abroad interns entitled "The Road Less Traveled" (www.abroad.pitt.edu/initiatives/litmag.html)

PRE-PLANNING CHECKLIST

DON'T FORGET TO DO OR BRING THESE ITEMS:

- _____ Copy of Study Abroad Contract (original must be in Study Abroad Office)
- _____ Passport/Visa
- _____ Financial Aid
- _____ Immunizations
- _____ Housing upon return
- _____ Registration
- _____ Leave a copy of all vital information at home and keep a copy with you. First two pages of your passport, traveler's checks numbers, credit card numbers, medical prescriptions, and any other essential documents.
- _____ Learn about the places you plan to visit, i.e., customs, political system, etc. Contact the National Tourist agency of your country (ies) of destination. Tell them what you are planning to do and most will send you FREE information, maps, etc.
- _____ Learn some of the language.
- _____ Talk to other people who have visited that country, meet host nationals
- _____ Familiarize yourself with the measurement, time, and monetary system of your country
- _____ Pack light and walk around the block with your bags to make sure you will be able to handle them alone.
- _____ Give yourself a budget to span the length of your stay.
- _____ Take a small amount of foreign currency with you. You may need it for transportation from the airport, coffee in the airport, etc.
- _____ Take copies of necessary medical and eyeglass/contact prescriptions
- _____ Other

APPENDIX A

Customs Information

Before You Leave the United States

Become familiar with **U.S. CUSTOMS REGULATIONS**. If you plan to take foreign-made personal articles (watches, cameras etc.) with you, consider getting a certificate of registration from the customs office nearest to you or at any port of exit from the United States. This certificate will expedite free entry of those items when you return by offering proof that they were not purchased overseas.

Entering a Foreign Country

Customs declaration forms are distributed on ships and planes and should be prepared in advance of your arrival for presentation to the immigration customs inspectors. Whether or not you have anything to declare, you must at least fill out the identification section of the form.

Upon entering the foreign country, you must show your passport, turn in your customs declaration form and pass through a baggage check. Customs regulations and procedures, as well as the purpose, nature and thoroughness of the customs check will vary radically from country to country. If you are traveling with any unusual items or large quantities of any kind of goods, check with the appropriate embassy before departure to find out if such articles are prohibited from entry.

Sending Items Home

- Any single item worth more than \$25 is liable for customs tax. Mark inexpensive gifts "UNSOLICITED GIFT: VALUE UNDER \$25" and no duty will need to be paid by the recipient.
- Books can usually be mailed home at a special rate if they are packed according to certain specifications. They are exempt from duty regulations.
- When sending clothing home, you should declare them as "USED CLOTHING" of an American abroad, which has no commercial value, so that you are not charged any duty. Used clothing does not include items that were purchased abroad and then worn.
- You can also ship home personal goods of U.S. origin duty free if you mark them as "American goods returned."
- Liquor cannot be mailed to the United States.

CAUTION: Do not misrepresent what may be contained in packages. U.S. Customs opens packages regularly and randomly (not just "suspicious looking ones"), and making a false declaration can be a serious matter.

Re-entry into the United States

The booklet "Customs Hints for Returning U.S. Residents – Know Before You Go" is available from the department of Treasury, U.S. Customs Service, P.O. Box 7407, Washington, DC 20044. Note that customs regulations can change at any time.

- Everyone must complete the identification portion of the customs form.
- Duty regulations allow you to bring in \$800 of goods duty free; you pay a flat rate on the next \$1,000 worth. If you fail to declare or understate the value, penalties can be severe.
- Declarable goods include items that you bought at duty-free shops abroad, gifts given to you and articles worn or used.
- The goods that you bring from duty-free must be for your personal or household use and cannot include more than 100 cigars, 200 cigarettes and one liter of alcohol. Also, you must be at least 21 years old to bring alcohol into the United States.
- If you do not exceed the duty-free limitation, you need only declare the total value of the goods accompanying you.
- If you surpass the limitations, you must fill out the written declaration form listing everything acquired abroad that you bring home and the price paid.
- All items included on your declaration form must accompany you.

Remember that “duty-free” only means that you did not pay local taxes in the country of purchase. Also remember to watch the prices in the duty-free shops.

APPENDIX B

Planning for a Healthy Journey

To be footloose and fancy-free is the dream of every traveler. But even small problems, particularly when they are health-related, can make the dream a nightmare. When you’re setting off on your own, it’s important to take a few basic precautions to insure your health overseas.

Are you one of the many people confused about what vaccinations to get before your travels? The most reliable source for the international traveler to start with is the CenterS for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>.

They will tell you the latest health requirements of the countries you want to visit. Be aware that the information is subject to change.

Health Certificate

First, your immunization record will be no good if it is not recorded on the International Health Certificate available from the CDC and approved by the World Health Organization (WHO). It must be complete in every detail; if incomplete or inaccurate, you risk being denied entry or revaccination at the border. In some countries this could mean that one needle is used for all travelers without sterilization in between jabs, so you stand a good chance of contracting hepatitis, AIDS, etc. For those reasons, it is important to find a doctor who has some knowledge of the International Health Regulations adopted by WHO that monitors the spread of diseases in the world. In addition, your doctor needs to possess a “Uniform Stamp” to validate your International Health Certificate. The best resources are travel clinics, usually associated with university medical centers or public health departments.

Immunization

For up-to-date immunization information, see these websites:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
World Health Organization www.who.int/en/

To schedule your immunizations, contact or your family physician:

Allegheny County Health Department (412) 687-ACHD
www.achd.net

HIV/AIDS

The most recent requirement for entering some countries is HIV testing, and particularly singled out are students. In addition, a number of countries are denying entry to persons with AIDS and those whose test results indicate infection with HIV is growing. Check with the embassy or the country you plan to visit for regulations. U.S. test results are not accepted by most of the countries listed by the U.S. State Department as of today. www.cdc.gov

Malaria

Information on malaria risk in specific countries can be obtained from the CDC special hotline for current malaria prevention and advice at (770) 488-7788. Doctors can obtain information concerning treatments and drugs for parasitic diseases at (404) 639-3670. There are several different strains of malaria on which your doctor should advise, depending on which country you will be traveling. You should know that the antimalaria drugs can cause mild to serious adverse reactions, and that you may acquire malaria regardless of methods used. In some cases, doctors and health officials do not adequately advise or inform travelers about the risks, side effects, or other contraindications of the drugs or vaccines they prescribe for travelers. For instance, no vaccine is completely effective or safe and some can cause adverse reactions from minor to major illness depending on the individual.

Dengue

Dengue fever has become the newest travelers' disease and has been spreading rapidly in the last 20 year, according to the CDC. The disease is usually benign and self-limiting. There is no vaccine or specific treatment available. It is transmitted by the Aedes mosquito, that prefers to feed on humans during the day. Malaria is transmitted by the bite of an infected female Anopheles mosquito. It is most active at dusk and dawn. In this case, more important than medicines to the traveler are protective measures such as mosquito netting, clothes that cover the whole body, and insect repellent for the exposed skin. In addition, travelers should spray Permethrin on their clothing and mosquito netting.

Personal Protection

Estimating the risk of illness for international travel depends on how and where you travel. You should understand the hazards of international travel and find a doctor who is willing to spend the time providing you with information on how to treat medical problems that might occur during your journey. Remember, you want to experience the charms of a country, not its medical facilities.

Pre-Departure Checklist

Robert Kohls in his book Survival Kit for Overseas Living (International Press) recommends the following predeparture checklist:

- Make an appointment to see your doctor at least three months ahead of departure for a physical and required immunizations.
- Find out from your Public Health Service if gamma globulin shots, a preventative measure against hepatitis, are recommended for the country of region where you plan to travel. (www.achd.net)
- Request copies of medical records that would be important to the treatment of problems you might encounter overseas: X-rays, a record of your blood type, prescriptions written in a generic form, dental records, and a letter describing any special health problems.
- Remember that U.S. prescriptions cannot be honored overseas. Take additional prescribed drugs with you and be sure that you have a doctor's letter with you describing, in generic terms, what these drugs are and how they are used. Sometimes, prescription drugs in the U.S. can be bought over the counter in other countries. Beware, however, of buying potent drugs over the counter. Always ask careful questions about what you're purchasing.
- Bring eyeglasses prescriptions and an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses. If you are using an electric cleaner for your contact lenses, make sure that you have the appropriate transformers or find other methods of cleaning. Bring extra dentures too, if you wear them.
- Bring a medical kit. Standard items, which may be useful abroad, include adhesive tape, cotton swabs, gauze, Band-Aids, sterile cleaners and anti-bacterial ointment. Depending upon the country, it might be useful to have water purification tablets, salt tablets, skin lotion and moisturizer, insect repellent, antihistamines and painkillers.

Learn how to find a doctor overseas. If you are with a program, your director should be able to tell you who is reliable. If you are traveling by yourself, you might contact a Western-style hotel to ask which doctor they refer their guests to. You might go to a University Hospital, or contact a U.S. consulate for a list of doctors. IAMAT, the International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers (417 Center St. Lewiston, NY 14092, phone (716)754-4883) www.iamat.org, provides a list of English-speaking doctors all over the world. There is no fee, but donations to this non-profit worldwide organization are welcomed.

Travel Advisories

Ask your doctor which vaccinations are necessary prior to departure to your destination. Are there particular health problems? Phone the U.S. State Department Overseas Citizen Emergency Center www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1187.html at (888) 407-4747 between 8:15 am and 10 PM. EST on weekdays for information on current health conditions worldwide. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov) provides up to date information on immunizations, current health risks, travel advisories, and embassy information for any country. The phone number is (404) 639-3311.

The Centers for Disease and Control publishes "Health Information for International Travelers", a yearly update on health vaccinations and other health issues (Washington, DC 20402, (877) FYI-TRIP) <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/contentYellowBook.aspx>. Other pamphlets are "Before You Travel" (American College Health Assoc., P.O. Box 28937, Baltimore MD 21240-8937, website: www.acha.org), "Health Concerns for International Travelers" (Travel Health

Information Service, see above) and “Self Care” (Krames Communications, 780 Township Line Rd., Yardley, PA 19067, (800) 333-3032).

If you have a health condition which requires routine attention, prepare to deal with the condition overseas. The Health Guide for International Travel (Passport Books) suggests the following steps:

- Prior to departure, visit your doctor to determine if any limitations apply to your travel overseas. Arrange for any prescriptions or staff-assisted medications you will require. Bring a doctor’s statement with you describing your medical problem, a generic prescription for drugs you may require for its treatment, and a very clear explanation about any drugs or medical paraphernalia that you are carrying with you. Bring copies of any relevant records: X-rays, EKG’s etc.
- Check your insurance coverage. Be sure that the medical insurance you carry will cover you in all overseas situations; if it does not, obtain the necessary insurance.

APPENDIX C

International Health Insurance

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE

The following is a list of available international health insurance providers. These are not recommendations of the Study Abroad Office, rather they are simply listings.

Wallach & Company

(800) 237 6615

www.wallach.com

Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI)

(800) 303-8120, ext. 5137

www.culturalinsurance.com

Champion Insurance Advantage, Ltd.

(800) 643-4675

info@champion-ins.com

www.charm.net/~roy/index.html

Hinchcliff International Group Services

(800) 242-4178

www.hthstudents.com

Worldwide Medical Insurance

(800) 257-7718

www.glg.com

APPENDIX D

SUGGESTED READING LIST

CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES:

- *The Art of Crossing Cultures*. Stori, Craig. International Press Inc., 1990.
- *The Survival Kit for Overseas Living*. Kohls, Robert. Intercultural Press, 1979.
- *Dos And Don'ts Taboos Around the World*. Axtell, Roger. Benjamin Books, NY, 1990.
- *All You Need to Know About Living Abroad*. Pierce, Elanor. Doubleday, NY, latest edition.
- *Their Heads are Green and Their Hands are Blue*. Bowles, Paul.

JOURNAL RELATED:

- *Interpretation of Culture*. Geertz, Clifford. Basic Books, NY, 1973
- *Return to Laughter. (Teaching Shakespeare to the Tiv)* Bohannon, Laurel.
- *The Travel Writer's Handbook*. Zobel, Louise. Writer's Digest Books, OH, 1984
- *The Mysteries of Pittsburgh*. Chabon, Michael. W. Morrow, NY, 1988

OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO WOMEN:

- *International Places of Interests to Women*. Ferrari, Marianne, ed. Ferrari Publications, 1991
- *In Another Dimension: A Guide for Women who Live Overseas*. Piet-Pelon, Nancy and Barbara Hornby. Yarmouth, ME, International Press Inc., 1985
- *Our Sisters' London: Feminist Walking Tours*. Chicago, Chicago Review Press, 1990

MORE WOMEN'S TRAVEL RESOURCES

Guidebooks:

- *Gutsy Women: Travel Tips and Wisdom for the Road* by Marybeth Bond. Travelers' Tales Inc. 1996
- *Gutsy Mamas: Travel Tips and Wisdom for Mothers on the Road* by Marybeth Bond.
- *Go Girl! The Black Woman's Book of Travel and Adventure* by Elaine Lee, editor. (Information, Advice and Encouragement and 52 Tales of Travel by writers Audre Lord, Alice Walker, Maya Angelou, and others) Eighth Mountain Press, 1996.
- *Active Woman Vacation Guide: True Stories by Women Travelers Plus 1001 Exciting Adventure Tips* by Evelyn Kaye, Blue Panda Publications, 1997.
- *A Journey of One's Own: Uncommon Advice for the Independent Women Traveler* by Thalia Zepatos. Eighth Mountain Press, 1996.
- *More Women Travel: Adventures and Advice from More Than 60 Countries* Natania Jansz and Miranda Davies, editors. A Rough Guide Publication, distributed by the Penguin Group, 1995.
- *A Foxy Old Woman's Guide to Traveling Alone* by Jay Ben-Lesser, Crossing Press, 1995.
- *Handbook for Women Travelers* by Maggie and Gemma Moss, Piatkus Books, 1995.
- *Without a Guide* by Katherine Grovier, Hungry Mind Pub, 1996.
- *Solo: On Her Own Adventure* Susan Fox Rogers, editor. Seal Pr Feminist Pub, 1996.
- *Season of Adventure* Jean Gould, editor. Seal Pr Feminist Pub, 1997.
- *Traveling Solo* by Eleanor Berman, Globe Pequot Press, 1997.
- *Safety and Security for Women Who Travel* by Sheila Swan and Peter Laufer, O'Reilly &

Assoc, 1998.

Genre Writing:

- *A Woman's World: True Stories of Life on the Road* Marybeth Bond, editor. Travelers' Inc., 1997.
- *My Journey to Lhasa* by Alexandra David-Neel. Beacon Press, 1986.
- *Maiden Voyages, Writings from Women Travelers* Marry Morris, editor. Vintage, 1993.
- *Full Tilt: India to Ireland with a Bicycle* by Dervla Muprhy. Overlook Press, 1987.
- *Nothing to Declare: Memoirs of a Woman Traveling Alone* by Marry Morris. Penguin Books, 1998.
- *Tracks: A Woman's Solo Trek Across 1,700 miles of Australian Outback* by Robyn Davidson. Random House, 1995.
- *Desert Places* by Robyn Davidson, Penguin, 1997.
- *Femme d'Aventure: Travel Tales From Inner Montana to Outer Mongolia* by Jessica Maxwell. Seal Press, 1997.
- *Miles from Nowhere: A Round the World Bicycle Adventure* by Barbara Savage. Mountaineers Books, 1985.
- *Shooting the Boh: A Woman's Voyage Down the Wildest River in Borneo* by Tracy Johnston. Random HoUSe, 1992.
- *Unsuitable For Ladies: An Anthology of Women Travelers* selected by Jane Robinson. Oxford University Press, 1994.
- *Edith Wharton Abroad: Selected Travel Writings 1888-1920* Sarah Bird Wright, editor. St. Martin's Press, 1996.

WEBSITES:

The Journey Woman network
Women's Travel Magazine

www.journeywoman.com
www.passionfruit.com

TRAVEL BOOKS:

- Bayse, Jennifer; *The Air Courier's Handbook – Travel the World on a Shoestring; Big City* Books,; 7047 Hidden Lane; Loomis, CA 95650 (not available in stores)
- *The Courier Air Travel Handbook* (no other information available.)
- Monaghan, Kelly; *The Insiders Guide to Air Courier Bargains*, (most highly recommended, no other information)
- *The Lets Go... series* has books for practically every area in the world, the passages are written by student travelers. Harvard Student Agencies, INC. (Available at Pitt's Book Center).
- *The Rough Guide series*. Travel books for every budget. Available at Pitt's Book Center and online at www.travel.roughguides.com
- *Lonely Planet Travel Guides* www.lonelyplanet.com

GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDERED RESOURCES:

- Likosky, Stephan, ed. *Coming Out: An Anthology of International Gay and Lesbian Writings*. NY: Pantheon Books, 1992
- Miller, Neil. *Out in the World: Gay and Lesbian Life from Buenos Aries to Bangkok*. Ithaca, NY: Vintage Books, 1992.

- Hendriks, Art. *The Third Pink Book: A Global View of Lesbian and Gay Liberation and Oppression*. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1993.
- Herdt, Gilbert. *Same Sex, Different Cultures: Gay and Lesbians Across Cultures*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997.
- Van Gelder, Lindsay and Pamela R. Brandt. *Are You Two... Together? A Lesbian Travel Guide to Europe*, NY: Random House, 1991
- Other Internet resources:

Queer Resources Directory

www.grd.org

International Gay and Lesbian Association

www.ilga.org

Gay and Lesbian National Hotline

www.glnh.org

Gay & Lesbian Travel Resource Guide

www.gaymart.com/travel/world.html

Youth Resource Directory

www.youthresource.com

International Gay & Human Rights Commission

www.IGLHRC.org

College and University GLBT-related sites:

O.A.S.I.S., University College Cork

www.ucc.ie/students/socs/oasis/

Imperial Queers, Imperial College

www.su.ic.ac.uk/IQ

LBG Society, Oxford University

<http://lgbsoc.com>

Purple Pages, Cambridge University

<http://bi.org/~purple>

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES RESOURCES:

University of Pittsburg – Disability Resources and Services

www.drs.pitt.edu

(412) 648-7890

(412) 383-7355 TTY

Mobility International USA

www.miusa.org

Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality

www.sath.org

APPENDIX E

Offenses Related to Welfare, Health, or Safety

An offense related to welfare, health, or safety is committed when a student:

1. Uses, possesses, or manufactures, without University authorization, firearms, explosives, weapons, or other dangerous articles or substances injurious to person or property.
2. Refuses to vacate buildings, street walks, driveways, or other facilities of the University when directed to do so by an official of the University or any other lawful authority having just cause or fails to vacate a University building, including residence halls, when a fire alarm sounds.
3. Uses, possesses, distributes, sells, or is under the influence of narcotics, hallucinogenics, dangerous drugs, controlled substances except as permitted by law, or possesses drug paraphernalia which can be demonstrated to be linked to drug activity, such as bong with drug residue.
4. Students who are knowingly present during the commission of the violation(s) of "uses, possesses, distributes, sells, or is under the influence of narcotics, hallucinogenics, dangerous drugs, controlled substances except as permitted by law, or possesses paraphernalia which can be demonstrated to be linked to drug activity, such as bong with residue," will be subject to disciplinary proceedings.
5. Possesses or consumes alcoholic beverages if under the age permitted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or if in facilities where prohibited by the University; or dispenses alcoholic beverages to an individual who is under the age permitted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, or violates any provision of the University alcohol policies.
6. Students who are knowingly present during the commission of the violation(s) of "possesses or consumes alcoholic beverages if under the age permitted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or if in facilities where prohibited by the University; or dispenses alcoholic beverages to an individual who is under the age permitted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, or violates any of provision of the University alcohol policies," will be subject to disciplinary proceedings.
7. Falsely reports a fire, or activates emergency warning equipment, or communicates false information regarding the existence of explosives on University property.
8. Abuses, removes, or damages fire safety equipment.
9. Engages in games of chance for money or other gain in violation of the law.
10. Ignites or burns materials which cause a fire.
11. Ignites or burns incense, candles, and/or like materials.
12. Violates University restrictions on smoking.

APPENDIX F

Passport and Visa Services

Travisa

(202)463-6166

www.travisa.com

America Passport

(800) 573-3738

www.americapassport.com

Briggs Passport and Visa Agency

(800) 218-6284

www.abriggs.com

Affordable Passports

(877) 973-0900

www.affordablepassport.com

Perry International

(312) 372-2703

www.perryvisa.com

Passport Express

(800) 362-8196

www.passportexpress.com

Travel Documents Express

Washington, DC (202)785-3250

(no available website)

APPENDIX G

From: American Student's Guide

When you go abroad to study, it is you who decides what kind of experience you're going to have. Will you live your familiar American way of life, or will you try to adapt as much as possible to your host culture? Dr John Engle, President of the American University Center of Provence, has fun with stereotypes in order to provide you with some helpful advice.

STUDY OVERSEAS

Creating your Personal Experience Abroad

More than most things, your upcoming semester or year studying abroad will be what you make of it. Of course, certain parameters are always going to be out of your control, like say, sighting Monsieur or Mademoiselle Right across a Parisian bistro, or, on the bad side, light-fingered pickpockets, lost luggage gnomes or, who knows, the luck of the draw awarding you a host family named Addams.

For most everything else, though, whether you're off to Dakar, Tokyo, or London, it's going to be you in charge of the quality of your time overseas. You can count on your on-site program coordinators to do their best to create an appropriate context, but in the end your experience abroad will be more or less what you make of it.

Naturally enough, the first step is to decide what kind of experience that's going to be. In the simplest of terms, that breaks down to choosing between two options: do you want to live in a protected cultural bubble with other Americans when you're in a foreign country, or do you want to venture forth and become a living part of your host culture?

For a closer look at these options, let's glance at two composite sketches drawn from the files of INTERCULT, the international agency charged with monitoring cultural faux pas (not to mention misused subjunctives). Names have been changed to protect the culturally timid:

Case A:

Boppsy, Age 20, junior

One semester in a southern European capital. After five months abroad, cannot name the Prime Minister of her host country, but knows everybody at Nelligan's, that American place with the great brunch that had the Super Bowl live on cable. Shares an apartment with another student from the program. Called a friend an hour after the homecoming game to know the score. Hangs out regularly with those Swedish guys in class who speak English so incredibly well. On her second Eurailpass has seen everything. Did ten hours on the train for a weekend at Oktoberfest; it was great. Feels silly speaking a foreign language with other Americans. Thinks it's disgusting that so many Europeans smoke. Ditto for eating raw shellfish, plus restaurants display it outside (funny little refrigerators probably too small anyway). Missed the program's first two walking tours because they were on Friday (Nelligan's has that happy hour), but plans to see the cathedral before she leaves. Her classes are kind of a blow-off but it's no biggy; only needs C's for credit. Follows Wizard of Id in the Herald Tribune. Wants to stay in town one of these weekends to

see what's up. Likes walking around with her Walkman. In daily E-mail contact with Melissa back home.

Case B:

Joy, Age 20, senior

One semester in Latin American provincial capital. Except for her dad's visit; hasn't spoken English since she arrived; slow at first but worth the effort. Reads the national and local newspapers. Brings her hosts a little gift every week. An A-average in mid-semester grades at the study center. History teacher, Senor Ramirez, lets her sit in on his class at the high school. Only hits restaurants frequented by locals. Happy to have taken a class at the local university; tough going the first weeks but getting better. Invited over last weekend by the girl in the row just in front in translation. Has strong opinions but slow to criticize what she doesn't know. Traveled two weekends during the semester, once alone to a harvest festival in a village nearby, another time for Easter with host family. Knows best local rock bands. Replaced her American day pack the first week with the jute bag the university students use. Studied soccer rules and goes to host brother's after-school matches. Taking yoga at the community center with her host mother. Left her college sweatshirts at home. Reaching the stage of real personal communication with a growing number of local friends.

Exaggerations, sure. In fact, most students abroad are neither the Ugly American nor are they Boutros-Boutros-Ghali. Stereotypes like this should give you an idea, though, of the basic choice that you have in front of you. It goes like this:

During your semester or year study abroad, do you want to belong as much as possible to your new host culture, speaking its language whenever possible and trying to understand and assimilate what makes it special and different as a culture?

Or...

Do you want to create your own Little America abroad, running with a pack of other Americans, speaking English all the time, and living like a tourist, not like a true (if temporary) resident of the country?

The choice is yours and absolutely nobody else's. Are you going to skate superficially through your experience or try to break the ice a little and see what's going on down there below the surface? Once overseas, let's admit it, it's sure tempting to act like Boppsy. You'll be very homesick, uncomfortable, and tired out by dealing with a new culture and language, and it'll be a lot easier to speak English and hang out with other Americans than put yourself and your weak Spanish or Japanese on the line out there every day in the real local culture.

Manuals are full of good general tips for anyone going abroad on how to deal with culture shock and the surprises of another culture. As an on-site director and resident abroad for years, I want to offer you something a little different, some very practical advice intended just for you, a student looking forward to your year or semester overseas but pretty unsure how it's going to go.

I'm going to start by assuming you're looking for an experience more like Joy's than Boppsy's. Here are a few ways to break out of the American herd abroad. There's a lot more where these came from, but this should get you started in the right direction:

“Are you going to skate superficially through your experience or try to break the ice a little and see what’s down below the surface?”

The Tourist Trap

Don’t fall into it! While vacation travel and an occasional weekend getaway are part of knowing a new culture, traveling every weekend is the surest way not to be part of your host culture and the local scene. On weekends, when local kids your age are having their social lives, you’re gone. And where are you? On the train, which, you’ll see, is a kind of English-speaking never-never land. Instead of living in Peru or Hungary, you’ll be visiting certified ‘tourist sites’ with other Americans.

Take the Friday Test

If you want no class on Friday so you can travel, it’s a more than even bet you won’t get very far in your host culture. Traveling all the time is a kind of ‘defense mechanism’ that will isolate you from the town and local scene you came thousands of miles to live in. Instead, take real advantage of your time abroad and be a resident not a tourist just passing through. Don’t worry, you can be a tourist the rest of your life, but when will you again have the chance to live in a foreign country?

Lose the iPod

Starting to get the idea? That’s right, pop the bubble, in this case a sound bubble that only cuts yourself off from the world you went thousands of kilometers across the sea to live in. Would you walk into a great restaurant and plug your nose? The magic of another culture’s sounds, its music of twangs and accents, the purr of different engines, the wonderful chaos of a marketplace, these will be a rich and essential element in your experience if you give them a chance. Cover all this with a sound track, and it’s only the movies.

It’s Called *Study* Abroad

I’m sure you’ve heard it before; classes abroad are a blow-off, and all the real learning takes place ‘in the street’. Trouble is, that’s wrong. In fact, you’re only going to be overseas for a relatively short time, so your classes are there to help you take real advantage of ‘the street’. They’re for rapid progress in the language; they exist to open up certain aspects of the cultures for you fast, now, when you need to understand them.

The fact is that those who do best in class do best in the street, period. Just because many colleges themselves undervalue the academic side of what happens abroad with their strange decision to award credit only on a Pass/Fail basis doesn’t mean that you should deprive yourself of a very important part of the *study* abroad experience.

No Pain, No Gain

Probably the best advice to you of all is ‘don’t be afraid to be uncomfortable’. Living in a foreign country, with a different culture, a different language, a different everything, is a very tough assignment. But it’s also wonderful. It’s wonderful to work your way through the difficulty and begin to learn and feel new things, new ways of being and thinking. It’s magical to feel yourself grow stronger, more independent, more tolerant and broad-minded.

You can’t have the magic unless you’re willing to pay for it. In the tough early days after your arrival, you’ll set patterns for the whole of your experience. And here we come back to Boppsy and Joy.

From the beginning, Boppsy chose the easy, comfortable way: American bar, English, the

Walkman, her world back home transported abroad. Joy chose a path that was tougher at first, but one which led somewhere meaningful, to an experience as a living, functioning part of her new society. No standing by the edge of the pool for Joy. She chose to dive in head first. It's a shock at first, but under the surface of a new culture lies an experience that may magically change her life. And yours.

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Best Wishes for a Safe and Memorable Study Abroad Experience!