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Notes
Section 1: Before You Go

Study Abroad Approval Form & Overseas Study Program

You should have already requested, completed and returned your Study Abroad Approval Form (SAAF) to the Office of International Education. If you have yet to do so, please contact your Study Abroad Advisor immediately.

The Office of International Education (OIE) will process your SAAF and provide you an override for the Overseas Study Program course, also referred to as OSSP. Please allow three to five business days to process your SAAF and enter an “academic override” for you into the system. You must register for OSSP during the regular course registration period (absolutely by the end of the ADD/DROP period of the semester you are studying abroad) in order for UVM to officially recognize you as a student “continuing off-campus”.

PLEASE NOTE: You will need to register for OSSP every semester you are abroad. You are responsible for registering for UVM courses, for the semester you return, following UVM’s course registration process.

Students participating in the Buckham Overseas Study Program, you will register under the CRN for BUCKHAM, not OSSP. Students in the UVM Semester Program in Oaxaca or Belize, you will enroll in the UVM courses offered by these programs.

Passport & Visa Information

Passport Requirements

You will need a passport to enter the country where you plan to study abroad. Be sure that it is valid for at least 6 months beyond your intended date of return. If you do not have a passport or need to renew it, submit the application as soon as possible. If you are applying for a passport now, you will need to use expedited service. (There is a fee attached to this service.)

For full instructions or information on obtaining a passport, see the U.S. Government’s Web Site: [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) or call the Chittenden Superior Court at 863-3467/2738.

Register with the US Embassy

- All U.S. citizens must register themselves at the U.S. Embassy in their country of destination before departure from the U.S.
- **Register your personal contact information** on the Department of State’s website: [https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/](https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/)
- This enables the local Embassy to contact you regarding security warnings or in the event of emergency.
- In the event of international, political, or family emergencies or in the event that your passport is lost or stolen, the U.S. Embassy is much better able to assist registered citizens.
- Print out the confirmation page after you have registered; leave one copy at home and take one with you. Students of other nationalities should check with their own embassies to see if it is possible to register prior to departure.
- As the Department of State continues to develop information on any potential security threats to U.S. citizens overseas, it shares credible threat information through its Consular Information Program documents, available on the Internet at [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov). In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4474 toll-free in the U.S. and Canada or, outside the U.S. and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. (Retrieved on 6 May, 2009, from [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1161.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1161.html))
- For a list of US Embassies, Consulates and Diplomatic Missions, visit: [http://www.usembassy.gov](http://www.usembassy.gov)

Visas

A visa is special permission (usually as a stamp or endorsement on your passport), granted by a foreign government, to enter their respective country. Visas are granted for travel, extended stay, work, and study. There is usually a required fee to obtain a visa. In most cases, you will need to obtain the student visa before leaving the United States. Passport Services of the Department of State cannot help you obtain a visa. Note that visas can only be obtained by applying directly to the foreign government via their diplomatic office(s) in the U.S. It is your responsibility to be informed of the entry and exit requirements of your host country(ies). Please check with the consulate or embassy for the specifics (e.g., requirements, application process, need to validate in the country of destination, etc.)

Check with your study abroad program to see if you require a visa, and if so, which type of visa you need. Check to see if your program will process the visa for you or if it will be your responsibility to do so. If your program does not process visas for its participants, or your Consulate requires you to apply directly, you will be responsible for securing your own visa. The easiest way to obtain a visa is by applying to a foreign Consulate (located in most major U.S. cities) or to the foreign embassy in the U.S. You need to contact the foreign consulate or embassy for the visa application. You may find visa application forms on the Consulate website.

For instructions or more information, see the Government’s web site: [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov)

Refer to the visa processing instructions of the Consulate Office having jurisdiction over your home address, as Regional Consulate offices can have different requirements. Note that some countries and their diplomatic offices do not accept applications through the mail, but require you to appear in person at their U.S. office in order to secure your visa.

Contact OIE to request confirmation of your full-time status as a UVM student, if such documentation is required by the Consulate. Please plan in advance as the production of consulate letters can take up to five days to process.

A word of advice: DO NOT wait until the last minute to apply for your student visa! As with passports, this can take many weeks to process, and if you do not have your student visa (and passport), you could miss your flight.

When applying for a visa, it's important to remember to:

- Photocopy everything before submitting it.
- Use certified mail both ways! Usually visas are stamped directly into your passport; therefore you will probably have to submit your passport along with your application, and possibly photos as well. Certified mail will ensure that this valuable document can be traced if lost.
☐ Apply far enough in advance in order to obtain your visa in time to begin your study abroad.

Additional Logistics Before you go

- **Travel Insurance**: You may want to consider purchasing additional travel insurance to cover trip cancellations and/or interruptions, baggage loss, thefts, etc. You may purchase this from a number of third party vendors. Inexpensive but limited travel insurance coverage can be found at [www.insuremytrip.com](http://www.insuremytrip.com).
- **Absentee Voting**: Citizens who will be living outside the United States have a few steps they must take to ensure that they receive an absentee ballot. For those living overseas, even temporarily, visit the Federal Voting Assistance Program website: [http://www.fvap.gov/](http://www.fvap.gov/) to request an absentee ballot. Remember that you should take care of absentee voting before you leave the United States.

Medical and Health Issues

**Medical Insurance**:
- It is recommended that you check with your current health insurance provider to ensure coverage for any possible medical expenses incurred while traveling abroad.
- Be prepared to pay cash for medical services on-site. Your insurance may not be accepted by providers outside your home country. Contact your insurance company for reimbursement policies.
- While traveling, you should carry your insurance policy identity card as proof of insurance and a claim form.

**International SOS**

UVM has contracted with a company called International SOS to provide worldwide assistance and evacuation services for all registered UVM students. International SOS offers our students travel, medical and security advice and services, as well as on-line access to information which many insurance companies do not offer. *International SOS is NOT health insurance*. UVM requires all students to maintain health insurance coverage and to make certain that their policies cover them while abroad.

**Before** you go abroad, visit the International SOS website to register emergency contact information, and any medical history or information that a health care professional would need to know in order to treat you in case of an emergency. Please visit their website: [http://www.internalsos.com/private/vermontu/](http://www.internalsos.com/private/vermontu/)

UVM Membership Number: 11BSG000020

**Using the International SOS Program**: Medical, Security and Travel Services

In order to utilize any of the medical, security or travel services listed under Program Benefits, contact an SOS Alarm Center from anywhere in the world by calling directly, calling collect, or by calling the toll-free number. While we have designated the Philadelphia center in the United States as our primary contact, any of the SOS alarm centers will assist you. To ensure a prompt response when calling, you should be prepared to provide the following:

- Your name, birthday, location, age, sex, and nationality
• The program with which you are associated
  i.e., Study Abroad Program in__________
• Your International SOS membership number: 11BSG000020
• The telephone number from which you are calling (in case you are disconnected)
• Your relationship to the member (if the person is not you)
• Name, location, and telephone number of the hospital or clinic (when applicable)
• Name, location, and telephone number for the treating doctor, and where the doctor can be reached (when applicable)

Program Benefits: Medical Services
• Emergency evacuation
• Medically-supervised repatriation
• Companion ticket
• Additional travel and accommodation arrangements after medical evacuation
• Repatriation of mortal remains
• Return home of minor children
• Medical monitoring
• Inpatient admission and identification of receiving physician
• Emergency and routine medical advice
• Pre-trip information on travel health issues
• Medical and dental referrals
• Outpatient referrals
• Outpatient case management
• Claims assistance
• Outpatient medical expense guarantee and payment (extra fees will apply)
• Inpatient medical expense guarantee, cost review and payment (extra fees will apply)
• Travel Services
• Legal referrals
• Emergency message transmission
• Translations and interpreters (extra fees will apply)
• Lost document advice
• Ground transportation and accommodations for accompanying family members (extra fees will apply)
• Emergency personal cash advances (extra fees will apply)
• International SOS Clinics
• Security Services
• Security evacuation assistance
• Online travel security information
• Access to security crisis center

Frequently Asked Questions
Q: What is the role of International SOS?
  A: International SOS provides you with worldwide quality health care and emergency assistance services 24 hours a day designed to supplement and integrate with UVM’s services, procedures and policies. If applicable, you should always attempt to contact your program’s onsite emergency contacts first, who will assist you. If they are not available, then proceed to contact International SOS.
Q: How can International SOS help?
A: International SOS provides you and your parents with peace of mind. One phone call connects you to the International SOS network of multilingual specialists for immediate help in an emergency. International SOS services are designed to help you with medical, personal, travel, security information and legal referrals when away from home. Call International SOS at any time to speak with a physician or security specialist about simple or critical matters.

Q: How does it work?
A: You will be provided with an International SOS membership card. Carry the International SOS membership card with you at all times. It includes the telephone numbers of the three major worldwide International SOS Alarm Centers. In the event of an emergency, call one of the emergency phone numbers listed on the card.

Q: What if I have pre-trip questions about my travel destination or questions about the current status in that location?
A: In addition to calling the Alarm Center for any pre-trip questions you may have, you can access Country and Security Guides from this website: http://www.internationalsos.com

Use your membership number, 11BSG C000020, as your member login. In addition to the information covered at the pre-departure sessions and on-site by your program the SOS comprehensive guides provide both medical, security and general travel advice, such as information on the standard of health care, how to pay for medical care, the availability of medications, safety of the blood supply, embassy/visa information, dialing code information, cultural etiquette and financial and voltage/plug information.

Q: Do I need to activate my membership?
A: No, your membership is already active. Simply carry the card at all times while traveling. Whenever you need service, contact one of the emergency phone numbers listed on the back of the card. You do not need to report specific trip dates to International SOS each time you travel. However, you can create a personal on-line account with SOS into which you can save medical, family and emergency information. Unless you input your information into an account, it will not be available for staff. Medical and personal information can only be accessed by an SOS doctor.

Q: What are Email Alerts?
A: You have the option to sign up for Email Alerts. You can choose to sign up for medical and/or security alerts by logging on and signing up. Medical alerts are issued when there is an unusual health risk that, in the opinion of the SOS Medical staff, may negatively impact travelers or expatriates visiting a country. Security alerts are issued when SOS Security professionals have identified a security risk in a specific country.

Q: What if I need a doctor?
A: You should first activate the on-site emergency support network from your location. If you are traveling, or in a situation where you cannot contact the study abroad program staff, you should contact SOS. The International SOS Alarm Centers are listed on the back of your card. Call the International SOS Alarm Center that is nearest to you for a referral to a doctor who speaks your language.

Q: What if I need a lawyer while overseas?
A: Call the nearest International SOS Alarm Center for legal referrals. If you are in a situation where you require legal assistance, your off-campus program director should be informed of this immediately.
Q: What if I need prescription medications?
    A: If you require a prescription that a local physician cannot obtain, or you need to replace lost, stolen or depleted medication, International SOS will, when permissible by local law, send the needed medication to you (additional fees for the medication apply).

Q: What if I am hospitalized?
    A: If you are in a situation or location where you cannot reach the study abroad program director or other on-site staff, call the nearest International SOS Alarm Center. International SOS will immediately take steps to evaluate the care you are receiving and determine what actions must be taken to ensure your safe and speedy recovery. International SOS will notify UVM immediately if you have not already done so.

Q: What if local medical facilities are not adequate for my specific requirements?
    A: If you are hospitalized in an area where adequate medical facilities are not available, International SOS will obtain approval from UVM to evacuate you to a medical facility capable of providing the required care. A physician supervises evacuations, and when necessary, a medical specialist or nurse will accompany you during the evacuation. An air ambulance will be used when required.

Q: What happens when I am released from the hospital and still need help?
    A: When your condition is stabilized and International SOS has determined that it is medically advisable to bring you home or to a facility near your permanent residence, International SOS will again obtain approval from UVM and arrange the repatriation under medical supervision.

Q: Will International SOS pay my medical bills?
    A: After a line of credit is opened in your name, International SOS will guarantee and pay all costs associated with your medical care. You are responsible for the costs of medical care. This is why we require you to have health insurance coverage that will cover you while abroad. International SOS will also medically monitor and evaluate your condition and ongoing medical expenses during your hospitalization. In situations where medical care is critical, by activating SOS you authorize medical care as necessary, and acknowledge that you will be billed for such care.

Q: How can International SOS assist in the event of death?
    A: International SOS will render all assistance possible to UVM to obtain clearances and arrange transportation for the return of mortal remains. In such an event, UVM will be the point of contact for the family in this situation.

Q: What should I do in the event of a security emergency?
    A: Call an alarm center listed on the back of your membership card, and a security specialist will assist you.

Q: What is security evacuation assistance and coordination?
    A: The SOS Security Division will assist UVM in the event of threatening situations such as civil and/or political unrest, insurrections, revolution or similar situations by providing information, guidance and resources in the event personal safety and security can no longer be assured.

Q: How do I access up-to-the-minute information about security alerts, warnings and the latest situations?

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of International Education at: +01 (802) 656-4296.
Assess Your Health:
- Please remember that study abroad is not a magic cure for concerns and problems that you may be having at home. Emotional, psychological, and physical problems will follow you wherever you go. Travel does not minimize these problems; rather, it often can exacerbate them to the point of crisis if you are not careful.
- Be clear and honest about your health needs when applying for a study abroad program and when making your housing arrangements. This includes issues such as medical needs, allergies, psychological treatments, dietary requirements (including vegetarianism), and disabilities.
- Services for people with disabilities vary widely around the world; if you have questions or concerns about these issues, please feel free to discuss them with your study abroad advisor.
- If you have any kind of mental health problems or eating disorders (or if you have had in the past), think carefully about your decision to study abroad, and please discuss these issues with your physician and with your mental health practitioner.
- For additional support, visit the UVM Counseling Center: [http://www.uvm.edu/~chwb/counseling/](http://www.uvm.edu/~chwb/counseling/)

Visit your health care practitioners:
- Before you go abroad, visit your family physician, dentist, gynecologist, and any other health care practitioners that you regularly see.
- Make sure your health records are up-to-date and that you discuss any medical issues you have that may affect your experience abroad.
- You should take copies of your medical records with you abroad, especially if you have specific medical conditions or if you expect to need medical care abroad.

Prescription Drugs:
- If you are taking any prescription drugs PLEASE visit your health care provider prior to leaving to discuss whether your medications are legal in your host country, what quantities you can carry with you in your host country, and how you will transport your medications abroad.
- Ask your health care provider and insurance company for guidance on how to secure a sufficient supply of medication to last through your stay.
- For safety reasons, it is best to carry your medication in their original, clearly labeled containers along with a copy of the original prescription.
- In order to pass through Customs, you will need a copy of the prescription (in name brand and generic form) for medications and medical supplies. You will need to carry your medications in their original, clearly labeled containers. Otherwise, it may appear that you are attempting to smuggle illegal drugs into your host country.
- You should check with the foreign embassy of the country you are visiting to make sure any required medications are not considered to be illegal narcotics. Visit the Department of State’s website at [http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/dpl/32122.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/dpl/32122.htm) for a listing of foreign embassies and consulates in the U.S.
- If you have a history of significant medical problems, wearing a medical alert bracelet while on your trip is a good idea.
- Bring photocopies of necessary prescriptions (eyeglasses, medications, etc.).

Immunizations:
- Some countries require specific immunizations in order to enter the country, and there are also immunizations recommended for travel to specific areas of the world. Be sure to check this out well in advance of your departure, as some immunizations require a series of inoculations starting many months before your scheduled travel.
• Check with health care providers or your own records to ensure that your immunizations (e.g., tetanus and polio) are up-to-date.
• Under the International Health Regulations adopted by the World Health Organization, a country may require International Certificates of Vaccination against yellow fever, and a cholera immunization may be required if you are traveling from an infected area.
• An increasing number of countries have established regulations regarding AIDS testing, particularly for long-term visitors. Check with the embassy or consulate of the country you plan to visit to verify if this is a requirement for entry.
• Health information can be obtained from your local Public Health Department, your physician, the UVM Travel Health Clinic [http://www.uvm.edu/~chwb/medical_clinic](http://www.uvm.edu/~chwb/medical_clinic) or by contacting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (phone 888-232-3228 or 877-FYI-TRIP or [http://www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/). It is very important to discuss these health guidelines and recommendations with your own physician.

Birth Control/Sexually Transmitted Diseases:
• If you have unprotected sex, you put yourself at risk for contracting HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, B and a host of other diseases. You also put yourself at risk for an unwanted pregnancy.
• Do not be unprepared for sexual contact while you are abroad. Take condoms, dental dams, birth control pills, or other contraceptives with you.
• Don’t assume you can easily find these in your host country.

First-Aid Kit:
• Don’t underestimate the importance of travelling with some basic medical supplies.
• You may want to include bandages, over-the-counter pain medications, antibiotic ointment, etc. to avoid having to rush off to a pharmacy for something minor.
• A statement about soap-less, anti-bacterial hand wash: Good hand hygiene is essential to good health on the road and helps in avoiding problems from diarrhea to a cold.
• For a list of first aid kit items, visit: [www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/). Click on “Illness and Injury Abroad” and then “Traveler’s Health Kit”.

SAFETY ABROAD
• In the case of an emergency affecting the public, please follow any emergency procedures put in place by your program director or in-country international office.
• Safety is an understandable concern wherever you may be going.
• Keep in mind that the United States is known around the world as a relatively dangerous country, and our street crime statistics support this view. No country has as many hand guns nor as many gun-related deaths and injuries, as the U.S. and U.S. rates of drug and alcohol abuse are amongst the highest in the world.
• It is also important to consider that the U.S. media coverage of the rest of the world focuses on overseas political upheavals, violent strife, and natural disasters.
• One of the first reactions study abroad students have is how “normal” life seems abroad, in spite of cultural differences.
• While you may be statistically safer abroad than at home, danger can occur anywhere, and you can play a big part in minimizing risks and hazards.
• Use the Buddy System: To ensure your safety we encourage you to identify one or two “buddies” in the group who will either always be with you or know your whereabouts.
• Know which areas are considered safe/unsafe in the cities you visit. If you are alone at night, stay in well-lit areas and don’t use short cuts or narrow alleys.
• Students should not travel alone, especially at night.
• Know where to get help if needed. Familiarize yourself with your neighborhood, locate your nearest police station and hospital, and be sure you have all necessary emergency phone numbers on your person at all times.
If you are raped or assaulted—remember it is never your fault. Get to a safe place; seek medical attention and emotional support.

Avoid crowds, protest groups and volatile situations. In the event of disturbances, do not get involved. In some cases it is illegal for foreigners to get involved in political protests.

Don’t divulge personal information to strangers.

Keep a low profile and don’t draw attention to nationality or wealth.

Read and evaluate all materials provided by your program or university that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in your host country.

How do locals and local laws deal with harassment and sexual assault? (Is the cultural norm supportive of victims, blame victims? etc.) What you consider harassment, may not be considered so in another culture.

Pay attention to the local conditions. Stay informed about local and regional news, read newspapers with good international coverage and analysis of local issues.

Be street smart. Remember that adjusting to city life is part of the cultural adjustment process, since most cities where students study abroad are much larger than Burlington, Vermont.

Make sure your resident director, host family, or foreign university official knows how to contact you in case of emergency. Leave your itinerary if you are traveling. Know which forms of public transportation are the safest to use.

Alcohol and drugs decrease your ability to consent, and to make good judgment. They also make you vulnerable to perpetrators. Be wary of impairing your judgment through excessive use of alcohol, and do not fall under the influence of drugs.

Do not display money, jewelry, cameras, or other valuable items. You might want to consider insuring valuable items such as camera, laptop, jewelry that you are bringing abroad!

Never carry large amounts of cash.

Don't allow yourself to be vulnerable. Take the same precautions you would at home regarding giving out your name and address to unknown people.

Driving customs vary a great deal, and in most countries pedestrians are not given the right of way.

We advise you not to drive at all while abroad, especially in countries where driving on the left-hand side of the road is the norm.

Traffic congestion and different traffic laws and regulations, civil and criminal, can make driving motor vehicles in foreign countries extremely hazardous.

Find out which roads are safest and whether it is safe to travel on overnight trains and buses.

For Women: Unfortunately women travelers are more likely to encounter sexual harassment, but dangerous or uncomfortable situations can sometimes be avoided by dressing conservatively, not walking alone at night or in questionable neighborhoods, and not agreeing to meet anyone in a secluded place. In addition, be aware that there are many unfortunate stereotypes about American women. If you are traveling alone, you may encounter being whistled at by men as you pass, catcalls or getting grabbed while on buses. Be aware and alert to what’s going on around you.

Country-specific Information on Safety:

- We strongly encourage you to visit the State Department website for more up-to-date information on the country and region you will be visiting.
- The State Department International Travel website also lists Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts for specific countries and regions around the world: [http://travel.state.gov/](http://travel.state.gov/)
- The Association for Safe International Road Travel promotes road safety through
education and advocacy. It compiles yearly updated road travel reports on over 150 countries (there may be a fee for obtaining the reports): [http://www.asirt.org/](http://www.asirt.org/)

- For more resources, please refer to Section 5.
Worldwide Caution

This information is current as of today, Sat Nov 06 17:45:21 2010.

August 12, 2010

The Department of State has issued this Worldwide Caution to update information on the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against U.S. citizens and interests throughout the world. U.S. citizens are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness. This replaces the Worldwide Caution dated February 12, 2010, to provide updated information on security threats and terrorist activities worldwide.

The Department of State remains concerned about the continued threat of terrorist attacks, demonstrations, and other violent actions against U.S. citizens and interests overseas. U.S. citizens are reminded that demonstrations and rioting can occur with little or no warning. Current information suggests that al-Qaida and affiliated organizations continue to plan terrorist attacks against U.S. interests in multiple regions, including Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. These attacks may employ a wide variety of tactics including suicide operations, assassinations, kidnappings, hijackings, and bombings.

Extremists may elect to use conventional or non-conventional weapons, and target both official and private interests. Examples of such targets include high-profile sporting events, residential areas, business offices, hotels, clubs, restaurants, places of worship, schools, public areas, and locales where U.S. citizens gather in large numbers, including during holidays.

U.S. citizens are reminded of the potential for terrorists to attack public transportation systems and other tourist infrastructure. Extremists have targeted and attacked subway and rail systems, as well as aviation and maritime services. In the past several years, attacks have occurred in cities such as London, Madrid, Glasgow, and Moscow.

Credible information indicates terrorist groups seek to continue attacks against U.S. interests in the Middle East and North Africa. For example, Iraq remains dangerous and unpredictable. Attacks against military and civilian targets throughout Iraq continue. Methods of attack have included roadside improvised explosive devices, mortars, and shootings; kidnappings still occur as well. Security threat levels remain high in Yemen due to terrorist activities there. The U.S. Embassy has had to close several times in response to ongoing threats by Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). U.S. citizens have been the targets of numerous terrorist attacks in Lebanon in the past and the threat of anti-Western terrorist activity continues to exist there. In Algeria, terrorist attacks occur regularly, particularly in the Kabylie region of the country. In the past, terrorists have targeted oil processing facilities in both Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

A number of al-Qaida operatives and other extremists are believed to be operating in and around Africa. Since the July 11, 2010, terrorist bombings in Kampala, Uganda, for which the Somalia-based, U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility, there have been increased threats against public areas across East Africa. The terrorist bombing in two
public venues in Kampala, which resulted in 74 deaths, highlights the vulnerabilities of large public gatherings in East Africa and around the world. Additionally, the terrorist group, al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has declared its intention to attack Western targets throughout the Sahel, which includes Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, and has claimed responsibility for kidnappings, attempted kidnappings, and the murder of several Westerners.

U.S. citizens considering travel by sea near the Horn of Africa or in the southern Red Sea should exercise extreme caution, as there has been a notable increase in armed attacks, robberies and kidnappings for ransom at sea by pirates. Merchant vessels continue to be hijacked in Somali territorial waters, while others have been hijacked as far as 1,000 nautical miles off the coast of Somalia, Yemen, and Kenya in international waters.

The U.S. government maritime authorities advise mariners to avoid the port of Mogadishu, and to remain at least 200 nautical miles off the coast of Somalia. In addition, when transiting around the Horn of Africa or in the Red Sea, it is strongly recommended that vessels travel in convoys, and maintain good communications at all times. U.S. citizens traveling on commercial passenger vessels should consult with the shipping or cruise ship company regarding precautions that will be taken to avoid hijacking incidents. Commercial vessels should review the Department of Transportation Maritime Administration’s suggested piracy countermeasures for vessels transiting the Gulf of Aden.

The U.S. government continues to receive information that terrorist groups in South and Central Asia may be planning attacks in the region, possibly against U.S. government facilities, U.S. citizens, or U.S. interests. The presence of al-Qa'ida, Taliban elements, Lashkar-e-Taiba, indigenous sectarian groups, and other terror organizations, many of which are on the U.S. government’s list of foreign terror organizations, poses a potential danger to U.S. citizens in the region. Terrorists and their sympathizers have demonstrated their willingness and capability to attack targets where Americans or Westerners are known to congregate or visit. Their actions may include, but are not limited to, vehicle-born explosives, improvised explosive devices, assassinations, carjacking, rocket attacks, assaults, or kidnappings.

Some examples include Pakistan where a number of extremist groups continue to target U.S. citizens and other Western interests and Pakistani officials. Suicide bombing attacks continue to occur throughout the country on a regular basis, often targeting government authorities such as police checkpoints and military installations, as well as public areas such as mosques, and shopping areas. In Afghanistan, remnants of the former Taliban regime and the al-Qa'ida terrorist network, as well as other groups hostile to International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)/NATO military operations, remain active. There is an ongoing threat to kidnap and assassinate U.S. citizens and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) workers throughout the country. In India there is a continuing threat of terrorism as attacks have randomly targeted public places frequented by Westerners, including luxury and other hotels, trains, train stations, markets, cinemas, mosques, and restaurants in large urban areas.

Supporters of terrorist groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, al-Qa'ida, the Islamic Jihad Union, and the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement are active in the Central Asian region. Members of these groups have expressed anti-U.S. sentiments and have attacked U.S. government interests in the past. Previous terrorist attacks conducted in Central Asia have involved improvised explosive devices, suicide bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings.

Before You Go

U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department’s travel registration website so that they can obtain updated
information on travel and security. U.S. citizens without Internet access may register directly with
the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, U.S. citizens make it easier for the
Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency.

U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to maintain a high level of vigilance, be aware of local
events, and take the appropriate steps to bolster their personal security. For additional information,
please refer to A Safe Trip Abroad.

U.S. government facilities worldwide remain at a heightened state of alert. These facilities may
temporarily close or periodically suspend public services to assess their security posture. In those
instances, U.S. embassies and consulates will make every effort to provide emergency services to
U.S. citizens. U.S. citizens abroad are urged to monitor the local news and maintain contact with
the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

As the Department of State continues to develop information on any potential security threats to
U.S. citizens overseas, it shares credible threat information through its Consular Information
Program documents, such as Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts, as well as Country Information. In
addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security
conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or, outside the
United States and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available
from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Friday, Eastern Time (except U.S. federal holidays).

MONEY AND BANKING

- Know the local currency and exchange rate. Learn to think in the foreign currency.
- Visit a currency exchange website in order to track the local currency trends. Some good
  sites are: http://www.xe.com/ucc/ or http://www.oanda.com/
- Create a sample budget for some extra personal expenses not covered in the program fee:
  money for going out at night, souvenirs, and other incidentals.

How to carry your Money:

- Don’t carry large amounts of cash. It is a good idea to change a small amount of
  money into foreign currency before you arrive in your host country.
- You can change money at any international airport; however, the exchange rates and
  fees are not the most favorable.
- You can carry the rest of your money in the form of traveler’s checks, credit cards,
  and/or debit cards.

Credit Cards/ATM Cards/Travel Cards:

- Be sure your credit card is usable abroad.
- Before you leave call your bank to inform them that you will be using your card abroad.
- Find out what fees will be associated with your international transactions.
- Get important phone numbers in case your card is lost or stolen.
- Fraud is widespread; only use ATM machines attached to banks.
- Check out the Visa Travel Money card – this is a re-loadable debit card that is accepted
  world-wide: http://usa.visa.com/personal/cards/prepaid/visa_travel_money.html
CALLING HOME

Calling Cards:
- In order to call home from abroad, you may want to consider obtaining an international calling card. Most major U.S. long-distance carriers can now be accessed from most countries. There is an access number for each service that varies by country.
- For information on any of the calling cards, contact your long-distance carrier or your local phone company before you go abroad.
- Research the web and in the travel sections of major newspapers for more information.

Cell phones:
- Purchasing a cell phone abroad is the most convenient way to keep in touch with friends and family. Most foreign providers offer phones at reasonable prices with varying plans and packages.
- Buying one that takes a rechargeable minute’s card will help keep your expenses down.
- Look into purchasing a SIM card abroad. It’s a small chip that allows your U.S. cell phone to connect with a local wireless carrier in the country you are visiting.

Skype:
- Services such as Skype (and other voice over internet protocol services) can be used to call home where a reliable internet connection is available. For more information, visit: [http://skype.com](http://skype.com) If you are considering this option, it is cheapest to set up your account in the U.S., before going abroad, in the city to which you plan to make the most calls.

Packing Tips and Travel Advice

Packing Tips and Traveler Philosophy
- Pack The Study Abroad Guidebook containing contact information and overseas addresses.
- For more specific information, please review the packing list provided by your study abroad program.
- Take any prescription medications you will need for your time abroad. Keep them in their original containers, clearly marked with official prescriptions from your physician(s); and in your carry-on bag. Take paper copies of your prescriptions with the generic names of drugs.
- Take extra passport photos in case of the need or replacement in an emergency.
- If you wear glasses or contact lenses, take a spare pair with you.
- Bring gifts for your host family, if you have one (e.g. mugs, calendars with photos of the US, something representative of your home state. Note: Chocolate does not travel well.)
- Leave jewelry and other expensive items at home. Assume that anything that is breakable will break, and anything that is expensive could get lost or stolen – this is not a reason to worry about safety. It’s travel common sense.
- Everybody loves their ipods. But not only are they subject to theft and loss, they are also anti-social on long bus rides or when you’re just hanging around. If you bring one, don’t let it interfere with the possibility of interacting with other people.
- Read up on the country you will be calling home for the next semester. Look at a map so you know where you will be in relation to other major cities and countries.
- More than anything, BRING A SENSE OF ADVENTURE.
- Leave your U.S. expectations at home, and don’t get uptight if things don’t work out as
expected or on time – because they will not.

- As you pack, please contact your air carrier for any luggage restrictions and costs for extra baggage.
- Pack larger quantities of liquids and gels in your checked luggage.
- As of this printing (April 2009), the Transportation and Security Administration (TSA) has ruled that liquids or gels are not allowed in your hand luggage except for the 3-1-1 rule for carry-ons.
- Liquids or gels must be in
  - 3-ounce containers or smaller, placed in a
  - 1 quart, clear, plastic, zip-top bag;
  - 1 bag per passenger placed in plastic bin for screening.
- For updates and more information, go to the TSA website: [http://www.tsa.gov/311/index.shtm](http://www.tsa.gov/311/index.shtm)

Items/Documents to leave with a parent or guardian at home:
- Complete the emergency contact info on your passport. Photocopy your passport, and copy down numbers of credit cards and travelers checks.
- Provide your family, guardian, friend with the contact information of your program or university.
- Secure the address and contact information of your local embassy and leave a copy with your trustworthy someone in the U.S.
- Provide your travel itinerary to your family/friend in the U.S. and contact them in the event a situation arises that would concern them.
- Leave copies of your prescriptions from your physician(s), with the generic names of drugs

Travel
- Carry on the plane: tickets, passport/visa, acceptance letter (you might have to prove you are a student), money/travelers checks, some changed currency for arrival in your host country, emergency contact information for family members/friends, and the contact information for your program/university.
- Secure the address and contact information of your local embassy and carry it with you
- Keep your money and passport in a safe place, such as in a money pouch
- Carry your health insurance information with you, along with your SOS international ID card
- Clearly tag your luggage with name, address and phone number both inside and out
- Anticipate security checks of your baggage--be informed as to airline regulations regarding size and weight limits and content restrictions, and adhere closely to them
- Take a day pack for shorter trips and pack bags that you can easily carry

Interested in Working Abroad
Studying abroad often leads to an interest in working abroad. Here are some steps that you can take now to broaden your future overseas employment opportunities:

Before you leave for study abroad:
- Check out library holdings and visit web sites to find out what sorts of opportunities there are (UVM’s Career Services office and Office of International Education have resources which address overseas employment).
- Prepare your resume before leaving campus for study abroad; take copies with you overseas.
- Meet with an adviser from Career Services for help preparing and exploring your options
before you go abroad!

While you are studying abroad:

- Ask your overseas program coordinator about internship options.
- Do an internship while you are studying abroad.
- Visit the Embassy of your host country to find out about employment rules, work permits, visa status, etc.
- Talk to your friends/host family overseas about employment options while you are there.
- Make appointments to talk to personnel office contacts at potential work sites overseas.

For more information, please contact the Career Services, Living/Learning, E Building, 656-3450, or the Office of International Education.

Section 2: Cross-Cultural Issues

Cultural Sensitivity and Norms

Communicating, Dressing and Relationships

- Be aware of cultural roles/expectations and prevailing attitudes about the U.S. This may make your time abroad easier.
- Learn as much as possible about the culture and cultural differences in the areas of gender roles, verbal and non-verbal communication and dress.
- Find out how dating and sexual activity are perceived. You may choose not to behave in the same way as local women and men do. However, knowing how they interact with one another is important and safe.
- Know which non-verbal behaviors are considered inappropriate and which are commonly used. Eye contact in some cultures is considered an invitation, certain hand gestures, greeting by bowing, shaking hands or kissing.
- Consider how you are dressing and communicating—are you easily identified as a U.S. citizen? Dress like locals and respect their customs. If you want to go out for a jog—think about appropriate dress.
- Listen to and trust your instincts. While you want to adapt to a new culture, you also need to pay attention to what feels comfortable. It’s important to find a balance between maintaining your identity and respecting the culture you are visiting.

Tips provided by the Women’s Center, the University of Vermont.

LGBTQ Students

- If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning, learn about the local culture and scene and if it’s safe to be out.
- Some countries are more progressive and may make it easier for you to come out. While other countries/cultures may be more conservative.
- Some cultures’ understanding of “gay” and “straight” don’t exist in the same way they do in the US; or they don’t carry the same importance.
- Some cultures may not see LGBT issues as identity issues, but rather a behavior or
orientation.

- **BEFORE** you go abroad, find support groups and get feedback on those groups. Don’t find yourself in an unsafe environment because you didn’t do your research ahead of time.
- Remember, it’s not your place to change a culture.
- The Lonely Planet guidebooks and online website, [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com), has information dedicated to the LGBTQ scenes and general sentiment of the area.
- For a lengthy list of resources please check out the following website: [http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/student.htm](http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/student.htm)

**Students of Color**

You may experience anxiety regarding your acceptance in, or ability to adapt socially and academically to, your new culture. As a person of a minority cultural, racial or ethnic group, you may be concerned about facing potential racial bias and prejudice without the comfort of your usual support system. On the other hand, you may be looking forward to being part of the majority population for the first time in your life. Or, you may be planning a self-discovery sojourn to the country or region of your family's heritage. Whatever reasons you have for studying abroad, you will find that confronting and coping with your adjustment abroad, as painful as it may be at times, can be a positive growth experience. It may not always be fun but, in fact, it can present a unique learning opportunity that will serve you well in the future.

Encountering a new culture will enable you to tap into social and intellectual capabilities you may have never experienced before and force you to discover what you have taken for granted about yourself as an individual and a member of a particular ethnic or racial group. Understanding another culture will enhance your self-awareness, lead to personal growth, and help you develop a greater acceptance of, and compassion for, cultural differences. You may not always admire or endorse the conditions abroad, but it is guaranteed that you will better understand the U.S. upon your return.

Below are some tips to help you consider study abroad, prepare for your journey, deal with situations abroad, and incorporate your experience into your everyday life after you return.

When you consider potential destinations, make an informed choice that takes into consideration all facets of a culture, including possible racism. Research the political, cultural and historical context of the country where you will be studying to find information on the racial climate, and be prepared for what you may face. Be aware of possible discrimination and racial prejudices that exist in your host culture. Just as the situation may be uncomfortable in the U.S., certain situations may arise abroad that you should be aware of, and able to overcome. Methods of overcoming discrimination abroad can be similar to the methods you use at home. Although these assets may not be at your direct disposal, finding new support groups and adjusting to a new comfort zone are things ALL participants face in study abroad. You can prevent tension by researching the host culture PRIOR to departure.

Understanding cross-cultural differences, including those that may be offensive, are an integral part of the entire study abroad “experience” for all students. There are various methods that may assist your immersion into a new culture, and should be recognized as assets to help maintain comfort and security abroad:

- Use your communication, foreign language, and coping skills.
- Do not be afraid to ask for help and reach out for support.
- Research possible connections with minority student organizations on your host campus.
- Be informed of your legal rights as they pertain to discrimination abroad.
- Be in contact with organizations that combat discrimination in the immediate area.
- File complaint reports with local police departments or the U.S. embassy if needed.
Always carry proper identification, in case local officials unexpectedly stop you.

There are also various coping methods you can use to deal with issues while abroad:

- Maintain pride and self-confidence by acting tactfully in addressing difficult situations.
- Remain in contact with on-site program directors and counselors.
- Use your network of friends, both abroad and at home.
- Talk to your host families (if applicable).

For additional information visit Access International: [http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/aie/students/](http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/aie/students/)


### Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and are interested in information about disability services while abroad, please contact the ACCESS Office for the coordination of possible accommodations. In addition, students should notify their program provider prior to departure if accommodation may be necessary.

Accommodations, facilities and services vary from country to country.

### Health and Safety Tips for Students with Disabilities Studying Abroad

*Below are some suggested tips to consider when planning for participation in an international exchange. There may be other tips based on individual disabilities, preferences, mode of travel or destination country. Check in with ACCESS and/or the Office of International Education (OIE) for more information.*

#### Considerations For All Disabilities:

Talk with others who have traveled to the same country to gather information on disability access and attitudes. Understand the laws and rights you have in the United States may be thought of and worked through differently in other countries you are traveling to. Services may or may not be available.

Contact disability-related organizations in the country prior to departing or upon arrival. Contact National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange (NCDE) for organization information.

Inquire with the program to determine how accommodations and services can be set up - do this as far in advance as possible.

Think ahead about what types of services and accommodations you are using currently. Make a list of where/how you use these services and accommodations - in school, at home and work, during social activities, for travel, while studying or taking exams, etc. Then, explore how to translate those strategies and techniques while studying abroad in the country you'll be traveling to.
Be prepared to share and inform others about your specific needs. Know key phrases in the language of the country for any important medication, equipment, transferring commands, etc. you may need such as "Can you please help me get down this curb?", "No sugar please, I am diabetic," or "Is there a freight elevator available?"

If you predict professional support needs may arise overseas, know where you can contact a doctor, psychologist or nurse who speaks a language you know.

For recharging of equipment batteries, be sure to bring the necessary adapters and converters (check at a local electrical, computer or medical supply store.)

**Considerations When Using Medication:**

Bring a first aid kit that includes pain reliever, pepto bismol, sterile syringes or any other medication you may need.

Drink plenty of water (bottled or boiled, if necessary) to avoid dehydration, especially if taking medication. For hot climates, bring a spray water bottle to help keep your body temperature down. For cold climates, bring a thermos to keep hot drinks in.

Bring extra prescription medication in their original containers, and a letter from your doctor in the language of the country indicating the reason for the prescription. Plan for medicine refrigeration if needed.

Make sure your travel and medical insurance covers pre-existing conditions.

Educate yourself about preparing and eating foods and water safely. If you have specific needs around food/medicine intake, look into options for what you will need when abroad - determine if it will be readily available in the area you are traveling to or if you'll need to bring what you need.

Research with your doctor the recommended travel immunizations, and find out if immunizations can be taken safely together with other medications or conditions.

**Considerations for Students with Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorders:**

For specific accommodations such as utilizing extended time, being flexible with deadlines, using a computer, calculator or other adaptive equipment/software, or having a notetaker - look into the program you are entering to determine if these things will be feasible. If so, find out what documentation may be necessary and how the accommodations will be set up.

Determine if your home institution can provide any services to you while abroad. For instance, sometimes books can be converted to etext for use with digital text readers if this is an accommodation that is used regularly.

**Considerations for Physical Disabilities:**

If you use a wheelchair, bring extra tire tubes and repair tools, and consider using tubeless tires (contact a local medical supply or bike repair shop).
If you use a power wheelchair, consider bringing a manual wheelchair for use in non-accessible places. Another possibility is to bring a portable, removable motor that can be easily installed on a manual wheelchair.

Bring backup prosthetics, braces, etc. for any adaptive equipment you feel is critical.

If you usually use crutches, consider bringing a manual chair for extended day trips.

Envision difficult access situations before you depart and create strategies or backup plans for dealing with them.

If you use a hearing aid or FM, bring extra batteries.

If you are deaf, bring notepads and pencils or technological devices for ease of communication.

If you use a guide dog, look into quarantine and other regulations for the dog prior to departure.

Be open and creative with bathroom needs – consider bringing equipment, extra clothing, or other necessities for emergency situations.

Bring egg crate pads for sitting or sleeping if concerned about pressure sores (especially on long airplane or bus rides).

If you are blind, have someone orient you to the community, describing dangers such as large potholes, curbs, traffic crossings, the layout of your school and town, etc.

Retrieved from The Center for Global Education: The SAFETI Clearinghouse website, [http://www.globaled.us/safeti/v1n1_disabilities.html](http://www.globaled.us/safeti/v1n1_disabilities.html) on 04/03/08 [Updated and Adapted by UVM/ACCESS on 04/22/10]

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**Culture Shock and the Process of Cultural Adjustment**

**What is it?**

Do you have an overwhelming desire to go home? Have you been feeling frustrated? Do you feel like you don’t belong?

If you answered “yes” to any of the above questions, you may be experiencing culture shock. Culture shock occurs when the familiar signs and symbols of one’s own culture are replaced by those of a new and unfamiliar culture. Culture shock is the natural reaction that occurs when we are uprooted from our cultural environment and transplanted into a new situation where the words, gestures, customs, signs and symbols that have previously helped us to make sense of our surroundings suddenly have no meaning or have new meanings. While culture shock implies something immediate, the onset is usually gradual and cumulative.
How can I avoid it?

Since culture shock is a natural response, your strategy should not be how to avoid it, but instead, how to manage it. Being able to anticipate the feelings you may encounter, and having an understanding of the cycle of adjustment should help minimize much of the difficulty of adjusting to life in the United States. While at times it may be an unpleasant experience to go through, adapting to a new culture provides great opportunities for personal growth and development. Allow yourself time to adjust. The first couple of weeks may be very difficult—this is perfectly normal.

- Be aware that other countries’ education systems may be very different than the U.S. (e.g., course/class structure, feedback, grading and organization).
- Remain open-minded, respectful and curious to enjoy and learn the most through your experience.
- Remember that just as your opinion may not reflect that of your home country, and everyone in it, the opinions of individuals you meet do not represent their entire country’s population.
- When you meet someone, listen to what they have to say—open your mind, listen respectfully and reserve judgment of them and/or their country.
- Go out and meet students/people from your host country. Getting to know them will enhance your experience!

What are the stages of Culture Shock and cultural adjustment?

1. “Honeymoon stage”- When you first arrive, the differences you observe are new, exciting and interesting. You are optimistic and are likely to focus on the positive aspects of your new environment.

2. “Homesickness”- As some time passes, the differences that were once interesting have now become obstacles for you to get things done or communicate effectively. You may begin experiencing any of the following feelings or behaviors:

   - disorientation and confusion
   - acute homesickness for family, friends and places
   - helplessness
   - frequent frustration
   - being easily angered
   - fatigue
   - withdrawing from friends or other people
   - self-doubt, sense of failure
   - sadness, loneliness, melancholy
   - preoccupation with health
   - aches, pains, and allergies
   - insomnia, desire to sleep too much or too little
   - changes in temperament, depression, feeling vulnerable, feeling powerless
   - anger, irritability, resentment, unwillingness to interact with others
   - identifying with the old culture or idealizing the old country
   - loss of identity
   - trying too hard to absorb everything in the new culture or country
   - unable to solve simple problems
   - lack of confidence
   - feelings of inadequacy or insecurity
   - developing stereotypes about the new culture
   - developing obsessions such as over-cleanliness
   - feelings of being lost, overlooked, exploited or abused
3. “Initial Adjustment”-gradually, you begin to feel more oriented and comfortable in the new culture. Your confidence builds as you start to adjust to the differences and expand your circle of friends.

4. “Adaptation”-Don’t underestimate the adjustment that will be required when you return home from your sojourn. People go through a similar series of stages upon re-entry to their home culture.

These stages are present at different times and each person has their own way of reacting in the stages of culture shock. As a consequence, some stages will be longer and more difficult than others. Many factors contribute to the duration and effects of culture shock. For example, the individual's state of mental health, type of personality, previous experiences, socio-economic conditions, familiarity with the language, family and/or social support systems, and level of education.

Suggestions on how to make your adjustment as smooth as possible:

- Maintain a sense of humor. Be able to laugh at yourself and at the predicaments you get into.
- Make an effort to learn about the region where you are staying - its people, religions, customs, history, etc.
- Begin to consciously look for logical reasons for anything in the host country that seems strange, confusing, or threatening. There is a reason why locals do things differently than people do in your country.
- Resist the temptation to constantly disparage the host country. You do not have to agree with the way that locals view things or do things, but constantly criticizing things in your environment will only leave you feeling more miserable, and may make others wonder why you are here.
- Other students from the U.S. can be very helpful when you first arrive, but as time goes on, try not to rely solely on co-nationals for support.
- Find students who can be understanding and sympathetic to your situation, with whom you can share your feelings of confusion. This person can be your “cultural informant” and help explain things to you about the local culture and lifestyle.
- Don’t forget to participate in activities you would normally do at home (e.g. sports, reading, taking baths, etc.) These activities will help you manage stress. If those activities are not available there, try to find an activity that gives you the same feeling of happiness or relaxation.

Journaling is a valuable learning tool during the study abroad experience. Journaling
- provides insights into the host country and culture;
- dispels myths and stereotypes of host country and culture;
- is an effective way to understand and combat “culture shock”;
- helps you to process unexpected experiences, both emotional and physical;
- allows you to more effectively integrate the old and the new;
- sheds new light on your old “reality”;
- a means of self-discovery, especially after you return, as you review your journal entries;
- allows you to acknowledge and appreciate your own discoveries and abilities;
- provides a permanent record of your once-in-a-lifetime experiences.
Section 3: Details While Abroad

As a service to our students studying overseas, the Office of International Education will sign you onto UVM's OSSP listserv upon receiving your SAAF. This listserv is our main communication link while you are overseas and the most effective way for us to relay important information to you. It is imperative that you continue to read your UVM email.

Keep in touch with friends and family

Parents, guardians, family and friends are often worried about you after you have left home. Please remember to call home to let folks know that you have arrived safely. It is not uncommon for the Office of International Education to receive multiple phone calls from worried parents and siblings regarding their students’ well being.

Important Credit Transfer Policies

Have coursework pre-approved through the Office of Transfer Affairs (through the Study Abroad Approval Form) and achieve final grades of “C” or better while you are overseas, to enable your credits to transfer back to UVM. Grades earned overseas will not be averaged into your UVM GPA, unless you are enrolled in UVM courses, participating on a UVM Faculty-Led Course, the UVM Oaxaca and Belize Semester programs or the Buckham Overseas Study Program (BOSP) at Kent University. Students taking faculty-led courses or on BOSP at Kent earn UVM credits and their grades average into their GPA. If you plan to apply to graduate school, however, schools will require your overseas grades and transcripts. Contact the foreign university directly to request a transcript.

Two other policies are important to keep in mind: you must complete 30 of your last 45 credits, and half of the credits in your major and minor, at UVM. To avoid any confusion about the level of credit and work accomplished, retain all your overseas coursework, including syllabi, exams, texts and papers. Write down the title, author and publisher of all books used.

- E-mail [transfer@uvm.edu](mailto:transfer@uvm.edu) or fax(802-656-8230) the Office of Transfer Affairs with your final schedule of courses once you have chosen them.

- Have an official transcript sent directly to the Office of Transfer Affairs and save course materials for review: Office of the Registrar 360 Waterman Building 85 South Prospect Street Burlington, VT 05405 USA
Important Information from Student Financial Services

UVM students who participate on Approved Study Abroad Programs and complete the Study Abroad Approval Process may be eligible to receive some financial aid while abroad. Financial aid packages will be re-calculated to reflect the costs of the study abroad program.

After completing the Study Abroad Approval Form (SAAF), students must notify OIE of any changes to their study abroad plans. Students receiving financial aid should note the following:

- Financial aid will not cover any coursework abroad that is repetitive of coursework already completed at UVM;
- Financial aid will not cover any courses you audit abroad;
- Financial aid may be reduced if you withdraw from a course while abroad.

These and other adjustments to your coursework could affect your aid eligibility. This means that you could see a reduction of or loss of financial aid, resulting in a balance due to UVM.

Please be sure to notify OIE of any changes to your study abroad plans once the SAAF has been completed.

If you have any questions about your financial aid award or disbursement date, please contact:

Student Financial Services  
221 Waterman Building  
85 South Prospect Street  
Burlington, VT 05405  
USA  
Phone: 802-656-5700; Fax: 802-656-4076  
Email: [sfs@uvm.edu](mailto:sfs@uvm.edu)

Your UVM Status

Once you register for OSSP, your status while studying abroad on an approved program is "Continuing Off Campus." Your Dean's Offices will expect you to return to UVM upon completion of your program unless they hear otherwise from you. Notify your Dean's office if you do not plan to return to UVM the semester following your program. If you plan to spend an additional semester overseas but will not be studying officially through UVM, contact your Dean and request your status to be changed to "Leave of Absence". You must cancel your enrollment if you do not intend to return to UVM at all, to avoid being billed tuition, etc.

If you wish to extend your Study Abroad beyond the period approved through the Study Abroad Approval Process, contact your Study Abroad advisor to complete the SAAF process for the extended period. The deadline for requesting an extension is October 1st for the Spring semester and February 15th for the Fall Semester. Requests submitted after these dates will not be considered.
Guide to the UVM Libraries for Study Abroad Students

UVM Libraries home page: [http://library.uvm.edu](http://library.uvm.edu)

Accessing UVM Library e-resources from abroad:
- From library home page, select: Connect from Off Campus → EZProxy → Login using your UVM NetID and password.
- This allows you to connect to all our databases and electronic journals and other e-resources from wherever you are in the world!

Finding journal articles on a topic
- From the library home page, select: Find Articles and More → Subject List → General and Multi-subject. Academic Search Premier and Expanded Academic ASAP are two good places to start your research on just about any topic, and both of these resources include links to full text of articles. Also use indexes to journal articles that are listed under specific subjects. **Once you have located articles of interest, follow any links to full text or linked text, or to check link source. You may be able to link directly to the text of an article. Or, you may need to check the UVM Library Catalog [http://voyager.uvm.edu](http://voyager.uvm.edu), to see if we subscribe to the journal (by doing a journal title search). You may then find a link to the electronic version of the journal article, or you may find that we have the journal at the UVM Libraries in print. If the UVM Libraries only own a print version of the article, you can request that the article be sent to you as a PDF file through Interlibrary Loan. If we do not own the journal article you are looking for, you can also use the Interlibrary Loan to request the article as a PDF file- no matter where you are! To do this, see the Interlibrary Loan section below.

Guides and style manuals
- For suggestions on resources to use for your research, by subject, check out our Subject Guides. From the library home page, select: Guides and Help → Subject Guides
- For help with citations styles (MLA, APA, Chicago Manual, etc.), look at our Citation Guides. From the library home page, select: Guides and Help → Citation Guides and Style Manuals

Interlibrary Loan
- If you need it, we can get it for you (EXCEPT books)!
- Use Interlibrary Loan to request the articles that we do not have available electronically (we will send you a PDF) and to request articles from journals that UVM does not subscribe to.
- Use Interlibrary Loan to request book chapters (if you have a reference to a book chapter, send it to us and we will send you the book chapter as a PDF).
- Important: To request materials through Interlibrary Loan as Study Abroad students, use the following form for Distance Education students: [http://library.uvm.edu/services/distance/bhcopy.html](http://library.uvm.edu/services/distance/bhcopy.html)

Getting help
Help is only a click away. Be sure to ask for help when you need it. Here are some different options:
- Use Bailey/Howe Library’s Ask-A-Librarian service → from the main library home page, click on the Ask-A-Librarian link on the left side of the page. From here select:
IM Chat for immediate assistance during times our Reference Desk is open or Email to ask a question anytime.

- Email a subject librarian with your question. Almost every department at UVM has a Library Liaison. For a list of Library Liaison contacts, from the main library home page, select: Library Services  Library Liaisons.
- Contact the Study Abroad Library Coordinator, who will work with you to address your questions, at [laurie.kutner@uvm.edu](mailto:laurie.kutner@uvm.edu)

Some things to keep in mind while abroad….

- Depending on where you are, Internet connections may be limited, unreliable, or non-existent. It may be difficult or impossible to download very large files. If you have a choice of downloading a file in HTML or PDF format, select HTML—it will load a lot faster.
- If using libraries abroad, library hours might be quite different. Books or materials may be arranged differently. Ask for help from a local librarian.

The information above was created for UVM’s Study Abroad students by Laurie Kutner, Bailey/Howe Library, University of Vermont, November 2008.

### Section 4: When You Return

#### Preparing to Return to UVM

In order to facilitate a smoother transition back to UVM it is important that you take care of some things before you leave your host country/institution/program.

- Have you obtained a copy of all your course syllabi? Remember these must include the number of credits, number of lecture and seminar/lab hours, name of your professor/instructor, bibliography, and copies of any assignments that you have completed. Keeping copies of all of your coursework will aid in the transferring of your credits.
- Do you know when you need to register? Have you registered for courses?
- Have you paid your UVM student account?
- Do you know the deadlines of when you need to apply for student loans? Complete your FAFSA?
- Will you be living in on-campus residence next year? Ensure that you apply for housing by the deadline.
- Do you know how to request an official academic transcript? When can you expect your transcript to arrive at UVM? (See p. 25)
- Have you paid all your financial obligations before leaving your host institution/program?
Housing and Meal Plan Contract Expectations*: Semesters spent studying abroad count towards the on-campus housing requirement that states all first time, first year students must live on campus for their first four matriculated semesters. After returning from study-abroad, students who have not completed their four-semester residency requirement are required to live on campus. Studying abroad spring semester is considered a continuation of the Housing & Meal Plan Contract that a student has signed for that particular academic year.

If a student ends up not studying abroad for the duration of the spring semester and returns to UVM, they are required to fulfill the remainder of that contract by living on campus, even if they have already completed their on-campus residency requirement. Students are responsible for notifying Residential Life if their study abroad plans change in any way. Students who are found to not be abroad, but still enrolled at UVM, will be charged for a traditional double room, lite-option meal plan, and IRA fee.

****Room Assignments for Students Studying Abroad**: Students who are studying abroad are guaranteed housing upon their return if they had been living in the residence halls prior to leaving for their program. Students who have or will have completed their four-semester residency requirement are not required to sign up for housing, but are permitted to do so if they wish to continue living on campus upon their return.

Students who are returning from studying abroad and want to obtain a room assignment for 2011-2012 must place their name on the Residential Life Housing Request Form. This is located online at [http://reslife.uvm.edu/?Page=students/wait_info/overview.html](http://reslife.uvm.edu/?Page=students/wait_info/overview.html). The Housing Request Form for Spring 2012 will be available online after the first day of classes in September, 2011. The Housing Request Form for Fall 2012 will be available online after the first day of spring semester classes in January, 2012.

In the summer of 2011, eligible students who have filled out the Housing Request Form will be sent an official offer of housing and a link to an online Housing & Meal Plan Contract that must be completed and submitted in order to receive a housing assignment. Residential Life will finalize and communicate housing assignments for these students who have completed this process later in the summer.

Re-entry Shock

This occurs when a student returns to their country of origin. Students may find that things are no longer the same at home. Some students find it more difficult than adjusting to the host culture. For example, some of the newly acquired customs from your host country are not used in Burlington, Vermont. We encourage you to share your experiences with fellow students, faculty
and staff at UVM. Sharing your knowledge of another culture and country provides you with the opportunity to analyze differences you observed, and helps to foster greater cultural understanding in our community. There are many ways to become involved in international activities on campus and in the Burlington community.

Program Evaluations

Evaluation forms are important to us and to students interested in studying at the same university and program or country you experienced. These forms provide the “real story” for prospective students and are invaluable tools for their decision-making. When you turn in your evaluation form, you will receive an OIE “Go Away” t-shirt. The forms are now available online at [http://www.uvm.edu/oie/evaluation.php](http://www.uvm.edu/oie/evaluation.php).

Attend an OIE Re-entry Gathering

Plan to attend our re-entry gatherings upon your return. These gatherings allow you to connect with UVM study abroad and international students and faculty to talk about your unique experience, cultural readjustment, and opportunities in international careers. At some events, you may have the opportunity to meet an international student here at UVM from where you studied abroad. Share your adventure with the campus!

Welcome an International Student

One of the best ways to integrate your study abroad experiences with your life at UVM is to get involved with newly arriving international students. As a former study abroad student, you are particularly aware of, and sensitive to, the challenges faced by students arriving in a new country and dealing with a new language. Help could encompass everything from picking up a student at the airport to taking students shopping in the first days after their arrival, to serving as their UVM representative and helping them get oriented in campus life. If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Amy Corwin by email at [Amy.Corwin@uvm.edu](mailto:Amy.Corwin@uvm.edu).

Resources for Community Engagement with an International Focus
The Office of International Education is in the process of expanding these regional travel tips. If you want more information, please contact either the CUPS office or OIE. Every cause for which you have a passion has a local, national, or international angle.

Think Global Through Local Action
Are you looking to volunteer with an international population right here in Burlington? Perhaps you’ve returned from studying abroad and are looking for cross-cultural interaction. Burlington offers many volunteer opportunities with an international focus... here are a few examples:

- **Champlain Valley Head Start**: Do you want to practice speaking in your second language? Are you interested in working with children and families who are immigrants or refugees? Champlain Valley Head Start looks for volunteers who are excited about working with children and families that are learning English.
- **King Street Youth Center**: This is an opportunity to help refugee women in the Burlington community learn English. The women, many of them mothers of young children, come to the King Street Youth Center three mornings each week to a Vermont Adult Learning program. Volunteers care for their young children while the mothers are in class.
- **Peace & Justice Center**: Peace & Justice Center’s mission is to create a just and peaceful world. They work on the issues of economic and racial justice, peace, and human rights through education, advocacy, training and non-violent activism and community organizing.
- **The Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program**: The Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program’s mission is to bring hope and opportunity to the lives of refugees and immigrants. They act to defend human rights, promote self-sufficiency and education and to forge community partnerships through a full range of programs & services.
- **For more information visit**: [http://www.uvm.edu/~partners/International_Resources.html](http://www.uvm.edu/~partners/International_Resources.html)

Think Global Through Campus Organizations
Check out these campus-based programs that offer an opportunity to address international issues and become engaged in the community, both locally and internationally.

- **Community Service Programs**: Connects students to the community though group and individual service events. Look for international connections in their annual community events such as Serv-A-Thon and Community Works.
- **Volunteers in Actions (VIA)**: Student-led organization that matches students with volunteer opportunities. Numerous internationally focused opportunities for students: Alternative Spring or Winter Breaks and English as a Second Language.
- **Community University Partnerships and Service-Learning**: Find out more about service-learning courses and community-based research at UVM. A multitude of local programs with an international focus and international programs with a local component exist.
- **Service-Learning Internship Program, Career Services**: Students have the opportunity to do community-oriented work and earn academic credit for personal reflections, essay writing, and group discussion. Students can focus on international issues in self-designed internships.

**Section 5: Travel & Region Specific Tips**

The Office of International Education is in the process of expanding these regional travel tips. If
you don’t see your region, please inform us of tips upon your return, so we can add your wisdom to this guidebook for students. Please note that these websites and resources have been helpful to other students in the past—use them at your own risk. Use good judgment and trust your instincts.

Most importantly, stay alert while travelling, keep track of your belongings at all times, and enjoy your time abroad! Keep an open mind and see what kinds of people you meet and adventures you have. Be safe and have fun exploring!

General Information

- **US Department of State, Official Travel website**
  This website provides international travel information, tips for traveling and living abroad, travel warnings, and many additional resources. Search by country and find information that is more specific to your destination.

- **Learn from those who have gone before you! Check out the following guidebooks and websites.** These books and websites discuss almost everything you would want to know about your destination: tips on in-country travel, popular events, money, etc. They are great resources to read before leaving as well as to have with you while away. (You can buy these books at any big name book store or order them on line).

- **Global etiquette** This is a great website about global etiquette. Go to this website and select a country from the list of options. A study abroad peer advisor found some of the suggestions on this website to be more formal than what she experienced in South America, yet some of them were right on. Everyone’s experiences will be different; we suggest reading the information and keeping them in mind when you are away. [http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/](http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/)

- **Travel Blogs**
  Read and learn through other people’s experiences and gain insight from those who have already been. There are pictures and interesting comments about their favorite/least favorite activities and cities. Here are a few websites we found interesting.
  - [http://www.travelblog.org/](http://www.travelblog.org/)
  There are many more blogs if you want to research more, simply type in “travel blogs,” or some variation, into Google or any search engine.

- **ISIC Card**- If you are going to purchase any discount card, purchase this one. It will allow for the most discounted prices at the most places. It can even work here in the States! Buy this card and it will pay for itself with all the money you will save on travel. [http://www.mysisic.com/MyISIC/?WT.srch=1](http://www.mysisic.com/MyISIC/?WT.srch=1)
• A translation book- Strongly recommend to buy a small book that has key words and phrases in the predominant language of your country. It is easy to carry around to refer to phrases such as how to order water, or where is the bathroom. Many also have small maps that can be referenced quickly.

• Global Edge
  [http://globaledge.msu.edu/countryInsights/]
  This website provides an overview of each continent and a short history of each country. There are interesting articles and key facts for each country!

• International Travel and Volunteer Opportunities
  Idealist: [http://www.idealist.org]
  International Volunteer Programs Association: [http://www.volunteerinternational.org]
  Volunteer Abroad: [http://www.volunteerabroad.com]

Africa

• Africa is a large continent with 53 different countries. There are many different Romance and African languages spoken throughout the continent. The climate ranges from tropical to subarctic.
• Check out some of the following resources for more information on Africa:
  [http://www.lonelyplanet.com/africa]
  [http://www.lonelyplanet.com/south-africa/]
  [http://www.tanzaniaodyssey.com/www.africanet.com/]
  [http://www.abt-travel.com/hotels/region.html#AFRICA]
  [http://www.southafrica.net/]
  [http://www.go2africa.com/]

Australia and New Zealand

Yes, English is the official language in the land down under, but it still may take some time to catch onto the Australian’s or Kiwi’s words and slang. Australian slang often throws U.S. students off-guard---they speak English right? Do you know the meanings of the following words? Hoo Roo, Tee Up, Uni, Chalkie, Paper-Yabber, Brekkie, Bickie, Boomer, or Rug Up?

Check out the following websites for more detailed information on Australia and New Zealand:

Australia:

New Zealand:
  [http://www.nz-immigration.co.nz/lifestyle/slang-words.html]
  [http://www.chemistry.co.nz/kiwi.htm]
Europe

Things to keep in mind: While many people travelling in Europe buy rail passes to get around, flying is another option that in many cases can be much faster and cheaper due to the dozens of discount airlines servicing Europe. Also, most European train companies have youth discounts for people under 25. Ask about these discounts at train station ticket offices because they can save you a lot of money!

- Don’t forget that dates are written day/month/year in Europe, and that time schedules are listed using military time.
- Usually, purchasing your ticket ahead of time can save time at the train station and money.
- Look for youth or student fares.
- Most of these pages have English translations, so look around the homepage for links to the English site.


- [www.backpackeurope.com](http://www.backpackeurope.com) A comprehensive guide to budget traveling. Need to pack more efficiently? Need a place to stay or to get in contact with your family? This website has it all!

- The official site for European Rail Passes, check out the youth passes for travel deals if you’re under 26.

- [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net) This site allows you to compare the fares of discount airlines that travel all over the world.

- [www.mobissimo.com](http://www.mobissimo.com) Like Orbitz, this lets you compare the prices of large, corporate airlines.

- [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com) An Irish airline, Ryan Air is dirt cheap and goes all over Europe.

- [www.skyeurope.com](http://www.skyeurope.com) This new discount airline services Eastern Europe and is a good way to get to Prague, Vienna, Budapest, and many other cities.

- [www.gumtree.com](http://www.gumtree.com) This London-based site is essentially the Craigslist of the UK and offers rideshares, jobs, apartments, and more.

- [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com) This hostel search engine is really extensive and helpful.

- [www.hostels.com](http://www.hostels.com) Another great hostel search engine.

- [www.covoiturage.fr](http://www.covoiturage.fr) A French rideshare site where you can find carpools, it’s expected that you throw in a few Euros for gas. (Only available in French)

- [http://www.mitfahrgelegenheit.de](http://www.mitfahrgelegenheit.de) Like Covoiturage, this is a German carpool site.

- [www.hitchhikers.de/](http://www.hitchhikers.de/) Another German rideshare site, this one is available in several languages including English.

- [http://craigslist.org](http://craigslist.org) This American standard now has some well developed European pages. Check out your city’s page for apartments, jobs, and carpools.

Other Resources:

- The book “Lets Go Europe.” This book goes through every European country and major European city. It offers maps of major European cities, along with the essential information you should know when traveling. It gives a list of different hotels, hostels, places that are must see, and the prices along with directions on how to get to these places. Highly recommend to purchase this book if you plan on doing any traveling. It is cheap!

- Student Agency and Airfare Watch Dog.com- Student Agency is a huge bus company that travels all over Europe. You will have no problem finding a cheap bus fair to practically
anywhere you want to go, especially since you are a student. Visit [http://www.airfarewatchdog.com](http://www.airfarewatchdog.com) to help you find cheap flights.

**Latin America**

- Latin America is made up of 21 countries from Mexico in North America to Tierra del Fuego in South America. Most countries in this region have Spanish or Portuguese as the official language. However, within each country there may be many different indigenous languages spoken.
- Check out some of the following resources for more information on Latin America:
  
  - [http://www.travelnotes.org/LatinAmerica/index.htm](http://www.travelnotes.org/LatinAmerica/index.htm)
  - [http://www.lonelyplanet.com/mexico](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/mexico)
  - [http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/travel/](http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/travel/)

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## Section 6: Important Contacts

**The Office of International Education**

The OIE will serve as your liaison to The University of Vermont. Please feel free to contact us if problems or questions arise while abroad. Be sure to send all correspondence to the University by either e-mail or fax. If, however, you have specific questions regarding your course selection or registration procedures for the semester of your return to UVM, you must contact your individual Colleges.

The University of Vermont  
Office of International Education  
Attn: (your Study Abroad Advisor’s name)  
633 Main Street  
Burlington, VT 05405  
Tel: +01 (802) 656-4296 - Fax: +01 (802) 656-8553  
Web address: [www.uvm.edu/oie](http://www.uvm.edu/oie)

Linda Damon: [Linda.Damon@uvm.edu](mailto:Linda.Damon@uvm.edu)  
(Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Oceania and the Middle East)

Pam Gardner: [Pamela.E.Gardner@uvm.edu](mailto:Pamela.E.Gardner@uvm.edu)  
(Asia, Canada, Europe and Russia)

Michael Guyer: [Michael.Guyer@uvm.edu](mailto:Michael.Guyer@uvm.edu)  
(UK, Ireland, Eastern Europe, Latin America)

**Emergency Contacts**

Name:  
Relationship to you:  
Phone number(s):  
Address:
Name:
Relationship to you:
Phone number(s):
Address:

Embassy in your host country/ies
Phone number:
Fax number:
Email:
Physical Address:

Phone number:
Fax number:
Email:
Physical Address:

**SOS 24-Hour Alarm Centers**

If calling from the US, Mexico, Central or South America:
Philadelphia, PA
24 hours: 1-215-942-8226 (call collect when available)
Within U.S.A. call: 1-800-523-6586
From Canada 1-800-441-4767

If calling from Europe, CIS, Africa, or the Middle East:
London, England
24 hours: +44 20 8762-8008 (call collect when available)

If calling from Asia, Australia or the Pacific Rim:
Singapore
24 hours: +65 6338-7800 (call collect when available)

Additional Alarm Center and Clinic contact information can be found at the SOS website at: [http://www.internationalsos.com/en/alarm-centers.htm](http://www.internationalsos.com/en/alarm-centers.htm)

**Study Abroad Program or Host Institution Emergency Contact**

Name:
Phone number:
Fax number:
Email:
Mailing Address:

**Academic Contacts**

Academic Advisor
Name:
Field of Study:
Phone number:
Fax number:
Email:
Mailing address:

Transfer Affairs Officer
Name:
Phone number:
Fax number:
Email:
Mailing Address:

Academic Department Chair
Name:
Phone number:
Fax number:
Email:
Mailing Address:

Language Advisor (if applicable)
Name:
Phone number:
Fax number:
Email:
Mailing Address:

Academic Dean
Name:
Phone number:
Fax number:
Email:
Mailing Address:

Student Financial Services Advisor
Name:
Phone number:
Fax number:
Email:
Mailing Address:
Resources Used in Creating this Guidebook


The Center for Global Education: The SAFETI Clearinghouse website: [http://globaled.us/safeti/]


Additional Resources

Abroad View Foundation.  P.O. Box 745, Bennington, VT 05201;  [http://www.abroadviewmagazine.com/]


Transitions Abroad. P.O. Box 745, Bennington, VT 05201;  [http://transitionsabroad.com/]
