Emergency Contacts

TU’s 24-hr emergency number
918-631-5555

Center for Global Education (CGE)
main number
918-631-3229

CGE e-mail
globaleducation@utulsa.edu

Dr. Cheryl Matherly,
Vice Provost for Global Education
918-631-3225
cheryl-matherly@utulsa.edu

Dr. Lara Foley,
Associate Dean for Global Education
Director, Tulsa Global Scholars
918-631-2050
lara-foley@utulsa.edu

Wendy Sheets, CGE Associate Director
918-631-3227
wendy-sheets@utulsa.edu

Laura Semenow, CGE Assistant Director
918-631-3226
laura-semenow@utulsa.edu

Colin Large, Study Abroad Coordinator
918-631-3254
colin-large@utulsa.edu

U.S. Department of State
24-hr emergency number
202-501-4444

U.S. Consulate number at my destination
**A Message from the Center for Global Education**

**Congratulations!** You are about to embark upon an exciting journey overseas. It is likely that you will undergo tremendous personal and intellectual growth in the coming months as you experience unique cultures, meet fascinating people and visit unforgettable places. When you cross cultural boundaries, you learn a lot more than another language or a different way of doing things. You learn to see yourself and your own culture in a different light. Going abroad for any length of time to study is a big step and a big challenge; but it will forever change you and will provide you with the tools for a successful career and for a meaningful contribution to your country as well as the international community.

We in the **Center for Global Education** congratulate you on being accepted to study abroad. We look forward to helping you make the most of your experience overseas. This study abroad handbook is designed to provide you with important information to make your experience abroad enjoyable and safe. It will answer many of your questions as you prepare for departure, live and study in your host country and return to The University of Tulsa. By reading this handbook carefully, completing the online and in-person pre-departure and on-site orientations, and keeping an open mind while abroad, you will gain the greatest return on your investment from both a personal and a professional perspective.

The Center for Global Education wishes you a successful journey and program abroad. **Bon voyage!**

*This handbook has been compiled using excerpts from the following sources:*
- Study Abroad Handbooks from:
  - Rice University
  - Ohio State University
  - Oklahoma State University
- CC-CS programs overview packet
- IES ‘Get Set’ Guides
- The British Council – A Pre-departure Guide for US Students
- U.S. Department of State – Bureau of Consular Affairs
- SAFETI On-line Study Abroad Handbook
- NAFSA: Association of International Educators

*Photos were taken by TU students, staff and faculty.*
Table of Contents

A Successful Study Abroad Experience ............................................................... 6
Before Your Departure .................................................................................... 8
Program Costs/ Financial Aid and Scholarships ........................................... 12
Academics .................................................................................................... 16
Housing Overseas ......................................................................................... 18
Staying Healthy While Abroad ...................................................................... 19
Safety and Study Abroad ............................................................................. 23
Money and Budgeting .................................................................................. 32
What to Take with You ................................................................................ 36
After your Arrival ........................................................................................ 38
Communication ............................................................................................ 39
Cultural Adjustment ...................................................................................... 40
Career Resources for Students Studying Abroad ....................................... 45
Returning Home .......................................................................................... 47
Useful Web Addresses and Resources ........................................................ 50
A successful study abroad experience begins with you and your willingness to adapt to change. It will require an open mind, positive attitude, and a good sense of humor. You will no doubt face challenges when you go abroad, and there will be many obstacles you must overcome as you adjust to the host culture. Your sense of humor will help you to keep your language and cultural mistakes in perspective!

It will often be up to you to meet new people while abroad. In some cultures, it is not very common to develop a close relationship in a short period of time. You really must earn your friendships abroad, but once made, they are lasting ones. Become involved in student and local cultural activities, and take the initiative to introduce yourself.

Learn about your host country and culture prior to departure. Read as much as you can and do research about the places you plan to go. Talk with international students and returning study abroad students and learn as much as you can as you prepare for this experience. Become familiar with basic laws and customs before you travel. Be sensitive to the people around you and learn to live with the conditions as they are and not what you’d like them to be or what they may be at home. Avoid making harsh judgments about local situations or people.

Have goals of what you want to accomplish in mind, and take small steps each day to accomplish them. As a university student, your experience abroad is an academic one. However, keep in mind that much of the learning takes place outside of
the classroom as well. It is important to find the right balance to make the most of your stay. Keeping a journal or creating a blog site of your experiences and observations will help as you reflect on your learning.

Remember that while overseas, you are a guest in the host country and an ambassador of your university and of your own country. From the minute you board the plane, you will be identified as one of thousands of American students abroad. Your actions are no longer totally personal and private, but they define you, your university and your country.

**Student Conduct and Behavior**

**As a TU study abroad student**, you are expected to attend all classes and to participate in all program activities, including on-site orientations, program field trips, excursions and other group activities. Just as important, you are expected to conduct yourself in a manner that reflects positively on you, your university and your country. As a member of the Tulsa student academic community, you have important rights and responsibilities as outlined in the TU Student Code of Conduct. The Code applies to not only on-campus conduct of students, but also to off-campus conduct of students, including those who participate in study abroad programs.

The Student Code of Conduct identifies prohibited types of conduct that will subject a student to university discipline. These include, but are not limited to, academic misconduct, cheating, endangering the health or safety of any person, sexual misconduct, and destruction of property. Inappropriate behavior abroad that is in violation of the Code can result in your dismissal from a study abroad program and subject you to disciplinary sanctions upon your return to campus.
Read this handbook thoroughly, and jot down questions to ask at the Pre-Departure Orientation.

Make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after your planned return to the U.S. If not, renew it now.

Complete the post acceptance steps on the CGE Online Application.

Make an appointment to attend the final advising meeting with a CGE staff member.

Complete the Pre-Departure Orientation course online.

Attend CGE’s In-Person Pre-Departure Orientation Session. Check the CGE website for the date/time/location.

Cancel campus housing and make arrangements for next semester.

Register for special study abroad courses with your college advisor.

Apply for a student visa/study permit, if required by the country you will visit.

Do research, talk to students, and inform yourself about the culture and current affairs of the country where you’ll study.

Go to the ID/Parking Office to apply for and get your International Student ID Card (ISIC).

Make travel arrangements and upload a copy of your travel itinerary to the CGE Online Application.

Make copies of important travel documents (passport, visa, airline tickets, insurance card, credit cards, prescriptions, etc.) to take with you; leave copies of the same documents with your family or a friend at home.
Pre-Departure Orientation

As you take on the challenge of studying abroad, and in an effort to help prepare you for the experience, the CGE conducts an orientation program each semester for study abroad participants. The orientation has 2 parts: an online course and an in-person meeting. **Your participation in both is mandatory.** The orientation will cover the nuts-and-bolts of studying abroad and cover important information such as travel, packing, visas, housing, health and safety, credit transfer, etc. In the in-person meeting you will have the opportunity to meet other TU participants, ask questions, discuss important topics and you will have time to interact with study abroad returnees (TU students who have been abroad).

Passports/Student Visas/International Student ID Cards

**Passports are required** for any travel outside of the U.S. If you do not have a passport already, apply for one immediately! It can take up to 10 weeks for a new passport to be issued. You can apply for a new passport at the Tulsa County Courthouse, 2nd floor, 500 South Denver, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The passport office phone number is 918-596-5425. If you currently have a passport, check the expiration date. Most countries require that your passport be valid for at least six months beyond the end date of your program abroad. If your passport will expire before then, you should renew your passport immediately. Passport applications, instructions and downloadable forms can be found at: [http://www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).

Don’t forget to sign your passport and complete the emergency information page. Make several copies of your signed passport before you leave: the CGE must have a copy of your passport on file, give a copy to your parents or a trusted friend, and keep a copy with you when you travel. If your passport is lost or stolen while you are abroad, contact the U.S. Embassy in your host country immediately. They can help you to replace it. Having a copy of your passport to show the U.S. Embassy as well as having another form of ID will facilitate the process of renewal.

Student visas and/or study permits will be required for most countries if you are staying there for more than three months, and it will be your responsibility to apply for, obtain and pay for one, if required. To determine if a visa is required for your country, visit the Embassy and Consulate Directory at: [http://www.embassy.org](http://www.embassy.org). Some destinations (currently – Spain and France) will require travel to the host country’s U.S. consulate (Houston, Chicago, or otherwise, depending
on student’s home or university residency) for a personal interview when applying for a visa. So, students must make plans accordingly. After acceptance, the host program or university typically provides some details and instructions on visa applications; the CGE can assist where necessary.

The International Student ID card (ISIC), which is the most widely recognized proof of student status abroad, is included in your study abroad fee. The ISIC card comes with special privileges and discounts throughout the world, such as reduced or free admission to museums, theatres, concerts, cultural and historical sites, as well as discounted prices on airfare and other travel. It also provides access to basic accident and sickness insurance for travel outside of the U.S., which supplements TU’s mandatory study abroad insurance. For more information about ISIC and its benefits, visit: http://www.isic.org. Your ISIC card will be made available to you for pick up at the TU ID/Parking Office in Fisher Hall prior to your departure. You will need to complete a short application form (which the ID Office makes) and provide a passport-sized photo (or have one taken there for a fee) in order to obtain the ISIC card.

**Non-U.S. Citizens**

If you are not a U.S. citizen, please let the CGE staff member know immediately. Prior to leaving the country, be sure to consult with the International Student Services Office (ISS) to have your immigration documents reviewed and signed before you leave the U.S. Visa requirements will vary from country to country for
non-U.S. citizens, and it is your responsibility to apply for and obtain the necessary travel documents according to your own country of citizenship. If you are a sponsored international student, special permission from your company or government sponsor may need to be requested. If this applies to you, discuss this with an advisor in the ISS Office prior to departure.

Customs and Immigration

When you arrive and depart from your host country, you are required to pass through Immigration and Customs. Immigration will check your passport and visa (if required), and Customs may check your luggage to ensure you are following the import/export regulations for the country. You will pass through U.S. Immigration and Customs when you return and are subject to its regulations. Be mindful of what can and cannot be brought back into the U.S.

Consider registering expensive items you are taking from home (such as a laptop or digital camera) with U.S. Customs before departure. This will help you avoid being questioned about whether or not the items are subject to duty when you return.

Travel Arrangements

It is your responsibility to make travel arrangements for your study abroad program. The CGE requires students to purchase round-trip airline tickets to and from your host country. Some programs will offer a group flight so that participants may travel to and from the host site together. It is encouraged to consider this option as it may be more cost effective. Generally, it is a good idea to do some comparison shopping before purchasing an airline ticket. It is also beneficial to shop early, which allows more choices in terms of prices and schedules. Many travel agencies exist to assist you in making your travel arrangements as well as web resources. Discounted ‘Student Airfares’ are available only to students currently registered at degree granting universities so be sure to ask about these when shopping around. Refer to the ‘Resources’ section at the end of this handbook for a list of some popular travel Web sites for students.

Most airline tickets these days will be electronic tickets accessible via the Internet or e-mail. If you receive paper tickets for travel, it is advisable to make multiple copies of it before departure. Leave a copy with a trusted friend or family member back home. The CGE requires you to upload a copy of your travel itinerary to your CGE Online Account prior to leaving the U.S.
Program Costs/ Financial Aid and Scholarship Information

**Program Costs**

**The University of Tulsa** is committed to ensuring that study abroad is affordable for every TU student. The CGE has developed handouts included in your application packet to assist you with determining an estimated cost of your time abroad and to understand how scholarships and financial aid can be used towards your expenses. This information can also be found online as well as on your study abroad budget, which is uploaded to your online account after the final advising meeting.

Paying for study abroad at TU works like this: You will pay TU tuition, and TU pays your program fees. We offer two different categories from which to choose your study abroad program: The TU Blue Program or the TU Gold Program. If you have chosen a program from the list of TU Blue, then you will be charged your regular TU semester tuition. The CGE will then pay the program fee directly to your provider/host institution. The great thing about the TU Blue is that your TU tuition will include the host program’s tuition and housing for the semester abroad. (Some TU Blue programs may also include meals.) If you have chosen a TU Gold Program, then you will be charged your regular TU semester tuition and any expenses that exceed TU tuition. In both cases, you will be billed directly by your program for expenses not included in their program fee, which might include but are not limited to, application fees, confirmation enrollment deposits, upgrades in housing, travel to and from the host country, local transportation, personal expenses and cultural travel.

If you are applying to an exchange program, a Global E3 program, a USAC program or any other program that includes tuition and not housing as a part of their program fee, you will pay the regular TU tuition, and the CGE will issue a stipend in the amount of the estimated housing costs, based on estimates provided by the foreign institution or study abroad provider. This amount will be equivalent to the lowest estimated price for housing at the host institution abroad.

For summer programs, students pay TU tuition for the number of credits they wish to take (normally 3-6) or the advertised program fee, whichever is greater. If the program fee is less than TU tuition, CGE will then award students a CGE scholarship in the amount of the difference. As with semester programs, students are responsible to pay for application fees, their own airfare to/from the host program as well as confirmation and housing deposits, local transportation, option excursions, entertainment, passport expenses, visas (if required), travel related to obtaining a visa (if necessary), personal & additional travel expenses.
Program Enrollment/Confirmation Deposits

Students are required to pay program deposits directly to their program provider upon acceptance. Essentially, this deposit holds your place on the program. TU will adjust your TU tuition charges to reflect the deposit and the amount will be credited to your TU student account.

The billing process can often be confusing, so the CGE staff will assist you to explain it further if necessary. We will review your program costs and estimated expenses closely during your final advising meeting.

Here are a few other issues that may affect the total price of your program:

- **Destination:** The cost of living will vary tremendously depending on the country or city in which you will be studying. Keep in mind that Oklahoma has a very low cost of living so it is possible that your living expenses will exceed what you typically spend in Tulsa, especially if you are studying in a major urban center. Your study abroad advisor and program provider should discuss this with you during the application process.

- **Exchange rate:** Currency exchange rates fluctuate constantly. It is a good idea to regularly check online currency converters to stay abreast of the latest rates. One useful converter is FX Converter (http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic).

- **Program duration/timing:** While short-term programs may be less expensive, you may find that there are more resources available to you for semester- or year-long study. Some costs do not change according to the length of time you are abroad.

If you currently receive federal financial aid and/or TU-sponsored scholarships, you may apply these awards to your participation in an approved study abroad program. After acceptance into a study abroad program, students receiving aid or scholarships will need to work directly with the TU Business Office to make arrangements for your awards to be refunded to you so that you may cover the program expenses not already paid by TU.

**Federal Financial Aid**

Study abroad expenses will often exceed the amount you would normally incur as a student at TU. The good news is your federal financial aid award can be used for all of the expenses associated with studying abroad, not just your tuition, as long as you remain registered as a full-time student taking at least 12 TU credits per semester. This means that you can use your aid for your total cost of attendance for your study abroad program, including your airline ticket, travel costs associated with obtaining your visa, your books, and even organized program excursions. Students receiving federal financial aid will need to work closely with the TU Financial Aid
Office to determine a financial aid package that is specific to your study abroad plans. You will be expected to provide the financial aid advisor your completed budget worksheet that has been approved and signed by a staff member from the CGE. Keep in mind that most loan and grant programs have a maximum amount that you can receive during your college career, and federal financial aid for your study abroad is included within that maximum. This is a matter to discuss with your financial aid advisor. After TU tuition and fees have been paid, the Business Office will release the balance of your financial aid award to your private bank account so that you can pay for other program-related expenses abroad. You will need to set up direct deposit through WebAdvisor.

**TU-sponsored Scholarships**

TU-sponsored scholarships will vary and may be limited to covering the tuition only or a portion thereof on a study abroad program. It is advisable to check with your financial aid advisor or scholarship representative for further details and ask about any specific restrictions your scholarship award may carry. You will be required to submit an approved budget sheet to the TU Financial Aid Office in order to apply your scholarship award to study abroad. Typically, scholarships do not cover summer study abroad.

**Presidential Scholars**

Presidential Scholars may apply their entire award, equivalent to current TU tuition plus room and board on campus, to the expenses associated with study abroad. The scholarship can be applied to expenses associated with your program costs, which include foreign tuition, room, board, insurance, and excursions directly related to the academic program. Your scholarship cannot be applied to expenses that are not part of the advertised program fee, including international airfare, personal expenses, ground travel, optional excursions, deposits, application fees, entertainment, visa and passport fees, and upgrades in housing or meal plans. As per the terms of the Presidential Scholarship, you cannot receive any balance of your award that exceeds the actual program costs.

Keep in mind that if your program fee exceeds that of a semester at TU, you are responsible to pay the difference of your program fee, which will be charged to your TU student account. Your scholarship will not be increased to cover the exceeded tuition amount. You may still be required to pay additional tuition, room and board, and expenses for your program abroad.

**Tuition Reduction Dependents**

Students who are dependents of a TU employee and receive a tuition reduction benefit may apply their award to their study abroad program for one term abroad (summer or semester). This award covers only the TU Blue programs, so students will be responsible for additional expenses in case of a TU Gold program, as out-
lined in CGE financial policy. The TU employee must work directly with the Office of Personnel to get instructions and to complete required paperwork.

**Additional Scholarships**

In addition to your TU money, there are additional scholarships to which you can apply for awards to support study abroad. A complete list of these awards is available on the CGE Web site. Announcements about new scholarships and opportunities will be distributed via the GoGlobal listserv.

Many program providers make available scholarships specific to their programs. These can be either merit based or need based and will require a separate application to be completed and sent to the program directly. We encourage students to apply for any program provider scholarships they may be eligible for as they can be stacked on top of financial aid awards and/or TU scholarships you may already be receiving.

**CGE Scholarships**

The CGE encourages students to participate in a new program or destination by awarding the CGE Pioneer Scholarship ($750, semester or year-long programs only). To apply or to find out which programs are “Pioneer programs” (not yet used by a TU student), go to the CGE webpage and click on “search programs”. The award will be credited to your TU student account.

Giant Causeway, Ireland / Kelly Edwards
TU/Study Abroad Enrollment

**Before you leave** for your program abroad, meet with your college advisor to get enrolled in special study abroad courses. Make a copy of your course approval form (CAF) to take with you for reference or download it from your CGE online account under documents. Maintain correspondence with your advisor while abroad. It is advisable to bring back to TU all course documents, syllabi, papers, tests and textbooks for courses you took at the host university or program because these will aid in the credit transfer process.

As part of the application process (and as indicated on your CAF), your college has approved an initial list of courses you plan to take abroad. In order to maintain active student status while you are abroad, you must meet with your college advisor and register for courses as you normally would during any other semester or summer term at TU before going abroad. Your advisor will assist you in registering for special courses designated as “Study Abroad” in the TU student record system. Failure to enroll at TU before going abroad may jeopardize your status as a TU student.

**Enrollment Abroad**

For most semester and full-year programs, you won’t actually enroll until after you arrive at the host university. Students must be enrolled full time during their semester or summer term abroad in order to maintain student status at TU. Students can enroll in a minimum of 12 TU credit hours and a maximum of 18
TU credit hours per semester. Students are required to be enrolled full time as determined by the host university or program provider during the period of study abroad; that means the number of courses you take abroad may vary. Enrollment for summer programs will vary depending upon the length of the program and the number of class contact hours (minimum of 3 TU credits and a maximum of 6 credits). All students must have their college’s approval for coursework taken abroad. Graduate students require an enrollment minimum of 9 credit hours per semester, or equivalent, or an approved mix of coursework and research to be determined and approved by the Graduate School.

**Study and Time Management**

The academic learning environment abroad will most likely differ from what you are accustomed to here in the U.S. For some program types and certain destinations, you may be enrolled in courses that require you to be more self-directed in your academic endeavors. You may be taking courses that do not require you to attend classes all the time, so you could have much more time for independent studying and preparation outside the classroom. This means that you will have to organize your study time accordingly. Often this learning environment can be somewhat difficult for U.S. students who are accustomed to having their time scheduled and getting credit for simply attending class. Remember, a good balance between work and play is vital to success abroad. Academic expectations inside and outside the classroom are typically discussed during the on-site orientation abroad and tutoring can often be made available to assist students to manage successfully a different learning environment.

**Credit for Courses Abroad**

Coursework taken abroad can transfer back to your permanent TU record and fulfill major, minor, block and elective credits to satisfy graduation requirements, pending your college’s approval, and upon successful completion whilst abroad. Students have two options for transferring grades back to TU, in consultation with their academic advisors: (1) students take courses for the actual grade from the host school, which will affect the overall TU GPA; or (2) students take courses for the actual grade from the host school. However, grades attained abroad will transfer back as credit hours only and will be recorded on the TU transcript as a “P” (pass) or a “N” (No Credit). You must decide in advance, in consultation with your advisor, which credit option you are choosing, and indicate this selection on your course approval form (CAF). Changes cannot be made after your departure. Students must attain at least a grade of “C” or better, or the equivalent, to receive a “P”. The “P” and “N” option will not affect the overall TU GPA.

In both cases, students will receive an official grade report or transcript from the host program or institution, and all transferable coursework taken abroad will appear on the permanent TU record.
Housing arrangements will vary with each study abroad program. Typically, programs offer on-campus dormitories or residence halls, home stays with local host families, or a choice of independent housing, like living in a shared apartment with local or international students. You should anticipate a commute to and from campus either by foot or by use of public transportation regardless of your living arrangements. Prior to departure, it is a good idea to determine if you will need to bring your own bed linens, blankets and other items. Regardless of your housing situation, it is a good idea to take your own towel(s) and personal items. Your program provider will send you further details about housing arrangements upon acceptance.

Host Family Stay

Living in a home stay with a local family gives you a unique insight into the culture and lifestyle of a family in your host country. In some cases, you may become part of the family and be invited to join in with the family on holidays and special occasions. Your experience will depend as much on your cooperation and courtesy as it does on the family. As a guest in someone else’s home, the CGE recommends that you:

- Bring a small gift, perhaps something that represents the U.S., Oklahoma or your home state, with you to give the family when you first meet them.
- Be flexible and try to fit in with the family’s routine. If you are unsure of something, ask questions.
- Be receptive to activities planned by your host family.
- Ask permission to use the telephone and pay adequately for your calls.
- Ask permission before helping yourself to food in the refrigerator.
- Do not use excessive amounts of hot water when bathing.
- Offer to help out with daily household tasks as culturally appropriate.
- Establish mutually acceptable guidelines with your host family for late night outings.
Staying Healthy While Abroad

Keeping yourself in good health is of great importance when you study overseas. Changes in climate, the fast pace of travel and different types of food may cause health problems abroad. Colds, sore throats, coughs, and gastrointestinal disorders associated with different foods and water are inevitable. The best way to stay healthy while you’re overseas is the same way you stay healthy when you are at home: eat healthy foods, get plenty of exercise, and get enough sleep.

Physicals and Check-Ups

We recommend that you get a complete physical, eye exam, and dental check-up before going abroad. Talk to your doctor about any specific health concerns or conditions you may have and discuss ways to cope with these issues before you travel overseas.

Jet Lag

When you fly over multiple time zones, jet lag rapidly disrupts your physiological and psychological rhythms. Symptoms of jet lag include general discomfort, sleep disturbances, reduced mental and physical performance, disturbed appetites and eating patterns. Some tips for dealing with jet lag:

- Try to get enough sleep before leaving and while on the plane.
- Reset your watch at the beginning of your flight for the local time at your destination to help adjust to the new time zone.
- Drink plenty of fluids! Airplanes are very dry environments, so drink plenty of water or juice during the flight. Avoid caffeine and alcohol as both cause dehydration.
- Get up and walk around during the flight, and do some stretching exercises at your seat to help your body’s circulation.
- After arrival, try to adjust your meal times and sleep schedule to the local time. This will help you adjust to the new time zone more quickly.
- Be aware that you may feel drowsy, sluggish and have reduced performance for a few days after you arrive overseas.

Mental and Physical Health

It is important to note that the standards of mental health care are not the same abroad as they are in the U.S. If you are currently receiving psychological treatment or treatment for any physical condition, it is very important that you discuss your program abroad with your doctor and/or counselor so that you are aware of what you need to do in order to continue treatment. It is equally important to disclose any information regarding your physical and mental health to your program’s admin-
Center for Global Education

Administrators on the appropriate forms so they can assist you with any special needs, accommodations or give general advice on the risks you might face. Prior to departure, discuss with your doctor and/or counselor suggested coping skills for living in a culturally different environment.

**Allergies/Medical Conditions**

If you are allergic to penicillin or have any other medical conditions that may require emergency care, carry some kind of identification card, tag, or bracelet on your person at all times indicating the specific nature of the problem, spelling out clearly what must or must not be done, should you be unable to communicate (e.g., in case of unconsciousness). Again, disclosing this information on appropriate forms to your program administrators will make those charged with your care aware of these issues in the event of an emergency.

**Infectious Diseases and Inoculations**

Find out about infectious diseases and health concerns in the countries to which you will be traveling, and get appropriate shots and pills. If immunizations are required, you need to get those before you leave. Check the CDC’s Web site for the latest info: www.cdc.gov/travel. TU’s Health Center can administer some vaccines.

**Food/Water Safety**

Poor refrigeration, undercooked meat, poor water supply, and outdoor vendors could pose problems related to food contamination. Be mindful of the source of your water and ice cubes. Use bottled water, even to brush your teeth in some locations, if necessary. If you get diarrhea or food poisoning, remember to drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. It is a good idea to take with you an over-the-counter anti-diarrhea medication with you just in case. See a doctor if your condition worsens.

**Prescriptions**

If you currently take prescription medications, be sure to have enough with you to last the duration of your trip. Check the CDC’s Web site (address noted above) to make sure you can bring your drug into the country in which you will be studying. What may be a legally prescribed drug in the U.S. may be considered an illegal drug in another country (e.g., Ritalin in Japan). Include an extra supply in case there’s an unexpected delay getting home. Get a doctor’s signed prescription for any medication you have to take abroad and may need to have refilled. Some prescriptions may need to be translated if you wish to fill them abroad. Carry prescriptions in their labeled containers as many countries have strict narcotic trafficking laws and may be suspicious of pills in an unlabeled bottle. Include your glasses or contact lenses prescription. Bring an extra pair just in case.

It is also suggested that you take any over-the-counter medications you might normally use at home since these items might not always be readily available over-
seas. You will then have a supply in case you need some allergy or headache relief on a weekend or when pharmacies are closed. The 24/7 shopping experience is a U.S. phenomenon! Over-the-counter medications could include pain relievers, cold/flu/allergy medications, anti-diarrhea or upset stomach treatments.

**Walking**

Take a good pair of comfortable walking shoes. Without access to a car, you will most likely do quite a bit of walking in many cases on cobblestone sidewalks, streets and uneven surfaces. Break in your shoes before you go.

**Getting Medical Care**

If you need medical care overseas, ask your program administrator for recommended physicians, hospitals and dentists. This is usually covered in your on site orientation once abroad. Make it clear that you expect high standards of hygiene and care. Most medical services and doctors will require advance payments for consultation and services. A credit card can come in handy in this case. Keep receipts for submitting a re-imbursement claim to your insurance company upon your return to the U.S.

Paro, Bhutan /McKenna LeClear
HIV/AIDS

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is a health problem worldwide. Although the risk of contracting HIV is more likely in certain countries, no country is completely risk free. Contaminated blood and unprotected sexual contact remain the primary means by which HIV is transmitted.

There is no foolproof guideline that will protect you from the AIDS virus. However, while traveling and studying abroad, there are things you can do to decrease the risk of infection. Consider the following precautions:

- Act responsibly
- If you are sexually active, use latex condoms
- Refrain from high-risk activities such as skin piercing, tattooing, intravenous drug use
- Avoid injections, IV’s or any medical or dental treatments unless you are certain needles and instruments are sterile. Some countries may not have resources to adequately screen blood for HIV/AIDS or provide sterile needles.
- Avoid blood transfusions unless it is absolutely necessary
- If you have a health condition requiring injections (e.g., diabetes), you should take along an adequate supply of syringes and needles needed for treatment.

Some countries require foreign visitors to take an HIV test prior to entry. Before traveling abroad, you should check with the embassy of your host country to learn about entry requirements and whether HIV testing is required. Check out the U.S. State Department’s Consular Information at http://travel.state.gov

For more information about HIV/AIDS, contact:

National AIDS Hotline — 1-800-342-2437
Centers for Disease Control (CDC) — http://www.cdc.gov

TU Insurance Requirement

There is a mandatory health and accident insurance requirement for all TU students who participate in a study abroad program. If your program provider requires you to take its health insurance, then the TU requirement can be waived. Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) administers the plan for TU students and provides supplemental insurance for students whose individual coverage does not meet the minimum levels required by the university, or whose program does not otherwise provide insurance. For more information on the CISI insurance, visit http://www.culturalinsurance.com.
Safety and Study Abroad

Your safety and security are of paramount importance to us at The University of Tulsa. We take this responsibility seriously and work with our partners in the U.S. and abroad to keep abreast of world events and security issues. We ask that you do your part as well. Using common sense everyday and in every situation will help you to reduce risks and remain safe.

The following guidelines have been developed to promote the safety and well being of every study abroad participant and to raise students’ awareness of potential areas of concern. As a study abroad student, you should exercise the same, if not more, personal safety precautions overseas as you would at home. Be aware that as a ‘foreigner’, you will stand out overseas, therefore, possibly making you an easy target. At times, people you meet may see you with stereotypical eyes. “Americans” tend to carry backpacks, dress differently, speak loudly, and have distinct accents. Meeting people and making new friends is an important part of studying abroad, but do remain vigilant at all times. It is possible that someone may appear to want to get to know you in order to take your money or your passport.

- Find out what the local laws and customs are before you go. Actions and activities that are legal in one country are not necessarily legal in another. Remember, while in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws!
Don’t show off your valuables. Keep your camera, electronics, wallet, and jewelry as inconspicuous as possible. You do not want to look as though you are flaunting wealth!

Leave copies of your itinerary, passport, and visa with a family member or friend and program director so you can be contacted in case of an emergency.

Adopt the ‘buddy system.’ Travel with a trusted friend or group.

Keep your passport in a safe, locked place!

Be wary of consuming too much alcohol, which can impair your judgment and may put you in an unsafe situation. Always be wary of accepting non-alcoholic/alcoholic beverages or food from strangers; you never know what may have been put in it!

Make reservations at a hotel or hostel before you arrive in every city, and ask for specific directions on how to get there.

Listen to the advice given by your host at the on-site orientation.

Alcohol

Drinking alcohol can seem deceptively harmless, especially when you travel to countries where attitudes, customs, and the drinking age may be different from the U.S. Excessive alcohol consumption impairs your judgment and increases the risk of accident and injury. Additionally, there are different cultural norms for drinking in different countries. For example, it is common to have a glass of wine with lunch in France, but you would never indulge. In Thailand, a woman drinking in excess sends the wrong message. If you choose to drink, do so responsibly and know your limit. If you decide not to drink, don’t feel pressed to do so because everyone else is. It is equally culturally accepted to request non-alcoholic beverages when out for the evening with friends. Educate yourself prior to departure about the etiquette, customs, and drinking laws for your host country.

Drugs

The use and abuse of drugs abroad can increase your risk of accident and injury. Do not under any circumstances carry, use, buy, or sell drugs. With very few exceptions, most countries are extremely intolerant of recreational drug use and make no distinction between “hard” and “soft” drugs. Being caught with even a small amount of a controlled substance can result in arrest, deportation, and/or imprisonment. If this happens, there is nothing the U.S. State Department can do to help you. Reckless behavior while in another country can do more than ruin your term abroad — it can have serious consequences. Do not take this risk.
Top Ten Ways Not to Become a Victim of Crime

While crime is a reality in every country, travel overseas introduces Americans to new types of risk. As a rule, people are more likely to be targeted by criminals when they are in unfamiliar surroundings and unskilled at interpreting events around them. For Americans with limited international travel experience, many parts of the world represent just this kind of environment. Following are 10 points study abroad travelers should adhere to when exploring the globe:

1. Don't be an obvious foreigner:

More than likely, you’ll stand out no matter what you do but make an effort to blend in as much as you can and respect local norms and customs. Loud or boisterous behavior advertises your presence in a very negative way. Where do you think the term ‘ugly American’ came from? Not being aware of unwritten rules of conduct, or being naïve about the intentions of others around you can put you at a disadvantage in another culture. Display confidence. By looking and acting as if you know where you are going you may be able to ward off danger.

2. Dress conservatively and leave expensive jewelry at home:

Fashion makes a statement though it is not always interpreted the same way you would. What you may consider as casual clothing that is common on U.S. college campuses (shorts, sleeveless tops) might be seen as provocative or inappropriate in another culture. It is often best to dress conservatively and by local standards. Take cues from locals. Avoid wearing T-shirts with corporate logos or American flags. The developing world often looks at Westerners as rich with money to spare and some people may try to take advantage of you.

3. Carry copies of your passport and hide the original:

Carry copies of your passport: Put one in each suitcase or bag, and carry one on your person. Put the original in the safest place you can find which will depend upon your living and traveling arrangements. Passports are one of the hottest commodities in the world, so be mindful of where yours is at all times.

4. Listen to your gut:

Never ignore your sixth sense! When you get alarmed or spooked, there is probably a good reason for it. Stop and calmly think for a few seconds: Observe and assess the situation around you, decide what your options are for getting to a safer place, then make a decision and act.

5. Learn where your embassy or consulate offices are located:

It is recommended to check in with your country’s embassy when you’re staying in a foreign country. As soon as you arrive, orient yourself so you can find your country’s consular offices. Learn two or three different routes as well as the best transportation methods. Ask to speak to the Regional Security Officer and get a crime fact sheet for the area. The local embassy or consulate offices are there to help you.
6. Read local English-language newspapers/web sources, if possible:

Local citizens and expatriates who write for these papers can be some of the best sources of information about the local scene. Be aware that in some countries, the media is under government control, so information can be quite biased. Inform yourself as much as possible about your new environment by getting your news from various sources.

7. Avoid unexpectedly amorous men and women:

Attractive as you may be, it is strongly advisable to be wary of people who approach and try to woo you. Most of the time, the real motive is to try to gain a foreign passport, your wallet, or to take advantage of you. Be firm. Say ‘No’ and walk away.

8. Become aware of real security threats:

Before you ever set foot out of the U.S., you should do some research. What is the political climate in the country you’ll be visiting? Might there be strong anti-American sentiment? Most countries have some type of English-language media outlets on the Internet that publish local news; wire services, such as Reuters, often cover such developments (check their archives), or the U.S. State Department. Check them out. It is always better to enter a foreign country with your eyes open. It might take keen eyes and ears to detect rumblings of civil unrest that can increase dangers to foreign visitors. Not only will a heightened awareness shorten your response time to potential warning signs, but also gaining an education in local or national politics will demonstrate to those you meet that you have a greater depth of interest in your host country than sampling the local pastries. Watch local news programs, read local papers and ask people who live there.
9. Avoid known hot spots, political conversations, and political rallies:

Countries and regions that have experienced severe levels of conflict and violence are probably best left off your study-abroad itinerary for the immediate future. Places that the U.S. State Department doesn’t consider safe are places that should be dropped from your itinerary; you want to avoid relying on luck to ensure your safety. Avoid political conversations and rallies, which may increase tensions and emotions or breed angry mobs for which a U.S. citizen may serve as a scapegoat. Political issues with host nationals may escalate and provoke retaliation against hostile or bigoted remarks concerning Americans. The foreign policy of the U.S. does not always sit well with people from other countries. Be extremely mindful of this. Become aware of your surroundings and ask locals about unsafe areas of the city in which you are living or going to visit.

10. Control the things you can control:

The Center for Global Education recommends places to study and program providers that can offer comprehensive support and services abroad. Before you go abroad, learn about the country — especially the health and safety support mechanisms. Bring an emergency card with a list of contact information for:

- The equivalent to “911” abroad
- A U.S. 24-Hour Contact
- Insurance/Assistance Information and 24-Hour Contact
- On-Site 24-Hour Contact
- Local Medical Care Facility
- Local Police Contact Information
- U.S. Embassy or Consulate Contact Information
- Local taxi service phone number
- Also, bring a list of “help statements” translated into the local language

The most important advice is to control your own situations.

Controllable factors that place students at risk:
- Being under the influence of alcohol and drugs
- Being out after midnight
- Being alone at night in an isolated area
- Being in a known high crime area
- Sleeping in an unlocked area
- Being out after local curfew, if any
Don’t take unnecessary risks

This includes limiting unsafe activities like bungee jumping, river rafting, and mountain climbing. Don’t get intoxicated by using alcohol or drugs that will limit your control over yourself and your interactions with others. Try to travel with others so that if something happens to you, they can help you or be there to respond to an emergency. Do not accept babysitting or other responsibilities in your host family. It may create liability issues.

Sometimes unfortunate things do happen even though you may have taken all the precautions you could have. While your travels overseas are likely to create some of the most valuable and positive learning experiences of your life, maintain a common-sense expectation that things may not always go as planned, and react as calmly as possible if they do not. In a crisis situation, panicking only leads to more confusion and potentially poor decision making. Think carefully and watch cautiously everything around you.

Harassment and Prevention

The issue of harassment for women and men can become a major stress factor that can greatly affect the entire overseas experience. The following information supplements the TU Sexual Harassment Policy published in the Student Handbook. If you feel you may be the victim of sexual harassment, consult the program administration immediately. They can help you sort out the difference between unacceptable harassment and culturally acceptable behavior which is nonetheless uncomfortable for you. In the case of sexual harassment, you may need to file a report at the local police station with the assistance of the program administration on site.

Dating and Sexual Behavior

A survey conducted at the University of Indiana on dating and sexual behavior while abroad shows that students dated more host nationals abroad than was previously expected. It also found that men seem to be involved in a greater number of relationships than women. Some reported that their relationships abroad gave them access to a greater understanding of the culture in which they lived. Others reported that by not engaging in serious relationships they were able to gain more since they could focus on other activities. Sexual norms abroad differ from the U.S. It is important to understand the norms of the country where you will be studying. Discussions with host nationals and observing the behavior of others may help you, as well as consulting guidebooks prior to and during travel. If you anticipate being sexually active while abroad, keep yourself free from sexually transmitted diseases by using protection.

Personal Boundaries

Personal boundaries are the personal space around us, physically and emotionally, that serves to preserve our physical and emotional integrity. When someone gets
too close, an alarm sounds inside. We need to listen for, respect, and respond to that alarm. We “assume” everyone has the same understanding about personal boundaries as we do. However, in another country you will find the whole issue of boundaries and personal space highly influenced by cultural norms and very different from what you are accustomed to in the U.S. The amount of personal space has a certain meaning in one culture and a different meaning in another. This may be one of the most confusing of cultural differences. Customs and personal boundaries in a new culture cannot be assumed or always be known.

**Concept of Female/Male Friendship – Boundary Misunderstandings**

American women and men are accustomed to the concept of female-male friendships and are quite accustomed to having them. Keep in mind that this same concept may not translate in the new culture. “He/she is just a friend” or “Going out” with a member of the opposite sex may have a different meaning in the culture than a student may intend. What does it mean in the culture you are in? Is that your intention? If not, change your behavior to send the message you intend.

**Nonverbal Communication**

Actions do speak louder than words, and sometimes more so in a different culture. Cross-cultural nonverbal cues can raise some eyebrows and leave you feeling embarrassed and or possibly offended. Hand gestures, eye contact (or lack thereof) and body language that we are accustomed to and consider harmless in the U.S. may be offensive in another culture. Make sure you are aware of what your body language is saying, and don’t be surprised if you observe another’s which may differ greatly and even offend you.

**Persistent People**

Use the broken record technique when faced with a situation when someone will not take no for an answer. Do not be coerced into backing down from your position by the persistence of the person insisting. Just because they did not accept your “no” does not mean you now need to come up with another reason or excuse. “No” may not always be interpreted as “No” in other countries. Stand your ground and remain firm when trying to get this message across.

**Trust**

Trust needs to be earned. Many people have the mistaken notion that people should be trusted until proven otherwise. Actually, it is prudent to stay in a neutral position about a person, neither trusting nor distrusting them at first. Use your gut instinct. Gather information from a person that will help you determine the person’s trustworthiness. In a new culture, watch for clues and cues from people who know the person, and figure out how trusted he/she is by the community or others.
Harassment Burn Out

Harassing behavior is annoying at best and threatening and dangerous at worst. Many students reach a point, after which they can no longer tolerate the catcalls on the street with the same humor they had when they arrived in country. All students should seek assistance from their on-site staff if harassment towards them becomes out of control and/or causes increased anxiety and anger.

Women and Traveling Abroad

Many exciting study abroad destinations may have conservative views about women and what is appropriate behavior for them. You may not agree with these views, but it is wise to take notice and abide by these customs to avoid problems. While traveling abroad, there are steps to take that minimize risk and maximize fun and a rich cultural experience. It is important for women to:

- Be aware of your surroundings and remain alert.
- Dress modestly, taking cues from local women.
- Make friends with women and integrate into their community.
- Learn from these women about self-protection and what the ‘unwritten’ social norms are.
- Interact with men according to local customs.
- Stay in control; staying sober and alert keeps your senses in place to protect you.
- Be vigilant in bars and clubs, and don’t leave your drink unattended or accept anything from a stranger. “Spiking” drinks happens in other cultures as well.
- Have a buddy system; having at least one other person with you that you trust can help you in regular circumstances as well as in problematic situations.
- It is generally a good idea to travel in small groups.
- Pay attention and respond to your intuition that “something just isn’t right” and remove yourself from the situation.

For women it is often difficult to fully accept some of the norms of a new culture and what is or is not appropriate behavior for women. Do your best to try to move past this prejudice and enjoy the new culture on its terms. You go abroad to experience a different way of life — one that allows you to assimilate into a new community and to have a rich cultural experience. Do not try to behave like you would back at home in the U.S. Learn new ways of adapting. You are not giving up yourself —indeed, you are expanding your choices as a female, which in the long run will enrich your life enormously.

U.S. Embassy

After you know your address abroad, you should register online with the U.S. embassy shortly after arrival in your host country. This is the way the U.S. embassy can find you in the event of an evacuation or a family emergency stateside.
Lost Passports

If your passport is lost or stolen, contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate (for U.S. citizens) or your home embassy or consulate (for non-U.S. students). When your (U.S.) citizenship and identity are verified, you will be issued a new passport. Have a copy of your passport with you to facilitate this process. Our office keeps a copy of your passport in your online application, that can be accessed if necessary.

Emergencies Stateside and Abroad

If a relative in the U.S. needs to transmit an urgent message to you while you are traveling, or if someone thinks you have disappeared, he or she may call the Overseas Citizens Services: from the U.S. (toll free): 1-888-407-4747; and from abroad and 24 hours/day: 1-202-501-4444. If you are overseas and your traveling companion gets lost or there is an emergency involving a U.S. citizen, contact the Overseas Citizens Services immediately.

If you find yourself in trouble overseas, the Consular Office at the nearest U.S. embassy can provide certain assistance and advice. However, they are limited in what they can do to assist you should you get into legal trouble. Consular Offices can help in the event of illness, injury, natural catastrophe, evacuations, destitution, or death. However, consular officers CANNOT cash checks, lend money, act as an interpreter, settle disputes with landlords, get you out of jail, or serve as your attorney.

Any emergency that occurs while a student is abroad should be reported to the Center for Global Education here at TU. A university crisis management team is in place to handle student emergencies. After hours emergencies involving students abroad should be reported directly to TU Security at (918) 631-5555.
Money and Budgeting

Having access to money overseas is a topic of great concern to every study abroad participant. Here are a few guidelines for dealing with money while abroad. Your program will provide you with detailed information prior to travel to assist with planning your budget.

Safety with Money

You will always want to remain careful with your money when traveling abroad. Use extreme caution while using public transportation, waiting for trains, busses or the subways, at ATM machines, or in crowded or tourist areas where pick pocketing may be prevalent. A money belt worn inside your clothing or a money pouch worn around your neck is recommended for safekeeping of money, your passport, credit cards, or anything you can’t afford to lose.

Budget Management

Prepare a daily budget before you leave so your money will last the duration of your stay. Consider all potential money-items and expenses not included in your room and board (e.g., entertainment, snacks, toiletries, travel, etc). Build in a “cushion” to avoid problems. Find out what exactly the program fees cover (e.g., meals or excursions), so that you may budget for incidental costs accordingly. Keep in mind that costs may vary a great deal from those in the U.S. It is advisable that you talk with previous study abroad participants about their expenses and study abroad costs. Some expenses related to study abroad you may not have considered include:

- **Travel**: transportation, lodging, food, and extracurricular expenses inside and outside the host country.

- **Local Transportation**: day-to-day travel including getting to and from school. Bus or subway passes.

- **Meals**: if some are provided, obtain a cost estimate for the others. Are meals provided during orientation period? Remember to budget for meals and food when doing independent travel as well.

- **Housing**: are you required to pay a deposit or pay separately for utilities?

- **Health Insurance**: may or may not be included in Program Fee. If not, you MUST buy the CGE CISI insurance. In most countries, you need to pay cash or use a credit card for medical treatment and then submit claims to your insurance company. Familiarize yourself with these procedures, as well as the documentation required by your insurer. Additionally, you should consider insuring valuables you may be taking (e.g. camera, laptop computer, etc).
- **Books, school supplies, lab and studio art fees:** whatever needed for your coursework.
- **Immunizations:** some may be required depending on your country.
- **Student Visa/Study Permit:** consider cost of the visa and potential travel to the consulate to apply for it plus mailing expenses.
- **Personal Expenses:** toiletries, clothing, entertainment, excursions, local events, and souvenirs.
- **Additional Fees:** obtain thorough information about who is responsible for costs involved with visa applications, airport taxes, entry fees, administrative and student fees at host universities, internship placements, etc.

**Emergency Funds**

Discuss recommendations for getting access to emergency funds with your program provider before choosing the method. It is important to know whether cash, credit cards or traveler’s checks work best in your host country. Also, find out whether the program temporarily covers costs incurred in a medical emergency, allowing you time to have funds wired from home. (See “Transferring Money” on page 35) It is likely you will be advised to reserve $50 - $300 in cash dollars for emergencies. Any time you travel, you must prepare for things getting lost or stolen. Because of this, we recommend that you not carry large amounts of money on you. Credit cards are usually the best way to access these funds.

**Saving Money**

Buy a travel guidebook for information on inexpensive travel options, low cost restaurants and grocery stores, cheap entertainment, and transportation ideas (e.g., local travel passes, rail passes, etc). Some popular guidebooks are: Lonely Planet, Let’s Go, and Rick Steve’s Travel Guides. Note the “free days” at local tourist sites like museums and art galleries. The International Student Identification Card (ISIC) can be used to get student discounts at restaurants, hostels, museums, and for transportation. Going out to dinner and clubs can be more expensive abroad than you are accustomed to here in Tulsa. It is suggested that you limit yourself if you are on a tight budget.

**Getting and Having Cash When you Arrive**

Have a small amount of cash in local currency with you upon arrival for snacks, drinks, public transportation and/or for taxi service if necessary. Check with your local bank for how to purchase currency of the country you are going to before leaving. Pre-determine your daily budget, and take that amount with you. Only put what you can afford to lose in a pocket, wallet or a purse.
Credit Cards

Take only the credit cards you plan to use. Typically, they allow for the best exchange rate; however, someone at home must pay your bill while you are away, or you must repay it upon your return. You may also access your account via the Internet with most credit cards, and set them up to accept transfers from your bank account as an easy way of dealing with payments. Alert your credit card company before leaving the U.S. to make them aware that you are going abroad. Sometimes if they are unaware of the possibility of your international transactions, they may suspect fraud and place a hold on your account, thus preventing your use of the card.

- When using your credit card to obtain cash from an ATM abroad, your PIN must be numeric in most overseas countries.
- Always keep your credit card receipts, especially if your number is printed on them.
- While Visa and MasterCard are typically widely accepted, Amex and Discover cards are not.
- Keep a separate list of cards and numbers in case of loss or theft.
- Review your company’s policy for transaction fees and surcharges on purchases abroad.

Agra, India / McKenna LeClear
Transferring Money

If you run out of money, or an emergency comes up while you’re abroad, there are several options for getting money from home. Cash or traveler’s checks can be wired to you through companies such as Western Union or an American Express office (located in major cities). This service is fast but expensive. Postal money orders are another option. A family member or friend can buy a money order from a U.S. post office and send it to you. You’ll be paid the amount of the money order at your local post office. Postal money orders have the advantage of being inexpensive, but are slow: they take as long to get to you as an airmail letter which may take up to 2 weeks depending on your host country.

Traveler’s Checks

These may be difficult to cash in some countries, but are subject to lower exchange rates. They are a safe source of emergency money, but you will need to show your passport to cash them, and not all shops will accept them. Keep your receipts and copies of your checks separate from your checks. Typically, banks have the best rates, but the worst hours. Hotel rates are the very worst for cashing traveler’s checks.

ATMs

ATMs are relatively easy to find in most places, but in some areas may not always work, or may be out of cash. They generally have the best exchange rates, and you can use them to withdraw money from your personal bank account at home. Make sure the ATM network is global (Cirrus or PLUS Network) and review transaction fees. ATMs have a maximum allowable amount of cash withdrawal per day and/or per transaction. Keep a running tally of funds that you withdraw and have someone at home who can put additional funds into your account if necessary. Before you go abroad, check with your local bank to see if it is possible to use your ATM in your host country and if there are any added fees for withdrawing money overseas. Make sure you have a 4-digit PIN and that it will work in ATMs abroad. Again, alert your bank that you intend to travel abroad so they are aware of the foreign transactions you will be making.

Local Bank Accounts

It may be a good option for you to consider opening a bank account once you’ve settled in overseas, particularly if you are staying a full year. This will keep things simple for you, and you can avoid ATM transaction charges as the local bank will issue you a card for ATM use. If you plan to open an account overseas, you should use traveler’s checks to make your deposit. Personal checks or money orders can take weeks to clear and will only delay your ability to open a bank account.
What to Take With You

Packing for study abroad will depend a great deal on the location and duration of your study abroad program. A six-week program in Mexico calls for a different type of clothing than a program offered in New Zealand for the entire year. Your program provider will often give you tips on packing for your host country.

Packing

Often this causes students much distress and most students will over pack. As a general rule of thumb, always pack lightly and sensibly! Remember, you are going to have to carry whatever you pack through airport terminals, bus and train stations, up and down stairs and over cobblestoned streets, so you might want to practice carrying what you think you will need to take and then adjust accordingly. Pack what you think you will need for the duration of your stay, and then take out half of it – this should be enough to take!

Keep in mind that it is perfectly acceptable to wear the same outfits a few times per week. Take clothes that will mix and match into different outfits. Also, weather can vary quite a bit throughout the day in some places, so be sure to take clothes that can easily be layered.

When you fly, you will be limited to one or two checked bags and one carry-on bag. Many airlines charge a fee for checked bags. Be mindful of the weight limit as it varies from country to country. Your carry-on should contain all of your necessities (medications, change of clothes, immigration documents) for one or two days in the event your luggage is delayed or lost. Remember that you will also accumulate things during your stay abroad that you will want to bring back, so packing to come home can become a real challenge!
**Do Take**

- Comfortable walking shoes – you will be walking a lot!
- Bedroom/house slippers – in some cultures it is rude to go barefoot in the house.
- Clothing that can be worn in layers
- Robe and flip flops for taking showers – which may be located down the hall!
- Your own towel and washcloth – bed linens may be required
- An extra pair of eyeglasses and/or contacts
- Enough prescription medication to last the duration of your program – keep them in their original, labeled containers
- Camera and supplies including extra batteries
- Small, battery operated alarm clock
- Personal hygiene products
- Small, first aid kit
- Rainwear and umbrella
- A winter coat, gloves, scarf, and hat depending on your destination and the season you will go
- Photos of family/friends, small mementos from home to share with your new friends/host family
- Multiple copies of your passport, visa, airplane tickets, credit/debit cards, insurance card, ID’s, anything else which is of importance to you
- Laptop (including necessary converters) - make sure it is insured before leaving!
- Electricity converter/adapter for your host country
- Your common sense and a sense of humor!

---

**Do Not Take**

It is not recommended that you take electronic equipment (CD players, hair dryers, etc.) that requires a plug in unless you purchase the appropriate voltage converters and adapters prior to departure. Otherwise, your equipment may not be protected from the higher voltages that are common in most countries outside the U.S. You can purchase voltage converters and plug adapters at most travel or luggage stores. Do not take unnecessary books, knick-knacks or heavy things you can do without abroad. It is expensive to ship boxes overseas, and you certainly don’t want to carry those things with you!
After Your Arrival

Once you get settled, upload your local address and phone number (including a cell number) to your CGE Online Account.

- Register with the U.S. Embassy: http://travelregistration.state.gov or home consulate for international students.
- Buy a pre-paid telephone card and/or a cell phone overseas.
- Make arrangements with your family to call or skype home regularly.
- Read the local or an international newspaper for current U.S. information; many can be obtained online.
- Inform yourself about the current affairs of the country you are now living in by watching the news, reading the paper and interacting with locals.
Communication

**E-mail is a convenient way** to keep in touch with family, friends and TU while you are abroad. Your TU e-mail account will still be active while you are abroad, and you can log in through the TU’s main web page. The CGE will communicate with you via your TU e-mail address. In most cases, your program or university will provide you with an e-mail address as well. Most programs and universities provide either computer facilities or will have wireless Internet available for your use. In most countries, you will also find Cyber-cafés which, for a small fee, allow you to use computers to access e-mail. If you choose to use an alternate e-mail address while abroad, please make sure your ‘utulsa.edu’ is forwarded so you receive communications from our office.

**With the CGE and TU**

We look forward to hearing from you when you are abroad, not only after your arrival, but also during your program. Don’t forget to share with us your ups and downs, adventures and accomplishments.

**CGE Requirements**

As soon as you arrive on your program site, log back in to your CGE online account and upload your **contact information** (physical address and phone number), including a cell number (please use all the numbers necessary to call from the US). Additionally you will need to **notify the CGE which courses** you will be enrolled in abroad - by your second week of classes. You will also need to contact CGE and your college advisor to seek approval for any new courses you want to take that are not already approved on your course approval form (CAF). **Credits will not be transferred back to TU if you do not have college approval for taking these courses. Approval must be granted before the end date of your program.**

**Calling Home**

Making calls from abroad means attempting to master a whole new phone system, which can be quite frustrating! The best advice is to buy a local phone card for the host country phone system and learn how to use it and/or get a cell phone. Many programs require you to have a local cell phone and will assist you to purchase one. Your U.S. long distance carrier will usually be more expensive. To call from the U.S. to most countries overseas, your parents and friends can call you by using calling cards purchased at Wal-mart or Sam’s for example. There are also inexpensive virtual telephone cards that can be found on the Internet, so it is advisable to shop around. Using Skype to call home from abroad or anywhere in the world is popular among study abroad students.
Cultural Adjustment

Expectations

For many students, this will be their first time in another country and an extraordinary opportunity to learn about another part of the world from firsthand experience. Cultural immersion, interacting and living with people from other cultures are important parts of the study abroad experience. As a study abroad participant, you should know what to expect from your study abroad program as well as what is expected of you while abroad before you leave the U.S. Educating yourself before your departure is one of the best ways to prepare yourself for what to expect overseas.

Differences Make the World Go Round

Every culture, every neighborhood, every family have different ways of doing things, even if we share the same language. Keeping an open mind, a sense of humor, and a positive attitude about those differences are crucial to your study abroad experience. Learn to be flexible in the event an unpredicted change in your program or itinerary or a health issue arises.

An unforeseen emergency can be disruptive but should not overshadow your entire program. Being able to go with the flow and adapt to change is part of the study abroad experience.

Don’t be Afraid to Try New Things

Be spontaneous! Be adventurous! Don’t be afraid to try something new. Your time abroad will go by quickly, so don’t pass up the opportunity to eat things you have never eaten and see places you’ve never seen. Step outside of your comfort zone, without jeopardizing your health or safety, and try new things. It may be a little frightening at first, but you’ll be glad you did!

Be Patient, Open and Friendly

Remember that happiness is catching. If you are positive and outgoing, people will respond to you. Keep in mind that you are both an academic student and a student of the world. Learn from and about the new people you meet and allow yourself adequate time to get acclimated to your new culture. Don’t be discouraged if it seems to take a long time to get adjusted to the new culture and language – your learning is already taking place!

Stereotypes

Every culture creates stereotypes of other cultures and people they don’t fully understand. Making generalizations about people who are different from you is a common yet problematic reaction to the fear of the unknown. Some stereotypes are
harmless, some are complimentary and some are misinformed. However, it is important to understand that stereotypes are often completely untrue, and they always interfere with your ability to really understand a new culture and new people.

Studying overseas involves dealing with your host culture’s stereotypes about you and coming to grips with your own pre-determined ideas about your host culture. It is important to recognize that not everyone in your host country is going to behave in one particular way. Becoming immersed in another culture is the best way to deconstruct damaging stereotypes and understand the new culture on its own terms and not yours.

**Culture Shock**

When you leave a familiar environment and go for an extended stay somewhere quite different, you are bound to experience a whole range of feelings. Many of these emotions will be unexpected and sometimes very strong, perhaps making you feel a little out of control or confused. This is what is commonly called “culture shock.” Even in countries similar to the U.S. and with the same language, you will probably still feel the effects of culture shock. You are confronted continuously with new ways of thinking, valuing, and doing things. We recommend that you go abroad expecting it to be very different and be surprised at the similarities, rather than vice versa.

Small things — like the unavailability of certain foods, modes of dress, “appropriate” behavior, and the climate — may seem even more difficult to get used to than something as obviously different as driving on the left side of the road. Just try to remind yourself that you will feel less and less uncomfortable as you become more immersed in your new culture. While some elements of culture shock may not completely disappear, differences that seem overwhelming at the beginning of your stay will probably become minute or even routine. Fortunately, culture shock is predictable and manageable, and if you are prepared for it, you can do a great deal to control it.

**It is typically marked by four phases:**

1. **Euphoria:** The “tourist phase” or the “honeymoon phase”. You are excited about your new environment, and you feel that the people and way of life is not that different from what you are used to. Everything is new and exciting.

2. **Irritation and Hostility:** The initial excitement has faded, and you begin to notice more dissimilarity between life in the foreign country and what you are used to. Minor nuisances and inconveniences lead to intense upset. Symptoms during this phase include: homesickness, boredom, irritability, withdrawal (e.g., avoiding contact with locals, spending time with Americans only), compulsive eating or drinking, stereotyping of or hostility towards locals. Fortunately, most people only experience a few of these symptoms, but this second phase of culture shock is a difficult period. It is helpful to be aware of these symptoms so that you can understand
what is happening to you or your friends, and can take steps to counteract them.

3. Gradual Adjustment: You gradually learn to change your perspective and will be able to adapt to the new culture. The culture becomes more familiar as you begin to orient yourself and are more able to interpret cultural cues. Your self-confidence returns and you realize that the situation is not hopeless after all.

4. Adaptation or Biculturalism: Full recovery has occurred! At this time, you realize that you enjoy some of the customs, ways of doing and saying things and personal attitudes that bothered you so much in phase two. You may not realize how well you have adjusted to the new culture until it is time to return to the U.S., and you don’t feel ready to leave. After returning home, you may experience ‘reverse culture shock’ as you re-adapt to life in the U.S.

Suggestions for Overcoming Culture Shock

Understand that practically everyone who goes overseas will experience some form of culture shock. It is a very natural part of the study abroad process, and you will get through it.

People who make an effort to learn as much as possible about their temporary home before they leave the U.S., and who arrive with an open mind often find it much easier to adjust. Gather information on the country’s history and current events and collect the Do’s and Don’ts of the culture. The number of surprises you experience will decrease the more you know in advance about your host culture.

Look for logical reasons behind things in the host culture that seem strange, confusing, threatening or difficult. Avoid the temptation to be negative or belittle the host culture.

Upon arriving abroad, do not wait for people around you to make the first move, but start reaching out right away. Form friendships with host nationals as many will be sympathetic, understanding, and open to discussions about the situations and feelings you are going through.

Take care of yourself: get enough rest, exercise and eat well. Know how and when to release tension, and pay close attention to your physical and emotional health. Consider keeping a journal that will help you to collect your thoughts about what you are experiencing and can act as a great outlet for expressing your feelings and frustrations.

Buy a map of the city, become familiar with your new neighborhood, and find the closest bank, post office, telephone, grocery store, etc. By making your new surroundings as familiar as possible, you will become more comfortable and feel more like home.

If you do find that you are unable to cope with these differences or your new surroundings, don’t hesitate to contact someone at your host institution. Most universities and colleges employ professional counselors and tutors, with special training
in offering support and advice, to help integrate into the community and overcome any initial emotional and practical difficulties.

No one can assure you that these elements of culture shock will completely disappear or that they will happen in any neat order. Each reaction is individual, and you may flow back and forth from one to another over the course of your semester abroad. Try to remember that what you are feeling is completely normal, and the intensity will fade with time and experience in the host culture. As time goes on, you may not only learn to tolerate these differences, but learn to appreciate them as well.

Social customs differ greatly from one country, region and city to another. It is therefore impossible to give guidelines that will be applicable in every situation in which you find yourself. A general rule of thumb is to just be yourself. Remain friendly, courteous and dignified. Always keep in mind that you are a guest in someone else’s country. Just as you would be on your best behavior in someone else’s home, you should treat your host country with respect, courtesy and decent manners.

Making a small (or sometimes big) cultural or language “faux pas” is to be expected for anyone traveling abroad. You can’t automatically know the “ins and outs” of a place you have never really experienced. And much of what is said or unsaid is in fact lost in translation. Just keep a sense of humor about the situation, and remember that it is all a part of adapting to the new culture.

The CGE has a resource library with a number of books available to be checked out for further reading on culture, customs and experiencing culture shock. Additional resources are available on our Web site too.
Gender Issues

Study abroad students, both men and women, should understand that relationships between the sexes may differ significantly from what is familiar to them in the U.S. What may be considered normal relations with people of the opposite sex in the U.S. could be interpreted very differently by the host culture. Be aware that sexual behavior considered ‘normal’ in the U.S. might invite trouble in the host country. It is important to research your host culture’s gender roles and assumptions (including the host culture’s unwritten rules) before you leave. You should also take time to talk to host culture counterparts to better understand local customs as they pertain to such details as acceptable dress and other social mores.

Race Issues

For many students traveling to a foreign country, especially one in which the racial mix is different from their own, can be challenging. Attitudes toward race differ widely across the globe, and reactions to racial differences can range from tolerance to discrimination. For some students, going abroad may be the first time they have had to deal with their own feelings toward people whose racial background differs from their own. It can also be the first time they realize that others perceive them to be racially different. If you encounter these issues or find yourself in racially tense situations, consult with the on-site staff of your host university or program.

Sexual Identity

Living in another culture allows for an opportunity for personal growth and self-exploration. As a study abroad student, you may have already identified yourself as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, or you may question your sexual identity for the first time while abroad. It is important to know what the attitude of the host country will be in regards to sexual identity. Research your country’s attitudes and resources for GLBT students abroad prior to departure. See the ‘Resources’ section at the end of this handbook for web resources. Whatever your sexual orientation, do be mindful that there may be GLBT students on your program or in the host country: some may be ‘out’, others may not. Being sensitive to this diversity is extremely important and can further enrich your overall experience.

Students with Disabilities

As cultures differ from one country to the next, so does the perception of disability and accommodations. Some countries may have a wide range of services available for students with disabilities while others may rely on family support, and yet others may have very limited accommodations available. The most important thing is to remain flexible and have an open mind as you are going abroad to experience a different way of life, which can mean a different way of dealing with your disability. It will be important to discuss your needs with the CGE and with your host university or program prior to departure as well as consider alternative ways to meet those needs.
Career Services Resources for Students Studying Abroad

The time that you choose to study abroad may create particular challenges for finding either a summer or full-time job when you return. It is possible to both study abroad and find a job, but it does take planning BEFORE you leave the country. Here are a few tips for managing your job search while out of the country:

- Don’t try to conduct a job search during the time you are physically out of the country. The whole point of studying abroad is to immerse yourself in another country. Trying to find a summer or full-time job while you are out of the country is difficult, frustrating, and unlikely to yield results. After all, an employer may be reluctant to call you in Prague to conduct a job interview. That is why it is very important to develop a strategy before you leave the country about how to manage your job search. The key: Plan ahead!

- Prepare a current copy of your résumé, including your study abroad experience under the “Education” section. This will inform an employer that you are not currently at TU.

- Prior to the time that you leave the country, confirm your registration with Career Services by: 1) creating or updating your user profile on Golden Opportunities (http://www.utulsa.edu/student-life/career-services.aspx); and 2) upload a current copy of your résumé. Once you have completed registration with the Career Center, you will be able to access online job listing services.

- Meet with a Career Services Staff member prior to the time you leave the country. A TU career counselor can advise you about strategies to use when applying to particular companies and industries. THIS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR ANY STUDENTS WHO ARE STUDYING ABROAD DURING THEIR SENIOR YEAR.

- Contact companies who regularly recruit at TU prior to the time you leave the country. If you will miss the fall recruiting season, send a cover letter and résumé to the employer expressing your interest in working for the company, explaining that you will be out of the country during the regular recruiting season, and requesting an opportunity to interview early. You may also suggest interviewing in December if you will be returning for the winter holidays. Especially if you are a graduating senior, it is important to have your résumé considered alongside the other graduating students, even if you will not be able to interview at the same time. A career services staff member can assist you with preparing your letters.

- Attend any career fairs scheduled prior to the time you leave the country. Many of the TU career fairs are scheduled early in the semester, and it is likely you will not yet have left the country. These are a terrific opportunity to network with
Center for Global Education

employers, explain that you will be out of the country, and make alternate plans for interviewing.

- Use your winter holiday wisely. If you are planning to return home in December and January, plan to meet with companies and alumni. For summer job seekers in particular, you may be able to line up your summer job during this time.

- Have back-up plans for your return. You may need to think creatively about your plans when you return. Some programs do not end until well into the summer, and summer job seekers may find it hard to secure an internship that will last 4 weeks or less. The summer after you return may be a great time to volunteer in your community or work a casual job to make money. Don’t worry that you will be penalized for not having a summer internship — employers will also consider a study abroad experience valuable. If you are looking for full-time work, be prepared to work in a temporary job for a period of time while you job search.
Returning Home

Before you expect it, the time to return home will arrive! Just as you looked forward to your travel overseas with a mixture of apprehension and excitement, you will most likely think about returning home in just the same way. You will probably be glad to go back home to your family and the friends you’ve missed during your term abroad. On one hand, this is very exciting. However, on the other hand, you are leaving behind a new part of your life. Some students feel that just as they are beginning to adjust and integrate into their new culture and life abroad, it is time for them to come home.

Reverse Culture Shock

Believe it or not, you may experience difficulties adjusting to your former routines and habits after returning to the U.S. Keep in mind that you have undergone tremendous personal and intellectual growth in a short period of time. This “reverse culture shock” is marked typically by four stages:

1. Disengagement: This stage usually begins before you leave your host country. You realize it is time to say good-bye to your overseas friends and to the new place you’ve called home. The hustle and bustle of finals, good-bye parties, and packing can intensify your feelings of sadness and frustration. You already miss the friends you have made, and you are reluctant to leave.

2. Initial Euphoria: Usually begins shortly before departure with feelings of excitement and anticipation. You may be very happy to see your family and friends again, and they are happy to see you. It ends with the realization that people are not as interested in your experiences abroad as you had hoped, and they soon grown tired of hearing your stories and seeing your photo albums or slideshows.

3. Irritability and Hostility: This may occur sooner than when it did when you first went overseas. You may experience feelings of frustration, anger, alienation, loneliness, disorientation, and not understand exactly why. You might quickly become irritated and critical of others and American culture. You may also feel less independent than you were before. You may feel like a “stranger” in your own country.

4. Readjustment and Adaptation: This is a gradual readjustment to life at home. Things will start to look more normal again, but things won’t be exactly the same as you left them. You have developed new attitudes, beliefs, habits, as well as personal and professional goals. The important thing is to try to incorporate the positive aspects of your international experience with your life at home.

Some Tips for Returning Home

Be patient with yourself. It’s going to take time to readjust to your “old” life and loved ones. Interestingly enough, it may take your friends and loved ones time to
readjust to the new you. Be mindful of this. Your changes may intimidate friends or family at first, but chances are they’ll be both supportive and excited to hear about your adventure!

After you return, get involved in international activities and clubs at TU; apply to live in the International Living Community, volunteer to participate in study abroad information sessions or workshops on campus and the annual International Programs fair; consider applying to be a CGE Peer Advisor, promote among your own peers and classmates the benefits of traveling and studying overseas; participate in a foreign language club, a photo or writing contest; plan to spend a second semester or a summer abroad. Active involvement with your community will give you a sense of self-worth and value and help you to process your experience abroad.

If you decide to look into additional work, study, or research abroad to further develop your cross-cultural curiosity, there are many scholarships and fellowships available. You may want to visit the Office of Competitive Scholarships in McFarlin Library. Your study abroad experience will give you an edge on the competition.

Don’t forget to include your study abroad experience when you are updating your résumé for post-graduation work or your job search. Your learning experience abroad will enhance your résumé and make recruiters take notice of an individual who has cross-cultural and language skills, a new perspective on the world around them, and is not afraid of new challenges.

**Grades and Credit Transfers**

Upon successful completion of coursework abroad, your host university or program will issue a transcript or official grade report to the CGE office at the completion of the semester. Make sure you make necessary arrangements to have your transcript sent to the CGE. Pending your college’s approval, the credit hours, along with the name of the courses taken abroad, are then posted on the TU transcript and become a permanent part of the TU record. This process does take some time due to when TU receives final grades from abroad, which may take months after your return. Keep in mind that if you still have an unpaid bill or housing charge still outstanding with your program, they will not release your transcript until it has been cleared.

**Study Abroad Evaluations**

The CGE is very much interested in hearing about your experiences abroad and learning how we can better prepare future participants. Therefore, upon your return, we will ask students to complete a written, online evaluation of their study abroad program. Please give this evaluation careful consideration. It is important that we hear your suggestions, criticisms, and honest feedback. This evaluation tool allows us to continue to assess the study abroad programs and services offered to TU students abroad. Your input is essential and appreciated!
CGE Returnee Event and Activities

Make plans to attend the Study Abroad Returnee event scheduled at the start of each semester. This evening program is a great way to reconnect with the CGE, talk to other TU student participants and learn about ways to keep your study abroad experience alive. Get involved or volunteer with international student events on campus, and stay in touch with the CGE for updates on other Returnee activities throughout the year.
Useful Web Addresses and Resources

**Government Services**

**Passport Information**
http://travel.state.gov/content/passport/english.html

**Foreign Entry Requirements**
http://travel.state.gov/content/visa/english/general/americans-traveling-abroad/html

**U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings/Public Announcements**
http://travel.state.gov/content/passport/english/alertswarnings.html

**Tips for U.S. students traveling abroad**
studentsabroad.state.gov

**List of U.S. Embassy and Consulate Offices abroad**
www.usembassy.gov

**Registration with U.S. Embassy abroad**
(Smart Traveler Enrollment Program)
http://step.state.gov/step

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**
http://www.cdc.gov
CDC International Travelers Hotline: 1-800-232-4636

**Travel Services**

**Discounted Student Travel**
http://www.studentuniverse.com
http://www.statravel.com

**Discounted Travel**
http://www.orbitz.com
http://www.travelocity.com

**Travel Guides**

Lonely Planet Travel Guide Online:  http://www.lonelyplanet.com
Let’s Go Travel Guide Online:  http://www.letsgo.com
Rough Guides Travel Online:  http://www.roughguides.com
Rick Steves’ Europe:  http://ricksteves.com
Accommodations

Youth Hostel Web sites
http://www.hihostels.com
http://www.hostelworld.com
http://www.hiusa.org

Hotels, B and B’s, Apartments:  http://www.venere.com

Miscellaneous Travel Information

Currency Exchange Rates:  http://www.xe.net/ucc/
Time Zones:  http://www.timeticker.com
CISI Insurance:  http://www.culturalinsurance.com
Internet Cafes:  http://www.world66.com/netcafeguide
Weather:  http://www.weather.com

Special Interest Groups

Travel Tips for Women:  http://www.journeywoman.com
LGBT:  http://www.outtraveler.com
http://iglta.org
Students of Color:  http://www.diversityabroad.com
Students with Disabilities:  http://www.miusa.org