



LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY 

# Study Abroad Handbook

2014-2015

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# Introduction

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Congratulations on your decision to study abroad! Studying abroad will challenge and inspire you and, like many students, you will probably look back on your time abroad as one of the highlights of your undergraduate career. Many Longwood students who study abroad return to campus with a greater understanding of themselves, a different perspective on world affairs, a host of new friends, and an eagerness to continue to explore newly discovered interests.

Whether you are going abroad for the first time or already consider yourself a seasoned traveler, we want to make sure that you are well prepared for the experience. This guide is designed to answer many common questions that arise before, during, and after studying abroad. Be sure to familiarize yourself with Longwood’s administrative and academic policies, and take this guide abroad with you as a reference.

For convenience, this guide uses the term “study abroad” throughout, but please note that the same policies and procedures also apply to domestic programs. If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us in Longwood’s International Affairs office. Best wishes for a productive and memorable study abroad experience!

# Travel Information

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## *PASSPORTS*

Any United States citizen leaving the US must be in possession of a valid US passport. If you do not have a passport already, you should obtain one now. If you already have a passport, make sure that its expiration date is six months or more after your intended return to the US following the semester abroad. If your passport expires before that date, you should renew it.

If you are applying for a passport or passport renewal less than three months before departure, you are strongly advised to request expedited service to make sure that the new passport will reach you in time. If you will travel within 14 days and have not yet applied, you must make an appointment to apply for a passport at a regional passport agency. For additional details and requirements for passport application or renewal, see <http://travel.state.gov/passport>.

Sign your passport in ink immediately after you receive it; otherwise it is not valid. Also complete the information page for emergency contacts.

Before you leave, make several photocopies your passport's biographical page(s) and signature page as well as your visa page, if applicable. Leave copies with your family at home and also bring a copy abroad with you in a carry-on bag separate from your original passport. Should your passport become lost or stolen, these copies will be helpful in securing a replacement.

NOTE: Some countries require non-citizens to carry their passport or other documents on them at all times while abroad. Check with the embassy or consulate of your host country for more information. A photocopy may often suffice in compliance with such a requirement, but check with the consulate to confirm.

Non-US Citizens: Non-US citizens must meet with Longwood's Director of International Affairs before leaving for a study abroad program outside of the US. International Affairs will advise non-US citizens on how to remain in legal US visa status during their study abroad semester and how to re-enter the US legally to complete their studies at Longwood.

## *STUDENT VISAS*

In order to enter most countries to study for an extended period of time, a special passport stamp or other indicator—often a visa—is required. A visa allows you to enter a country for a specific purpose and for a specified time period. Obtaining a student visa can take anywhere from several weeks to several months, so if your host country requires that US citizens obtain a visa for study, you should begin the visa application process as soon as possible. If your study abroad program is sponsored by a US provider (e.g., SACI, etc.), your program will likely provide you with information on how to obtain a student visa for your host country and may assist you with the visa application process. If your program

does not provide assistance in this area or if you are participating in a direct exchange program, you should consult with the nearest embassy or consulate of your host country for guidance.

Visa application requirements vary from country to country and even from consulate to consulate. In other words, the French Consulate in New York may have completely different requirements from the French Consulate in Los Angeles. Common requirements for visa applications include a passport, a country- or consulate-specific visa application form, proof of health insurance, an admission letter from your host institution, and/or financial verification of bank accounts.

You may have to appear at a consulate in person to submit your visa application materials. If this is a requirement, there is most likely no way to get around it. If the NY Consulate of Spain, for example, requires you to apply there, you must be prepared to drive, fly, or take a bus or train to NYC. We cannot ask them to eliminate this requirement for you.

Some consulates allow students to apply for visas by mail. If this is the case, it is recommended that you send your passport and visa application materials via track able overnight express mail and to pre-purchase a return track able overnight express mail envelope for the consulate to use to return your passport and visa to you. Other consulates may require students to apply for a visa in person, which in some cases may require travel to the consulate nearest to your permanent address.

Consulates generally have very limited open hours both for answering the telephone and for public appearances. When you speak with someone in a consulate, keep a detailed record of the conversation: the date and time of the conversation, the full name of the person with whom you spoke, and his/her comments, answers or recommendations.

Most countries have specific visa application information and documents posted on their consular websites and provide contact information for applicants with questions. Be sure to read all instructions carefully, as a consulate may require you to call, fax, or e-mail your request or questions to them. Others may not have a website and take telephone calls only. When contacting a consulate for instructions, be prepared to provide the following information:

- ✓ Purpose of your planned stay abroad
- ✓ Institution where you will study
- ✓ Planned dates of your departure and return
- ✓ Maximum amount of time you plan to spend in that nation

Links to foreign embassy/consulate websites and related information are available at the following sites:

Find your country's embassy in the US: <http://www.embassy.org/embassies>

More travel information: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1765.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html)

The visa process can be time-consuming and complicated. Most of all, be patient and be prepared. The visa application process is one of the most daunting and time-consuming parts of the study abroad process. Keep in mind the end result!

In addition, please keep in mind that the international office staff at Longwood and your host institution are not agents of foreign countries, so their ability to help you complete visa applications is very limited. It is always best to seek answers directly from a consular employee.

**Non-US Citizens:** If you are not a US citizen, you will need to learn your host country's visa requirements for citizens of your home country in order to determine whether you will need a visa for study abroad. Requirements for US citizens may be different from requirements for citizens of other countries, so be sure to research this matter early in the study abroad process in order to prepare for and have sufficient time to complete the visa application process, if needed.

## *TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS*

As soon as you have confirmed your study abroad program participation, it is wise to begin researching your travel options. Occasionally, a study abroad program may provide group travel arrangements, but in most cases travel arrangements are up to you. Be sure to keep in mind the following before making your travel plans:

- ✓ Confirm the dates for orientation (if applicable) and the start of classes
- ✓ Confirm the last date of exams for your program
- ✓ Consider any additional travel you may wish to do before and after your program (remember to ensure that you and fulfill in advance the visa requirements of any other countries you plan to visit or travel through)

It is recommended that you do not plan to arrive more than a few days in advance of the date that orientation or classes begin at your host institution, as arriving too early may also result in difficulties at immigration and airport security. Four or five days in advance should allow you sufficient time to recover from jet lag and become familiar with your new environment prior to the start of your program.

Many travel websites offer discounted fares to students. Links to a number of student travel websites are available at [GoAbroad.com](http://GoAbroad.com) and [StudyAbroad.com](http://StudyAbroad.com).

## *TIPS FOR SECURING VALUABLES*

**Packing:** Do not carry everything in one bag! Never pack essential documents, medicine, or anything else you cannot do without in your checked luggage. Put these items in your carry-on bag.

**Cash:** Never carry large amounts of cash, either in transit or while abroad. Consider other means of accessing funds (for example, credit cards, ATM cards, etc.). For the cash you will need to carry, consider using a necklace pouch or a money belt that you can wear hidden underneath your clothing.

**ATM and Credit Cards:** Take only the cards that you will use on the trip. Keep these in your carry-on bag. Keep separately (e.g., in your necklace pouch or money belt) a list of your cards, numbers, and emergency replacement procedures.

**Insurance:** Since it may be necessary to contact your insurance agent(s) while abroad, keep all names, phone numbers, and your policy number(s) with you in a safe place.

**Luggage:** Mark all luggage, inside and out, with your name. Only write your address on the **inside** of your luggage. Keep a list of what is in each bag and what each bag looks like—including brand name and color (you will need these if the airline loses your luggage), and carry the list with your other important documents. Mark your bags in some distinctive way so that you can easily identify them on the luggage carousel at the airport. Try to travel light; it is safer, easier, and, lately, often cheaper.

**Medicines:** Carry all essential items you will need for the trip in your carry-on and ALL prescription medication. Also, carry a copy of your prescription(s) with the generic name of the drug(s). Keep medicines in original drugstore containers. Take extra glasses and your contact lens prescription with you.

**Passport:** Carry with you in your carry-on bag—separate from your passport—at least two extra passport pictures, your passport number, date and place issued, a certified copy (not the original) of your birth certificate, and a photocopy of your passport. If your passport becomes lost, report it to the local police, obtain written confirmation of the police report, and take the above documents to the nearest US Consulate to apply for a new passport. You should also leave copies of your critical documents with a trusted family member in the US.

**Ticket:** Make a copy of your ticket or list your ticket number (all flights included) and the name and address of the issuing agency. Keep this list separate from your ticket. Also leave a copy of your complete itinerary with your parent or guardian.

## *IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS INSPECTIONS*

Upon entry to any country, you must show your passport, required visa(s), and sometimes also proof of immunizations and/ or financial documents. At an airport, this usually occurs just after you deplane, but before you recover your luggage. Remember that admission to the country is entirely at the discretion of the immigration officer. The immigration officer, who determines the length of stay to be authorized and stamped into your passport, will normally ask you about the purpose of your visit and how long you plan to remain in the country.

After your passport has been stamped and you have collected your luggage, you must pass through a customs inspection. You will probably receive a customs declaration form to be filled out on your plane (or train) and customs officials will examine it when they look at your luggage. Your bags may be very carefully examined and you may be detained or asked to pay duties if there are any irregularities or violations of customs regulations. You may also be waved through with no special attention whatsoever. Note: Don't joke about bombs, terrorism, smuggled items, or the like.

Most major airports and train stations offer banking services, so if you have not brought much local currency with you it is often possible to purchase some there with US dollars or other foreign currency. ATMs are also often available in these locations, and you may choose to use your ATM card for your

initial transaction (assuming you have checked with your bank in advance to ensure that your ATM card will work in your host country). Change only enough to cover local transportation and a few meals, as you will likely be able to get a better exchange rate at a bank in town.

### *DUTIES AND TARIFFS*

You will want to register in advance with US Customs any expensive equipment (e.g., computer, camera, radio, etc.—especially foreign-made or fairly new items) that you take abroad with you. By registering these items with US Customs before you leave, you can avoid being questioned about whether or not they are subject to any duty when you return. Consult the US Customs Service Web site, <http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel>, in advance of your departure for further information and to review their tips entitled “Know Before Your Go.” You should also obtain and save receipts for any major purchases you make overseas and intend to take home.

Returning to the US: US residents are usually permitted to bring into the US \$800 worth of foreign souvenirs and gifts duty-free. All articles acquired abroad and in your possession at the time of your return to the US must be declared to Customs officials. Declaration forms will be distributed during your flight back to the US.



# ARRIVAL AND ORIENTATION

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After clearing customs, the next step is reaching your program site. This is usually done independently, sometimes according to directions and modes of transport suggested by your host institution, or together with a group from your program if this has been pre-arranged. After you arrive, you are likely to be given at least a short orientation about living and learning in your new environment by your host institution or international office coordinator. Some orientation programs may be very elaborate, involving such things as language testing, local excursions and sightseeing, lectures and talks on history and customs, counsel on cultural adjustment, etc., while others may be brief. Shortly thereafter, real classes will begin.

## *CONFIRMATION OF ARRIVAL*

After you have arrived at your host program or residence, you should phone or e-mail your family. You will also need to notify Longwood's International Affairs office of your physical address abroad (and mailing address, if different), local telephone number (if you will have one), etc. as soon as these are finalized. Contact the International Affairs office as follows:

Office of International Affairs/Longwood University  
Stevens 111  
Office of International Affairs  
201 High Street  
Farmville, VA 23909  
Tel. (434) 395-2172  
Fax (434) 395-2988

## *JET LAG*

Jet lag refers to the physical and mental effects the body suffers when traveling rapidly across numerous time zones. The condition results from the disruption of the traveler's normal sleep-wake cycle. As a result, the traveler may experience indigestion, daytime sleepiness, and headaches, changes in blood pressure, fatigue, and poor concentration.

If you are in the air for more than six hours or cross more than three time zones, your body may react unfavorably to the stress, causing symptoms that you will experience upon arrival abroad, often including exhaustion, disorientation, headaches, insomnia, nausea and aching bones and muscles. There is no single cure for jet lag. What works for one person may not work for another. Following are some tips that may help reduce the effects of jet lag:

- ✓ Try to book an aisle seat so that you can stand easily and regularly.
- ✓ Eat a meal high in carbohydrates the evening before the flight.

- ✓ On the day of the flight, eat lightly. Especially avoid coffee, tea, alcoholic drinks, and nonprescription drugs.
- ✓ Set your watch for the time at your destination. This will help mentally prepare you for the time change and begin the process of your body's adaptation to a new sleep cycle.
- ✓ Try to relax on the flight.
- ✓ Make yourself comfortable. Wear loose clothing.
- ✓ Drink water (not coffee or a soft drink) for each hour spent in the plane.
- ✓ If at all possible, get some sleep.
- ✓ Do not use sleeping pills. Once you arrive: if it is dark, go to bed; if it is light, get out and do something in the sunlight (not sunbathing).

# Pre-Departure

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Before departure you must do all of the following:

## *Longwood PREPARATION*

- ✓ Attend Longwood's study abroad pre-departure session(s).
- ✓ Complete all final critiques, papers, and examinations at Longwood.
- ✓ Take a copy of your Study Abroad Course Approval Form.
- ✓ If you receive financial aid or scholarships at Longwood, work with the Financial Aid office to complete any required paperwork and arrange for your receipt of funds for the coming semester(s), if applicable.
- ✓ Return all library books and pay any outstanding fines.
- ✓ Register a temporary change of address with the post office so that your mail can be forwarded to your home address (e.g., your parent or guardian's home) while you are away.
- ✓ Copy down all names, phone numbers, and postal and e-mail addresses of campus people and offices you MIGHT need to contact during your time away.
- ✓ If you are not a US citizen, consult with International Affairs to make sure that all is in order with your immigration status.

## *PROGRAM PREPARATION*

- ✓ Read your acceptance letter and materials from your host institution carefully and return all completed information as required. If applicable, send in the confirmation deposit before the deadline.
- ✓ Apply for housing at your host institution, if applicable. Do this as early as possible, as space may be limited.
- ✓ Apply for your passport. If you already have a passport, make sure that it is valid at least six months past the date of your anticipated return to the US; if it is not, renew it as soon as possible.
- ✓ Make all flight arrangements.
- ✓ Collect documents required for the visa if your host country requires one for entry. Apply for and obtain the visa.
- ✓ Collect any other entry documents you are required to take (e.g., program acceptance letter, immunization records, financial documents).

## *LOGISTICS*

- ✓ Plan your budget. Have an emergency fund available that you can access abroad if needed (suggested minimum: \$250).
- ✓ Bring a sufficient amount of money for estimated start-up costs.
- ✓ Arrange with your bank to have \$200 in small denominations of local currency to bring with you.

- ✓ Make sure you have the credit cards, ATM cards, telephone cards, etc., that you are planning to use.
- ✓ Contact your Credit Card Company, bank, etc. to ensure that the companies know in advance when and where you will be abroad.
- ✓ Obtain rail passes, hostel cards, etc., as desired.
- ✓ Make sure you understand what your primary health insurance plan does and does not cover while you are abroad and how it works. Review the services of any secondary insurance plan that might also cover you (e.g., Longwood insurance plan, a parent's insurance plan, etc.). Obtain additional insurance for additional coverage, as needed/desired. Bring insurance card(s) abroad.
- ✓ Consider purchasing insurance for personal liability, property loss, trip cancellation, etc.
- ✓ Arrange for power of attorney for the person handling your financial affairs in your absence.
- ✓ Discuss safety and terrorism issues with your family as well as emergency contact procedures.
- ✓ Arrange for absentee voting in any election that will occur before you return (where you are registered to vote).
- ✓ Gather and bring all medication, prescriptions, saline solutions, extra glasses or contacts, needles, over-the-counter drugs, etc. for the duration of your stay abroad.
- ✓ Bring several extra passport-size and passport-quality photographs (for miscellaneous use).
- ✓ Have a physical, dental check, eye examination, etc. Make sure you receive all appropriate immunizations.
- ✓ Review the suggested packing list. Pack lightly.

# Packing

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The best advice is to travel light and not take more than you can carry by yourself. For emotional comfort, you may want to pack one or two items that you feel are personal necessities, but you will find that large amounts of clothing, gadgets, art supplies, and books can be an unnecessary burden. Among bulky clothing items, take only essential coats and sweaters that are appropriate for the climate. You can acquire other inexpensive items in your host country that will have the added advantage of fitting in with the local fashions so you will stand out less as a foreigner.

Use the following basic list as a general guideline to pick and choose what is essential for you. (You may wish to adapt these items to your own checklist.) Be sure also to consult any specific information provided for your program.

## *GENERAL PACKING TIPS*

- ✓ Clearly identify your luggage inside and out with your name and both US and overseas addresses.
- ✓ Place a strap or piece of rope around your suitcase to secure it in case the lock breaks and to make it easy to identify on the luggage carousel.
- ✓ Check airline regulations for weight, size, and number of bags. Check current regulations for carry-on items (liquids, etc).

## *CLOTHING*

- ✓ 1 pair of rainproof walking shoes (dark-colored shoes are usually best to blend in overseas)
- ✓ 1 pair of flip-flops (showers may be less than scrupulously clean)
- ✓ Socks
- ✓ Underwear
- ✓ Shorts (may not be appropriate in certain cultures or climates)
- ✓ Pants/skirts
- ✓ Shirts/blouses
- ✓ Sweater/sweatshirt
- ✓ Pajamas, slippers
- ✓ Poncho/rain jacket
- ✓ 1 light jacket
- ✓ 1 bathing suit
- ✓ 1-2 nice outfits
- ✓ Winter coat, gloves, hat (depending on location and season)

## *GIFT SUGGESTIONS*

- ✓ Clothing and items with the Longwood logo
- ✓ Cookbooks with North American recipes (pancakes, chocolate chip cookies, etc.)
- ✓ -Non-perishable foods specific to the US

- ✓ -Baseball caps
- ✓ -CDs of US music (jazz, folk, pop, rock, etc.)
- ✓ -Calendars with US scenery
- ✓ -Pen-and-ink drawings or professional quality photographs of your region
- ✓ -US-style paraphernalia (Disney World, Warner brothers, NBA, NFL, etc.)
- ✓ -Handmade crafts or jewelry (especially Native American)

### *MEDICINE AND TOILETRIES*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Remember that non-prescription liquids generally cannot be in your carry-on.</li> <li>✓ Soap and shampoo (mini-sizes, as you can buy these items after arrival)</li> <li>✓ Toothbrush and mini-size toothpaste (you can buy a full-size toothpaste tube after arrival)</li> <li>✓ Comb or brush</li> <li>✓ Cosmetics, moisturizer (check size limitations for any liquid items you wish to carry on)</li> <li>✓ Deodorant (check size limitations for liquids; you may need to check this)</li> <li>✓ First aid kit</li> <li>✓ Contraceptives/condoms</li> <li>✓ Aspirin</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Tissues for the flight</li> <li>✓ Tampons/pads (small amounts, as these can also be obtained abroad)</li> <li>✓ Razor/blades (pack in check-in bags only)</li> <li>✓ Extra eyeglasses and sunglasses (carry these on)</li> <li>✓ Extra contact lenses (carry these on) and cleaning solutions</li> <li>✓ Tweezers, nail file, etc.</li> <li>✓ Linens (perhaps including a lightweight set of sheets, if not provided by the program)</li> <li>✓ Towel/washcloth (small versions; buy more, if needed, once abroad)</li> </ul> |
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### *CONSIDERATIONS FOR PACKING MEDICATIONS*

- ✓ Bring all medications labeled in correct containers/packaging.
- ✓ Bring a physician's prescription with the GENERIC NAME for all medications. You might also wish to have a letter from your doctor concerning the medication and your legitimate need for it. Such a letter could be an especially useful document for customs officials.
- ✓ ALL prescriptions should have the generic name listed, as brand names vary from country to country.
- ✓ If you have a chronic condition or medication allergy, consider ordering a medic alert bracelet. Contact your pharmacist for ordering information.
- ✓ Carry medication(s) and accompanying documentation with you in your carry-on luggage.
- ✓ If you use birth control pills, remember to bring your prescription.

### *DOCUMENTS*

- ✓ Carry on all items!
- ✓ Passport and visa – and photocopies (also leave photocopies with a family member in the US)
- ✓ Tickets (and rail passes, if applicable)
- ✓ Insurance card(s)
- ✓ Driver's License (US or international; only if you plan to drive - note that driving abroad is strongly discouraged)
- ✓ Hostel membership card, if applicable (purchased from Council Travel)
- ✓ Under-clothes money belt or neck wallet
- ✓ Cash, credit cards, ATM card(s), calling card, etc.
- ✓ Copies of the above for reporting lost or stolen cards (you may also wish to leave copies at home)
- ✓ Acceptance letter from the program and approval letter from Longwood
- ✓ Extra passport-size photographs (useful for ID cards, railcards, etc.)

### MISCELLANEOUS

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| ✓ Watch (cheap, reliable)  | ✓ Battery-operated alarm clock  |
| ✓ Camera and film  | ✓ Moist towelettes  |
| ✓ Small flashlight   | ✓ Batteries   |
| ✓ Address book; light-weight stationery and envelopes                | ✓ Portable music player   |
| ✓ Books, guides, maps, train schedules, handbooks                    | ✓ Adapter and voltage converter/appropriate plugs (Note: Most countries use different electric current and plugs, etc. Check on your host country's voltage/plug requirements and purchase adaptors as needed.) |
| ✓ Day pack/small compressible knapsack                               | ✓ Small locks for backpacks or locking luggage to overhead train racks  |
| ✓ Stuff bags/plastic storage bags                                    | ✓ US recipes, measuring cup   |
| ✓ Small laundry soap and compact clothesline                         |   |
| ✓ Hostel sleep sack (a folded-over sheet that is hemmed up the side) |   |
| ✓ Umbrella   |   |
| ✓ Luggage lock and tags  |   |

### DON'TS

**Do not take:** Expensive jewelry, luxury items, etc. that would mark you as a target for a casual thief or pickpocket, or that you might lose.

**Personal computers:** a common question is whether to take along a laptop computer. The use of personal computers at institutions abroad is not nearly as widespread as it is in the US. Many students abroad use computer labs on campus. If you feel that you simply cannot function without your laptop or you need ready computer access for your independent work, consider taking a laptop along. You should realize, however, that there are risks in transporting and storing the computer. Theft of laptop computers has become alarmingly common and you may find that a laptop is a significant burden and worry if you plan to travel after your program ends. When traveling with a laptop, always keep the

laptop with you; never put it on the seat in front of you or under your seat. Make sure that the computer is insured and registered in advance with US Customs.

### *HOUSING CONSIDERATIONS*

Before beginning your travels, be sure that you know if you need to provide your own furnishings for your accommodations. Some programs or housing facilities will provide basic bedding, kitchenware, and appliances, while others may not. If your housing includes bedding, you still might want to bring your own set of sheets. If you plan to do significant traveling while abroad that includes staying in hostels, it may be useful to bring your own set of sheets and a small towel or to buy these upon arrival.

In addition, please be aware that housing is not always included or managed by the host institution and you may have to commute to your classes as anyone who lives there would. A commute could be anywhere from 20 to 60+ minutes and include subways, buses, or walking.



# Academics

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A number of important academic matters must be settled before you leave to study abroad and when you return. Please carefully review this section and consult with your academic advisor and International Affairs if you have any questions.

## *COURSE APPROVALS*

Upon your return to Longwood, you will earn Longwood credits for all of the courses that you pass abroad as long as you complete the following steps:

1. Submit required Course Approval Form to the Office of International Affairs by the appropriate deadline! You should write the courses you intend to take while abroad and obtain approvals from either the Dean or your Advisor. Work with your academic advisor to make sure you understand what you need to take while abroad so you are on track toward graduation. Take a copy of the form with you to use as a reference! You are responsible for your course approvals and schedule. We will not email copies or your course choices.
2. Please be aware that many host institutions and programs do not have course listings available in print or on websites. They may set their classes/schedules at a much later date than we do. They may change their course offerings last minute. We cannot control this! Consequently, this means that your courses may change when you arrive abroad. You need to be patient and flexible and realize this is part of studying abroad and learning about a new culture. If your courses change when you arrive, you must seek email approvals from your Advisor. Again, we cannot do this for you. Please copy the Assistant Director on all emails regarding course approvals. She/he will print them and attach them to your original Course Approval form. We cannot process your transcript without the correct course approvals. Please do not wait until you return to obtain approvals because there is no guarantee a Department Chair will approve a class.
3. Request that your host institution mail your official transcript directly to Longwood's International Affairs office.

It is your responsibility to know before you leave Longwood the number of credits you must take at your host institution and how many equivalent Longwood credits are expected to be awarded on your return. Note that falling below the equivalent of 12 Longwood credits may result in the loss of certain financial aid or scholarship awards.

After you return to Longwood following your semester abroad and Longwood will receive a copy of your official transcript directly from the host institution which will be reviewed by your advisor in order to confirm the placements in your degree plan.

When seeking approvals from department chairs, the chair will review the course information and work with you to determine how the courses can be placed in your degree plan. If you do not know your

courses in advance, instead discuss the types of courses that you're advisor might expect of you in order to meet the degree requirements that you seek to fulfill. Some advisors may wish to meet with you again on your return to Longwood to review the work you did abroad before they will grant final approval for a course to fulfill a specific requirement in your degree plan. For this reason, be sure to document carefully and thoroughly all of the work you do abroad and keep copies of all syllabi, course work, papers, and exams.

It is your responsibility to ensure that International Affairs has a copy of all course approvals in writing and that the course approval requests you email to department chairs address all of the same information as the Study Abroad Course Approval form. You should also keep a copy of all approvals for your own records; International Affairs recommends that you print out the e-mail correspondence and bring the messages home with you. Once you have finalized your course schedule for the semester abroad, you are required to e-mail your course names and credits to Longwood's International Affairs office.

While abroad, you should maintain a full-time credit load as defined by the host institution and equivalent to at least 12 credits at Longwood. Note that falling below the equivalent of 12 Longwood credits may result in the loss of certain financial aid or scholarship awards.

### *REGISTRATION, ADD/DROP AND WITHDRAWAL*

When studying abroad, the rules for dropping and adding a new course and/or withdrawal from a course may be different from the rules at Longwood. In many programs, you are normally not permitted to withdraw from a course once you have registered for and begun attending it. In making any adjustment to your course schedule, you are completely subject to the policies of the host institution. The host institution is under no obligation to grant a withdrawal, especially when it is apparent that a student has done no work in a course.

You are expected to complete all assigned work before leaving the study abroad site at the end of the term or semester. You must have written permission to leave a site before completing all of your academic obligations. You are not permitted to request early departure, early exams, pass/fail, incomplete grades abroad, or withdrawal from a semester abroad. Failing to follow these policies will result in a failed semester and no refund of paid tuition and/or fees charged by the host institution. Consult with Longwood's Director of International Affairs if you have any questions about these matters prior to making any changes at your host institution.

### *GRADES, GPA, AND THE Longwood TRANSCRIPT*

On most programs, grades earned abroad, which are judged by individual instructors according to local practice, are not included in a student's Longwood grade point average and only grades of Pass or Fail are recorded on the Longwood transcript. Nonetheless, students may be asked to submit their study abroad transcript when they apply to graduate or professional schools, which will certainly take the study abroad grades into consideration when evaluating an application.

## *TRANSCRIPTS*

Before leaving your host institution, you must request that transcripts from your host institution be sent directly to:

Office of International Affairs/Longwood University  
Stevens 111  
Petra Visscher, Executive Director  
201 High Street  
Farmville, VA 23901

Longwood's International Affairs office must receive an official transcript directly from your host institution in order to evaluate and record your overseas credit. Please note that it may take up to several months for some host institutions to finalize and mail your transcripts to Longwood. If Longwood does not receive your transcript as required, you may risk your enrollment ranking and/or graduation date.

Also, if you expect in the future to apply for graduate school, scholarships/fellowships, or jobs that require transcripts, you may wish to request additional transcripts from your host institution or program at the end of your term abroad. Foreign institutions have different rules from US institutions regarding record keeping, so you may not be able to obtain original, official copies of your transcript from your host institution after a certain time period has passed. Some foreign institutions may have a rule that they only ever issue one transcript per student; if this is the case at your host institution; there is no way to circumvent this rule.

## *PRE-REGISTRATION FOR Longwood COURSES THE FOLLOWING SEMESTER*

Students abroad are required to be in touch with their academic advisor from abroad by e-mail or phone in order to obtain clearance to register online for classes for the following semester. Be prepared to provide your academic advisor with the class and credit information for your semester abroad as well as your plans and goals for courses in the upcoming semester.

You are also strongly advised to meet in person with your academic advisor during the semester prior to your semester abroad in order to discuss in person your schedule both for the semester abroad and for the semester that you will return to Longwood, and you are encouraged to contact your academic advisor by e-mail or phone any time you have registration or advising questions while abroad.

## *ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS*

While studying abroad, students are expected to attend class regularly, to come prepared, and to participate actively in classroom discussion and activities. Absence from a class may be excused normally only for a legitimate medical reason. Absence from classes for other activities or due to travel or visitors, including family, is not tolerated and may lead to sanctions (e.g., a reduction in grade). You are encouraged to take a proactive approach to learning and to engage

Voluntarily in learning activities that complement the formal curriculum and that reinforce your language and cultural skills.

## *DIFFERENCES IN ACADEMIC SYSTEMS AND NORMS ABROAD*

### *International Office at Your Host School*

Some students are frustrated with the lack of individualized attention from the international office at their host schools. However, in most countries abroad, university-age students are expected to be more independent than students are in the US. As a result, if you need help, you likely will not receive it unless you make your question or concern known to the appropriate person abroad. Longwood's partners abroad have no way of helping if they do not know that you need assistance, and please recognize that these advisors provide advice and help to all international students at your host university (a population that can exceed 2,000 students). The message here is: when you have questions or need help, let the international office abroad know. Maintaining good contact and a good relationship with the international education office at your host institution is an important way to make the most of your experience abroad.

### *Registration for Classes*

Many institutions overseas do not set their academic time table and course offerings until shortly before the beginning of the term, so in some cases (particularly on direct exchanges) you will not register until you arrive at your host institution and classes will shortly begin. In these cases, there is no alternative to waiting because the institution's course schedule will still be in flux. The best way to cope with the uncertainty of what classes will actually be offered at your host institution and whether you will be permitted to enroll in them is to identify many classes that might satisfy Longwood degree requirements and to have them all pre-approved by the

Appropriate department chair(s) at Longwood; this way, you will have many back-up plans when you register. You can usually use the previous year's catalogue or degree plan for this activity, if one exists, because it is reasonably likely that your host institution will offer similar classes again.

Keep in mind that most overseas institutions do not allow students to enroll in the range of courses that a US college does and often restrict students instead to courses within one or two disciplines. Thus the range of courses available to students may be much narrower than the institution's catalogue suggests. Programs sponsored by US institutions generally offer much more leeway in terms of diversity in courses than direct enrollment/exchange programs do.

### *Course Levels and Equivalencies*

Some overseas partner schools offer three-year undergraduate degree programs. At these institutions, four years is usually not necessary because there are no core or general requirements for a degree and students typically focus only on their major; they are not required to take courses in other departments as US students are. Students in the host country may have begun to focus their studies on two to four subjects even before applying to university, which means that they will often have been focusing on

their major even before they enter the university system. The advantage of this system is that your fellow students in most of your classes will have a fairly strong background in the subject. Some US exchange students find that they can keep up in such cases—so long as the course is at the introductory level. So if you have no background in a particular subject but you want to enroll in a course on that subject (and your host institution permits you to do so), it is wise to choose classes at lower levels.

### *Grades*

Most countries' educational systems do not suffer from the same grade inflation that has become a problem in the US. Most instructors abroad are accustomed to awarding "C" level grades to the average hard-working student, reserving "A" grades for the extraordinary students who come along once a year or even less frequently. Some returned students from certain countries have equated "B+" level work in the US with "C" level work in abroad. Another way to get the most out of your academics while abroad is to choose courses with appropriate and useful course loads and to pass your classes with the equivalent of a "C" or better.

### *Exams*

Normally, you must complete the entire semester at your host institution. However, in rare cases, depending how closely the term dates at your host institution align with Longwood's, a small conflict between the institutions' semester schedules may arise. Note that students are permitted to end a semester early only in cases where there will be a brief, unexpected conflict with semester dates in a given term – and with permission in advance from Longwood's Director of International Affairs. If you think that this may be the case for you, contact Longwood's International Affairs office immediately to learn what steps you may need to take to resolve the situation. Keep in mind the following:

- ✓ You must finish all coursework before leaving the host institution and in most cases may not complete course work by e-mail or via mail, regardless of what your instructor abroad might tell you.
- ✓ In many courses, the final assessment is worth the vast majority of your grade. Be sure that you give the assessment your absolute best effort. If it is a paper or project, try to make it one of the best you have ever done.
- ✓ Save all of your course work and materials that are transportable, and bring copies and documentation home with you to the greatest extent possible. It is not uncommon that instructors abroad will misplace your work, and you also must be prepared to document your work for Longwood department chairs upon your return to Longwood.

### *Success in the Academic System Abroad*

Several major differences exist between the US and many other countries' academic systems at the undergraduate level; in fact, you may experience culture shock most vividly in the classroom. Following are several tips on what to expect:

### *Grades, Tests, and Study Tips*

One difference abroad is the number of assessments that happen in a term. In the US, you might have frequent homework assignments, projects, and papers for a class. In contrast, many classes abroad will have only one final critique, project, exam, or paper that is worth 100% of your grade. Sometimes instructors will assign optional homework that is not graded and may have no effect on your final grade. As a consequence, your final assessment—whether a test, paper, or project—should be your very best work. Set aside time each week to work, study and prepare throughout the entire term, not just the final weeks of the term. US institutions recommend that you study a minimum of two hours for each hour that you are in class. This might be a good guideline for your schedule abroad. Set deadlines for yourself and meet them.

### *Independence*

Another difference is the level of independence. Students abroad often work independently, studying and working on their own for significant periods of time. This model is actually very similar to ideal US graduate schools. There is less guidance on what is expected of you to prepare for class each day. Some instructors might only tell you the topic for the next class, and it will be your responsibility to prepare yourself through independent research. Often you will be given a comprehensive list of suggested readings, but you will not be required to read all or any of them. You should go to the library and examine each of the suggested readings and focus on the ones that are most helpful to you. You may find that many of your classmates rush to the library the first day after class to check out the important reading materials on the list. Keep in mind that you can request to recall books if what you need is checked out. This process usually takes around two weeks. Often instructors will put several books on reserve in the library for students to use, but will not assign specific page numbers to read; therefore, you must make the decision about what and how much you want to read.

Most instructors are willing to meet with you and discuss this, but they will expect you to take the initiative in your work. It might be a good idea to propose some thoughts about your project plans to your instructor and ask for her or his feedback. This is a lot of pressure, which can cause some anxiety, especially since you may not have the opportunity to learn how the instructor grades and what he/she believes is most important about the topic. If you are accustomed to having readings or projects assigned for each week, assign them to yourself and ask for the instructor's feedback on your work. This should ease your worries. Make sure to visit your instructor's or tutor's office hours regularly.

### *Critical Thinking*

In general, it is much more apparent on foreign campuses that the emphasis is on independence and critical thinking (which they may call "critical judgment"). As college students, you should know what constitutes critical thinking. If you have doubts about what exactly critical thinking means, it might be best to ask one of your favorite instructors at Longwood well before you leave for the semester abroad. In general, critical thinking is the ability to suspend your preconceived notions in order to investigate an issue from many different academic angles, and then form an opinion that is coherent and well-supported by evidence. After taking a course abroad, you should be able to speak at length in an

interesting way about the topic, displaying critical views of many of the basic points of the course material; if you can do this, it is a good indication that you are prepared for the assessment at the end of the term. If you want personal academic help and advice, your host institution may have support services such as tutors and writing workshops, although this exists more in the UK than elsewhere abroad. Using local tutorial services, if available, will familiarize you with your host country's system and save you the stress of trying to learn it the hard way—by making mistakes!

### *Rigor*

In general, it is important to remember that, to visiting US students, foreign academic systems may seem deceptively easy because of the very high level of independence granted to students. Do not be fooled, however, by the casual attitude that your instructors and local classmates may appear to have towards their studies. It may not feel rigorous until you receive your grades at the end of term because independent work is emphasized so much; however, know that most higher education in Europe is considered extremely difficult and rigorous. Always remember that students abroad are expected to determine independently much of the direction of their own learning and it is assumed that you will be working, practicing, reading, and learning on your own. The great advantage of this is that students are able to pursue topics and projects of individual interest at much greater depth than is typically possible in a US classroom, so take advantage of this new system to deepen your own learning and to fully explore something that fascinates you. Take your work very seriously and do not procrastinate in preparing for your final works, projects, and exams.

### *FOREIGN LANGUAGE*

Students who study in countries where English is not the majority language should strive to improve their skills in their host country's language as much as possible prior to departure in order to have a richer, more fulfilling experience abroad. To enhance cross-cultural understanding, Longwood students are strongly encouraged to enroll in a language course while abroad. Often, such a class may be offered by the study abroad program or host institution or at a nearby language school. Ask your host institution about the study options available to you as an exchange student.

### *STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES*

Students with all types of disabilities study abroad. Some study abroad programs are committed to making their programs accommodating to students with physical, mental, learning or other disabilities. Programs administered by US institutions or in the UK tend to be more accommodating than those operated elsewhere or by other foreign entities. Longwood's International Affairs office is committed to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to study abroad and is pleased to assist students in finding a program that can meet their needs.

Remember that many other countries are not as accessible as we may think they should be. If you expect that you will need accommodations in order to study abroad, research early in the study abroad application process the laws of your target host country regarding persons with disabilities and the general availability of services and accommodations. Attitudes toward disabilities may vary greatly by

location. Mobility International ([www.miusa.org](http://www.miusa.org)), Accessible Journeys ([www.disabilitytravel.com](http://www.disabilitytravel.com)), and disABILITY ([www.makoa.org/travel.htm](http://www.makoa.org/travel.htm)) are excellent online sources of information about international travel for students with disabilities. Contact International Affairs early in the study abroad application process for more information about the possibility and availability of accommodations abroad.

### *Learning Disabilities*

Students with documented learning disabilities should notify both Longwood's Learning Resource Center and International Affairs office regarding their plans to study abroad and to explain the accommodations they request, and International Affairs can then liaise with the host institution to determine what accommodations, if any, may be available at a given site. Key to a successful study abroad experience for a student with a disability is communication. Students with documented disabilities should begin working with the LRC early in the study abroad process to prepare a detailed description of the disability and needed accommodations.

Programs administered by US institutions can generally more readily accommodate students with learning disabilities than other programs can. Direct enrollment in a foreign institution may present the greatest accommodation challenges, depending upon the prevailing attitude toward learning disabilities in that location. Be sure to inquire about additional costs, if any, for accommodations services; do not assume that such services will be free as they are in the US or at Longwood. If services are not available at a given site, we encourage you to continue to work with International Affairs and the LRC at Longwood to discuss alternative options and to try to find a solution that will still enable you to study abroad.

Failure to disclose a disability or need for accommodations, though within a student's right, is not recommended, as the added stress of foreign study coupled with a lack of appropriate accommodations abroad could prove to be overwhelming.

### *PROGRAM DIRECTORS ABROAD*

Most of you will have on-site program directors or international office coordinators while abroad. Their roles are very important and they should be your first point of contact. They will not only orient you to your study abroad location, but will be available for other kinds of assistance: academic, housing, everyday living, health and safety issues, and more. If you have a question or concern, for example, about your housing situation overseas, consult with them first, since they are on location and have the local knowledge necessary to help you find the information you need.



# Housing

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## *HOUSING - HERE AND ABROAD*

Housing arrangements vary by program. Some programs arrange housing for students, while others offer varying levels of assistance in finding roommates or apartments. Students should carefully consider their program's housing options or arrangements, as final responsibility for securing accommodations, either through the host program or independently, rests with the student.

## *HOUSING APPLICATION*

After you receive approval from Longwood and acceptance by the host program, you should apply for on-campus housing abroad immediately if your program offers it and if it is the housing option you wish to pursue. (Note that a housing application may have been part of the initial study abroad application for some programs.) Some programs require a housing security deposit that may be refunded (barring any damage to program property) at the end of the semester abroad.

# Money

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## *TUITION, FEES, AND FINANCIAL AID*

Students studying abroad for a semester with an affiliated provider will have to pay the program fee of the provider they have chosen. Students studying abroad through Longwood's Exchange program will pay the same tuition as Longwood minus room and board. Students are responsible for all other expenses (e.g., travel, housing, meals, health insurance, etc.), some of which may be required and billed by the host institution. It is the responsibility of the student to research fully the program's policies and procedures, including costs, prior to enrollment. For more information about costs and payments, please make an appointment with the International Affairs office with Petra Visscher.

Longwood students with Longwood scholarships or financial aid will be able to use their award (except work-study) for their Longwood abroad program. Students on study abroad are eligible to participate in Longwood's annual competitive scholarships.

All financial matters must be up to date with Longwood's Student Account Services office before an application for study abroad will be approved, and student accounts must be settled prior to departure. *All students need to see Mrs. Karin Warner before departure to talk about your account information.* Other questions about accounts should be directed to the Student Account Services office at (434) 395-2067 or [studentaccounts@Longwood.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@Longwood.edu).

## BUDGETING

The overall cost of living abroad can sometimes be higher than in the US in part because you are in an unfamiliar environment making transactions with unfamiliar currency. Depending on your program site, you may also be confronted with an almost endless array of entertainment possibilities and attractions. A go-slow approach to buying makes sense.

It also makes sense to try to live within a prudent budget, which will allow you to keep your finances in shape. The following budgeting suggestions may be helpful. You should discuss your budget in advance with your parent/guardian; the budget worksheet in the appendix of this guide can serve as a helpful guide. Pertinent general principles include the following:

- ✓ Make both weekly and daily budgets and stick to them.
- ✓ Learn the “value” of the money (i.e., in relation to the currency you know, the US\$) quickly wherever you are.
- ✓ Be consistently alert to special student rates and discounts wherever you go, and know which are available (e.g., travel, accommodations, entrance fees, some entertainment, etc.).
- ✓ Take advantage of less expensive alternatives whenever possible. Cook for yourself (especially breakfast and lunch), or use refectory or student cafeteria meals rather than restaurants, reserving meals at restaurants for special occasions.
- ✓ Note: many local students eat their main meal at lunchtime, taking advantage of subsidized collegiate refectories. Doing this will save you money and has the added bonus of exposing you to increased interactions with host country peers.
- ✓ Plan entertainment/recreation around the availability of free, inexpensive, or discounted events—on campus or locally.
- ✓ When you travel, stay in youth or student hostels or in modest bed- and-breakfast accommodations, as opposed to hotels, which cater to tourists and business travelers and charge accordingly.
- ✓ Take care of your belongings and safeguard your money and documents. Loss of personal possessions is upsetting at any time, but even more troubling and inconvenient abroad. Keep in mind that pick-pocketing is relatively common abroad. Never keep your wallet in your back pocket or backpack, as it is likely to be stolen. When at a café or restaurant, do not put your purse or backpack under your chair without it being secured to you in some way.
- ✓ Sales taxes, as US residents know them, generally do not exist in other countries, but many countries now impose a Value Added Tax (VAT) on certain goods (not services), particularly those that are more expensive. As a visitor, you can often reclaim the amount you have spent on the VAT at the international airport when you leave the country, but you will need to show all of your receipts and your purchases in order to claim this refund.
- ✓ Join local organizations, such as school or church choirs, sports teams, and other special interest groups that facilitate inexpensive social activities.

## *GENERAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION*

Before you leave home, make a list of international contact numbers for your financial institutions, as well as your account, credit card, and ATM card numbers. Keep this information in a safe location in case any of your cards are stolen.

While you are abroad, you want to be sure that you maintain control of your finances and that your credit rating does not suffer. Sign up to receive online statements from your bank(s), credit card(s), brokerage account(s), etc. If online statements are not available, be sure to have mailings directed to your home or overseas address, per your preference.

If you will be using a US credit, debit, ATM, or other card abroad, be sure to contact your credit card company or bank in advance of departure in order to inform them of the dates and locations where you will be abroad. If you fail to do this, your card may be canceled after the first or second time you use it abroad due to suspected fraud.

## *CURRENCY EXCHANGE*

US currency can be exchanged for foreign currency at most large banks or international airports prior to your departure, at the international airport of your destination, and at most major banks and railroad stations abroad. Note that banks and exchange bureaus in town often have better rates than those in airports and transportation centers.

It is wise to exchange a small amount of money prior to your departure in order to have some cash on hand upon your arrival abroad (the equivalent of around \$200 is common). In general, try to exchange money at bank branches in town and not at hotels, restaurants, or retail shops, where the exchange rates are unfavorable.

Bank branches can often be found in both airports and railroad stations abroad. Banks abroad afford you the fairest exchange rate available, but you can expect to pay a commission (which varies from one country to another) every time you exchange currency. In some countries, the commission is based on a percentage of the amount you exchange, while in others there is a flat fee regardless of the amount of the transaction. The flat fee rate makes it advantageous to exchange larger amounts to avoid repeat visits to the bank, though this may mean you might have to carry more cash than is advisable.

You will need to find a happy medium between carrying large amounts of cash and paying bank commissions. Oftentimes, you can use an ATM card to withdraw money and avoid any commission charge, although your bank may charge you a withdrawal fee.

## *BANKING AND ATM CARDS*

Establishing a bank account overseas (if visiting international students are permitted to do so where you study) can be a convenient and cost-effective way to cope with money matters abroad. Most students wait until arrival in the country to establish a bank account; your program orientation or international coordinator will or can likely explain the procedures. Being on site will allow you to become acquainted

with the various banks and the services they offer, and also allow you to familiarize yourself with the different types of bank accounts and to find the branch office most convenient for your use. If you already know of a particular bank and have the exact address of a convenient branch location, you may want to contact the bank in advance to learn whether you can open an account before you arrive. In this way, you can wire money in advance in order to have funds waiting for you abroad. You may need to provide a reference from your current bank. Many banks abroad have their own bankcards, allowing you to make easy, inexpensive withdrawals from their ATMs.

Alternatively, one of the most common ways that US students abroad obtain cash is to withdraw it with an ATM card from their bank account in the US. Opening an account at a local bank can be a time-consuming experience if you are only abroad a short time, and in some locations it may not be permitted for a short stay. Unless your home bank has offices or partner banks in the country where you will study abroad, you will be charged a fee to withdraw money with your ATM card.

You may also need to change your PIN in order to use your current card overseas (for example, ATMs in some countries can only accommodate a 4-digit PIN), or you may need to obtain an entirely new ATM card. Note that Bank of America currently has agreements with banks in several countries that allow you to withdraw money from your US Bank of America account using certain local ATM machines abroad and pay no commission fees. Contact Bank of America for details and to obtain a current list of countries and overseas banks where this arrangement is available. Other US bank chains may offer similar services abroad, so check with your own bank for details.

## *CREDIT CARDS*

Credit cards make foreign currency transactions easy and are invaluable in a financial emergency. Do take a credit card along, but use it wisely; credit cards can be dangerous because overspending is so easy. Also, credit card service fees and interest charges can be costly, the loss or theft of a card abroad can be a serious inconvenience when traveling, and most cards will charge you a fee (usually a percentage) for each purchase made abroad. Note that credit cards should not be your only means of spending abroad, as outside of large cities abroad credit cards may not be widely accepted.

Possession of a Visa, MasterCard, or American Express card may be helpful should you need emergency funds. Also, if available at your host site, you can usually go to an American Express office and cash a personal check for up to \$1000 (only the first \$50 will be provided in cash and the balance in traveler's checks). If you have no personal checks with you, American Express can provide you with a blank check if you can provide some pertinent information such as your personal checking account number and your banking institution's name and address.

With a Visa card you can usually obtain a cash advance against your account from a foreign bank. This is a relatively easy procedure. The bank will take your passport number and your credit card number and enter the information into a central computer to prevent you from exceeding the established limit. MasterCard is typically even more flexible because it is recognized as an international credit instrument. Most major banks across Western Europe and in tourist areas in adjacent countries readily accept the card. It may be used to draw cash. In addition, it is widely accepted by local merchants in much of

Western Europe. If you have a credit or bank card that is on the CIRRUS network, you should be able to withdraw money from most bank machines in Europe.

Only use the cash advance feature offered by your credit card as a last resort. Most companies charge a high interest rate for these transactions. Also, do not forget to pay your credit card bill on time! Request an electronic statement, pre-pay your card, or arrange for payments directly from your bank account while abroad.

Finally, for all financial transactions abroad, be sure to have adequate identification with you (e.g., your passport).

### *TRANSFERRING MONEY FROM HOME*

Should you run short of cash while abroad, money can be sent from home in a variety of ways. A brief summary follows:

- ✓ Cable transfer: US banks can telex money to foreign banks. This process can be complete in a matter of hours/days and there is a fee.
- ✓ Bank draft/cashier's check: You can request a bank to send a cashier's check, or bank draft, to your account overseas. Be warned, however, that clearing the check can take some time.
- ✓ Personal checks: Personal checks from a US bank may be honored by foreign banks, but only after they have cleared the US Bank. This process can take weeks or months. In some countries, personal checks are not honored at all. International Affairs suggests that you avoid using personal checks.
- ✓ American Express: You do not need an American Express card to take advantage of their services. American Express can cable money from their US office to one of their overseas offices, where it can be picked up with appropriate identification. Since not all American Express offices can prepare money orders or cable money, you should call your local American Express office for a list of offices abroad that can provide these services.
- ✓ ATM cards: You may be able to use your ATM card to withdraw money from your bank account in the US. This is a quick and painless way to access your money while abroad. Check with your bank to find out where your ATM card can be used and what fees are involved.
- ✓ Credit Cards: Be sure to acquire a PIN number for your credit card that is valid in your host country before you leave the US. Credit cards make foreign currency transactions easy and they are invaluable in a financial emergency. Use them wisely! With credit cards it is easy to overspend and you will be charged a fee per purchase abroad. Also remember that you will be hit with finance charges for cash advances on your credit card. Make a cash advance only if you have no other option.

### *MANAGING YOUR MONEY ABROAD*

Study abroad usually entails a drastic shift in the way you manage your money. No longer will you have a Longwood "flex account" or a local job. Instead, you will find yourself paying for daily expenses out of pocket with cash or credit. Remember that credit cards can be as risky as they are convenient. Without a

certain amount of discipline and budgeting, you might return from abroad with a staggering credit card debt. At the end of this guide, you will find a Budget Planning Sheet to help you plan, itemize, and budget for expenses you might incur before and during your time overseas.

The Credit Education Bureau suggests smart and effective ways to keep track of your credit card expenses. See their website and list of resource materials at <http://www.crediteducationbureau.com/library.asp>. Other useful reading about credit card debt for college students may be found here: [http://www.nelliemae.com/library/cc\\_use.html](http://www.nelliemae.com/library/cc_use.html).

# Health

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Scheduling an appointment with your doctor/primary care provider (PCP) prior to going abroad is strongly recommended, even if your program does not require you to do so. You may find it helpful to talk with your doctor about your health, diet or nutritional concerns, prescription renewals, and other questions you may have. Female students may also want to schedule an annual gynecological exam before going abroad.

## *GENERAL ADVICE*

The risk of becoming ill while traveling abroad may depend on three important factors: making adequate pre-departure preparations, including immunizations; knowing the health and safety risks; and following sound US and local medical counsel.

In addition, you should know that living away from your usual cultural environment can sometimes cause a degree of mental and emotional stress—which, in turn, could trigger physiological consequences. The impact of studying abroad on personal relationships, on counseling sessions (if you are in therapy), and on your general health (especially if you are on medication of any kind) is something you need to consider as you prepare for your sojourn abroad. In general, it is a good idea to find out about health care facilities in each of the countries in which you expect to spend any time.

Traveling in most developed countries, such as Western Europe, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand, usually incurs no greater health risks than traveling in the US. On the other hand, in some regions of Africa, Asia, South and Central America, and the Middle and Far East, sanitation and hygiene may be below US standards. Cities in these areas often have better health environments than outlying rural areas, but not always. The key to good health while abroad, is understanding your health needs and knowing what to expect in every place you visit.

If your travel itinerary is limited primarily to tourist areas, there is generally less risk of exposure to food or water of questionable quality, and thus the risk of disease remains small. But you may travel to cities off the usual tourist routes or live in small villages or rural areas for extended periods of time. In doing so, you enrich your educational experience, but you may also run a greater risk of contracting infectious diseases through exposure to contaminated water and food.

During your recommended travel planning appointment with your doctor, you will be able to review your immunization record and discuss appropriate preparations and precautions for your trip abroad.

The Center for Disease Control recommends that “diabetics or other persons who require routine or frequent injections should carry a supply of syringes and needles sufficient to last their stay abroad.” It is not uncommon to bring needles for your own use. Be aware that carrying needles and syringes without a prescription may be illegal in some countries, so take along a note from your doctor. Some countries

have needles and syringes for sale. Do not use or allow the use of contaminated, unsterilized syringes or needles for any injections.

Take good care of yourself while traveling! Do not wear yourself down, watch out for excessive exposure to heat, drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration, and get plenty of sleep. Do not ride with reckless drivers. Avoid alcohol. Most serious accidents involve alcohol consumption.

## *INSURANCE*

It is imperative that you have health insurance, especially if you study abroad. Make sure you understand your insurance coverage and how the system works. You should know how bills are paid in the case of a medical emergency abroad and also for routine treatments. Should you require medical attention abroad, it is necessary for you to have sufficient cash or credit card balance to make payment at the time of treatment, since the foreign physician and/or hospital may not be able to bill you later. Be sure to obtain an itemized receipt to submit with your insurance claim for reimbursement upon return to the US. It might also be helpful to carry a few blank claim forms with you just in case.

Also be aware of the provisions of any other policies you own, especially regarding coverage outside the US, including personal liability insurance against injury or damage caused by or resulting from your acts or omissions. In addition to being critical for your own well-being, sufficient, comprehensive insurance coverage abroad is also often a requirement of countries that require foreign students to obtain study visas. Such countries often require prospective students to prove they have health insurance that will cover them completely for the duration of their time overseas – whether in the host country or traveling. Contact your current health provider to learn whether they will cover you completely while abroad. If they do, obtain a letter from them stating that your current policy will cover any and all medical expenses while abroad.

If they do not, or if you cannot prove that your current health provider will cover you while abroad, you will need to purchase supplemental insurance. Often, a cost-effective option is to purchase insurance offered to international students from the government of your host country or from a company that is based in your host country.

For example, foreign students in Germany and Italy are typically required to enroll in the host government-sponsored health insurance that will cover medical expenses during the students' stay.

When evaluating your insurance needs, some questions to consider include:

- ✓ Will the plan cover hospitalization for accidents and illnesses for the entire period that I am abroad? (Note that some policies may cover medical expenses for brief stays abroad, but not for the full term of a study abroad program.)
- ✓ Will the plan cover you in your specific host country as well as every other country you plan to visit?
- ✓ Will the plan cover non-emergencies, such as doctor visits and medication prescribed abroad?



- ✓ What does the policy exclude from coverage (e.g., injuries received while driving an automobile, sporting injuries, etc.)?
- ✓ Is there a deductible? If yes, how much?
- ✓ Is there a dollar limit to the amount of coverage provided?
- ✓ Does the plan cover pre-existing medical conditions?
- ✓ What are the procedures for filing a claim for medical expenses abroad? Do you need to pay expenses up front and then submit receipts to the insurance company for reimbursement? Make sure that you get full information from your policy about how to arrange for routine treatment, medical emergency procedures, and what is required to pay for or be reimbursed for a claim. Many overseas health providers will not process US insurance claims and will expect payment at the time of treatment, so students should have access to a minimum of \$400 (e.g., by credit card, ATM, etc. held in reserve for emergencies) in the event that medical treatment is required abroad.

Be sure to obtain a receipt in order to submit it with your insurance claim for reimbursement upon your return to the US.

- ✓ What if you do not have enough money to pay cash up front? Can money be wired/sent abroad? How will you do that?
- ✓ Does the plan cover emergency medical transportation and evacuation as well as repatriation of remains? If so, what is the maximum payable?
- ✓ What documentation must you use as proof of international medical coverage (e.g., when obtaining care or if the host government requires documentation)?
- ✓ Will the plan cover you in the US for the same semester if you decide, for medical or other reasons, to return to the US before the end of the program? (In case of a serious accident or illness abroad, it may be necessary to return to the US for further care; it is therefore important that students carry coverage that applies not only abroad, but also simultaneously in the US.)
- ✓ If you are not a US citizen, will the plan cover you? (Often international students must arrange for coverage with a company in their home country, as many international policies do not cover students' travels in countries other than the US.)

\*\*We have information on our website about required insurance\*\*

### *Insurance Requirements*

(This information is also found on the Study Abroad webpage: <http://www.longwood.edu/internationalaffairs/44990.htm>)

- ❖ You must purchase an insurance policy through International Student Insurance Atlas Travel Medical plan or provide proof of equivalent coverage. The benefits of this insurance include:
  - ✓ Up to \$1 Million in Coverage (students are required to purchase a minimum of \$100,000 worth of coverage)
  - ✓ Coverage for hospitalization/ Doctors Visits
  - ✓ Coverage for prescription Medication

- ✓ Natural disaster evacuation/Political unrest evacuation/ Repatriation
- ✓ Hazardous Sports Rider
- ✓ Lost Luggage
- ✓ Trip Interruption
- ✓ For a full list of coverage benefits, see the Atlas Travel Description of Coverage (also found on Study Abroad webpage)
- ❖ You must purchase a minimum of \$100,000 of insurance coverage with no deductible.
- ❖ Please be sure your coverage dates include the dates of travel to and from the foreign country when applying for your insurance policy.
- ❖ Students participating in exchange or affiliated/approved non-affiliated programs: You may be required by the foreign institution to purchase other insurance, or the third party provider may include insurance in their costs. If this is the case, you must be sure to provide proof of equivalent insurance coverage to the office of international affairs. If the coverage offered by these entities is not equivalent, you may need to purchase the Atlas Travel Medical plan as well.
- ❖ Students participating in faculty-led programs: Check with your faculty program leader before applying for an individual insurance policy. Some faculty members may choose to purchase a group policy and include the cost in the price of their program.

**To purchase the Atlas Travel Medical plan, click or type the following link:**

<http://www.internationalstudentinsurance.com/schools/longwood-university-study-abroad.php>

- ❖ Note: This website works best in Chrome or Firefox browsers.

### Proof of Coverage

Proof of coverage must be provided to the Office of International Affairs BEFORE you leave for your study abroad program. Acceptable documents for proof of insurance coverage include receipt for insurance purchase, copy of current activated insurance card, etc. If you choose to use another insurance plan while abroad, you MUST provide proof that the coverage is equal to the coverage offered by the plan above.

### *PLAN IN ADVANCE*

You should prepare yourself to know what to do when medical attention is required. To facilitate a prompt and efficient response to any medical problem that may arise, many programs ask you to provide a medical history, which can be provided to anyone called upon to treat you. Being fully honest is in your best interest.

Your on-site coordinator may indicate during the host school orientation period what arrangements exist locally for routine and emergency health care. Learn whether there will be a physician on call or a clinic available to visiting international students.

You can also ask your local international office coordinator about local medical services: your coordinator should be able to help you contact the appropriate physician or other medical authority.

You should always carry your insurance cards with you. Some insurance companies will provide referrals to English-speaking doctors and other medical and emergency services (e.g., if you have Longwood student health insurance, some emergency services support abroad is included in the policy). For details, consult with your insurance company.

Weekend or post-program travel may present special problems, as you may find yourself in unfamiliar and remote locations. Research your emergency health options and prepare a written action plan, including contact information, in advance. If you are not fluent in the language of the host country and need medical attention, your advance preparation can prove invaluable. Do not take any chances on a breakdown in communication.

### *REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS*

Because of specific health concerns and conditions in various countries, proof that you have received certain immunizations may be required for study abroad in some locations. In such cases, you must carry an official record of your immunizations on an “International Certificate of Vaccinations” form, issued by the US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and approved by the World Health Organization. This form is available from many physicians and travel agencies, and it must be completed and dated by the physician or clinic administering the immunizations. In some countries, you may be asked to present the form upon entry to the country at the same time that you show your passport and any required visa. Your program may advise you on what is required for entry into the country where your program is located; otherwise, ask the consulate. You should also provide your program abroad with a copy of your immunizations record. If you plan personal travel to other countries before, during, or after your program, know their immunization requirements, too. It is your individual responsibility to know what immunizations are required.

At present, no immunizations are required for entry to or return from Western Europe, Japan, Israel, Australia, or Russia. This, of course, can change, depending on the prevailing health conditions. Therefore, it is always a good idea to check on the latest requirements just prior to your departure on the Center for Disease Control Web site: [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). Protection against yellow fever is recommended for those going to certain parts of South America and Africa. Anti-malarial medicine may be needed for some parts of Asia, Central and South America, and Africa. Remember that these anti-malaria drugs must be taken regularly and in strict accordance with your doctor’s instructions in order to be effective.

It is wise to determine which shots you may need before departure. Though you may be traveling only in Western Europe, you may consider obtaining such basic immunizations as those against tetanus and Hepatitis A. Travel abroad may involve “roughing it,” and cuts and abrasions are always possible. The more protection you have, the better. If you will require immunizations, you should schedule your appointment at least ten weeks in advance of your departure.

## *PRESCRIPTIONS*

Should you currently be under the care of a physician or require regular medication or injections (e.g., insulin or allergy shots), be sure to check with your personal physician for any advice or recommendations concerning your welfare while abroad. Living in a new environment, along with the stresses of studying abroad, can have an impact on your health. You should notify the on-site coordinator at your host institution of any special needs you have.

If you need medications regularly, take an adequate supply with you to last you throughout your time abroad (including birth control pills). Many insurance companies will cover your purchase of extra medication if you confirm with them that you will be studying abroad. Do not buy medications “over the counter” (OTC) while abroad unless you are familiar with the product, as OTC drugs abroad may be below standards set by the US Food and Drug Administration. Prescription medications vary in name, potency, and purity from country to country and cannot be sent through international mail.

If you have diabetes, are allergic to penicillin, or have any physical condition that may require emergency care, carry some kind of identification—a tag, bracelet, or card—on your person at all times. The tag should indicate the specific nature of the problem and spell out clearly what must or must not be done should you somehow be unable to communicate this information yourself.

A letter from your physician should accompany prescription medicines. This letter should include a description of the health problem, the dosage of prescribed medications to assist medical authorities during an emergency, and the generic name(s) of each medicine.

Any and all special health needs or medical conditions should be noted on the medical history forms that you are advised to carry with you. If you are required to take a medicine containing habit-forming or narcotic drugs, you must carry a doctor’s certificate attesting to that fact. It is also advisable to keep all medicines in their original and labeled containers.

If you need to carry medicines abroad, you should consult the embassies of the countries you will visit before departing to ensure that you can enter the country with your prescriptions and to avoid potential problems.

## *OTHER MEDICAL ITEMS TO TAKE WITH YOU*

### *Medications*

If you prefer certain over-the-counter (OTC) medications, it is a good idea to take a supply with you rather than to assume you will be able to purchase the same medicine abroad. For customs purposes, keep all medicines (prescription or over-the-counter) in the original containers. If you bring syringes with you, be sure to bring a doctor’s note. Syringes could be construed as drug paraphernalia.

Keep the medications in the original container(s) and carry any medications you take daily in a carry-on bag in case your luggage is misplaced while traveling. It is also wise to bring the written drug information provided by your pharmacy with you through customs in case the officer has questions about your

medication. If you have questions about your prescription medications, ask your primary care provider and/or a pharmacist for advice.

### *Glasses/Contact Lenses*

If you wear glasses or contacts, it is a good idea to bring a typed copy of your prescription and an extra pair of glasses or contacts with you.

### *Your Medical Record*

Bringing information from your medical record when you study abroad is recommended. It is advisable to carry these documents in a place that is both secure and accessible by you at all times while traveling. Be sure to make a photocopy of your medical records in case of loss. Some suggested information or items to bring are:

- ✓ Medications you are currently taking
- ✓ List of your chronic illnesses, allergies, and hypersensitivities
- ✓ Your immunization history
- ✓ Your blood type (if available)
- ✓ Your eyeglass and/or contact prescription
- ✓ The name of your PCP in Baltimore and at home
- ✓ The name and policy number of your health insurance company/-ies

### *Medic Alert Emblem*

Medic Alert emblems are recognized internationally. If you wear a Medic Alert ID tag or bracelet, be sure also to wear it while abroad. If you carry a card, you should carry the card with you at all times. This identification should indicate the specific nature of the problem and clearly state what must or must not be done should you be unable to communicate this information yourself (e.g., in case of unconsciousness).

### *First Aid Kit*

You may want to bring a small first aid kit with you. The availability of specific OTC drugs and hygiene products is uncertain in other countries. Many of these products will have different brands in the countries to which you will travel, so it is a good idea to have what you need for the duration of your stay before you leave home. Sample items to pack in a first aid kit:

- ✓ Acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol), Ibuprofen (e.g., Advil, Motrin), or Aspirin for pain or fever
- ✓ An antihistamine (e.g., Benadryl) for allergies, motion sickness, and to ease the itch from insect bites or stings
- ✓ Loperamide (e.g., Imodium) for diarrhea
- ✓ Bandages and band-aids for minor injuries
- ✓ Antiseptic, e.g., povidone-iodine (e.g., Betadine) and antibacterial (e.g., Neosporin) for cuts
- ✓ -Calamine lotion or 'AfterBite' to ease irritation from bites and stings

- ✓ Acetaminophen or ibuprofen, throat lozenges, cough suppressants (e.g., Robitussin DM), decongestant for colds
- ✓ Condoms and contraceptives. If you take birth control pills, bring enough for the duration of your stay.

*A few other things to consider including in your first aid kit:*

- ✓ Multivitamins (especially for long trips when dietary vitamin intake may be inadequate)
- ✓ Feminine hygiene products
- ✓ Insect repellent
- ✓ Sunscreen and chapstick
- ✓ Scissors and tweezers (packed in your suitcase)

### *Food and Water*

In areas where chlorinated tap water is not available, or where hygiene and sanitation are poor, only the following may be safe to drink: hot beverages (tea and coffee, made with boiled water) and canned or bottled carbonated beverages (soft drinks, juices, beer, and mineral water).

Where water may be contaminated, ice or containers for drinking may also be contaminated. It is generally safer to drink directly from the original beverage can or bottle. Wet cans or bottles should be dried before being opened and surfaces that directly contact the mouth should first be wiped clean. If no source of safe drinking water (e.g., verifiably safe bottled water) is available, tap water boiled for one minute may be safe. Once it has cooled and is in a thoroughly cleaned container, it can be used for brushing teeth as well as for drinking.

You should be careful in choosing which foods to eat. In areas of the world where hygiene and sanitation are poor, always select fresh fruit and vegetables with care. Any raw food could be contaminated, particularly in areas of poor sanitation. Foods of particular concern include salads, uncooked vegetables and fruit, raw meat, and shellfish. Avoid unpasteurized milk and milk products, such as cheese, and eat only fruit you have peeled yourself. Following these precautions will help to avoid intestinal infections, such as travelers' diarrhea, that are caused by organisms in contaminated food or water. But be warned: following the guidelines is no guarantee and you may still develop diarrhea. Prepare your own juice from fresh fruit that has been washed with a Clorox solution. Iced drinks and non-carbonated bottled fluids made from water of uncertain quality should be avoided.

Many countries offer an abundance of food sold from roadside stands. It is advisable to avoid such food. Note: many locals may have no trouble with such food or drink, because they have developed immunities against indigenous microorganisms. Visitors lack these immunities, which means you should proceed with care.

It is difficult to generalize about the quality of restaurant food overseas, but generally establishments that cater to outsiders and/or are in the expensive price ranges generally offer safe and nutritious food, while those that are at the other end of the economic spectrum and serve locals are of a more uncertain

quality. Assuming that there are no restaurants that meet the higher standard, the best recommendation is to seek sound advice from reputable travel guides or, even better, from your program director or on-site hosts.

If you are a vegetarian or have other special dietary needs, you may find it particularly challenging to maintain a healthy diet. You may want to research the foods offered in your host country. You may want to bring protein powder, vitamins, and other dietary supplements with you to provide good nutrition while abroad. Talking with other vegetarians or students on special diets who have studied abroad may also be helpful.

### *Some Not-Too-Uncommon Diseases*

Diarrhea is a common affliction that usually strikes several days after arrival in a new environment and seldom lasts longer than about five days. Diarrhea is nature's way of ridding the body of noxious agents; intestinal motility serves as the normal cleansing mechanism of the intestine. The most important way of coping is to maintain adequate fluid intake to prevent dehydration. Most cases of diarrhea are self-limited and require only simple replacement of fluids and salts lost in diarrhea stools. Drink fluids such as canned fruit juices, hot tea, or carbonated drinks. Your physician may be able to prescribe medication to take along for relief of the symptoms. It is strongly recommended that you consult with a local physician rather than attempt self-medication if your diarrhea is severe or does not resolve itself within several days, if blood and/or mucus is in the stool, if fever occurs with shaking chills, or if there is persistent diarrhea with dehydration.

Tetanus, commonly known as "lockjaw," is an infection of the nervous tissue produced by a contaminated wound or injury. The most common symptom is severe muscle spasms. If left untreated, tetanus can be fatal. Keeping a wound or injury clean (lots of soap and water to remove contamination) is one of the most effective weapons to prevent this kind of infection. Tetanus immunization is available, often in combination with the diphtheria vaccine. Tetanus diphtheria boosters are recommended every ten years after the initial series of three injections. Dirty and deep puncture wounds warrant an updated tetanus booster in the last five years.

Hepatitis A (Infectious Hepatitis) is most prevalent in North Africa, the Middle East and Caribbean, but it is possible to contract the disease anywhere, including in the US, if living conditions are crowded and unsanitary. Hepatitis A is transmitted orally through the ingestion of contaminated food or water. Clams, oysters, and other shellfish, especially raw, are common sources of the disease in contaminated areas. A variety of symptoms are associated with the disease, including fever, loss of appetite, nausea, abdominal pain, and yellowing of the eyes.

Malaria, which is transmitted by the female Anopheline mosquito, is common to parts of the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Anti-malaria medication is available and is required for those who will be participating in a program in some parts of the above named places. Instructions on taking the medication must be followed carefully to ensure adequate protection; you must usually begin taking the medication prior to your departure, and continue during the entirety of your visit and for

approximately one month after returning to the US. (Malaria cannot be contracted until seven days after a mosquito bite.)

No anti-malarial drug is 100% effective. To further protect yourself from malaria and other insect-borne diseases, it is important to use insect repellents containing 20-35% DEET and to use Pyrethrin clothing sprays.

Certain viral, bacterial, and parasitic infections acquired abroad may not result in any immediate illness. Some diseases (such as malaria) may not produce symptoms for as long as six months to a year after the disease is contracted. Should you become ill even long after returning to the US, you should inform your physician of your travel outside the US. Knowledge of the possibility of exposure to certain diseases abroad will help the physician arrive at a correct diagnosis.

### *Sexual Activity and Sexually Transmitted Diseases*

It is important for you to be aware of your host culture's view towards gender, dating, sex and morality. If you choose to be sexually active, protect yourself and your partner against unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS. Be responsible if using alcohol or other drugs because they can affect your judgment and your behavior.

There are many diseases (e.g., gonorrhea, herpes, etc.) that are primarily contracted through unsafe sexual activity. AIDS is the best known and the deadliest. The same wise precautions apply to all sexually transmitted diseases. The following is excerpted from a brochure prepared by CIEE on AIDS and international travel:

Everything you already know about AIDS and how it is contracted is as true overseas as it is at home. Taking all advised precautions is the only way to protect yourself. AIDS is considered less of an epidemic in some countries than in the US, and considered more in others. Whatever the situation in your host country, you are not more likely to contract AIDS there than here—IF you act sensibly and refrain from unprotected sex and other behavior that carries the risk of infection. As The World Health Organization states: "AIDS is not spread by daily and routine activities such as sitting next to someone or shaking hands, or working with people. Nor is it spread by insects or insect bites. AIDS is not spread by swimming pools, public transportation, food, cups, glasses, plates, toilets, water, air, touching or hugging, coughing, or sneezing." Since you will not know your environment overseas as well as you do at home, or might not be able to control it to the same degree, there are some things you should be concerned about in advance, to prepare yourself for all eventualities. If sexually active, always use a latex condom. Take a supply with you, as conditions of manufacturing and storage of condoms in other countries may be questionable and availability may be limited.

**Knowing Your HIV Status:** Some countries now require incoming foreigners, including students, to take the HIV antibody test, usually for long-term stays. Check whether your host country requires HIV testing. You may need a "doctor's certificate" showing the results of an HIV antibody test. Consulates in Washington, DC and New York City also carry information on HIV testing. Keep in mind that some countries may not have the resources to adequately screen blood or provide sterile needles. Living



overseas in certain areas MAY present greater risks to those who test positive for the HIV virus. Some overseas locations have limited medical facilities that cannot monitor the progress of such infections. Therefore, if you believe you may be infected, knowing your HIV status will help when planning your trip. If you decide you want to be tested, do so only at a center that offers pre- and post-test counseling. At many institutions, the primary focus is AIDS counseling. Allow yourself two weeks for the testing process. Consider getting tested twice: first anonymously (this allows you the privacy to decide what you want to do if the result is positive), then again for a doctor's certificate, if needed.

**Overseas Blood Transfusions and Blood Products and HIV Screening:** Many countries, including the US, Canada, Japan, Western Europe, and Australia screen donated blood for the AIDS virus; others do not. Before you leave the US, you should know your blood type and find out from your local Red Cross and/or host country's embassy about safe sources of blood overseas. In some locations, ascertaining the availability of HIV-screened blood and blood products may be difficult. In general, you should consider the following precautions: If you are injured or ill while abroad, avoid or postpone any blood transfusion unless absolutely necessary. If you do need blood, try to ensure that screened blood is used. Regardless of blood screening practices abroad, always take precautions that will reduce the risk of serious injury that may require blood transfusions.

**Overseas Injections and AIDS:** In the US, we take for granted that equipment such as needles and syringes are never reused. Be advised that in some foreign countries even disposable equipment may be used many times with different patients. In some countries, if an injection is required, you can buy needles and syringes and bring them to the hospital for your own use. The best rule is to avoid injections unless absolutely necessary. If injections are required, make sure the needles and syringes come straight from a package or have been sterilized with alcohol wipes or by boiling for 20 minutes. When in doubt, ask to see how the equipment has been sterilized.

**Note:** Caution regarding instrument sterilization applies to all instruments that pierce the skin, including tattooing, acupuncture, ear piercing, and dental work.

### *Alcohol and Drug Use*

If you decide to drink while abroad, drink very carefully and wisely. Overdrinking and alcohol abuse can lead to unsafe choices, poor academic performance, higher risk behavior, and/or regretted sexual activity. Do not endanger yourself, others, or property. You should use good judgment whenever consuming alcohol.

Students abroad may abuse alcohol due to a mistaken impression of how alcohol is used in the new surroundings, the cheaper cost to purchase alcohol, a lower minimum drinking age, different portions of alcohol, different types of alcoholic beverages, more lenient laws against drunkenness, and/or a desire to experiment or fit in. Although alcohol abuse may not carry the same legal penalties as the use of illegal drugs, it can create dire circumstances for you and your personal safety.

Remember that you will be in a new environment and will often need to rely on public transportation to get home at night. You may need to make the journey home at night alone, so be sure to use caution

and stay in control and aware of your surroundings. Use of inebriating or hallucinogenic drugs has very serious cultural and legal consequences (e.g., incarceration, deportation, removal from your program, etc.), as well as innumerable health risks.

Although there may be no minimum drinking age in your host country, customs regarding alcohol use may be very different than in the US. Most countries, with the exception of those with religious prohibitions, tolerate social drinking, but alcohol abuse and drunken behavior are not socially acceptable or tolerated. Remember that you are serving as an ambassador for Longwood and the US and Longwood's rules apply to you while you are studying abroad.

If you or a fellow student becomes incapacitated due to alcohol overuse and/or is in need of medical attention, the local emergency medical service and your local program director/staff should be notified immediately to protect the student's health and well-being.

### *Emotional Health*

Living in a new place and culture can cause stresses that may or may not be anticipated. Emotional ups and downs may occur while you adjust to new academics, surroundings, food, habits, customs, people, etc. Feelings of loneliness or frustration will pass as you make these adjustments. If they persist, however, consider it a possible medical problem and seek assistance from a counselor or physician.

Going abroad is not a magic "geographic cure" for concerns and problems at home. Both physical and emotional health issues will follow you wherever you go. In particular, if you are concerned about your use of alcohol and other controlled drugs or if you have an emotional health concern, you should address it honestly before making plans to travel. Contrary to many people's expectations, travel does not minimize these problems; in fact, it often exacerbates them to a crisis stage while you are away from home.

**Culture Shock:** It is normal to experience stress when studying abroad. You not only have to adjust to being a student in a new and different setting, but also to living a new environment. Quite likely, you will be far away from friends and family and will experience feelings of loneliness and homesickness. These feelings are very natural. The difference between what you expect and what you actually experience may contribute to the level of distress you feel. It may help to know that most people go through the following five fairly predictable stages as they adjust to their new environment:

- ❖ Stage 1: The initial excitement about being in a new place is called the orientation or honeymoon phase.
- ❖ Stage 2: This stage involves a period of initial cultural adjustment when you may feel lonely, frustrated or depressed.
- ❖ Stage 3: This is a time of adjustment when you start feeling more comfortable with your surroundings and acquaintances.
- ❖ Stage 4: As you complete the adjustment cycle, you will find yourself feeling integrated into the host culture and may find that you enjoy most aspects of host country.

- ❖ Stage 5: Returning to the US may send you into a period of reverse cultural adjustment. You may have wanted to stay in your host country longer and may try to figure out how and when you can return.

Symptoms of Stress: Many emotions and reactions are to be expected when you are stressed. Some common manifestations of stress are:

- ✓ Irritability over small things
- ✓ Difficulty concentrating
- ✓ Difficulty falling/staying asleep
- ✓ Queasy stomach
- ✓ Desire to run away
- ✓ Constant feeling of tiredness
- ✓ Psychosomatic illness
- ✓ Excessive criticism of others
- ✓ Poor work performance
- ✓ Difficulty making decisions
- ✓ Being unusually introspective
- ✓ Feelings of guilt, worry, anxiety

You should also be aware of the signs of a serious problem, either in yourself or in a fellow student, that require immediate intervention. These signs may include:

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

Dealing with Stress: In dealing with the routine stress symptoms described in the first section above, you may find it helpful to think about the coping strategies that have worked for you in the past and may also want to develop some new strategies.

These symptoms are felt at some point and to some degree by all expatriates abroad, and it helps to anticipate that you may have periods of loneliness, sadness, or depression abroad so that you can be prepared to work through them. Whenever your usual coping mechanisms are not working or you find yourself making coping choices that are not in your best interest, realize that you may need more support and seek help. You may find it helpful to talk with your program coordinator or an instructor abroad about the stress you are feeling. The following techniques may be helpful in dealing with the stresses and strains of adjustment:

- ✓ Stay active in your host community and institution. New experiences and activities will keep you interested, inspired, and with other people. Staying active is one of the best ways to become

acculturated and relaxed and to feel as though you are a real member of your new community abroad.

- ✓ Immerse yourself in art/study/reading/a hobby that is satisfying.
- ✓ Find a local person with whom you can talk regularly.
- ✓ Practice relaxation strategies through meditation, reading, walks, etc.
- ✓ Write letters/e-mails to family and friends – but don't focus too much on this! Remember that it is important to balance contacts at home with your new and special opportunities for learning and community abroad.
- ✓ Visit fellow students.

If emotional signs and symptoms persist, consider it a possible medical problem and seek assistance from a counselor or physician. If your symptoms are severe, seek immediate assistance from your host institution's international office coordinator and a counselor or physician.

(Adapted from "Maintaining Strong Mental and Emotional Health" module, Pre-Service Health Training for Volunteers Binder, Peace Corps Office of Medical Services)

### *FURTHER HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION*

For information on worldwide health conditions, consult the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>. The US State Department Overseas Citizens Emergency Center number is 202-647-5225, which is handy for information on medical, financial, or legal problems while abroad. Other travel health resources include:

- ✓ World Health Organization-<http://www.who.int>
- ✓ Travel Health Online-<http://www.tripprep.com>
- ✓ Mdtravelhealth.com-<http://www.mdtravelhealth.com>
- ✓ Medical Information for Americans Traveling Abroad-[http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures\\_1215.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1215.html)

Preparation and research are key to having a safe and healthy experience while away from campus.

# Safety

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## *OBEYING LOCAL AND NATIONAL LAWS*

While you are visiting another country, you are subject to the laws of that country. Many of the legal protections you take for granted are left behind when you leave the US. US embassies and consulates are very limited in the assistance they can provide should you get caught up in the legal system of your host country. They can give you the names of competent attorneys and doctors, but not any financial assistance in paying for legal or medical services. They cannot intervene on your behalf in the administration of justice in the host country.

Bail provisions as we know them in the US are rare in many other countries, and pre-trial detention without bail is not uncommon. The principle of “innocent until proven guilty” is not necessarily a tenet of legal systems abroad. The best advice is, of course, to know the laws and to obey them scrupulously. If you get in trouble, contact your program director and seek legal assistance as quickly as possible.

Avoid any involvement with drugs and all other illegal substances. Even if you are at a party and not using drugs but others around you are, you could be in big trouble. Leave that place at once! Drug laws vary from country to country, but in most cases they are very severe, regardless of whether the drug in your possession is for personal use or for sale to others. Bail is not granted for drug-trafficking cases in most countries. Pre-trial detention, often in solitary confinement, can last for months, and if you are arrested for drugs the US consular officer cannot get you released from jail. Many countries do not provide a jury trial, and in some cases you may not even be present at your trial.

You could be in a country where prison and law enforcement officials do not speak English, the significance of which you may not fully appreciate until you are confined and feeling helpless. The average jail sentence in drug cases worldwide is about seven years. In several countries, the death penalty can be imposed for conviction on some drug charges. Do not wrongly assume that buying or carrying small amounts of drugs cannot result in your arrest. Americans have been jailed abroad for possessing as little as three grams (about one-tenth of an ounce) of marijuana. See the US State Department “Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad” at [http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic\\_text/state/drug\\_warning.html](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/state/drug_warning.html).

## *WORKING ABROAD LEGALLY*

In many other countries, as in the US, holding a wage-earning job while you are on a student visa is illegal and can be grounds for expulsion. Most student visas authorize you to remain in the country only for the purposes of education, usually for the period of your formal enrollment, plus perhaps some additional time for tourism. Moreover, you are likely to be so busy with your studies and the other demands and pleasures of being in a new place that you will not have time to do much else. More to the point, if you are caught working illegally, it is likely that you will be asked to leave the country.

If you are intent on working abroad, you usually must make arrangements with your host country's consulate in the US beforehand to work either before the program begins or after it ends and in many cases you would need to enter the country with a work permit, as most countries do not allow changes in student visa status after entry. Work permits are available to students only in certain countries and only under specific circumstances. Employers usually must demonstrate that a potential foreign employee has skills and experience not possessed by the citizens of that country, which is usually a very hard case to make. Recent changes in UK legislation allow foreign students to take part-time or holiday work under specific circumstances, but in most cases you must obtain prior permission and a special notation on your visa prior to leaving the US; contact the UK embassy or consulate for more information. If your main motivation for going abroad is to gain work experience, perhaps you should consider a summer work abroad opportunities or future opportunities through an international employment or internship organization.

### *REGISTERING WITH THE US DEPARTMENT OF STATE*

The US State Department's consular website is found at <http://travel.state.gov>. An important feature of the website is a secure online travel registration that allows US citizens to record foreign trip and residence information that the US State Department can use to reach and assist citizens in case of an emergency. It is highly recommended that you register through the website with the US embassy or consulate in your host country. You can register and update your contact information at any time, so it is easy to keep your data current. To register, go to <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>. You will need the following information to register: (1) passport number, place and date of issue, and date of expiration, and (2) date of arrival and date of departure abroad. The site also provides up-to-date travel information customized to your unique travel agenda and itinerary. The data you provide is secured behind Department of State firewalls, accessed only by cleared personnel in Embassies, Consulates, and the Department of State, and can be released only with your permission under the provisions of the Privacy Act.

### *WHEN THINGS GO WRONG*

When students are alone in another country, they should be prepared for any crisis, whether it is an illness, accident, violent crime, terrorist attack, natural disaster, or political unrest. Prior to departing the US, be sure to register online with the US Embassy or consulate nearest your host institution, as described above.

Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact you in an emergency. Remember to leave a copy of your passport at home in the US. In addition, you should provide your parent/guardian with the contact numbers for your place of departure and arrival whenever you travel. Be sure to inform them of any changes in your itinerary that may delay your arrival. Don't let your family worry; communicate with them.

In case of an emergency while you are abroad, you should contact the on-site program director or appropriate host institution staff immediately, and then notify Longwood's International Affairs office at [internationalaffairs@Longwood.edu](mailto:internationalaffairs@Longwood.edu) or (434) 395-2172. If the emergency happens outside of normal business hours, call Longwood's Campus Safety office at 434.395.2091.

### *CRIME, VIOLENCE, AND TERRORISM*

Most countries in the world have less street crime than the US does. Indeed, US students returning from abroad often report that they never felt safer. However, this does not mean that there is no crime and that your safety is assured. Being a foreigner and not knowing the rules of local behavior may increase your odds of becoming the victim of crimes such as fraud, robbery, or theft. Moreover, in some circumstances it is possible you will get caught in the midst of political strife that may not be directed at you personally, or even at you as an American, but nevertheless can be very dangerous.

In the event of a terrorist threat, program directors, working with local police and US consular personnel and local university officials, will institute all necessary security measures and will notify students of appropriate security measures to take. Longwood's emergency management team will work closely with the overseas program administration to create an appropriate response. Terrorism is a present reality, so have contingency and contact plans in case of emergency. Students abroad should also regularly check the US State Department's Travel Advisories for any country that they plan to visit: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html).

### *FOLLOWING PROGRAM SAFEGUARDS AND COUNSEL*

Overseas study programs recognize their responsibility to do their utmost to provide a secure and unthreatening environment in which students can safely live and learn. Study abroad administrators consult regularly with colleagues around the country, resident directors of programs, responsible officials of foreign host universities, and individuals in the US State Department and other governmental and non-governmental agencies, as well as other experts who are well-informed on world issues and events.

The ability to communicate almost instantaneously worldwide via fax and email enables study abroad administrators to obtain and share information quickly and accurately in the event of an overseas emergency that may affect a program abroad. In short, most campuses and programs both in the US and abroad have in place a system of consultation and consensus building in order to make proactive and reactive decisions concerning the safe operation of their programs.

### *TAKING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY*

Again, US citizens residing abroad for an extended period of time should register with the local US Embassy or Consulate abroad. Non-US citizens should confirm procedures with their home country. Safety and security depend to a large degree upon students being well prepared, listening to and heeding the counsel they are given, and remaining vigilant. Following are some essential rules:

### *Safety in Public*

- ✓ Keep a low profile and try not to make yourself conspicuous by dress, speech, or behavior, in ways that might identify you as a target. Do not draw attention to yourself either through expensive dress, personal accessories (cameras, radios, sunglasses, etc.), or careless behavior.
- ✓ Avoid crowds, protest rallies, or other potentially volatile situations, as well as restaurants and places of entertainment where Americans are known to congregate. Keep abreast of local news. Read local newspapers, magazines, etc. and speak with local officials to learn about any potential civil unrest. If there should be any unrest, do not get involved.
- ✓ Be wary of unexpected packages and stay clear of unattended luggage or parcels in airports, train stations, or other areas of uncontrolled public access.
- ✓ Report to the responsible authority any suspicious persons loitering around residence or instructional facilities or following you; keep your residence area locked; use common sense in divulging information to strangers about your study program and your fellow students.
- ✓ Do not impair your judgment by excessive consumption of alcohol and do not fall under the influence of drugs. Inebriation weakens your judgment, your self-protective inhibitions, and your observational abilities.
- ✓ Know local laws: laws and systems of justice are not universal. Do not assume that just because something is legal in the US it is also legal abroad.
- ✓ Females abroad are sometimes more likely to encounter harassment, but uncomfortable situations can often be avoided by taking precautions. Dress conservatively—avoid shorts, short skirts, and tank tops—and avoid making direct eye contact with men you pass on the street. Avoid walking alone late at night or in questionable neighborhoods. Do not agree to meet a person whom you do not know in a non-public place. Be aware that some men from other countries tend to mistake the friendliness of American women for romantic interest.

### *Safety in Travel And Transportation*

- ✓ If you travel to countries beyond your program site and expect to be there for more than a week, register upon arrival at the US consulate or embassy having jurisdiction over the location.
- ✓ Make sure the resident director or host school official who is assigned the responsibility for your welfare always knows where and how to contact you in an emergency. Leave a schedule and itinerary if you travel, even if only overnight.
- ✓ Travel lightly. When you encumber yourself with excess baggage you make yourself less independent, slower, and more vulnerable. The more bags you have, the more likely you are to “lose” one, and a snatched bag is difficult to recover when you are weighed down with others.
- ✓ On trains, either take your bags with you to the dining or lounge cars or leave a friend to look after them. A stranger you have just met is not, for these purposes, a friend.
- ✓ Do not sightsee in large, English-speaking groups. It can be enjoyable to wander about with one or two friends, but large groups of young Americans (inevitably a bit boisterous) can attract unwanted attention and hostility. Of course one must violate this recommendation in program-sponsored outings.



- ✓ The US government monitors the political conditions in every country around the world. For current information, advisories, or warnings, contact the US State Department in Washington, DC at 888-407-4747 (from overseas 317-472-2328), [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html), or the local US embassy or consulate nearest your residence abroad (<http://www.usembassy.gov>).
- ✓ Be aware of local health conditions abroad. Especially if you are traveling to remote areas, you should be aware of any public health service recommendations or advisories. For current health conditions abroad contact local officials or refer to the Centers for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel> or 877-FYI-TRIP (877-394-8747).
- ✓ Use public transportation wisely. By all means avail yourself of the subway, streetcars, and buses of your host city, but be sure that you know how the system works and where it is taking you. Subways especially, because their underground routes prevent you from seeing the passing cityscape, can convey you into areas you would not normally enter on foot.
- ✓ If you carry a bag, keep it close and keep it closed. In crowded or threatening situations hug it to your body. Use only a bag that closes with a snap, tie, zipper, or buckle. Never leave your bag unattended. If you place it beside you on a bench be aware of who's nearby. Never use a fanny (bike) pack, as this will always mark you as a visitor.
- ✓ Pickpockets and purse-snatchers often work in pairs. Be aware that an importuning stranger may be a decoy engaged in distracting you from the malicious work of his or her associate. A child may sometimes be a partner in this sort of crime. Also, remember that public conveyances, because they tend to compress strangers into dense masses, are especially attractive to pickpockets.
- ✓ You are strongly discouraged from operating a motorized vehicle abroad. Driving laws and norms can be quite different from those in the US. Almost all overseas study abroad venues have two things in common: (1) public transportation is excellent and (2) strolling is pleasant and edifying. To saddle yourself with a rented motor scooter or automobile is to complicate your life unnecessarily. You add a distraction from the central mission of your program and put yourself in the way of a host of legal/medical problems. Walk, enjoy the air, take in the sights, and connect with your host culture. Do not drive abroad.
- ✓ Taxi tips: Taxis are, after all, an automobile controlled by a complete stranger. Make sure that your taxi is a "normal," properly licensed conveyance and that your driver's identification is in view (the degree to which this is possible will vary by country). Most guidebooks contain some information about the local taxi system and give you a means for making the important distinction between legitimate and illegitimate cabs. Before taking a taxi from an airport, take a moment to see how the cab dispatching system, if there is one, works. Look for an official cab line, perhaps with a dispatcher. Again, guidebooks are usually helpful in this regard. Be wary of drivers who are too aggressive in soliciting business. To avoid being driven in circles as a means of jacking up the fare, you may wish to reach a preliminary understanding with the driver about what constitutes a reasonable fare to your destination. This applies especially to meterless cabs. (Remember that in some cities nighttime rates are higher and bringing luggage may carry a surcharge.)

### *Safety At Home*

Student housing abroad varies from program to program and country to country, and thus it is impossible to guarantee absolutely safe accommodations. In this regard you must do your part in keeping your temporary home secure. Following are some suggestions:

- ✓ Whether you live in an apartment, a residence hall, a pension, or with a host family, take steps to keep your temporary home “off-limits” to strangers.
- ✓ Whether you are setting out or returning, you should get in the habit of locking your front door as soon as you close it behind you.
- ✓ Don’t admit strangers to your home. Ask repairmen for identification.
- ✓ As soon as you arrive in your new abode you should make an inventory of doors and windows and mentally map out a set of escape routes in case of fire.
- ✓ The telephone can be the means of invasive attentions and the harbinger of unsolicited physical contact. The only proper response to a prank caller is an immediate dial tone. If you experience a pattern of harassing calls, report them to the authorities just as you would in the US.
- ✓ Develop with your parent/guardian a plan for regular telephone or e-mail contact, so that in times of heightened political tension you will be able to communicate with your parents/guardians directly about your safety and well being. Also provide them with your itinerary and contact information if you travel from your program site.

### *Other Safety Tips*

- ✓ Know the emergency number in your host city abroad for police, fire, and ambulance services. Find out if there is an English-speaking emergency service. Carry the number(s) with you and enter them into your cell phone, if you have one.
- ✓ After you arrive at your host country residence, learn where the nearest police station and hospital are. Also, remember to register at the nearest US Embassy after arrival.
- ✓ Naturally you will want to make new friends abroad, and this is encouraged. But be careful not to let this quite appropriate goal lead you into an unwelcome intimacy. Allow yourself to be just a bit cautious with strangers. Friendships worth having are often slow to develop. Don’t rush it!
- ✓ Use banks to exchange your money: do not exchange your money on the black market. Do not carry on your person more money than you need for the day. Carry your credit cards in a very safe place.
- ✓ If you are fearful or confused about anything, share your concerns with the international coordinator, program director, and/or overseas study office.

## *SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND STUDY ABROAD*

Many challenging experiences await students who have chosen to study abroad. These will generally be exciting and positive character-building experiences that will educate and enlighten. However, there can be potential problems related to cross-cultural interaction of which all students should be aware. Cultural differences in interactions on romantic or sexual levels can be a problem area: some behaviors might be very inappropriate in the US, but considered perfectly acceptable in the culture in which you

are living, and vice-versa. Some of the new behaviors will be relatively easy to adjust to, but others pose more of a problem; sexual harassment is a particularly difficult area because of the extreme variance in acceptable behavior among cultures. Combined with the different social and legal responses to such behavior, sexual harassment when abroad can be a difficult scenario to deal with; fortunately there are ways to prevent or lessen the negative consequences.

In the US, many people believe that it is possible for a non-sexual relationship (i.e., friendship, companionship) to exist between men and women. However, in many other cultures this belief can be just the opposite; stated simply it can be considered difficult or impossible for non-sexual relationships to exist between men and women. Until one is fully aware of the cultural norms combined with the verbal and non-verbal cues that one is sending, one must be very mindful of the emotions and expectations that can evolve. In our society, it is not uncommon to rebuff an unwanted sexual encounter by saying "I'm seeing someone," or "I have a boyfriend/girlfriend." While the contextual clues for that type of statement are generally understood in the US to mean "Leave me alone" or "I'm not interested," in another cultural context it might actually be understood as an encouraging response rather than a signal of discouragement. Similarly, when a female makes eye contact with a male who is a stranger in Italy, Spain, or other Latin countries, this is usually understood locally as an invitation for contact. To avoid such unwanted behavior, notice how local women behave (e.g., staring straight ahead when walking and avoiding eye contact) and try to mimic their behavior. Clear, direct and unambiguous responses may be difficult for many Americans to deliver, but these strong responses are crucial for clearer understanding in a cross-cultural situation. If you do experience a cross-cultural misunderstanding or unwanted attention, saying "I do not want to go out with you, please do not ask me again" can be a direct and strong way of expressing your true thoughts about the situation; to be safe, do not operate on assumptions.

Informal resolution of your sexual harassment problem may be possible. You are encouraged to contact the appropriate person on your host campus/program to report any behaviors that you feel are sexually harassing. They should be able to assist you in sorting out the situation in a culturally appropriate way. If these campus/program representatives are unable or unwilling to assist you, please contact Longwood's International Affairs office and we will assist you in this matter.

### *HELP FROM AMERICAN EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES*

Should you encounter serious social, political, health, or economic problems that cannot be handled within your program, the local US embassy or consulate can usually offer limited assistance. For example, they can provide a list of local attorneys and physicians, contact next of kin in the event of emergency or serious illness, contact friends or relatives on your behalf to request funds or guidance, provide assistance during natural disaster or civil unrest, and replace a lost or stolen passport. Remember that US embassies and consulates cannot, however, act as a travel agency, give or lend money, cash personal checks, arrange free medical service or legal advice, provide bail or get you out of jail, act as couriers or interpreters, search for missing luggage, or settle disputes with local authorities. Their primary purpose is to fulfill the diplomatic mission of the US government.

The Bureau of Consular Affairs of the US State Department has prepared several pamphlets about travel and residence abroad. Two are of particular interest: “A Safe Trip Abroad” and “Your Trip Abroad” and are available on the State Department’s website:

[www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures\\_1231.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1231.html).

### *OFFICE OF OVERSEAS CITIZENS SERVICES*

Should your parent or guardian need to contact you while you are traveling (e.g., after the program is over), emergency assistance is available through the Citizens’ Emergency Center of the Office of Overseas Citizens Services (OCS), operated by the State Department’s Bureau of Consular Affairs. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday to Friday, except Federal holidays, and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday. The phone number is 202-647-5225. For emergencies after hours, call 202-647-4000 and ask for the “Overseas Citizens Duty Officer.”

This office can transmit emergency messages from your parent/guardian, provide protection in the event of arrest or detention while abroad, transmit emergency funds to destitute nationals when commercial banking facilities are not available, etc. It would be wise for you to provide your parent/guardian with at least a tentative itinerary of all of your travel plans so that in an emergency they can give the US State Department some idea of where to begin looking for you.

# Culture

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These days, it is easy to believe that one fully understands a foreign culture even without having directly experienced it. Images in the popular media and information gleaned from books or from encounters with a few natives can provide the illusion of real knowledge. However, living in a culture, having to come to terms with its conventions and customs, is a different matter entirely. Every culture has distinct characteristics that make it different from every other culture. Some differences are quite evident (e.g., language, religion, political organization, etc.). Others can be so subtle that learning to deal with them is a complex process. A first-time visitor may remain uncomfortable and off balance for quite some time.

According to L. Robert Kohls, author of *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*, culture is “an integrated system of learned behavior patterns that are characteristic of the members of any given society. Culture refers to the total way of life of particular groups of people. It includes everything that a group of people thinks, says, does, and makes—its systems of attitudes and feelings. Culture is learned and transmitted from generation to generation” (Kohls, 1984, p. 17). Living in a foreign environment for an extended period of time allows you to confront and develop a better understanding of the differences among various cultural systems.

## *CULTURAL STEREOTYPES*

Much research has attempted to identify specific characteristics that distinguish one culture from another. Unfortunately, attempts to categorize cultural characteristics may often end up in cultural stereotypes that are unfair and misleading. Most Germans, Japanese, Italians, etc., have stereotyped perceptions of “the American,” just as most Americans have stereotyped images of “Germans,” “Japanese,” “Italians,” etc. In short, misperceptions exist on all sides.

In adjusting to your study abroad environment, you will have to deal not only with real cultural differences, but also with perceived cultural differences. Keep in mind that people of other cultures are just as adept at stereotyping Americans as we are at stereotyping them—and the results are not always complimentary. The following are a few examples of the qualities (some positive, some negative) that others frequently associate with the “typical” American:

- ✓ outgoing and friendly
- ✓ informal
- ✓ always in a hurry
- ✓ loud, rude, boastful
- ✓ immature
- ✓ promiscuous
- ✓ hard working
- ✓ wealthy
- ✓ racially prejudiced
- ✓ generous
- ✓ extravagant and wasteful
- ✓ disrespectful of authority
- ✓ sure they have all the answers
- ✓ ignorant of other countries
- ✓ superficial

While a stereotype might possess a grain of truth, it is obvious, when we consider individual differences, that not every American fits the above description. You should remember this when you pass judgments on your hosts. Remember to maintain a healthy skepticism about all preconceptions.

### *CULTURE SHOCK*

It is quite possible that your initial reaction to life abroad will be euphoria, sparked by a sense of novelty and adventure. It is also quite possible that the euphoria will give way to a less pleasant emotion as you try to make your way through an unfamiliar culture. You may realize that your old habits do not fit your new circumstances and that you are unable to follow your usual routines. Minor problems may unexpectedly seem like major crises, and you may become depressed. You may feel anxious because the signs and symbols of social interaction that you are used to are lacking. All these symptoms point to “culture shock,” a kind of psychological disorientation.

There is no well-established way of dealing with culture shock, although recognizing its existence and accepting your vulnerability to it is an important first step. It helps to prepare for the possibility that you will experience culture shock to some degree. Remember that it is a common phenomenon and suffering from it does not in any way imply any psychological or emotional shortcoming.

There are ways, however, to minimize the impact of culture shock. In his book *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*, Kohls suggests the following: learn as much as possible about the host country, try to look for the logical reasons things are done or perceived differently, meet local people and find friends with whom you can discuss your reactions and feelings, read and speak the local language, and try to learn as much as possible about local viewpoints and customs (Kohls, 1984, pp. 69-70). Just as an athlete cannot get in shape without going through the uncomfortable conditioning stage, so you cannot fully appreciate cultural differences without first going through the uncomfortable stages of psychological adjustment. You should emerge from the experience with the ability to function in two cultures with confidence.

### *FITTING IN*

Social customs differ greatly from one country to another. It is therefore impossible to provide guidelines that are universally applicable. Generally speaking, you should act naturally, always remaining friendly, courteous, and dignified. Keep in mind that you are a guest in someone else’s country. You should therefore behave pretty much as if you were a guest in someone else’s home. If your missteps are well-intentioned, you are likely to be given the benefit of the doubt as a foreigner who is doing his/her best to fit in.

**Politeness** In many countries, social encounters are governed by a code of conduct that requires a greater degree of formality than we are used to in the US. Be prepared to offer a formal greeting to whomever you meet in your day-to-day activities. For example, should you approach a clerk in a local market in France, always be courteous enough to begin your conversation with, “Bonjour, Madame (Monsieur, Mademoiselle)” before you launch into your inquiries about the product. Become familiar with the appropriate expressions of gratitude in response to your hosts’ hospitality.

**Humor** While each country has its own particular brand of wit and humor, very few cultures appreciate the kind of “kidding” to which Americans are accustomed. Kidding comments, even when well-intentioned, may be interpreted as unfriendly.

**Speaking The Language** Most people will be extremely flattered by your efforts to communicate in their native language. Do not be intimidated or inhibited even if your command of the language is limited. A couple of words of caution might be in order: do your best to avoid slang expressions, the sense of which may be difficult for a foreigner to master. Be aware of the differences between the “familiar” and the “polite” forms of address, and be sure to use them properly.

**Physical Contact** When establishing social relationships, “play it by ear” in determining the level of familiarity that you should adopt at the various stages of your relationship. Physical contact, for example, may not be appreciated or understood by someone unfamiliar with the American idea of camaraderie; a cheerful pat on the back or a warm hug may be quite embarrassing and uncomfortable in certain cultures.

All cultures have different notions about social space -- for instance, how far away to stand or sit when conversing, how to shake hands or wave farewell. Restraint is advisable until you learn how the locals do it and what they expect of you.

**Too Personal Questions** Let your hosts point the way when engaging in “small talk.” While Americans often find it easy to talk about themselves, in some countries your hosts may view this as being impolite.

**Drinking And Drunkenness** Be extremely sensitive of others’ attitudes and feelings when it comes to drinking. You will probably find that your hosts enjoy social drinking as much as any American, but they might not look upon drunkenness as either amusing or tolerable.

**Bargaining** Bargaining over prices is sometimes not only appropriate but expected. At other times, it is inappropriate. If you misread the circumstances, you may find you have insulted the merchant and also reinforced a negative stereotype of Americans. You can always test the waters by politely indicating that you like the product very much but that the price is a bit more than you had anticipated spending. If the merchant wishes to bargain further, this would give him an opening to lower his offer; if bargaining is not part of his business practice, you can simply (and politely) terminate the conversation.

**Talking Politics** Expect people abroad to be very articulate and well informed when it comes to matters of politics and international relations. Do not be at all surprised if your new friends and acquaintances engage you in political debate. There is certainly no reason for you to modify your convictions, but you should be discreet and rational in your defense of those convictions. Here again you may very well find yourself butting heads with another of those unfortunate stereotypes, the arrogant American who thinks everyone must fall in line with US policies.

**Photograph Etiquette** You may want to record your experiences on film, which means you may include some of the local inhabitants in your photographs. Remember, however, that the people you “shoot”

are human beings and not objects of curiosity. Be tactful and discreet; it is always courteous and wise to ask permission before taking someone's picture.

### *ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR CULTURAL INTEGRATION*

- ✓ Find out about current events in your host country and city. Read the newspaper. Learn about your local, national, and international events, concerns, and news to better understand the culture and opinions of average local citizens.
- ✓ Take advantage of invitations and opportunities to interact with locals. Making friends among your host country peers usually takes an active effort. Joining an organized student group or special interest group at your host institution or in your host community is an excellent way to meet locals and gain a sense of belonging in your host country. Some common examples include a language conversation group, sports club, book club, cooking class, or religious group.
- ✓ Develop a repertoire of conversation topics (sports, films, politics, authors, music, popular figures, etc.) to enhance your interaction with locals. Certain topics may not be considered appropriate for discussion in public or between genders, so be observant of these customs.
- ✓ Practice your foreign language skills or learn a brand new language. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, because they are a great way to learn and can be funny, too!
- ✓ Form positive relationships with your hosts. Be courteous, respectful, and aware of cultural differences and taboos.
- ✓ Cooking is a great way to learn about cultures and traditions. Learn how to cook local recipes from your house mates or a cooking class, and bring some recipes from home to share with your new friends.
- ✓ Attend cultural events that are not typically for tourists, such as an elementary school dance or a Swiss yodeling contest.
- ✓ Ask your classmates and friends what local events are of interest and importance to them.
- ✓ Besides special cultural and holiday events, find out what other interesting and unique activities your hosts engage in on a daily basis, such as mushroom gathering in the Czech Republic.
- ✓ Try to shy away from familiarity. Eat at local restaurants or pubs instead of American restaurants. Limit the time you spend with other Americans and English speakers. Avoid locations heavily visited by tourists.
- ✓ Discourage yourself from negatively comparing your host country to the US. Things will be different, which is why you came! Instead of looking at these new environments, customs, and behaviors with criticism, try to understand what makes your host country tick.
- ✓ Keep an open mind. Food, religion, thought patterns, and social habits will seem strange, but allow yourself to be open not only to understand them, but to participate and try new things.
- ✓ Reflect on your daily encounters in order to deepen your understanding of your experiences and host culture. A journal is a good way to do this.
- ✓ Above all, have fun and keep busy! This is the experience of a lifetime. You are not a tourist, but a participant in a global encounter with the amazing opportunity to learn about another culture, another way of life, and other people in a whole other part of the world.



## *A SPECIAL NOTE TO WOMEN*

Some women students from “liberal” campus environments such as Longwood’s have a difficult time adjusting to attitudes they encounter abroad, in both public and private interactions between men and women. In some countries, it is not uncommon for women to be honked at, stared at, verbally and loudly appraised, and aggressively addressed in other ways. American women are especially likely to get this treatment, simply because they may look different. The attention can be flattering, especially when it is still a novelty. However, it may soon become very annoying and frustrating. Local women, who often get the same sort of treatment, have learned to ignore it. They know that eye contact between strangers or a smile at someone passing in the street, common in the US, may result in totally unexpected invitations.

You will have to learn the unwritten rules about what you can and cannot do abroad. Women can provide support for each other, and former students suggest that you get together several times early in your stay to talk about how to deal with the unwanted attention. American women are seen as “liberated” in many ways, and sometimes the cultural misunderstandings that arise from this image can lead to difficult and unpleasant experiences.

Be careful about the messages you may be unintentionally communicating. Above all, try to maintain the perspective that these challenging (and sometimes difficult) experiences are part of understanding another culture, which is one of the important reasons you are studying abroad. Prepare yourself by learning about the gender roles and assumptions in your host country.

## *RACIAL AND ETHNIC CONCERNS*

No two students studying abroad ever have quite the same experience, even in the same program and country. This rule holds true for students from US minority ethnic or racial backgrounds. Some students report feeling exhilarated by being outside the American context of race relations; others experience different degrees of innocent curiosity about their ethnicity and sometimes familiar as well as new types of ostracism.

No returning Longwood student has suggested that the racial or ethnic problems one may encounter abroad constitute a reason for not going abroad. Nevertheless, minority students should know what they are getting into and be prepared for it. Try to find other minority students on campus who have studied abroad and who can provide you with some counsel.

## *BEING GAY, LESBIAN, OR BISEXUAL ABROAD*

It is important to be aware of the laws pertaining to homosexuality in other countries, as well as the popular attitudes toward gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. Some countries are more liberal on these matters than the US and some less.

Moreover, whatever the general rule, there will always be pockets of difference and personal idiosyncrasies. Country-specific information is often available from campus offices and student groups.

Talk with other students who have studied in your host country and city. You can also consult the Web site of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (<http://www.iglhrc.org>).

### *SUMMARY*

No rules of behavior apply to every culture. The best way to learn about local social customs is to inquire politely. Expect things to be different overseas. One of the basic reasons you chose to study abroad should be to develop an appreciation for the people and customs of a totally different culture. Anyone who goes overseas demanding that everything be the same as what he or she is accustomed to in the US will be sorely disappointed and probably better served by staying at home. Be flexible and receptive in dealing with differences, and you will find your life experiences will be greatly enriched.

# Logistics

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## *OVERSEAS ADDRESS AND CONTACT INFORMATION*

Remember to provide Longwood's International Affairs office with your contact information abroad, including your physical address (and mailing address, if different), phone number (if applicable), and primary e-mail address if this changes. We require this information for emergency purposes. Common sense and recent world events also necessitate you provide us with the contact information of your parent or guardian.

## *INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS MAILINGS WHILE YOU ARE ABROAD*

While abroad, you may be out of sight, but not out of mind. Longwood's International Affairs office will send you occasional emails with important information and reminders. We will communicate with you by Longwood email only. Be sure to check regularly (at least once weekly) your official Longwood email address.

## **CONTACTING Longwood**

Following is contact information for key Longwood offices and space for you to record your important personal Longwood information. Note that it is critical to take with you the contact information for your academic advisor both (1) to discuss any changes that may occur in your schedule after you arrive abroad and (2) to ensure that you complete pre-registration advising by phone or e-mail in order to receive authorization to register online for the following semester's courses.

You are also encouraged to contact the International Affairs office while you are away. We especially like to receive postcards (hint, hint) from the exciting places where you are studying and we are available during regular office hours by mail, e-mail, fax, and phone. Keep in mind when contacting anyone at Longwood from abroad that there will be a time difference of anywhere from two to 16 hours. This means that you normally will not receive an immediate response to your electronic communication. Please allow 24-48 hours; faculty and staff are just as busy as you!

### **Important Administrative Offices and Contact Information:**

International Affairs: [internationalaffairs@Longwood.edu](mailto:internationalaffairs@Longwood.edu) + 1 434-395-2172

Financial Aid: [finaid@Longwood.edu](mailto:finaid@Longwood.edu) +1 800-281-4677

Student Accounts: [studentaccounts@Longwood.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@Longwood.edu) +1 434-395-2067

Residence Life: [residencelife@Longwood.edu](mailto:residencelife@Longwood.edu) +1 434-395-2080

Academic Advising/Enrollment Services: [enrollmentservices@Longwood.edu](mailto:enrollmentservices@Longwood.edu)  
+1 434-395-2063

Technology Systems & Services: [helpdesk@Longwood.edu](mailto:helpdesk@Longwood.edu) +1 434-395-2034

## *WEB ACCESS AND E-MAIL*

Most of you will be in places with relatively easy Internet access, whether at your host institution's computing center, residence, or cyber cafés. Remember, though, that few US students abroad have free and unlimited access to Internet and e-mail. Computer labs and Internet cafes are generally not open as late as they are in the US, and do not be surprised to find time limits and/or fees assessed for this service. Be considerate of any regulations. After you recover from any initial homesickness, it is important to spend less time online and more time exploring your new surroundings and community. You should strike a balance: stay in touch, but don't live vicariously back at Longwood.

## *PHONE SERVICE*

You may wish to consider obtaining a cell phone for your stay overseas. Some programs may help students acquire cell phones, either by selling recycled phones or directing students to purchase one. If you already own a cell phone, first check with your service provider to learn whether your phone will work outside of the US (note that most US phones will not). As you would in the US, be sure that you have carefully read (or get help to read) the fine print on any contract you might sign overseas. Failure to do so can result in staggeringly high phone bills. Minimally, you will want to investigate phone cards, which can make the expense of international calling slightly less acute. If you have questions about telephones in a particular country, ask your host institution's international office or study abroad returnees at Longwood, or consult a recent travel guidebook for that country. For more information on phoning to and from overseas locations, including international calling codes, consult a recent guidebook for your host country or consult with phone companies. Remember to consider the difference in time zones when making international calls. Additional phone tips are below.

Should you or your parents wish to make a direct-dial international call from the US, the usual procedure is:

1. Dial the International Access Code: 011
2. Dial the country code (normally a 2- or 3-digit number)
3. Dial the city code (normally a 1- to 5-digit number)
4. Dial the local number abroad

For an operator-assisted call (i.e., person to person, collect, credit card, or billed to a third number), follow the previous instructions but use "01" instead of "011" for the International Access Code. The operator will then come on the line to ask for the information needed (e.g., the name of the person you are calling or your credit card number). Direct-dial calls made with the "011" International Access Code are the equivalent of station-to-station calls. Unless you expect your party to be immediately available, this can be a bit risky. No matter who answers at the other end, you will be billed the minimum charge based on the first three minutes of conversation.

You can obtain the country and city codes you need from any long-distance telephone company or directory or using an Internet search engine such as Google.

The subject of finding the cheapest and best ways to phone home while abroad generates a lively exchange on such posting boards as Lonely Planet's "Thorntree" forum ([thorntree.lonelyplanet.com](http://thorntree.lonelyplanet.com)),

Rick Steve's "Graffiti Wall" ([www.ricksteves.com](http://www.ricksteves.com)) or the forum at Virtual Tourist ([www.virtualltourist.com](http://www.virtualltourist.com)). For someone with a specific question—e.g., "What is the best place to rent a cell phone in Berlin?"—these boards can be a good place to find up-to-the-minute data.

**Cards for Calls** One option can be to use an international phone card such as an AT&T card (may be available at Sam's Club and Wal-Mart, though also available elsewhere and at [www.att.com](http://www.att.com)) or GlobalPhone card from IDT ([www.idt.net](http://www.idt.net)), another phone card company. With the IDT cards you can also create voicemails.

**Mobile Phones** Newer mobile phones that can operate on any of the three wireless frequencies in place worldwide are becoming more common in the US, but are still not widespread. Global roaming rates are still high, e.g., between 99 cents and \$4.99 a minute, so be sure to check with your phone company to learn all of the rules before you go abroad.

**Phone Rental** You can rent globally enabled cell phones from companies such as TravelCell ([www.travelcell.com](http://www.travelcell.com)) or Cellhire ([www.cellhire.com](http://www.cellhire.com)), among others. A long-term plan from such a company for rentals of more than three months generally costs about \$20 a month, plus optional insurance of around \$8 a month; the country-to-country rates are usually half of, for example, T-Mobile's. The cost is significantly more than a regular cell phone, but incoming calls are usually free from anywhere in the world and outgoing calls may be about \$2 a minute.

It is not recommended to use the 800 number posted on public and hotel telephones abroad, whether calling collect or with a credit-card. Charges can be \$30 to \$50 for calls under five minutes. Note: If you share accommodations and a landline with host country students, be careful if you try to make long distance calls from the shared phone, as some billing systems do not itemize each call; your roommates may be very unhappy to see an expensive group phone bill arrive in the mail. If this is the case, in order to make an international call you should go to the post office or to a hotel that has this service available or to special telephone offices.

**Time Zones** When making phone calls to or from the US, keep in mind that there is often a significant time difference between countries. Be sure to remind friends and relatives; for example, should a friend call you in Italy at 9:00 p.m. EST, he or she should be aware that you and your roommates have probably long since gone to bed because it is 3:00 a.m. in Florence. Most people know this sort of thing, but then again you would be surprised. It is better not to have the surprise arrive at 4:30 in the morning and wake your household.

## *POSTAL MAIL*

Depending on where you are studying and the quality of the postal service, surface mail can take from days to weeks to arrive; airmail can take up to a week just to arrive in the country and getting it to your local address adds additional days. Sending packages can be expensive, and there is no guarantee that you will receive your package "untouched." There is little you can do to change the postal system in your country. If you live in a city that has a small post office, try to get to know the local postal workers and develop a friendly rapport with them.

# Useful Links

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Make the most of your study abroad experience by planning ahead and learning as much as possible about your host country prior to departure. Research as well as countless student testimonials indicates that students who have the most successful educational, cross-cultural, and social experiences abroad are those who prepare by learning as much as possible about their host country prior to departure.

The following websites provide links to topics relevant to study abroad that you may find helpful. These sites are not endorsed by Longwood, but represent just a small sampling of the many resources available to you, and you will certainly find your own favorites once you begin your pre-departure preparation in earnest. Start preparing for study abroad now!

## *GENERAL TRAVEL/STUDY ABROAD INFORMATION*

- ✓ [lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html#toc](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html#toc) (country-specific information)
- ✓ [www.letsgo.com](http://www.letsgo.com) (a popular student travel guide)
- ✓ [www.roughguides.com](http://www.roughguides.com) (a popular travel guide)
- ✓ [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) (a popular travel guide)

## *CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATES*

- ✓ [www.federalreserve.gov/releases/H10](http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/H10) (real-time exchange rates used by your bank)
- ✓ [www.xe.net/currency](http://www.xe.net/currency) (online currency converter)

## *SAFETY ABROAD*

- ✓ [www.state.gov/travel](http://www.state.gov/travel) (US State Department travel advisory)
- ✓ [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) (US Centers for Disease Control travel site)
- ✓ <http://studentsabroad.state.gov/> (US State Department website for students abroad)

## *HEALTH INSURANCE*

- ✓ [www.hthworldwide.com](http://www.hthworldwide.com) (HTH Worldwide)
- ✓ [www.compassbenefit.com](http://www.compassbenefit.com) (Compass Benefits Group)
- ✓ [www.wallach.com](http://www.wallach.com) (Wallach & Company)
- ✓ [www.cmi-insurance.com](http://www.cmi-insurance.com) (CMI Insurance)
- ✓ [www.gatewayplans.com](http://www.gatewayplans.com) (The Gateway Plans)
- ✓ [www.studenttravelguard.com](http://www.studenttravelguard.com) (Student Travel Guard)
- ✓ INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ID CARDS
- ✓ [www.aesu.com](http://www.aesu.com) (student travel agency in Baltimore that sells ID cards)
- ✓ [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com) (national student travel agency)

## *LANGUAGE TOOLS*

- ✓ [www.freetranslation.com](http://www.freetranslation.com) (online translator)
- ✓ [www.lexicool.com](http://www.lexicool.com) (online translator)
- ✓ [www.word2word.com/course.html](http://www.word2word.com/course.html) (links to language practice exercises online)
- ✓ [www.bbc.co.uk/languages](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages) (links to free language courses)

## *MAPS*

- ✓ [www.nationalgeographic.com/maps](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/maps)
- ✓ [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)
- ✓ <http://maps.google.com/>

## *MOVING AND SHIPPING*

- ✓ [www.fedex.com](http://www.fedex.com)
- ✓ [www.dhl.com](http://www.dhl.com)
- ✓ [www.ups.com](http://www.ups.com)

## *POSTAL MAIL AND TELEPHONE*

- ✓ [www.upu.int](http://www.upu.int) (international address and postal code information)
- ✓ [www.countrycallingcodes.com](http://www.countrycallingcodes.com) (search engine for country codes and city codes)

## *TIME ZONES*

- ✓ [www.worldtimezone.com/index12.html](http://www.worldtimezone.com/index12.html) (world time zone map with real-time data)
- ✓ [www.timeanddate.com](http://www.timeanddate.com)

## *TRANSPORTATION*

- ✓ [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com) (national student travel agency)
- ✓ [www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com) (student-fare flights)
- ✓ [www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com) (cheap flights within Europe)
- ✓ [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com) (cheap flights from the UK/Ireland to Europe)
- ✓ [www.eurolines.com](http://www.eurolines.com) (the “Greyhound” of Europe)
- ✓ [people.reed.edu/~reyn/transport.html](http://people.reed.edu/~reyn/transport.html) (the world’s subway systems)

## *WEATHER*

- ✓ [www.euronews.com](http://www.euronews.com) (select “weather” for temperatures in Celsius)
- ✓ [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) (the Weather Channel in the US)
- ✓ [www.onlineconversion.com/temperature.htm](http://www.onlineconversion.com/temperature.htm) (Celsius and Fahrenheit conversions)
- ✓ [www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com) (Weather Underground; international weather)

# Contact

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## *OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS/LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY*

Stevens 111  
201 High Street  
Farmville, VA 23909  
Tel. (434) 395-2172  
Fax (434) 395-2988

## *IN CASE OF EMERGENCY*

If you need to reach Longwood in an emergency outside of regular working hours (after you first contact local emergency services abroad), call Longwood's 24-hour Campus Safety desk at 443-423-3333 and Campus Safety will contact the appropriate Longwood administrators for assistance.

*\*Thank you Alfred University and Maryland Institution College of Arts for allowing us to use your information.*