



The University of Vermont

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
STUDY ABROAD

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2018

Study Abroad Guidebook



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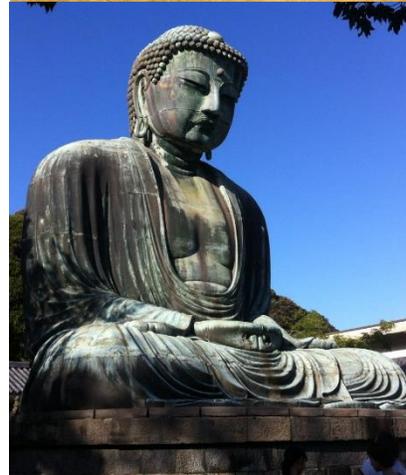
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Before You Leave

Checklist

- Attend Pre-Departure Orientation
- Complete Pre-Departure Phase of IAbroad
 - Request O.S.S.P. Course Override
- Check to make sure your passport will be valid for at least six months post program or apply for a passport
Passport applications can be found at travel.state.gov/passports
- For J-1 and F-1 students: meet with an International Student Advisor to discuss how study abroad will affect your US immigration status
- Make copies of your passport, one for you to keep separate from the original, leave one with family and friends, and email one to yourself
- Research visa requirements and apply accordingly
- Make flight arrangements
- Notify credit/debit card companies you will be out of the country and make sure they will not expire during that time
- Research your country and program to determine what money solutions will work best for you, if necessary, exchange money to the currency of your host country
- Visit your travel doctor and get necessary vaccinations, if applicable
- For U.S. passport holders: register with STEP (State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program)
- Verify that any medications you take are legal in your host country. Obtain medication necessary for the full length of the trip along with prescription copies.
- Make sure your health insurance will cover you abroad
- Prepare necessary documents including ID's, flight itineraries, passport and visas, immunization records, travel and health insurance etc.
- Research best communication options and phone coverage. Have a plan of how you will contact family and friends back home.
- Make a communication plan with your family before leaving the country, especially if traveling to a remote area with little cell or wireless coverage.
- Make sure your luggage meets the TSA requirements.
- Learn about International SOS
- Read/Bring a Lonely Planet guide of your host country



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

This manual is created as a side along documentation to the Office of International Education's pre-departure, which is a mandatory event held twice a semester. Students are always able to review the [Prezi](#) at a later date.

iAbroad and OSSP

All of the steps up to "Attend Pre-Departure Orientation" in the Pre-Departure phase in your iAbroad account should be checked off. If you have not completed all of the steps to this point, please continue to work in your iAbroad account and complete this phase as soon as possible. If you have not reached the Pre-Departure phase in your iAbroad account or have any questions, please contact your [Study Abroad Advisor](#) immediately.

The Office of International Education (OIE) receives your request for an OSSP override and will provide an override for the Overseas Study Program course. Please allow three to five business days to process your OSSP override request. You will receive an email confirmation with the CRN attached. You must register for OSSP during the regular course registration period in order for UVM to officially recognize you as a student "continuing off-campus". For students studying abroad during fall semester, you must register by midnight on the last day of classes during spring semester.

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.*

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.

Extending your study abroad semester:

If you wish to extend your Study Abroad beyond the period approved through your iAbroad account, contact your [Study Abroad Advisor](#). They will assist you regarding completion of your iAbroad account for the additional term abroad. **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.



Travel Documents

Passport

Apply for a Passport:

U.S. citizens are required to have a passport to enter most foreign countries and to gain re-entry into the United States. Apply as early as possible as passport applications can take 4-6 weeks or longer to be processed. It's advisable to apply several months in advance. You will also need a passport in order to apply for any country-specific visa which can also take many weeks. For more information on applying for a passport, pricing, etc. see the [U.S. Government's website](#).

Note: A passport card is not the same as a passport. Passport cards are not accepted when traveling by air.

How to apply: You must apply in-person at one of the following:

- a U.S. post office authorized to accept passport applications
- a passport agency (some travel agencies may aid if you proceed by this route)
- a county or superior court. In Burlington:

*Chittenden Superior Court
175 Main Street, Burlington, VT 05401
8:30 - 4:00 p.m. Monday - Friday
863-2738*

Tip: *It is always advisable to photocopy all your documents when applying for passports.*

Make Sure your Passport is Up to Date:

Check to make sure your passport will not expire until six months after the end date of your program.

Renew: If you already hold a passport that has been issued within the last 15 years, and you were at least 16 years old at the time of issuance, you may be eligible to renew your passport by mail. Passport renewal application forms can be obtained from the Chittenden Superior Courthouse. Or, find out pricing and get an application on the [U.S. Government's website](#).



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Visa Information

A visa is special permission, usually as a stamp or endorsement on your passport, granted by a foreign government to enter their country. Visas are granted for travel, extended stay, work, and study. In most cases, you will need to obtain the visa before leaving the United States. As with your passport, please allow plenty of time for your visa to be processed. Process time can take up to 90 days in some cases, or require additional requirements, like FBI background checks.

Visas can only be obtained by applying directly to the foreign government via their diplomatic offices in the U.S. Be aware that some countries do not accept applications through the mail and require you to appear in person at their U.S. office in order to secure your visa.

Find out if you need a visa: Once you have been accepted to your program, check with them to see if you require a visa, and if so, which type of visa you need.

Find out if you or the program secure the visa: Check also to see if your program will process the visa for you. If your program does not process visas for its participants, you will be responsible for securing your own visa.

Obtain the 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. To check the nearest location of a consulate or embassy, you can refer to the [State Department's website](#). Visa application processes vary widely between countries. Check the consulate or embassy website for information regarding application fees, requirements, process timeline, and regulations regarding visa validation upon arrival in country.

Tip: Photocopy everything before submitting it and use certified mail both ways. Usually, visas are stamped directly in your passport and you will likely have to submit your passport along with your application (possibly photos as well). Certified mail will ensure that this valuable document can be traced if lost.



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Immunization Records

Make an appointment with your physician or the UVM Travel Clinic to learn about required immunizations and other health-related preparations. If you are required to get vaccinations for your country, you will need to carry your immunization records with you. Typically they are listed in a small yellow packet, this may vary depending on vaccinations and location.

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.

Health Insurance

Fortunately, medical emergencies abroad are rare. But in the event you require hospitalization, the costs can be catastrophic if you do not have medical insurance.



- UVM's student health insurance covers you while studying abroad, provided that you are not studying abroad in your home country.
- It is recommended that you check with your current health insurance provider to ensure coverage for any possible medical expenses incurred while traveling abroad.
- You are required to have a valid medical insurance policy in order to participate in a study abroad program.
- Be prepared to pay cash for medical services on-site. US health insurance is often not accepted by providers outside your home country. Contact your insurance company for reimbursement policies.
- Some programs and/or countries may require that you purchase their health insurance. Check with your university or program provider for requirements.
- While traveling, you should carry your insurance policy identity card as proof of insurance and a claim form.
- If your friends and family are planning to visit you, they should plan to purchase additional health and travel insurance that will cover them in their travels.

A number of companies provide short-term health insurance coverage for students studying abroad. **UVM's recommended provider of health insurance abroad for students is HTH Worldwide.** HTH offers affordable weekly student accident and sickness insurance for students enrolled at the University of Vermont. Details about [the UVM plan can be found here.](#)



Pre-Departure Health Care

Assess Your Health:

Please remember that study abroad is not a magic cure for concerns and problems that you may be having at home. If you already have existing emotional, psychological, and physical issues you should prepare to effectively handle these conditions abroad. 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](#).

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.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Prescription Drugs:

- If you are taking any prescription drugs **PLEASE** visit your health care provider prior to departing 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.
- If you have a history of significant medical problems, wearing a medical alert bracelet or other notification 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, as well as recommended immunizations 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.
- For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the [World Health Organization](#).
- The [UVM Travel Clinic](#) serves the needs of UVM students traveling to foreign countries for study abroad or for independent/personal travel.
- Health information can be obtained from your local Public Health Department, your physician, the [UVM Travel Health Clinic](#) or by contacting the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) ***It is very important to discuss these health guidelines and recommendations with your own physician.***

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Birth Control/Sexually Transmitted Diseases:

- If you have unprotected sex, you put yourself at risk for contracting HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, as well as a host of other diseases, in addition to 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.
- Check out these examples of good [first aid kit items](#) to include.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP):

Be sure to fill out your [Emergency Action Plan](#) and share it with your emergency contacts prior to departing for your host country.



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

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: <https://www.internationalsos.com/>

UVM Membership Number: **11BSGC000020**

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:

Information to have prepared when calling SOS Alarm Center:

- 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: **11BSGC000020**
- 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)

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

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



For more information please visit our [website](#)

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of International Education at: +01 (80) 656-4296.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Finances

Financing your study abroad experience, whether it is paying for the program, food, or excursions can be a learning experience in itself. Additional travel or going out is not an expectation of student's semesters abroad, however for students who do so, it can add to the overall budget to study abroad. What works for one student, may not be the same for the next. To help prepare you for your time abroad, please read through the advice below.

Notify Your Bank

It is crucial to notify all banks and credit card companies prior to leaving the country about your intended travel. You may be asked for a list of the dates that you will be in each country you plan to visit. It is uncommon for students to have all this information before even arriving in their country, so it is important to find out the requirements for informing your bank of unexpected travel. You should plan to notify any bank/credit card company for all cards that you will be taking with you, or using over the internet.

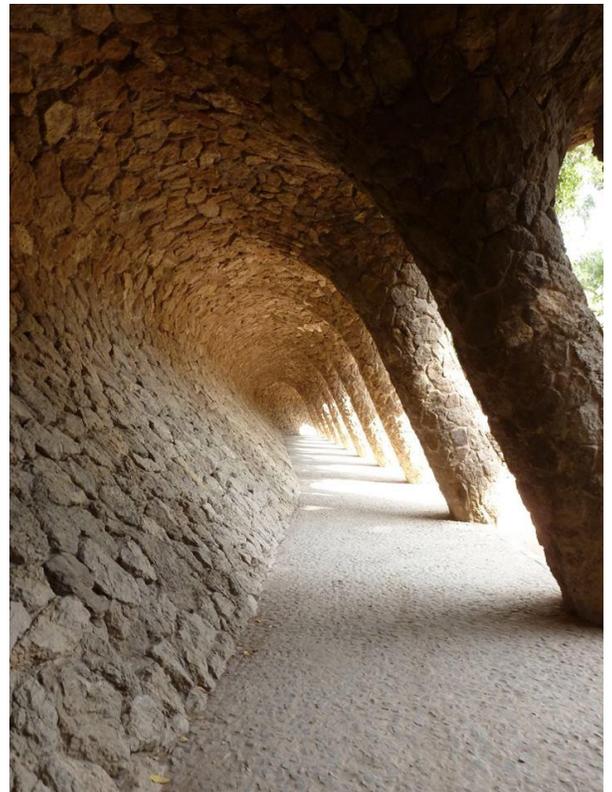
It is advised that you ask for the best practice if your card is lost/stolen, and their policy for getting a new card sent to you.

Plan Ahead for Expenses

We recommend that prior to departing, you plan out an overall budget. If you have financial aid, you would have completed a [budget sheet](#) for your program. It is recommended that all students complete a budget sheet to help understand the costs and share with anyone helping you finance your time abroad. It is important to note that this budget sheet does not include any *non-required* costs, including, but not limited to: additional travel, meals outside your meal plan, going out at night, an occasional snack, etc. Students should create a budget to help stay on track for excursions, souvenirs, entertainment, etc. This [budget calculator](#) from IFSA-Butler can help to plan out how much you should bring with you.

Currency

It is recommended that you have some local money for when you first arrive in your country for unexpected expenses. Many US banks can exchange money for a small service fee, some banks will have a minimum requirement. Depending on the currency, they may need a few days to receive the money to give you. You can also exchange money at most international airports, however the exchange rate may be less favorable, or you can usually withdraw money from an ATM for a small fee. Some countries have a commission rate for exchanging money. If



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

you exchange money at hotels, restaurants or retail shops be prepared to pay extra. You may need your passport as identification whenever exchanging money.

Whenever you travel to a new country during your study abroad experience, be sure you know the currency, and exchange some before you depart, especially if you are arriving by bus, car, or train.

Opening a Bank Account

Your study abroad program may require you to open a local bank account, especially if you are receiving stipends for your cost of living. If this is the case, your international office or local director should be able to assist with this and advise you on the best bank.

Even if it is not required to open a bank account, it may be worthwhile to look into, to limit the number of fees you pay when using a US debit/credit card.

Credit Cards

Credit cards can be extremely useful abroad, both to make foreign transactions easier, and in the case of emergencies. If you choose to take a credit card with you, be aware of any service fees and interest charges you may encounter. It can also be easy to overspend, lose track of your budget, or forget to pay off your charges each month.

Debit/ATM Cards

Many students find debit/ATM cards to be the easiest method to withdraw money abroad. You should find out from your bank if they have any agreements with international banks that will ensure you do not pay a fee each time you withdraw money. When you use an ATM abroad, all transactions will be in the local currency. Exchange rates will be applied on the date the purchase or withdrawal clears your bank, rather than the day of the transaction. It is your responsibility to be aware of the exchange rate, and ensure that you have enough in your account. Most times your balance will not show on the screen or receipt.

Many countries are switching to a chip only system. If your card does not have a chip, you should request a new card before you depart.

Most international transactions only accept a four-digit PIN. If your PIN for your debit card is longer than four-digits, make sure you change this before you depart.

Not all ATMs will accept all cards. It is advised that you always have more than one way to pay for your expenses. Many banks have a withdrawal limits to prevent fraudulent withdrawals. You should be aware of your limits, and plan accordingly when leaving for extended trips.



Travelers Checks

It is advised that you research if your country requires traveler's checks as the method of currency exchange. Some countries no longer accept traveler's checks, while in others it is the only method. This [guide](#) explains how to use traveler's checks, and where to buy and exchange them.

Important Information from Student Financial Services

UVM students who participate on [Approved Study Abroad Programs](#) and complete the four stages in their iAbroad account 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 all of the steps in your iAbroad account, 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 you have completed the "Conditional Acceptance" and "Pre-Departure" stages in your iAbroad account.

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

Student Financial Services
223 Waterman Building
85 South Prospect Street
Burlington, VT 05405
USA

Phone: 802-656-5700; Fax: 802-656-4076

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Travel Preparation

Preparing for a semester or year abroad can take a lot of preparation. The following is by no means a complete list of things to consider, but rather a starting point. The Office of International Education has created a [Pinterest](#) page as a tool to help with preparation.

Flight Arrangements

Prior to purchasing your flight, make sure you have read arrival information from your program/University. You want to be sure to arrive during their suggested times, as it may impact your housing/transportation. UVM doesn't recommend any specific travel websites, however www.statravel.com offers student discounted tickets.

Planning to arrive at your final destination early in the day will leave room for flight delays, customs, and finding your way in a new country in daylight.



Be sure to review [TSA Guidelines](#) and your specific airlines baggage requirements for all connecting flights. International flights will often allow larger bags than in country/continent flights. For example, students may be allowed two large suitcases to fly to New Zealand, however the connecting flight may only allow one suitcase. To avoid extra baggage fees be sure to pack for the lowest weight/size allotment.

Communicating Your Arrival

Create a communication plan with anyone that will want to know you have arrived safely. The first 48 hours of your arrival can be busy. You may not have internet access immediately. As soon as you are able, be sure to send a quick text, Facebook post, or email that you have safely arrived. Make sure everyone involved has a clear understanding of when they can expect to hear from you. Waiting too long may cause unnecessary stress or worry.



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Packing

Packing for extended periods of time, especially when the time will cross seasons, can be difficult in itself, and only becomes more difficult when keeping in mind the customary dress for your host country. Below are questions that may be useful to think about when packing. While it is always important that you stay true to yourself while abroad, it is important to be aware that some outfit choices will make you stick out as an American more than others.

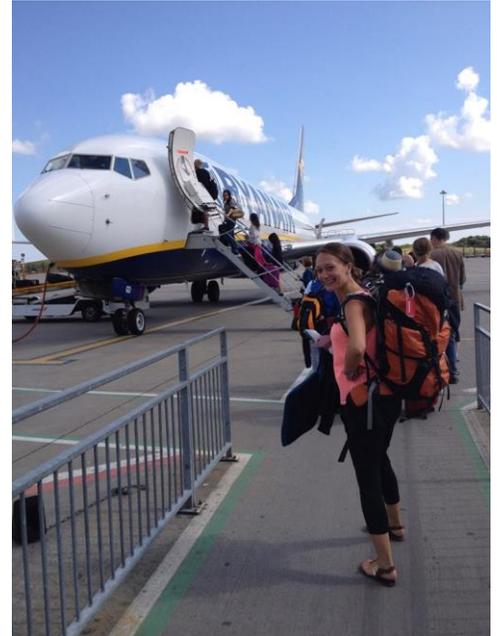
- What is appropriate for men and women to wear?
- Are pants or shorts worn in warm weather?
- Are jeans, sweatshirts, sweatpants, etc acceptable to be worn?
- Are sneakers, flip flops acceptable?
- Does it rain a lot?

Try to pack lightly as you can. Hold off on buying new clothes in the States, and wait until you get abroad to try out new styles. The lighter you pack, and the fewer suitcases you have, the easier you will be able to manage airports, buses, trains, subways, stairs, etc. Make sure you label your luggage with your information in case it is lost. If you do not know your address beforehand, find out if you can put your international office's address.

Suggested Packing List

Carry On

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passport and driver's license or other ID | <input type="checkbox"/> Prescription medications in their original containers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entry requirements for your country | <input type="checkbox"/> Change of clothes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plane Ticket and Itinerary | <input type="checkbox"/> Book/iPod/coloring book |
| <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. and foreign currency in addition to a credit or debit/ATM card | <input type="checkbox"/> Toiletries (toothbrush, deodorant, face whipes, etc) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of your travel documents and emergency contacts | <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop and any additional electronic devices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your Insurance cards/International SOS Card | <input type="checkbox"/> Chargers and batteries |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone/Watch |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Camera |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Snacks |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Contact lenses/glasses |



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Checked Bags

- Additional copies of travel documents
- Clothing that is appropriate for the climate and culture of your host country
- Undergarments, shoes, accessories
- Toiletries
- First Aid Kit
- Jacket/Coat
- Shower shoes
- Beach wear and accessories including sunscreen
- Bug spray, Suntan Lotion
- Travel guides/language books
- Music
- Rain Gear
- Journal
- Locks/straps to secure luggage
- Small travel bag for excursions
- Contraceptives
- Power Converter/Adapter
- Extra pair of contacts/prescription glasses, also bring the prescription
- Photos of friends and family



While You're Abroad

Disclaimer: A lot of the information in this section pertains to students that will be abroad during the academic year and may not apply to students abroad in the summer.

Checklist

- Attend your university/program's orientation to prepare for the semester
- Familiarize yourself with your surroundings including your campus, and police stations and hospitals
- Record and carry emergency contacts and numbers, including your SOS card
- Observe local conduct and traditions
- Stay informed of local and global situations
- Get involved on campus, join clubs and international student groups
- Email Transfer Affairs updated course selection
- Learn about traveling within your region to plan for excursions during weekends or vacation
- Be sure to register for classes for your following semester at UVM. Find out the date that you are eligible to do so and be aware of the time difference when registering, if applicable.
- Make sure that you have housing for the semester you return
- Take photos and videos for the UVM Study Abroad Photo and Video Contests, follow OIE's [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [blog](#), and use [#uvmstudyabroad](#)
- Bring all course materials back to UVM to ensure full transfer credit
- Be cognizant of what skills you are gaining, and how to use study abroad to [help your career](#)
- Make sure your transcript from your host university will be sent to UVM. We recommend that you request additional copies for yourself and keep them sealed. This will be necessary for graduate school and future jobs and internships. It can be difficult to obtain after you leave the country.



Health Abroad

Once you are abroad, it's important to take steps to protect your health. Being in such a new and foreign environment can add stress, and factors that may influence your health like food and water safety, insects, or weather may be different than they are in Burlington. Make sure to take care of yourself while abroad. This includes basic precautions like wearing sunscreen, taking medications as prescribed, and maintaining a regular sleep schedule. If you do experience any physical, mental, or emotional issues while abroad, make sure to contact your on-site program staff or contact at your host university and they will help you get appropriate care.

Mental Health

- Keep in mind that any mental health issues you may have at home will likely still be present while you are abroad. In many cases, being in the new, unfamiliar environment of your host country can exacerbate your symptoms.
- Keep taking any prescribed medication while abroad.
- If you feel that your mental health has the potential to become unmanageable while you are abroad, be in touch with your program director or host university contact to get help.

Alcohol and Drugs

- Be responsible in your use of alcohol.
 - Follow all local laws and programs rules, and do not assume you can treat alcohol and drugs in the same way you may have at UVM or at home.
 - Consider your safety: overconsumption can make you an easier target for criminal activity of many kinds, and you will be even more vulnerable abroad where the culture, neighborhoods, and language may be unfamiliar to you
- Many countries have stricter rules than the U.S., particularly regarding drugs. Each year hundreds of Americans are jailed abroad for drug offenses. In 32 countries around the world, you can be executed for a drug offense.

Sexual Health

- Rates of STIs can be different abroad than in the US. In some countries, rates of infection are much higher.
- It is extremely important to use protection—both to prevent pregnancy and to prevent the spread of STIs.
- You may want to bring birth control methods with you, like condoms, because they may be harder to find abroad or they may be made to inferior quality.
- Be aware of what birth control methods are legal in your host country. In many countries, for example, emergency contraceptives (Plan B) are illegal. Abortion is also illegal in many countries.

Insects

- Insects can cause serious illnesses such as malaria, dengue fever, chikungunya, yellow fever, zika, lime disease, and others. Students studying abroad have become ill with these diseases.
- Be aware of what insects pose a threat in your area and take the appropriate measures to alleviate your risk of disease.
 - Use bug spray, mosquito netting, and preventative medication where appropriate
 - Discuss potential threats with your travel doctor and program director or host university contact.



Tattoos and Body Piercings

- Getting tattoos and piercings in your host country may have more risks than doing so back home.
 - Exposure to blood borne pathogens (HIV, Hepatitis B and C) is possible in any country.
 - Each country has different health standards for tattoos and piercings, and different regulations for tattoo/piercing businesses. Some countries may have more regulations than others, and tattoo/piercing shops may or may not follow all of them.
 - Cheap tattoos and piercings can sometimes mean:
 - Non-sterile or reprocessed needles
 - Cheap ink, which can cause skin irritation or can fade quickly

Food and Water

- Remember that food and water can make you sick in developed countries as well as less developed ones.
 - Always observe and follow locals' behavior regarding food and water.
 - Particularly surrounding water, restaurants, and street food
 - Always wash your produce before consuming it.
 - In countries or locations where water may not be safe to drink or your food may have come from unsanitary conditions, always cook or peel your produce.
- Be aware of whether water is safe to drink or not.
 - Sometimes you may find that some taps are safe because they are connected to a safer water supply than other taps.
 - In some cases, water may be safe to drink at some times of the day and not at others.
- Have medication that treats food and water-borne illnesses and their symptoms with you, so that you can access it easily if needed.

WHILE YOU'RE ABROAD

Seek Medical Attention When...

- You have a fever of 101 degrees F for 24 hours or more
- If you have severe and frequent diarrhea or vomiting

Seek Emergency Medical Attention When...

- You have a fever of 103 degrees F or more
- You feel confused or disoriented
- You are experiencing reduced levels of consciousness (fainting)
- You have a severe headache

In Any Medical Situation

- Make sure to contact your program staff or host university as soon as possible and let them know how you are feeling. They can help direct you to appropriate care and support you while you are receiving it.



Safety Abroad

The State Department publishes a [Worldwide Caution announcement](#) that is updated twice yearly. This announcement summarizes possible safety risks to US citizens due to terrorism abroad. The chances of experiencing a terrorist attack while studying abroad are very small, but all students should be aware of all possible safety risks associated with their travel.

It is important to keep in mind that the United States is known around the world as a relatively dangerous country due to US crime and gun statistics. US media outlets, when covering international current events, tend to focus on political upheaval, violent strife, and natural disasters when these are not typical in most countries. Most students find that life abroad is very “normal” in spite of cultural differences. However, dangerous situations can arise anywhere, and you will still be in a new place with an unfamiliar culture. Thus, you should always take proper safety precautions while abroad. Using common sense and being observant and aware of your surroundings will help keep you safe, whether you are in Burlington or abroad.



Basic Safety Preparation

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Stay informed about local and regional news, read newspapers with good international coverage and analysis of local issues.
- Sign up for [International SOS email alerts](#)

Safety While Out and About

- Be aware and alert to what's going on around you at all times.
- Avoid crowds, protest groups and volatile situations. In the event of a disturbance, 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.
- Never agree to meet someone in a secluded area.

- Keep a low profile. Dress appropriately for the occasion and cultural context, and do not dress in ways that mark you as a foreigner.
- Know which areas are considered safe/unsafe in the cities you visit and act accordingly.
- 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.
- 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.

Safety After Dark

- If you are out at night, stay in well-lit areas and don't use short cuts or narrow alleys.
- Stay in groups of at least two. Never leave a friend alone at a bar or nightclub while out.
- Don't walk alone at night or in questionable neighborhoods.
- Be cautious and use common sense while patronizing restaurants, nightclubs, cafes, bars, or places where large crowds may gather (stadiums, malls, festivals)
- Alcohol and drugs decrease your ability to consent and to make good judgment. They also make you an easier target to perpetrators. Be wary of impairing your judgment through excessive use of alcohol, and do not use drugs while abroad.
- Laws regarding alcohol and drugs vary between countries, and many countries have stricter policies than the US.

Travel and Transportation

- Learn about taxis and public transportation, and know what your safest travel options are. Even taxis and public transportation that are considered safe by the local community may have risks. It is especially important to travel with a buddy while taking a taxi or overnight transportation.
- 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.
- To ensure your safety we encourage you to identify one or two "buddies" who will either always be with you, or know your whereabouts.
- 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 can make driving motor vehicles in foreign countries extremely hazardous.

Sexual Assault/Harassment

- Learn how locals and local laws deal with harassment and sexual assault.
- What you consider harassment may not be considered so in another culture. For instance, staring and "catcalling" is extremely common in some countries. Ask for help from your program staff or host university staff if you have concerns about harassment.
- If you are raped or assaulted—remember it is never your fault. Get to a safe place; seek medical attention and emotional support.

- Toll-free sexual assault crisis lines are available for Americans abroad. For more details, please visit: <http://sashaa.org/> Live online chat with a crisis line is also available from SASHAA if that is preferable to calling their toll-free international numbers.

Law and Legal Issues Abroad

- Laws in your host country may be very different than US laws. Your rights under the US Constitution do not apply to you when you are in a different country. Many countries have stricter constraints on speech, religious practice, protests, and other rights you have in the US. Many countries may also have laws regarding gender, race, sexual orientation, and other aspects of identity that you may feel are discriminatory.
- While you may be uncomfortable or strongly disagree with some laws in your host country, you are individually responsible for following all local laws. If you do not, you could be subject to arrest.
- When US citizens are arrested abroad, the US embassy or consulate can help them by providing a list of local attorneys and an overview of the local justice system, and by visiting the US citizen in prison and advocating for their proper medical care. However, the US embassy or consulate cannot provide legal advice, pay for legal or medical services, or get a US citizen out of jail.

Country-specific Information on Safety

- The State Department International Travel website also lists [Consular Information Sheets](#), [Travel Warnings and Alerts](#) for specific countries and regions around the world. We strongly encourage you to visit [State Department Website](#) for more up-to-date information on the country and region you will be visiting.
- You should register with the [State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) so that you can be contacted by the U.S. Embassy in case of an emergency.
- Review the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Traveler's Health website](#).
- 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).
- International SOS is a fabulous resource country specific information in regards to medical, safety, and cultural information. Students are required to sign up for security email reminders through at [International SOS](#) using the UVM membership number: **11BSGC000020**



Cultural Adaptation



Intensity Factors:

Being aware of differences between the US and your host culture and setting expectations can help reduce potential stress that may be brought on when dealing with cultural differences. Below are some examples of factors that may add to stress.

- Language
- Status
- Prior knowledge
- Holidays/birthdays
- Education
- Values

American Stereotypes:

It is important to remember that preconceived notions of what Americans are like may impact your initial communication and relationship with locals in your host country. By taking into account the numerous negative and positive stereotypes you can help be a good representative of UVM by reinforcing the positive stereotypes.

Common Stereotypes Include:

- Outgoing/Friendly
- In a rush
- Promiscuous
- Wealthy
- Hard Working
- Ignorant/Uninformed
- Wasteful
- Informal/Rude
- Overweight
- Unintelligent
- Superiority complex

WHILE YOU'RE ABROAD

Dress:

There are various things to be aware of when selecting the clothing you plan to wear in your host country. In addition to alternate weather and climates, there are many cultural differences that impact how you should dress abroad. While it depends on your country, it is important to be aware that certain items of clothing may be viewed as offensive to the local culture. For example, in certain areas of Central America it is very unusual to see locals wearing shorts. Regardless of the heat, it is more culturally acceptable to wear pants, skirts, or dresses. Wearing clothing that is not typical of the host country may also call more attention to your American background and potentially negative stereotypes. In addition, there may be items of clothing typically worn in your host country not traditionally worn in the U.S and the standards of dress may be different for men and women. Researching your country's dress and customs beforehand will allow you to be prepared for your time abroad and help ease your transition. By showing respect for the local culture and learning appropriate dress, it is more likely that you will be welcomed into the local community and as a result improve your cultural experience abroad.



Communication:

When communicating in another country, specifically one where you are not fluent in the local language it is important to take into account both your verbal communication and body language. In many countries it is preferred that you attempt to speak the local language even if your skills are entry level. It shows respect and a willingness to incorporate yourself into the local culture. However, it is also important to consider that there are areas where it may be insulting if you speak their language poorly. Body language of those engaged in conversation typically varies between cultures. In the United States personal space is greatly valued when speaking with others, however there are many cultures that engage in more intimate and close conversations. This may also be true of greetings where it is common in some cultures to kiss someone hello on their cheeks. While communicating with a limited knowledge of the local language is difficult, students have found it can be helpful/fun to use body language/charades to ease the conversation.

Social Media:

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and on our [Blog](#) and use [#uvmabroad](#)



Culture Shock



One may experience culture shock after recently being exposed to a new or foreign cultural setting and feels overwhelmed and distressed. When adjusting to your host country you are likely to experience some form of culture shock over the course of your trip. Often time students experience a high in the initial stages of the trip and then feel overwhelmed or homesick for a period of time before settling in. If you find yourself experiencing culture shock there are many strategies you can employ to help cope with this transition.

What is it? Culture shock is the natural reaction that occurs when we are uprooted from our cultural environment and transplanted into a new situation. While culture shock implies something immediate, the onset is often 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 outside of 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?

Not all students go through these stages in the exact order, or through all of them. Some students find they don't experience culture shock and all but rather experience a difficulty adjusting when they return home. This is simply a guideline to show common periods of transition that students experience abroad.

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. Often around holidays, birthdays, or special events at home, students may feel homesick. At these times, look to new friends or fun activities in your community to help overcome homesickness. Students have probably experienced homesickness at UVM when missing high school friends, or their family. Think back to how you overcame this at UVM and use it in your new community.

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"**- You are fully immersed in routines and feel part of the community. This will be similar to when Burlington became your home.

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.



WHILE YOU'RE ABROAD

- Resist the temptation to disparage the host country. You do not have to agree with the way that locals view things or do things, but criticizing things in your environment could cause you feeling unhappy.
- 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/Blogging are a valuable learning tools during the study abroad experience. It can help:

- readers understand your new country and dispel myths and stereotypes
- provide insights into the host country and culture
- understand and combat “culture shock”
- you to process unexpected experiences, both emotional and physical
- enable you to more integrate the old and the new
- provide 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
- provide a permanent record of your once-in-a-lifetime experiences



Identity Abroad

The Office of International Education encourages all students to study abroad as it widens one's academic and personal experience and enhances cultural understanding. It is important to understand the diversity of experiences students will have abroad, and the challenges that they may face. UVM works to provide a variety of resources and information regarding different cultural issues that impact one's identity abroad.

Gender Abroad

Each culture has different attitudes and expectations about both men and women. Research these before you go, and understand what their perceptions of Americans abroad.

Points to consider:

- Anyone, regardless of gender, can be mugged and be taken advantage of
- Sexual assault is reported among men and women abroad – watch out for each other
- Prepare for different gender norms both by and towards men and women
- How men and women dress abroad may impact how you are treated, as always, be aware of local norms

Some Questions to Ask (a good time is at orientation abroad):

- Is it safe for me to go out alone? Are there places I should avoid?
- How do men treat women? How do women treat men? How are transgender people treated?
- What are the cultural norms regarding friendships and dating?
- How do my personal values compare with my host country's attitudes about socially accepted gender roles?



LGBTQA Students

Get to know your destination. Explore LGBTQA travel guides and internet resources. Talk with other LGBTQ and allies about their experiences in certain countries or regions to gather as much information as possible upon which to make your choices and decisions. Once in your host country, find out what local newspapers, e-magazines or online resources may be available. Some questions to consider may include:

- How open will I be about my sexual orientation and gender identity or my identity as an LGBT ally with my teachers, peers, friends, host family and others?
- How important is it to me to find other LGBT students and friends while abroad? How will I make connections with other LGBT students, local residents, or community organizations and gathering places?
- What resources are available in my host country for LGBT people?
- Are there any LGBTQA-friendly establishments nearby? How can I find them?
- What are my safety needs and perceptions, and how can they best be met?
- Will I need access to any medications, supplies, or services due to my transgender status? Are they available in my host country? If not, will I need any additional documentation to travel with my medication or supplies?

Understand the context, customs, and attitudes in your host country. Similar expressions or behaviors may have vastly different meanings in different places. In some locations when you are outside distinct gay 'neighborhoods' or specific vacation or resort facilities, open expressions of your sexual orientation might be frowned upon.

In some other areas of the world, expressions of friendship (such as eye contact, a smile, touching, and physical proximity) may be quite different than those expressed among your U.S. peers and cause you to experience confusion or uncertainty about who may or may not be LGBTQA. For example, in several Middle Eastern countries hand-holding among males is a custom of special friendship and respect and does not necessarily imply homosexuality. Some questions to consider may include:

- What are the cultural and local attitudes towards Americans, tourists, and sexual orientation and gender identity in my host country?
- What are police attitudes towards local residents, tourists, LGBTQA visitors?
- What is considered typical male and female social behavior and customary gender relations and social patterns in the host country?



WHILE YOU'RE ABROAD

- What may make the coming out process different in the host country compared to the U.S.?
- What are the norms and behavioral expectations within the LGBTQA communities in my host country?
- What is the social perception of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people in my host country? How are allies socially defined? What roles do transgender people play in the host culture?

Learn the laws of your host country regarding LGBTQA issues, same-sex sexual behavior and expressions of LGBTQA identity and community. You are required to follow the law in your host country. Once outside the United States you are no longer protected by U.S. laws. If same-sex acts are illegal in your host country and you are caught engaging in them (or presumed to have engaged in them), you could be arrested and imprisoned in that country. Some countries are more liberal than the U.S. and in other countries, the penalties are very severe. Some questions to consider may include:

- Are there “public decency” laws, or “public indecency” laws?
- What is the age of consent? Does it differ for heterosexual versus same-sex couples?
- Does the law require having “proper identification” at all times?
- What is the police attitude towards the local LGBTQA community?
- Will laws and attitudes be the same for different social classes or geographic areas?

Think about changes that may occur when you return home. A journey abroad is a time of personal growth and discovery. Many transformations in personal development and self-awareness can occur, prompted by the fact that the restrictions of the home culture have been removed. Returning home is therefore a time of transition that can be difficult at times. Some questions to consider may include:

- If you choose to come out while abroad, how will this affect your return to friends and family?
- Will you be able to re-integrate these relationships upon your return or will you need to find a different supportive community?
- Be aware before you come back home of the ways in which you may have changed both independent of and as a result of your coming out.
- Consider the implications of coming out when back home. Family and friends may want to dismiss your sexual orientation as temporary due to the experience abroad, rather than acknowledge a lifelong identity.

Some helpful links for your research, both prior to departure and while abroad:

- <http://ilga.org/> (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association)
- <http://www.ilga-europe.org/>
- <http://www.utopia-asia.com/>
- <http://diversityabroad.com/guides/diversity-inclusion/sexual-orientation-abroad>
- <http://www.iesabroad.org/study-abroad/about/diversity-lgbt>
- <http://educationabroad.isp.msu.edu/students/admitted-students/life-abroad/sex-and-gender/>
- <http://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en.html>

LGBTQA Center at UVM
Allen House
461 Main Street
Burlington, Vermont
05405

Students of Color

You may experience anxiety regarding your acceptance in, or ability to adapt socially and academically to, your new culture. As a student of color, you may be concerned about facing potential racial bias and prejudice without the comfort of your usual support system. On the other hand, you may be looking forward to being part of the majority population for the first time in your life. Or, you may be planning a self-discovery sojourn to the country or region of your family's heritage. Whatever reasons you have for studying abroad, you will find 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 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.

Many students of color assume that racism abroad may be so overwhelming that it would be better to stay home where you can predict the challenges. In fact, many students of color who study abroad have expressed surprise when they are treated as U.S. Americans first and as extraordinary students who have earned the right to study in the host country.

When you consider potential travel destinations while abroad, 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. If you would like to speak with a student of your same racial or ethnic background, the office may be able to put you in touch with students who have studied abroad and expressed an interest in talking to future study abroad students.

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



ALL participants face in study abroad. You can prevent tension by researching the host culture PRIOR to departure.

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:

- Do not be afraid to ask for help and reach out for support.
- Research possible connections with 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.
- Always carry proper identification, in case local officials unexpectedly stop you.
- 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).

These links may be useful to you and may assist your research, both prior to departure and while abroad:

- <http://diversityabroad.com/guides/diversity-inclusion/racial-ethnic-minority-students-abroad>
- <http://www.globaled.us/plato/diversity.html>

Students with Disabilities

UVM strives to assist students in finding study abroad opportunities regardless of academic or personal needs. If students require additional accommodations, either learning or physical, it is important to be in contact with the appropriate offices in addition to the Office of International Education.

Consider:

- How accessible are places in my host country?
- How are people with disabilities perceived and treated in my host country?
- Will my disability prevent me from participating in some activities or excursions at my host university/in my host country?

Tips:

- Disclose disabilities and accommodation needs to program or university as early in the study abroad process as possible.
- Do your research about:
 - Your country's cultural perceptions
 - Legal requirements for accommodations in host country (often different than in US)

Resources:

- Mobility International: <http://www.miusa.org/>
- UVM ACCESS Office: <http://www.uvm.edu/access/>

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.

UVM Information

Important Contacts

It is important to keep your program, university, embassy, etc. emergency contacts on you at all times. Many programs will give you a card with this information, but it is advised you also put them in your phone.

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/studyabroad

Carolyn Boudreau Carolyn.Boudreau@uvm.edu

(Latin America, Spain and Portugal)

Lauren Huffman: Lauren.Huffman@uvm.edu

(Western Europe (all except Spain and Portugal), Australia, New Zealand, Oceania)

Linda Damon: Linda.Damon@uvm.edu

(Africa, Asia, and the Middle East)

Michael Guyer: Michael.Guyer@uvm.edu

(Eastern Europe, Russia, Scandinavia, UK + Ireland,)

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)

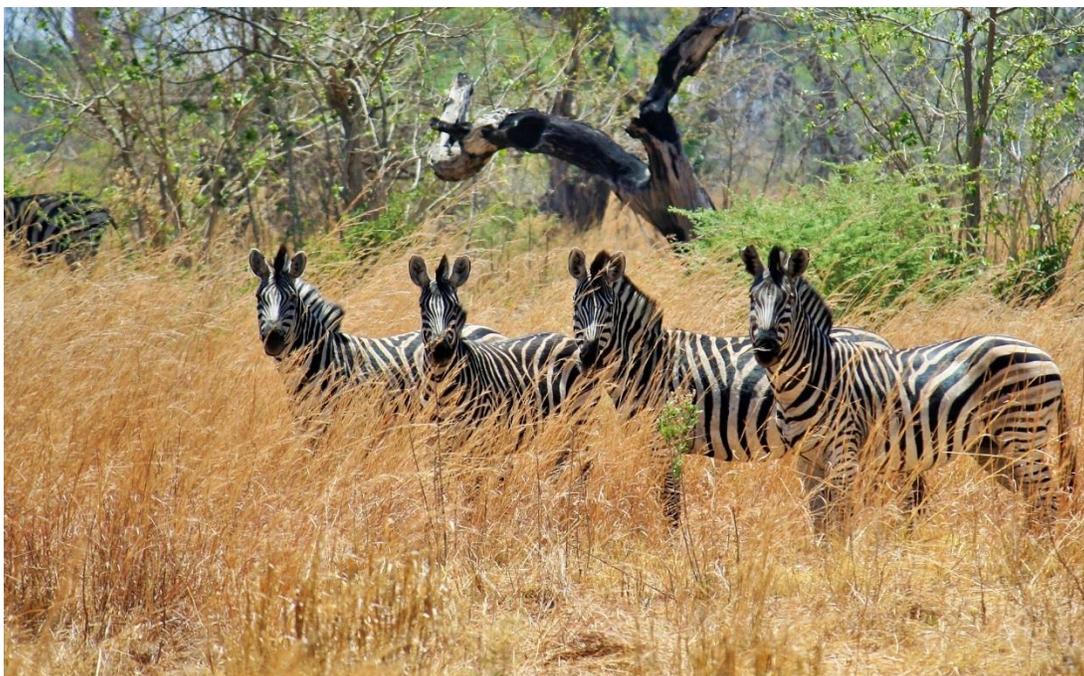
If calling from Asia, Australia or the Pacific Rim:

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:

<https://www.internationalsos.com/locations>



Using UVM Library Abroad

UVM Libraries home page: <http://library.uvm.edu>

For help accessing the library resources abroad, and to understand what resources are available to you, please utilize the [Study Abroad Library Guide](#). For specific questions, you can contact Laurie Kutner at laurie.kutner@uvm.edu.

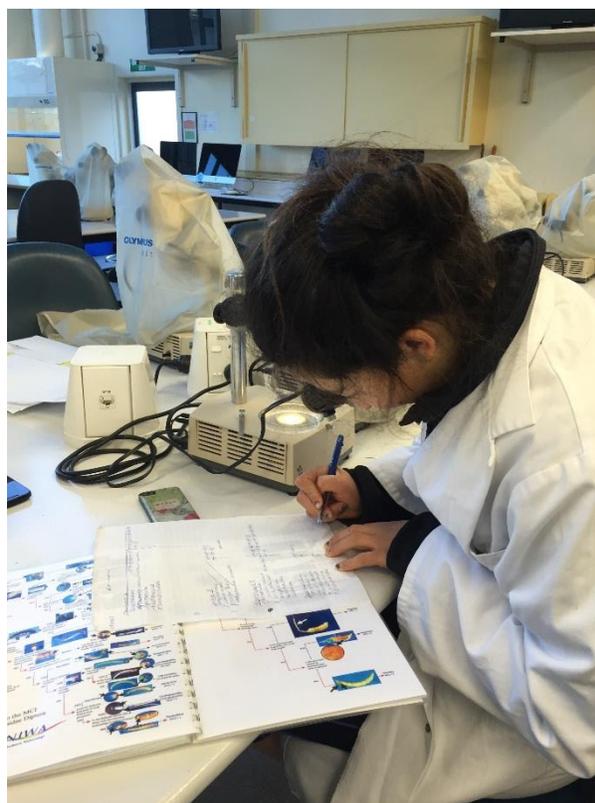
Important Credit Transfer Policies

Have coursework pre-approved through the Office of Transfer Affairs (through your iAbroad account) 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 Semester program or the Buckham Overseas Study Program (BOSP) at Kent University. Students taking faculty-led courses or on UVM Semester earn UVM credits and their grades average into their GPA. Students on BOSP at Kent University receive transfer credit, however their grade will 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) 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



UVM Housing

On-Campus Housing Expectations for Study Abroad Students

Residency Requirement: 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.

Housing and Meal Plan Contract: Students studying abroad for the fall semester are released from their nine-month housing and meal plan contract, but are responsible for notifying Residential Life if their study abroad plans change. Students who cancel their study abroad for the fall semester and remain enrolled at UVM but do not return to on-campus housing will be charged for the remainder of their contract/residency requirement.

Room Assignments for Students Returning from Study Abroad

On-campus housing is guaranteed for students returning from study abroad who have not completed their four-semester residency requirement, and university housing is available to others as space permits. Please note that for the 2016-17 academic year, housing will be located in the residence halls and at off-site locations Quarry Hill apartments and the Sheraton.

Students who are returning from abroad and still have a housing requirement are eligible to submit programmed housing applications and participate in room selection. They will be contacted by Residential Life via email in February with more information and must reply by all stated deadlines.

Students who are unable or ineligible to participate in room selection must submit a Residential Life housing request form available online in myResLife at <https://reslife.uvm.edu/>. The form will be available shortly after Add/Drop each semester. As space permits, eligible students who have filled out the housing request form will be emailed an official offer of housing and a link to an online housing and meal plan contract. A completed contract is required to receive a housing assignment. Residential Life communicates all housing offers and assignments through UVM email accounts.

Voting While Abroad

You can still vote in local, state, and national elections using an absentee ballot when studying abroad. Complete and send in the federal postcard to your election office before leaving to go abroad. More information can be found [here](#).

Scenarios

Below are some scenarios to help you prepare for how you would handle certain situations while abroad.

1. Documents

A long weekend is coming up, and you and your friends decide to take a weekend trip to a neighboring town. You take a long bus ride to get there. You finally arrive and hop off the bus, happy to stretch your legs. The bus drives away and you start heading to your hostel for the night. You realize that you left your wallet on the bus. What's worse, you discover your passport is also missing.

What should you do in this situation?

What could have been done to avoid/prepare for this situation?

2. Finances

You are a couple weeks into your semester abroad and your initial funds are running low. Luckily, financial aid has been disbursed to your parents and they can wire it to you. However it's going to take up to three business days for the money to become available to you. Your parents send you the money on a Friday afternoon. You only have the equivalent of \$20 on you.

What should you do in this situation?

What could have been done to avoid/prepare for this situation?

3. Health

You wake up one morning with a terrible sore throat. You assume it's just the start of a cold and go about your day. You start to feel worse throughout the day, and decide to go to bed early. You wake up in the middle of the night with a fever of 103 and are in severe pain.

What should you do in this situation?

What could have been done to avoid/prepare for this situation?

4. Health

You have a chronic illness that requires daily medication. With one month left to go before you return to the U.S., you realize you underestimated the amount of medicine you would need and are going to run out soon. Stopping your medication is not an option - you need this medicine to stay healthy.

What should you do in this situation?

What could have been done to avoid/prepare for this situation?

5. Safety

It is your first weekend in your city. You are excited to go out and explore the nightlife with your new friends. Later that night, as it is time to leave the club and everyone has been drinking, you realize you can't remember how to get back to your apartment. Everyone you're with is too inebriated to help.

What should you do in this situation?

What could have been done to avoid/prepare for this situation?

6. Safety

Your roommate, who is also from the U.S., begins dating someone from the city you live in. They both seem really happy together and start spending more and more time together. One day you come home after class to find your roommate crying. After you calm her down, she explains that the night before she and the person she is dating had unprotected sex after she repeatedly said “no”.

What should you do in this situation?

What could have been done to avoid/prepare for this situation?

7. Culture

You decide to meet your friend in the city one day for lunch. It's really hot out so you decide to wear shorts. On your way to meeting your friend, you notice people are staring at you. It starts to make you feel uncomfortable. The staring doesn't stop. Suddenly you realize something - you're the only person on the street wearing shorts.

What should you do in this situation?

What could have been done to avoid/prepare for this situation?

8. Politics

You on a weekend trip and chatting with some locals. When they hear you are from the United States, they start to ask you questions about the American political process, policies, etc. You do not want to talk/feel comfortable talking about politics.

What should you do in this situation?

What could have been done to avoid/prepare for this situation?



When You Return



Checklist

- Get active on campus and become a peer advisor, a buddy to an international student, volunteer, or attend OIE events
- Attend the Welcome Back Event
- Fill out program evaluation
- Submit your photos and videos to the OIE photo and video contests
- Attend workshops to help make your study abroad experience marketable for your resume and interviews.

Preparing to Return

Tips for Preparing to Return

For many study abroad students, the process of re-adjusting to their lives in their home country can be just as challenging, if not more challenging, than adjusting to living in their host country. To ease this process, here are some steps you can take before the end of your time abroad:

- Make a list of everything you still want to visit/do/accomplish while abroad. Do them!
- Make sure you have the contact information of all your new friends so that you can stay in touch. One of the benefits of studying abroad is that you'll now have friends from all over the world!
- Take pictures of your favorite people, places, and things. Don't forget to document your everyday routine—even though you may not think to photograph “normal” aspects of your life abroad, you will want to remember them in the future.
- Take some time to reflect on the experience. You've experienced a lot and learned a lot over the course of your time abroad, and you may feel different in some ways than when you started. Consider what your experience means to you, and how you want to carry what you've learned forward.



Logistics of Returning from Abroad

- Make sure that a transcript from your study abroad semester will be sent to Transfer Affairs:

Transfer Affairs
Office of the Registrar
360 Waterman Bldg.
85 S. Prospect St.
Burlington, VT 05405

- You may also want to request several copies of your official transcript for yourself. These should remain sealed (do not open them). In the future, should you apply for graduate school or for a position which requires your college transcripts, you will have copies to send out without having to contact your host university or program provider.
- Bring all of your course materials home—especially syllabi and graded assignments, papers, or exams. These materials may be needed to finalize credit transfer and determine the “level” of a class.
- Make sure you’ve closed any accounts you’ve opened abroad, like bank accounts.
- Pay any outstanding bills you have at your host university or program provider.



Re-Entry Shock

Re-entry shock, also called reverse culture shock, is the adjustment you may experience when returning back home from being abroad. Similar to culture shock, everyone has a different experience with adjusting to life back home and not everyone will experience the same level of re-entry shock. **Feeling re-entry shock is completely normal. Not feeling re-entry shock is also completely normal.**

You may find it difficult to discuss your experience studying abroad with friends or family, particularly if they have not had similar experiences in their own lives. You may also feel overwhelmed, irritable, or sad. It is important to note that these feelings should soon fade.

If you are having a tough time with this adjustment, or would just like to talk through your feelings with a counselor, [UVM's Counseling and Psychiatry Services \(CAPS\)](#), at the Center for Health & Wellbeing can help. Counseling is available at no cost to full-time UVM undergraduate students, and many different types of services are available.

WHEN YOU RETURN

Tips for Easing your Transition:

There are many ways to help ease your transition back home. Getting involved and enhancing skills and characteristics strengthened abroad will likely reduce your re-entry shock.

Talk About Your Experience

- Share your experiences and talk about traveling with a receptive audience.
 - Often you can find this from friends who have studied abroad or who are international students.
 - Also, all of the staff at the Office of International Education has had significant experience studying, living, and/or travelling abroad. We are happy to hear about and discuss your experiences.
- Stay in touch with friends you met abroad. This will help you continue to connect with the culture you left behind. If some of them are also study abroad students who have now returned to their home universities, they may be dealing with similar feelings.



Get Involved on Campus

- With the Office of International Education:
 - If you have federal work-study funds, you can become a Study Abroad Peer Advisor. Peer Advisors are our student staff. Among other projects, they present Study Abroad 101 sessions, work on study abroad marketing and social media, talk to intro-level classes about studying abroad, and help with events like the Study Abroad Fair, Accepted Student Visit Days, and Pre-Departure Orientation.

WHEN YOU RETURN

- If you do not have work-study funding, talk to the OIE about volunteering for our office. You could help with admissions events, Pre-Departure Orientation, the Study Abroad Fair, or you could serve as a contact for students interested in studying in your host country.
- Attend the Welcome Back Event, which is held at the beginning of each semester. All returning study abroad students and all exchange students who are studying abroad at UVM are invited. It will be easy to find people who understand the study abroad experience at this event!
- Become a buddy to an incoming international student through [the Catamount Cultural Connections Program](#). This program is meant to help international students adjust to US culture and life at UVM, and gives domestic students the chance to connect with people from many different cultures. The OIE plans events, field trips, and activities for “buddies”.
- Contact the OIE for more information about participating in English Conversation Corner, where international students learning English can practice with fluent English speakers.
- With a club or organization related to international cultures, foreign languages, or diversity
 - [The Global Village Residential Learning Community](#)
 - World Club and other student organizations
 - Organizations in the Burlington community

Study Abroad and your Future Career

International experience like study abroad can be a really valuable asset to you as you plan your future career. It’s important to think about ways to further the skills and knowledge you gained abroad once you’re back home, and to learn how to frame your study abroad experience in terms that future employers will understand and value.

Keeping Your Skills Active

- Continue your foreign language education. One of the best ways to do this would be to take foreign language classes at UVM. If your academic schedule doesn’t allow for that or your language isn’t available at UVM, you could get involved on campus in relevant organizations or find speakers of that language in the community to practice with.
- Continue engaging with different cultures. Employers value intercultural communication and the ability to work successfully with people from different backgrounds. Engage with organizations on campus or in the community where you will use these skills.
- Consider going abroad again. There are many ways to do so including volunteering abroad, graduate school abroad, working abroad, or research abroad.

WHEN YOU RETURN

Communicate the Value of Study Abroad

- Put study abroad on your resume. If you took classes or did a research project abroad that is relevant to your career plans, include that. For resume guidance, please contact the [Career Center](#).
- Think critically about what you learned during study abroad. Common examples of skills and traits gained or improved include: problem solving skills, intercultural communication skills, confidence, perseverance, independence, research skills, adaptability, etc.
 - In cover letters and interviews, use this sort of language to describe your experience and why you are a better candidate because of it. Explain why it sets you apart.



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