

Illinois Wesleyan University Study Abroad Handbook



Becca Segal, IES Nantes 2007

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Congratulations on your decision to study abroad!

The journey you are about to undertake will be one of the most memorable of your life. We want to ensure this period of study away from the Illinois Wesleyan University campus will be both academically rewarding and personally enjoyable for you.

Keep two key things in mind as you prepare for your sojourn abroad:

1) If you want to feel at home, stay at home. Just about everything will be different from what you're used to during the time you study abroad. The way courses are taught, the way you are graded, housing standards, gender dynamics, commuting, Internet access—basically anything you can think of—will not be the same as what you are used to here in the United States. Try to embrace the differences and learn from them rather than falling into a cycle of resistance and complaining. Develop a sense of humor and ability to laugh at your mistakes as you navigate your host culture.

2) You'll get out of it what you put into it. If you want to get to know students in your host country, you're going to need to make an effort to form relationships. You're around only for a few months, so challenge yourself to take a class at a local university if possible, meet people in the neighborhood, join a sports club or extracurricular organization, or just seek out people to talk with during your day. Try to limit your out-of-country travel during the semester and travel to other regions of your host country instead; in doing that, you'll get to know the country and culture more deeply, and can arrange to travel to nearby countries after your program ends.

Please take time to read this handbook carefully before you leave. It contains information that will be important to you before departure, while you are abroad, and when you return. You should also take this handbook with you. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the International Office by email, telephone, or fax.

Sincerely,
Stacey Shimizu
Director, International Office

Room 167, Memorial Center
Phone: (309) 556-1096 or 3190
Fax: (309) 556-3727
Email: abroad@iwu.edu or sshimizu@iwu.edu

24-Hour Emergency Phone: (309) 556-1111. (Describe the emergency to campus security and ask them to put you in contact with the staff member on call.)

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ACADEMIC, FINANCIAL, AND HOUSING ISSUES

ACADEMIC ISSUES

Academic Credit

The actual number of courses you take abroad may vary according to the foreign institution or program you attend, but you must maintain full-time student status as defined by both your host institution and IWU. Remember: You may not take a course on a pass/fail basis. The amount of credit awarded is determined by the teaching institution. A course unit at IWU is defined as the equivalent of 4 semester hours: the average semester load of a student at IWU is therefore 16 semester hours of coursework. Therefore, a course that is awarded 3 semester hours by the teaching institution or the credit-granting/transferring institution is the equivalent of 0.75 IWU course units. A course must carry at least 3 semester hours/0.75 IWU units of credit to meet a major, minor, or general education requirement.

For programs with standing affiliation agreements with IWU, all coursework from a semester or academic year off-campus study program will be reflected as IWU credit on your IWU transcript, including failed courses. All grades are factored into your IWU cumulative grade point average.

Courses and Course Load

When approval is granted for your study abroad courses (using the Course Approval Form [CAF] that you completed as part of your IWU study abroad application), the approval is for the specific course of study listed on that approval form. This means that once you are abroad, you are expected to take the course of study outlined in your proposal. If you must change courses for valid academic reasons (e.g., scheduling conflicts or course availability issues), you should contact our academic advisor and the International Office as soon as possible; in addition, if you want major, minor, or general education credit for a course not listed on the CAF, you will need to contact the appropriate department chair and/or the director of General Education to request approval. We suggest that you cc the International Office on those correspondences and that you save a copy of all email messages relating to course approval. Upon your return, you will be asked to complete a new CAF for any courses not approved on the original form.

Upper- or lower-division credit is determined by the teaching institution. (Courses taken at a British or Australian institution are usually upper division if they are classified as second- or third-year classes; first-year classes are lower division.) The International Office determines whether upper-division credit will be awarded and records this on your CAF.

You are required to carry a full-time load of coursework as determined by your program (but no less than 3 IWU course units or 12 semester hours) while abroad. Participation in an off-campus study program precludes simultaneous registration for IWU coursework (e.g., independent study, internships, etc.), but remember to register for the appropriate Off-Campus Study (OCS) number to maintain your status as a full-time student at IWU. Your off-campus study program must report all credit earned.

Applying Credit to Degree Requirements

Credit earned through off-campus study is degree credit for graduation, but this does not guarantee that it may be applied towards general education, major, or minor requirements. As part of the approval process, you are required to consult with the appropriate department chair/program director or the director of General Education to determine how your off-campus study credit will apply towards your degree program.

It is the prerogative of each department or program at IWU to determine whether or not to apply credit from off-campus study toward its requirements. Not all coursework is necessarily approved in advance; departments can require evaluation of certain courses upon your return from the program. It is always a good idea to return to IWU with copies of the course syllabi, reading lists, papers, and exams from off-campus study. You are responsible for getting your transcript to the Registrar's Office. If you owe any money to the program, they will not release your transcript until your account is settled.

Examinations

If you are enrolled at a foreign university, you must sit at the regularly scheduled times for all examinations that are required of you, including those given at the end of individual academic terms and, if you are on an academic year program, any comprehensive exams that are given at the end of the academic year. Failure to do so may result in a failing grade.

Registration

For the semester(s) you will be abroad, you need to register at IWU for OCS (Off-Campus Study). Do not register for IWU classes as a backup.

To register for IWU courses from abroad, you will need to consult with your academic advisor via email. You will be sent a notice via email about the dates for academic advising. When advising begins, you will be able to see the course selections on the web via My.IWU. To access the Schedule of Classes on My.IWU,

- Log in to my.iwu.edu
- Click on "Students" tab
- Click on "Academic Services"
- Click on "Administrative Services"
- Click on "Student Services and Financial Aid"
- Click on "Registration"
- Click on "Look-Up Classes to Add"
- Choose the correct term and click "Submit Term"
- Complete the search criteria (e.g., subject, course attribute, etc.) and click "Get Classes"
- To see course comments, including prerequisites, instructor approval, and cross-listed courses, click on the "CRN"

Because you are off campus, you will need to choose your courses and contact your advisor to have those courses approved prior to your registration. When you contact your advisor, provide your preferred classes, plus some back-up choices and all CRN numbers, and ask for your registration PIN. You can register yourself from off campus through My.IWU on the appropriate registrations day (which is based on the number of units that you have completed), but many students have limited access to the Internet and most find the time difference to be inconvenient. Therefore, the Registrar's Office recommends that, when you

email your advisor about your courses, you request that he/she forward your choices to the Registrar's Office; the Registrar's Office will then register you on the appropriate day. We suggest that you cc the Registrar's Office (iwureg@iwu.edu) and the International Office (abroad@iwu.edu).

In your conversations with your advisor, you should also obtain your registration PIN so you can see your courses and make any necessary changes. Registration information can also be accessed on the Registrar's Office Website.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

Financial Aid and Billing

Remember that you are responsible for your regular IWU tuition for the semester(s) you are abroad—unless the program tuition is higher, in which case you are responsible for the higher cost. You are not billed for IWU room and board; rather, you will be billed by your program for room, possibly for your board, and for any other required costs (e.g., mandatory insurance).

You must confer with the Financial Aid Office regardless of whether you are currently receiving financial aid. When you speak with the Financial Aid Office, you should take with you a print out of actual and expected costs (available from your program provider's Website). The cost of your study abroad program will be reviewed and your financial aid award may be adjusted as appropriate. If your combined budget for a semester or year away is more than a semester/year at IWU, you are generally responsible for the increased cost. For further information, please contact Kelly Fairley (kfairley@iwu.iwu) in the Financial Aid Office.

Affiliated programs bill IWU for tuition—and IWU then bills you. The Business Office will apply your financial aid to your student account and bill the remaining charges to you, your parents, or your guardians. Housing, board, and other fees will be billed directly to you by the program.

Money and Banking

If you do not already have one, you should obtain a credit/debit card through Visa or MasterCard, as these are the most widely accepted credit cards. You should also take a credit card for emergency use. Unless you will be abroad for a year, you should not need to open a bank account—and even then it may be difficult. A few points to remember the following:

- Your credit card purchases abroad are subject to the exchange rate for that day and may also incur international transaction charges.
- Make two copies of your cards; leave one copy with your parents and take the other with you but keep it separate from the cards themselves.
- Call your bank and notify them and ask them to make a note on your account that you will be out of the country. If you fail to do so, when you attempt to use your debit card abroad, the bank may put a hold on your account and deny access in order to prevent what is perceived as fraudulent use of your card.

- Take the emergency cancellation telephone number with you and keep it separate from your wallet in case your card is stolen.
- Your program will advise you on how much money to take with you. If they do not, consider a combination of cash and a debit card.
- When you get to your destination, find out where the closest Western Union location is—you can get money from home quickly in the event of an emergency

HOUSING ISSUES

IWU Housing

The Office of Residential Life requests that students studying abroad register as living abroad for the semester they plan to be away. Housing login codes are sent to students through campus mail or by USPS as well as to each student's IWU email account. Each student will use the housing login code to register his/her housing plans for the upcoming semester. In general, ORL recommends that students planning to study abroad set up, in advance of their departure, their plans for living either on or off campus when they return to IWU.

For students who will be abroad during the fall and returning to campus housing in the spring, ORL will send out an email in late October or early November with a list of open beds on campus. These spaces are assigned on a first-come-first-served basis, so you should respond quickly. If you have a friend on campus with whom you would like to room and there are available rooms with two spaces on the ORL list, you can both request the move.

Students who plan to live in a residence hall but who will not be on campus during the spring housing lottery process are asked to indicate a campus proxy—a friend on campus who will make housing decisions on their behalf. Send your proxy an email giving him/her authority to make a decision for you, and remind your proxy to take a copy of the email to the lottery. It is important that you discuss in depth the range of housing options that might be available so that your proxy can make appropriate decisions in your absence. ORL contacts all students studying abroad to remind them to have a proxy and to notify the proxy of their housing choices.

If you have any questions, please contact ORL or Terrance Bond (tbond@iwu.edu).



CONDUCT, HEALTH, AND SAFETY ABROAD

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

At IWU, study abroad is not college-sponsored tourism: It is an academic endeavor, not a vacation. Study abroad is a way for you to immerse yourself in a different culture, to become an active participant in the life and society of your host country in order to learn as much as possible about it. By applying to your program of choice, you have taken a significant step towards expanding your mind, engaging other cultures, and becoming a more informed participant in our global society. Take full advantage of this opportunity: if you want to travel in your free time, explore your host country and come to know it in more depth, and reserve semester breaks and post-program free time for travel to other countries.

Keep in mind that, in a very real way, you go abroad as an ambassador for the University and for America. Your attitude, interactions and presence abroad will speak volumes about you and about us. You are privileged to be there as a full-time learner, both academically and in every act of your daily life. Resist reinforcing stereotypes of Americans when you interact with others. Resolve instead to develop understanding and respect for the culture you are visiting.

Statement of Responsibility and Authorization

You are expected to abide by the conditions set forth in the waiver form reprinted at the back of this handbook in Appendix 1 (p. 27). You should be prepared to obey host country laws, abide by the policies of your host institution, and respect the norms of the host culture with regard to behavior and appropriate attire. You must attend and participate in classes and complete assignments, respect the property of the host institution, and provide the program director with contact information and/or itinerary before leaving for individual travel.

College policies regarding student conduct as outlined in the IWU *Catalog*, including academic infractions such as plagiarism, apply to students studying abroad just as if you were on campus. Students are expected to respect the rights of other students (whether other study abroad students or host national students), as well as those of homestay families, faculty, and staff.

Most cultures have well-established customs with regard to acceptable social drinking. Students abroad need to demonstrate mature behavior and respect for local customs. The misuse of alcohol will not be tolerated and can result in dismissal from the program. The use, purchase, or sale of illegal drugs is prohibited.

Legal penalties with regard to drugs and alcohol may be more severe in the host country than in the United States and entail fines and/or jail time. A student charged with breaking local laws will be subject to the rulings of local courts. U.S. laws and constitutional guarantees do not apply. The ability of program staff or U.S. Embassy personnel to assist is very limited, and in most countries release on bail while awaiting trial is not an option.

MEDICAL/HEALTH ISSUES

Check the Website for the Centers for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov) for comments on health issues specific to your program location. Their site, gives current information on disease outbreaks and immunization requirements throughout the world.

Submit the IWU Medical Information Form (Appendix 2, p. 30) before you leave campus. The information you release will not affect your admission to the program and will be kept confidential. It is crucial that the International Office is aware of any physical or mental health issues before you arrive at your program so that we can ensure you receive adequate care while abroad.

As you prepare for your study abroad experience, keep the following in mind:

- All students are advised to discuss their travel plans with their personal physician or the IWU Health Services staff before they leave. Make sure they know where you are going and how long you plan to stay.
- Some countries require a medical evaluation by a physician for your visa application, so be sure you look carefully at the visa requirements.
- Depending on your program location, you may need additional immunizations prior to your departure. Get started on this early.

Prescription Medications

Take an adequate supply of your prescription medications with you and know the import restrictions for your country. Most countries restrict shipments of medications from abroad, so do not plan to have your parents ship your prescriptions. (The Travel Assist services that come with the study abroad insurance IWU provides you can assist in shipping emergency prescription medications; see Health Insurance and Emergency Assistance, p. 7.) You should carry a copy of the original prescription and a letter from your physician and have these ready to present to customs officials if asked. This letter should include a description of the problem, the dosage of prescribed medications to assist medical authorities during an emergency, and the generic name(s) of medicine listed. Keep all medications in their original containers.

If you are prescribed narcotic and/or other habit-forming medication, you certainly should carry a copy of your physician's letter with you. You should register this information with the local U.S. Embassy at your destination. You should also discuss this with the program prior to your departure. Narcotic drug laws vary greatly from country to country.

Mental Health Issues Abroad

The stresses of study abroad can exacerbate or lead to recurrence of anxiety, depression, or eating disorders. If you are currently on prescription medication for these or similar conditions, now is not the time to go off your medication. Please complete the IWU Medical Information Form (p. 30) completely so that the International Office can work with our partners abroad to ensure adequate care is available should it become necessary.

Allergies/Special Conditions

If you take any needle-injected medication, have serious allergies, or any other condition under which you could become incapacitated, consider a medic-alert bracelet and have a

card in your wallet in the native language explaining what should be done should you need assistance.

Food-Borne Illnesses

Many students abroad suffer from some sort of food-borne illness at some point in their travels. Diarrhea is generally the most common symptom. Diarrhea is the body's natural way of ridding itself of toxins. The problem occurs when you happen onto bacteria that your system is not used to. Usually, this does not last more than 5 days. If it lasts longer or seems serious, be sure to see a doctor. Temporary relief from diarrhea can be provided from products such as Imodium, but you should use this with caution.

More serious than traveler's diarrhea is food poisoning. If you become violently ill, cramped, and/or nauseous beyond the norm, it could be food poisoning and you should seek medical attention. Remember these tips to reduce your chances of food-borne illnesses:

- Avoid eating foods or drinking beverages purchased from street vendors or other establishments where unhygienic conditions are present
- Avoid eating raw or undercooked meat and seafood
- Avoid eating raw fruits (e.g., oranges, bananas, avocados) and vegetables unless you peel them yourself

If handled properly, well-cooked and packaged foods usually are safe. Tap water, ice, unpasteurized milk, and dairy products are associated with increased risk. Safe beverages include bottled carbonated beverages, hot tea or coffee, beer, wine, and water boiled or appropriately treated with iodine or chlorine.

Health Insurance and Emergency Assistance

A student participating in study abroad at IWU maintains registered student status at the University and, as such, must carry health insurance. The Student Health Plan, obtained through the University, covers you year-round and worldwide. IWU also maintains a Foreign Travel Accident and Sickness policy that covers IWU students studying on approved study abroad programs. More information on that policy is provided below (p. 8).

If you or your parents maintain other medical insurance, be sure that the policy offers comparable coverage and make sure that you have the necessary information before departing. Your program may require you to purchase additional health insurance as well.

Neither the IWU Student Health Plan nor the Foreign Travel Accident and Sickness plan make direct payments to health care providers outside the United States. It will be your responsibility to make arrangements for payment, save your receipts, and submit a claim for reimbursement when you return to the U.S. Your health plan identification card has the address and phone number of the Student Health Plan Office at IWU. Providers can contact that office directly in order to verify coverage and policy provisions.

Make sure that you understand your insurance coverage and how the system works. You should know how bills are paid in the case of a medical emergency and also for routine treatments. Should you require medical attention abroad, you need to have sufficient cash or credit card funds to make payment at the time of treatment, since the foreign physician and/or hospital may not be able to bill you. Be sure to obtain a receipt to submit with your

insurance claim for reimbursement upon return to the United States. It might also be helpful to carry a few blank claim forms with you just in case.

EIIA Foreign Travel Accident and Sickness Coverage

The University provides Foreign Travel Accident and Sickness coverage through EIIA and AIG Insurance for students studying on approved study abroad programs. Study abroad participants are provided with an EIIA/AIG Assist card and are asked to carry it with them as they travel. Students are also given a sticker to affix to the back of their passport.

At the time of this writing, coverage includes the following:

- \$100,000 medical accident and sickness coverage with \$250 deductible
- \$200,000 accidental death and dismemberment
- coverage for pre-existing conditions is limited to \$1,500
- medically supervised repatriation
- repatriation of remains
- emergency medical evacuation
- emergency family travel

The Foreign Travel policy also comes with Traveler's Assistance, which can help with lost document (e.g., passport, tickets, credit cards) replacement, lost luggage assistance, emergency cash, translation services, and travel information.

Please note that the EIIA policy covers you while you are on an approved-study abroad program, but coverage terminates with the end of your program. If you plan to do any personal travel after the completion of your program, you should make sure you have additional insurance coverage.

International Student Identity Card (ISIC)

International Student Identification Cards (ISIC) are available to IWU students for about \$22 a year. Some of the program sponsors include these in the program fees and some do not. Contact the International Office to find out the most up-to-date information.

Some benefits of the ISIC card include the following:

- Discounts: airfare, accommodation attractions and transportation
- ISICConnect: phone card/email/messaging
- Identification: Serves as a recognized form of identification in 106 countries
- 24-hour Hotline for Medical Assistance: 24-hour medical monitoring, medical evacuation, assistance arranging emergency medical payments, assistance with replacing lost or stolen prescriptions
- Additional 24-hour services: Help with lost or stolen travel documents, emergency message transmission, assistance arranging emergency fund transfer, interpreters
- Additional travel Insurance

INFORMED CONSENT

IWU is concerned about the health and safety of its students studying abroad. We review and revise our approach and response plans and make every effort to anticipate health and safety issues. Yet it remains true that many of the risks in study abroad cannot be reasonably anticipated or prevented.

Students are required to acknowledge that

- (1) there are inherent risks in travel and work in international settings, particularly in developing countries;
- (2) the political, environmental, and cultural situations in these countries differ from those in the United States and at IWU
- (3) that these situations are unpredictable and may become volatile and dangerous, often within a very short period of time; and
- (4) in such circumstances, evacuation may prove difficult or impossible.

Furthermore, students must understand that as foreigners, they should avoid situations that have the potential for becoming politically volatile or otherwise dangerous and to understand health risks associated with travel, including risks associated with motor vehicles and poor driving conditions.

Finally, all students must certify that they have weighed the dangers inherent in foreign travel, the risks presented to their own health and well being, and their personal desire to further their education by studying abroad and have concluded that the risks are acceptable and are outweighed by the desire to participate in study abroad. Students acknowledge that there may be additional factors that may not have been brought to their attention when they sign and return the Waiver Form (p. 27) to the International Office.

TAKING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR SAFETY

Every student going abroad is responsible for becoming familiar with the Department of State website (www.travel.state.gov) and the information available there. Before leaving, read the Consular Information Sheet for your host country and register yourself with the appropriate U.S. Embassy using the Department of State website. For your safety, do the same while abroad for all countries you plan to visit.

Be Alert

- Be alert to your surroundings and the people with whom you have contact.
- Be wary of people who seem overly friendly or interested in you.
- Learn which areas of town should be avoided. If you find yourself in uncomfortable surroundings, act confident. Do not be afraid to say "no" or to call out for help if you feel threatened.
- Be prepared for an emergency—have phone numbers of program contacts handy at all times and memorize the 911 equivalent and your program/resident director's cell number.
- Know how to reach the police in the country in which you are traveling.

- Have sufficient funds or a credit card on hand for emergencies—especially for purchasing a train or airline ticket, or medical care.

Blend In

- Keep a low profile and try not to make yourself conspicuous by dress, speech, or behavior in ways that might identify you as a target. Do not draw attention to yourself either through expensive dress, personal accessories (cameras, radios, sunglasses, etc.), or careless behavior. Returned students suggest avoiding clothing with large logos and talking more quietly than you would in the U.S.
- Integrate yourself as fully as possible into the local community.
- Be sensitive about what you photograph.

Stay Informed and in Touch

- Review U.S. State Department Travel Advisories (travel.state.gov/warnings_list.html) concerning the countries or region to which you will be traveling.
- Keep informed through radio, TV, newspapers, and the Internet.
- Register at and know the location of your embassy.
- Make sure the resident director, host family, or foreign university official who is assigned the responsibility for your welfare always knows where and how to contact you in an emergency. Leave a schedule and itinerary if you are traveling, even if only overnight.

Avoid Theft

- Keep valuable items in a safe place—lock up valuables in hostel/hotel safe when touring a city.
- Don't take nonessential items such as expensive jewelry abroad with you. If you can't replace it, don't bring it.
- Don't keep all of your documents and money in one suitcase or location on your person.
- Don't flash large amounts of money: carry small bills or credit/debit cards whenever possible.
- Be discrete in displaying your passport when necessary.
- Carry your purse or wallet so that it cannot be easily taken, especially in public transportation and other crowded public places.
- Do not carry anything valuable in the back pocket of your backpack or pants.
- Avoid situations and locations popularly identified with tourists/Americans.
- Get in and out of airports, train, buses, and subway stations as promptly as possible.
- Avoid traveling or going out alone.
- Do not leave your bags unattended (even briefly!) in an airport, bus, or train station.

Be Smart

- Avoid crowds, protest rallies, or other potentially volatile situations.

- Be wary of unexpected packages and stay clear of unattended luggage or parcels in airports, train stations, or other areas of uncontrolled public access.
- Consume alcohol in a responsible and culturally-appropriate fashion.
- Don't use illegal drugs.
- This is still real life—consider the consequences of your behavior.

Emergencies

To be as prepared as possible, memorize the emergency number (your host country's equivalent to 911) in your host country as soon as possible. Also memorize your program/resident director's cell or other emergency contact number. It helps to carry additional numbers with you, but you need to be prepared in case your bag is stolen. In-country authorities and staff should be the first calls you make, followed by calls to your family, and IWU's International Office (309-556-1096) or emergency number (309-556-1111). Campus security maintains contact information for the director and members of the administration and will alert relevant staff of your emergency so that we can work to assist you.



COMMUNICATION

TECHNOLOGY

Email

IWU and the International Office will use only your IWU email address for email communication. You must keep your IWU account open and clear to accept messages and check it regularly. You will probably have less access to the Internet abroad than you are used to; try to get into the habit of using email less frequently now, before you leave campus, to help you transition.

Cell Phones

Many programs require that participants rent a local pay-as-you-go cell phone for emergency use: this is a good, low-cost option for local calls and texts, and also a good option when used with a calling card for international calls.

However, if you prefer to bring your own phone, you will need to make sure that your phone will work in your host country. US cellphones and cell companies use both a different frequency and different encoding system than most other countries, so you will likely want a global/world phone (also called a quad-band phone). In addition, you will want to make sure that your US service provider has an agreement with a provider in your host country (e.g., that roaming is allowed). If your phone will work overseas, do keep in mind that all of your calls—both back home and to local numbers—will be treated as international roaming calls. You may switch to an international calling plan, which will generally give you reasonable rates calling overseas, but poor rates calling locally.

If you have a world phone and it can be unlocked, you might purchase a local SIM card, which will give you a local phone number and reasonable pay-as-you-go rates. Alternatively, you might purchase a global roaming SIM, which will give you reasonable rates in multiple countries.

Again, we believe the simplest solution is to rent a pay-as-you-go phone while abroad and use a pre-paid calling card to make international calls.

Phone Cards, VoIP Services

Phone cards with access numbers overseas are one of the cheaper options for calling home. Look into offers from the standard companies or global calling card providers (such as Zaptel, www.zaptel.com; IDT, www.global-call.net, or Ekit, www.goabroad.ekit.com).

VoIP (voice over Internet protocol) services, such as Skype and Vonage, which allow you to make calls using the Internet, are an increasingly popular way to talk with family and friends back home. If you plan to take your own computer with you and know that you will have regular Internet service, this might be an option to explore.

COMMUNICATION ADVICE

Communicating With Your Family

Email and cell phones allow students to keep in closer touch with family and friends back home than ever before. There is a good side to this, but it is possible to overdo it so that you focus too

much on home to the detriment of your experience abroad. Consider writing frequent letters and postcards, which can be reread and kept as a record of your time abroad. Letters allow you to keep in touch while giving you space to grow in your encounter with a new culture.

Family Visits

Plan family visits to your study abroad site during official vacation periods when you are free to spend time with them and not during the academic session. Visits by family or friends do not count as acceptable excuses for missing class sessions or exams.

Family Emergencies

Since you will be far away from home for an extended period of time, it would be wise to discuss your plans in the event that a family member becomes ill or dies. It is also important to consider what your family would do if you were to become seriously ill or injured while abroad. We strongly advise that before you leave the United States, at least one parent or guardian obtains a current passport to use in case of emergency.

Problem-Solving

At some points in your sojourn abroad, you are bound to encounter challenging situations. It may be something as simple as lack of Internet or computer access, or an issue with your host family or roommate. When this happens, your natural instinct may prompt you to phone your parents for advice or just to vent. But before you pick up the phone or send an email, first think through the following:

- Are my expectations realistic given the culture in which I am living?
- Am I experiencing a temporary frustration and feeling the need to vent, or is there a significant issue here?
- Have I made serious attempts to resolve the situation in consultation with my onsite director?
- Do my parents understand the cultural context in which I am operating?

Too often, we see an ineffective cycle of communication that looks like this:

Student → Parent → International Office → Surprised local staff

The International Office wants to help you have the best study abroad experience possible and is always ready to assist you in the event of emergency, serious academic or personal issues, or health concerns. To help us help you, take responsibility for addressing your concerns first with onsite staff before bringing your parents and us into the process.

Change of Address

You need to register a temporary change of address with the Bloomington post office so that your mail can be forwarded to your home or abroad address while you are away. Please note that only first class mail will be forwarded free of charge.

Income Taxes

Students who will be abroad in the spring may normally request an extension of the deadline for filing federal income tax. The best advice is to contact the American Consulate or Embassy in your host country for information on your tax obligations; they may have 1040

forms. You can file from abroad if you make arrangements with your parents to send you the necessary state and federal forms and other documentation.



TRAVEL LOGISTICS

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Passports

You should apply for a passport immediately if you do not already have one. If your passport was issued to you before the age of 16, it will need to be updated. If you have a valid passport, please make sure it is valid for at least 6 months beyond the last date of your program. If you apply for a passport, plan on it taking up to 10 weeks (2-week expedited service is available but is significantly more expensive). When your passport arrives, make sure you check it for errors (spelling, etc).

You will need a certified copy of your birth certificate to get a passport. See www.vitalchek.com if you need to order a copy. Passport applications are available on the State Department Website (travel.state.gov/passport/) but need to be submitted in person to a U.S. post office or county clerk's office.

Visas

A visa is official permission to enter a country for a certain amount of time and is granted by the government of that country. For example, if you are going to the UK for no more than 6 months and will not be participating in an internship, you will be given a visa when you pass through passport control in the UK. For most other study abroad locations, if you will be in country more than 90 days, you will need to apply for and receive a visa before you leave the United States. Visa regulations and application procedures vary by country. For details see travel.state.gov/visa/. In addition, keep the following in mind:

- You will need a number of documents to get a visa. Check the appropriate consular Website carefully.
- For many countries, you will need to apply in-person at the nearest consulate.
- You may need a statement from a physician verifying your health. Some students may need an HIV or tuberculosis test.
- You may need a police check and/ or proof of funds (a notarized letter from your parent's bank).

If you live far from the consulate that serves you, you may wish to use a visa expeditor service if that is allowed. Expeditors will deliver application documents to the consulate for a fee (usually \$75-\$100).

Note to non-U.S. Citizens: Visa procedures and customs requirements are different for students holding non-U.S. passports. Contact the International Office if you do not hold a U.S. passport, particularly if you are planning to study outside the United States for more than one semester.

ARRANGEMENTS

Air Travel

IWU will arrange air transportation only for participants in the IWU London and IWU Madrid programs. Otherwise, you are responsible for making your own flight arrangements if a group flight is not offered by your program. Good Websites to check are STA Travel (www.statravel.com) and Student Universe (www.studentuniverse.com), in addition to the standard travel Websites. Some programs have a specified arrival time and place, so that all program participants can be met as a group by program staff. If this is the case, it is essential that you make your travel arrangements accordingly.

Book your travel as soon as you know when and where you have to arrive and when you have a good estimate of your return date. Purchase a roundtrip ticket, and make sure to verify the charges for changing your return flight before making your purchase. Most group flights offered by our affiliated programs have a low change fee.



PACKING SUGGESTIONS

GENERAL ADVICE

- **TRAVEL LIGHT!** Carry your fully packed bags around the block once, and then see what you can live without. Take comfortable, versatile clothing and shoes.
- Mark all luggage, inside and out, with your name and address.
- Mark your bags in some distinctive way, so they are easily found.
- Know the luggage size and weight limits for your airline.
- Check Appendix 3 (p. 35) in the back of this handbook for some further reminders.

Medicine and Toiletries

- Prescription medicine (carry copy of prescription)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Soap and Shampoo
- Comb and brush
- Sunscreen, moisturizers, cosmetics
- Deodorant
- First-aid kit
- Contraceptives and condoms
- Aspirin
- Tissues
- Tampons/pads

- Razors/blades
- Extra eyeglasses and sunglasses
- Extra contact lenses and cleaning solutions
- Tweezers, nail files/polish, etc.
- Linens (if not provided by program site)
- Towel/washcloth

Gift Suggestions

- Clothing and items with IWU logo
- Cookbooks with American recipes (pancakes, chocolate chip-cookies, etc.)
- Non-perishable foods (maple syrup, peanut butter, salt-water taffy, etc.)
- Baseball caps
- Cassettes or CDs of American music (jazz, folk, pop, rock, etc.)
- Calendars with U.S. scenery
- Pen-and-ink drawings or professional quality photographs of your area
- U.S.-style paraphernalia (things from Disney World, Warner brothers, NBA, NFL, etc.)
- Hand-made crafts or jewelry (esp. Native-American)

Documents

- Passport and visa(s) + photocopies
- Tickets and rail passes
- International Student Identity Card
- Drivers License (U.S. or International)
- Money belt or neck wallet
- Cash, travelers' checks, credit/debit cards, calling card, etc.
- Copies of the above for reporting lost or stolen cards and traveler's checks
- Acceptance letter from program



CROSSING CULTURES

The degree to which you are willing to learn about and adjust to your host culture will in large part determine the extent of your ability to function well while abroad. You may return to IWU as an expert on your site and culture, and we hope that developing this level of intercultural competence is one of your goals for your time abroad.

Take a moment now to list what you're most looking forward to about study abroad:

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____

Think about how you've handled change before: what strategies work well for you in stressful situations and transitions?

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____

Refer to these notes once you're abroad and compare your thoughts now with your experiences then.

One thing you can do to prepare yourself is to learn as much as possible about your country before you go. Refer to Appendix 4 (p. 36) for a list of questions about your host country. Most of us would probably have a hard time answering these questions without a fair amount of research, and yet many people you'll meet abroad will be able to answer these questions about the United States. Take the time to educate yourself about your host country: start with guidebooks and then pick up some books, magazine articles, and newspapers on the history, literature, and performing arts of your host country.

You should also be prepared to answer tough questions about U.S. foreign policy. Using the library and the Internet, read newspapers and magazines that cover international affairs in depth. Include foreign news sources to expose yourself to other perspectives; the BBC can be a good place to start. You especially need to be broadly informed about the situation in Iraq and the Middle East. You do not want to arrive abroad poorly informed or be caught off-guard by an encounter with viewpoints sharply different from your own. People will have strong opinions and expect to engage you in dialogue. Don't take these discussions personally, but do be prepared to encounter criticism of U.S. policies. Recognize such discussions as valuable learning opportunities.

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Coping With Stress

Along the way, you may react strongly to the psychological disorientation most people experience when living for an extended period of time in a different culture. You can think of this disorientation, commonly known as *culture shock*, as the occupational hazard of overseas living that you need to move through in order to experience another country and culture in depth.

Whether this is yet another chapter in your history of living abroad or the first time you have been outside the United States, you will at some point hit a challenging cultural barrier. For some people the bout with culture shock is brief and hardly noticeable. These are usually people whose personalities provide them with a kind of natural immunity. For many of us, however, culture shock is something we'll have to deal with over a period of at least several months and possibly throughout the entire time we are abroad.

Cultural adjustment progresses slowly. Some students quit their study abroad experience (either literally by coming home or figuratively by shutting down) while others work through it, adjusting and adapting to the challenges around them. You may find that you cycle back and forth between some of the stages described below. Of course no one can predict the exact course of your time abroad—and we wouldn't want to try! We do hope that knowing that cross-cultural communication is difficult and tiring at times, and immensely rewarding at other times, will help you during the inevitable ups and downs of your study abroad experience.

Stages of Cultural Adjustment

1. Initial Euphoria. Many students begin their sojourn abroad with great expectations and a positive mindset. At this point, anything new is intriguing and exciting and the similarities stand out most. You may be impressed with how people everywhere are really very much alike. This period of euphoria may last from a week or two to a month, but doesn't last for long.

2. Irritation and Hostility (a.k.a. *culture shock*). Gradually, your focus may turn from the similarities to the differences. And these differences, which suddenly seem to be everywhere, are troubling. Culture shock happens when the differences are narrowed down to a few of the most troubling and are then blown up out of proportion. (For Americans, standards of cleanliness, attitudes toward punctuality, and the value of human life tend to loom especially large.)

By now, you may be experiencing acute distress and tend to blame the host culture for the natural difficulties inherent in any cross-cultural encounter. This is the stage generally identified as culture shock, and you may experience any of the symptoms below:

- Persistent homesickness
- Psychosomatic illnesses
- Persistent boredom
- Unprovoked fits of weeping
- Withdrawal
- Loss of the ability to work effectively
- Need for excessive sleep
- Hostility towards host nationals

- Compulsive eating
- Stereotyping of host nationals
- Compulsive drinking
- Family tension and conflict
- Irritability

Not everyone will experience a severe case of culture shock, nor will all the symptoms be observed. Many people ride through culture shock relatively easily, only now and again experiencing the more serious reactions. On the other hand, if you never find yourself feeling uncomfortable, you may be insulating yourself too much from your host culture.

There are things you can do to minimize cultural stress:

- Accept the fact that you will make mistakes and give yourself permission to fail. If you haven't already, stumbling through your first few days with your host family or navigating the unfamiliar bureaucracy of your host university is a great way to learn to drop the ball with grace. A healthy sense of humor can be invaluable.
- Learn as much as possible about where you are. By looking consciously for logical reasons behind what seems difficult, confusing, or threatening, you will reinforce the positive attitude that in fact there are explanations behind what you observe in the host culture.
- Don't succumb to the temptation to disparage the host culture. Resist making jokes and comments such as, "Well, what else would you expect from [fill in nationality] people?" intended to illustrate the stupidity of the local population, and don't hang around Americans who do.
- Find your cultural wizard. Identify a host national (your resident director, a faculty member, a neighbor, a friendly acquaintance) who is sympathetic and understanding, and talk with that person about specific situations and about your feelings related to them. Talking with Americans can be helpful, but only to a limited extent. Your problem lies in your relationship to the host culture.
- Above all, have faith—in yourself, in the essential good will of your hosts, and in the positive outcome of the experience. Know that the above responses can occur, that culture shock is in some degree inevitable, and that reactions are emotional and not easily subject to rational management.

3. Gradual Adjustment. This step may come so gradually that, at first, you will be unaware it is happening. Once you begin to orient yourself and are able to interpret some of the subtle cultural clues, the culture seems more familiar. You become more comfortable in it and feel less isolated from it. Gradually, too, your sense of humor returns and you realize the situation is not hopeless after all.

4. Adaptation or Biculturalism. Cultural adaptation will result in an ability to function in two cultures with confidence. You will even find a great many customs, ways of doing and saying things, and personal attitudes to which you have in some degree acculturated—and which you will definitely miss when you pack up and "come home."

RETURNING TO THE UNITED STATES

Before you know it, it's time to head back to the United States. Unfortunately, leaving a new home, new friends, and a new culture you have grown accustomed to makes returning home quite a bit more complicated than just stepping off the plane. Some things to be prepared for upon re-entry to the United States include the following.

Reverse Culture Shock

"For the past month, all I could think about was coming home and seeing my friends and family. Now I can't wait to go back. No one here understands me."

If you find yourself feeling this way when you return from study abroad, you're definitely not alone. You're dealing with feeling out of place in your own country, or experiencing a sense of disorientation—and you thought you'd left that behind when you packed up to come home. While everything is familiar, you feel different. Even walking through the airport and hearing American English spoken can be a very surreal experience. You'll likely find yourself feeling and sounding critical of the United States for a while.

Re-Establishing Relationships

People you were close with when you left, even those you kept in good contact with, will be separated from you by the unique experiences you have had in each other's absence. However, this separation is certainly not permanent, and new experiences can make for some very interesting conversation. Just keep in mind that since both of you have changed, you won't necessarily interact in the same way.

Sharing Your Experience

Since only you have had your experience, there is no possible way that anyone can fully understand what you have gone through. While people will be interested in what you did abroad, no one will be quite as interested as you. But there are ways to leverage your experience—whether through volunteering to mentor a new international student at IWU, participating in panel discussions during study abroad information sessions, or sharing relevant experiences during class.

Readjusting

Fitting your new life into your old one can be frustrating. Since every country has a unique approach to life, it can be difficult if you're used to operating within cultural mode, or have made that approach to life a part of you, to return to the United States where the rules are different. It's easy to become frustrated with aspects of U.S. culture that no longer make sense to you. Try to keep things in perspective. Bear in mind that every country has its flaws and its strengths.

Just as it is possible to dramatize the glory of your return home, it is also possible once you've returned home to over-romanticize your experience abroad. Home is not the impenetrable haven you might remember it as at times, and life would still not be flawless, even if you were back in the host country you left behind.

A few things might make re-entry a little easier: Talk to others who have studied abroad, keep in touch with those you met abroad, use the emotional momentum to continue cultural interactions, and be patient with yourself and others. Savor the rare privilege of having two homes!



RACE AND GENDER ISSUES ABROAD

GENDER

The roles of men and women in society vary greatly from culture to culture. To learn about things like dating, gender discrimination, women's safety, and other such topics, you should consult guidebooks or talk to people who have experience in the culture. But here is some basic advice for men and women.

Perception of American Women

Let's face it—popular culture hasn't helped the international image of American women. In many countries and cultures, American women are stereotyped as morally or sexually "loose." If you wear clothing inappropriate to the culture, move too quickly in a relationship, or flirt overzealously, you will not help that perception. If anything, behave conservatively at first until you figure things out.

Harassment

In the Midwest, you seldom see men whistling, hooting, or staring at women. Such incidents are generally far more common in many other cultures, though of course not all. Female students who have spent time in Jerusalem report being stared at or shouted at as they walked by. In that culture, it is inappropriate for men to behave in such a manner, and they seldom do so to local women. Here's the key: ask local women what to do. They can teach you a few choice phrases to yell, and it works.

Students who study in southern Europe or Latin America may have different experiences. They often receive lots of attention and harassment, but so may their female host national friends. In that culture, it is expected. Returned students advise women studying in these regions to observe the local women and learn to ignore the unwanted attention.

Dating

If you want to date, figure out the norms of your host culture. Ask a host family member, a local friend, or another host national with whom you feel comfortable. Women and men should generally be more cautious than in the United States. Find out the laws governing sexual assault at your site. In some countries, any sexual encounter that happens after a woman has agreed to enter a man's room is considered consensual, and the concept of date rape is unknown. Other cultures may have trouble understanding the American concept of casually dating several people at once; to them, if you date, you are in a relationship. Sure, you can break up and start dating someone else as soon as you want, but if you date two people at once, you are cheating. The point is to realize that there are differences and to understand the expectations of your host culture.

What to Do

Be careful at first, and figure things out with the advice of a local friend. Learn the local laws. Learn the differences between what you are accustomed to at home and the way your host culture works. Respect the culture—you are not there to change it; you are there to learn about it.

The bottom line? Have fun, experience life, but understand and respect the differences between your home culture and host culture.

UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS ABROAD

Societal attitudes toward race and sexual orientation vary considerably across cultures, and IWU students studying abroad inevitably bump into them. Those bumps can be jarring, particularly if students go abroad with unrealistic expectations about how they will be perceived by the host culture. You may need to take a deep breath from time to time and remind yourself that this is a learning experience. You'll be learning a great deal about a foreign culture and about your own identity in juxtaposition to it.

Cultural Reactions to Color

When asked, "What were the biggest differences between your experience as a person of color abroad as opposed to your experience in the USA?" University of Iowa student Natasha Robinson wrote, "It seems that racism is a little more noticeable in the USA than in Spain. I deal with it on a daily basis [here], but in Spain it seemed that the people reacted to my color due to never seeing an African American in real life, rather than the prejudiced attitudes that some people have about African Americans here."

James Brook's article "U.S. Blacks Find Visits to Brazil Bittersweet" in the *New York Times* (June 1994) explains,

"On and off campus, a semester here gives African Americans a rapid introduction to the complexity of Brazil's race relations. On one level, there are the daily racial slights in a country where the average income of blacks is less than half that of whites. In elegant shopping centers, store clerks often drag their feet in waiting on black customers. At currency-exchange shops a counter attendant will look suspiciously at a young black woman with dollars. 'His whole face changed when I opened my mouth,' said Rashida Sykes, [a] Spelman student here. Addison Le Platte, a business student from Morehouse College, put it bluntly: 'You move into English when you don't want to be bothered.'"

White students traveling to predominantly non-white cultures may be challenged by the unfamiliarity of belonging to a visible minority. Students should seek guidance from program staff and learn how to manage the transition, particularly in cultures where open staring is acceptable.

Hung T. Quan of the University of Montana describes his study in Hong Kong:

"In essence, I have come to understand the deeper implications of my standing as an Asian American. Because of my experiences in both cultures, I cannot feel completely comfortable in either culture, but belong instead in the interface between the two of them. I consider this realization as the most valuable result of my

experiences in Hong Kong. In light of my experiences, my advice to any student who is considering going abroad is to do it. Regardless of whether you are a first, second, or 'nth' generation immigrant. I feel cultural identity and roots are important facts that need to be explored."

GLBT Issues

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (GLBT) people experience oppression everywhere in the world, though there are different levels of acceptance in different countries. Before you go, it is important to reflect on the culturally based ideas and definitions of sexual identity and consider carefully how your identity as a GLBT person may affect your relationships with host nationals, your cultural adjustment, and your overall education abroad experience. Part of your pre-departure preparations should include reflecting on the larger context of acting on your GLBT identity while abroad. As a visitor, what role do you or should you have in the host culture? Does your right to be GLBT in the U.S. conflict with your host country's religious or cultural values and traditions? How will you reconcile your human rights with the cultural values of your host society? Are there safety or legal considerations you should be aware of?

Familiarize yourself with the laws of your host country. Homosexuality is illegal in many countries, and carries the death penalty in some. In some countries, safety may require you to hide your sexual identity. Inform yourself about country-specific laws on age of consent, traveling with print or other materials on sexual orientation, and similar issues. If necessary, are you willing to hide your sexual orientation? Finding out about the laws of the host country, would you reconsider your options? If you are "out" in the United States, reflect on what it means to leave behind a support system of friends and family. Being GLBT abroad has been described as some as a second coming out. How will you re-establish your identity overseas?

Students may wish to contact the president of the IWU Pride Alliance to discuss these issues. In addition, consider the following resources:

- www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/student.htm

An outstanding resource assembled by NAFSA's Rainbow SIG, a GLBT special interest group within the national organization for international education. Specifics about study abroad for LBGT students and links to numerous articles and country-specific sites.

- www.iglhrc.org/

International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission gives information about current events and laws for specific countries

- www.ilga.org/

Country-by-country listing of laws pertaining to GLBT issues and same-sex behavior

- www.gayguide.net/index2.html

Country-by-country information obtained from returnees about climate

- www.damron.com/

ANTI-AMERICANISM ABROAD

Given current world events and the role America has played in them, a major concern of students planning to study abroad—and of their parents—is the reception they will receive as Americans. You will likely find that host-country nationals will want to engage you in political discussions: Don't assume, however, that such discussions are driven by anti-Americanism or are initiated with malice. Though the people you meet may have much more strongly felt opinions than ones we experience in the United States, their motives in opening a political conversation with you will much more likely be driven by curiosity and the pleasure of intellectual give-and-take.

Amy Johnson, in "Students Share Foreign Perspectives on War" (*Transitions Abroad*, April 2003), examines the fear over anti-Americanism and quotes returned students on their actual experiences. One such student said,

"From the moment I stepped off the plane, my first taxi driver wanted to know what I have to say about the war. . . . Occasionally my German friends tease me about supporting Bush or being a warmonger, but beyond that it seems that the German people are really more interested in hearing my own opinions."

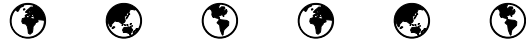
"As for the issue of safety," writes Johnson, "students generally agree that the citizens of most countries, regardless of whether they or their administrations support the war, are able to distinguish between American foreign policy and Americans."

Admittedly, some of the students Johnson spoke with experienced less warm receptions—but even then they agree that they felt people were open to their opinions and distinguished between individual Americans and government policy:

"People [in Morocco] are sensitive to my concerns as an American, but they tend to be a bit closed-minded regarding their viewpoints. . . . While people are open to my point of view, they seem to condemn America without sufficient arguments. They have a hard time stepping back and looking at issues as a whole. Overall, my experience has been awesome and I'm learning a great deal about how others view America."

The individual goodwill and curiosity that students describe experiencing does not, however, obviate the need to exercise caution and be prepared for an emergency. As discussed in the Informed Consent and Taking Personal Responsibility sections (p. 9), you should try to blend in rather than to stand out and should avoid politically charged gatherings—political rallies or other potentially volatile situations. Moreover, there are several procedures that should be planned in case of emergency, such as creating telephone trees and setting established meeting points between the on-site coordinators and the students in any given city.

Though we don't want to downplay the danger of politically motivated violence, the reality is that the greatest dangers to students abroad are not terrorists, thieves, or people motivated by anti-Americanism: The greatest dangers lie in students' own risky behaviors—drinking to excess, not paying attention to local customs and laws, practicing unsafe sex, and engaging in risky physical activities.



STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORIZATION: WAIVER, RELEASE, AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

I, _____, am a student at Illinois Wesleyan University. I have agreed to participate in _____ (the "Program") in _____ (Country) during the period _____ through _____. My participation in the Program is wholly voluntary. In consideration of the University's agreement to permit me to participate in the Program, I hereby certify that I have read and understand the following statement of University policies relating to travel courses offered by the University, and I agree as follows:

- 1) I hereby represent and warrant that I am and will be covered throughout the Program by a policy of comprehensive health and accident insurance which provides coverage for injuries and illnesses I sustain or experience while traveling inside the United States or overseas, and, more specifically, in the countries in which I will be living and/or traveling while on the Program. By my signature below, I certify that my health insurance policy will adequately cover me while inside or outside the United States. I absolve the University of all responsibility and liability for any injuries, illnesses (including death), claims, damages, charges, bills and/or expenses I may incur during May Term. I agree to report to the University's Dean of Students any physical or mental condition I have which may require special medical attention or accommodation during the Program at least ninety (90) days prior to departure. I agree that the Travel Course Leader may be apprised of the condition.

- 2) I understand that although the University will attempt to maintain the Program as described in its publications and brochures, the University reserves the right to make changes to the Program itinerary at any time and for any reason, with or without notice, and that the University shall not be liable for any loss whatsoever to participants by reason of any such cancellation or change. The University is not responsible for penalties assessed by air carriers that may result due to operational and/or itinerary changes, regardless of whether the participant or the University made flight arrangements. Any additional expense resulting from the above will be paid by the participant. The University reserves the right to substitute hotels or accommodations or housing of similar category at any time. Specific room and housing assignments are within the sole discretion of the University. The right is reserved by the University, in its sole discretion, to cancel the Program or any aspect thereof prior to departure; and, in the University's sole discretion, to cancel the Program or any aspect thereof after departure, requiring that all participants return to the United States, if the University determines or believes that any person is or will be in danger if the Program or any aspect thereof is continued.

- 3) I understand and acknowledge that the University assumes no responsibility or liability, in whole or in part, for any delays, delayed or changed departure or arrival times, fare changes, dishonors of hotel, airline or vehicle rental reservations, missed carrier connections, sickness, disease, injuries (including death), losses, damages, weather, strikes, acts of God, circumstances beyond the control of the University, *force majeure*, war quarantine, civil unrest, public health risks, criminal activity, terrorism, expense, accident, injuries or damage to property, bankruptcies of airlines or other service providers, inconveniences, cessation of operations, mechanical defects, failure or negligence of any nature howsoever caused in

connection with any accommodations, restaurant, transportation, or other service or for any substitution of hotels or of common carrier beyond the University's control, with or without notice, or for any additional expenses occasioned by any of the foregoing. If due to weather, flight schedules or other uncontrollable factors I am required to spend additional nights, the University will not be responsible for my hotel, transfers, meal costs or other expenses. My baggage and personal property is at my risk entirely.

4) The University reserves the right to decline to accept or retain me in the Program at any time should my actions or general behavior impede the operation of the Program or the rights or welfare of any person. Similarly, if my conduct violates any policy or procedure of the University, I understand that I may be required to leave the Program in the sole discretion of the University's agents and representatives, and may be referred to the appropriate University officials for further disciplinary or other action. I understand that I will be escorted to the departure gate by a University representative. In such an event, no refund will be made for any unused portion of the Program, and all my return expenses and all expenses incurred by the faculty member(s), class, or individual will be my responsibility.

5) I am aware that any potentially unsafe behavior is to be avoided (examples, but not limited to: alcohol abuse, illegal drug usage, walking alone in a city at night, being in unsafe neighborhoods, swimming in ocean currents). The University's health insurance program does not cover potentially unsafe activities, such as skydiving, recreational parachuting, hang gliding, glider flying, parasailing, sail planing, and bungee jumping. I am also aware that it is specifically forbidden to rent motor vehicles, including vehicles for water sports.

6) I understand that, although the University has made every reasonable effort to assure my safety while participating in the Program there are unavoidable risks in travel. I, individually, and on behalf of my heirs, successors, assigns, and personal representatives hereby release, acquit and forever discharge the University and its employees, agents, officers, trustees and representatives (in their official and individual capacities) from any and all liability whatsoever for any and all damages, losses or injuries (including death) I sustain to my person or property, or both, including but not limited to any claims, demands, actions, causes of action, judgments, damages, expenses and costs, including attorneys' fees, which arise out of, result from, occur during or are connected in any manner with my participation in the Program and/or any travel incidental thereto.

7) I, individually, and on behalf of my heirs, successors, assigns and personal representatives, hereby agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the University and its employees, agents, officers, trustees and representatives (in their official and individual capacities) from any and all liability, losses, damages, judgments or expenses, including attorneys' fees, that they or any of them incur or sustain as a result of any claims, demands, actions or causes of action that arise out of, occur during, or are in any way connected with my participation in the Program and/or any travel incidental thereto.

8) I represent that my agreement to the provisions herein is wholly voluntary, and further understand that, prior to signing this agreement, I have the right to consult with the advisor, counselor, or attorney of my choice.

9) I agree that this Statement of Responsibility and Authorization: Waiver, Release and Indemnification Agreement, is to be construed under the laws of the State of Illinois, U.S.A.; and that if any portion hereof is held invalid, the balance hereof shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect. In signing this document I hereby acknowledge that I have read this entire document, that I understand its terms, that I will abide by each of the

terms and conditions, that by signing it I am giving up substantial legal rights I might otherwise have, and that I have signed it knowingly and voluntarily.

10) I represent that I am at least eighteen years of age, or if not, that I have secured below the signature of my parent or guardian as well as my own.

| | | |
|------------------------|----------------|------|
| (Signature of Student) | Name (Printed) | Date |
|------------------------|----------------|------|

(Signature of Parent/Guardian if Student is under the age of 18)

Approved, Dunn Law Firm, 1/14/03

MEDICAL INFORMATION FORM GENERAL AND EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____ Student ID (or SSN): _____

Country of Study: _____ Program: _____

Gender: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____

Physician's Contact Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Person to notify in case of an emergency:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Tel.: _____ Bus. Tel.: _____ Cell: _____

MEDICAL HISTORY

If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you must complete and return the Physician's Report form on the last page. Please contact us if any conditions or treatments significantly change before the start of your program or while you are abroad.

Are you currently under medical treatment? yes no

Do you have any ongoing or chronic medical condition (asthma, diabetes, etc.)? yes no
Please identify the condition or conditions:

MEDICAL HISTORY (CONTINUED)

Are you currently taking any medications? ___ yes ___ no if yes, please list name, dosage, prescribing physician and, if not listed above, contact information for that physician. Use an additional sheet of paper if you need more space. Please return the Physician's Report form on the last page if you are taking prescriptions for a serious medical condition or for depression, anxiety, or other psychological condition. (You do not need to return the form on the last page if you are taking routine prescriptions such as birth control, skin care, or allergies.)

| Name of medication | Dosage | Physician Information |
|--------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

What condition(s) is (are) being treated with the above medication?

Are you taking the medication(s) on a temporary or on-going basis?

Please list any dietary restrictions or preferences:

Please list any allergies to medication, food or other substances/conditions:

AUTHORIZATION STATEMENT

I hereby authorize Illinois Wesleyan University to release information from my medical history, including but not limited to medical records, upon the request of the International Office. I further authorize the release of information by the International Office to the relevant program director and to the cooperating or affiliated foreign institutions.

I understand that the International Office will not request any information from my medical records unless a situation arises while I am studying abroad that requires information pertinent to my safety or health. I further understand that any information obtained from my medical records that held by the International Office will be destroyed upon the completion of my study abroad program.

I understand that, if I have a medical condition that requires or has required treatment, I must discuss my plan to study abroad with my clinician.

I certify that the information on this Medical Information Form is true and correct, and I will notify the International Office hereafter of any significant or relevant changes in my health that occur prior to or during the study abroad program.

Student's Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

PHYSICIAN'S REPORT

(This form is required only if directed by responses earlier in the questionnaire)

_____ (print student's name) has identified a chronic and/or recurrent health issue. Please evaluate the physical and/or mental health of this student, who intends to participate in a study abroad program in

_____ (print foreign location). The availability of medical services in the country (or countries) and areas within which the student will be living and traveling should be considered.

Diagnosis:

Medications and dosage:

Stability of condition over the past five (5) years:

To your knowledge, are there any predisposing medical, physical, or emotional factors that, under stress of adjusting to life in another country, may require treatment while the student is abroad?

Recommendations for care of this individual:

Physician's Signature: _____

Printed Name of Physician: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Please complete and return to: International Office, Illinois Wesleyan University, P.O. Box 2900, Bloomington, IL 61702-2900; fax: 309-556-3727.

PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

- Have you turned in all required forms to the International Office?
 - o Course Approval Form
 - o Statement of Responsibility and Authorization (Waiver)
 - o Medical information Form
 - o Letter of Understanding
- Have you turned in the Study Abroad Financial Aid form to the Financial Aid Office?
- Do you have a valid passport?
- Have you applied for and received any required visas?
- Have you gotten an ISIC card? Will your program provide it?
- Have you made two copies of your passport, credit cards, driver's license, and/or other important documents—one to take with you and one to leave at home?
- Have you finalized your flight arrangements?
- Have you packed this handbook, course registration info, and an IWU phone/email directory?
- Have you made calling arrangements (phone card, VoIP, etc.)?
- Does the International Office have your parent's emergency contact phone/email info?
- Have you set up your IWU email to be forwarded to another email address?
Have you made provisions to check your IWU email address?
- Have you sent us your abroad mailing address? (You may not get this until you are abroad but are to send it to us when you do know it.)
- Do you have an emergency credit card and/or other forms of money you need?
- Do you have insurance abroad?

Learning About Your Host Country

One of the best safety precautions you can take is to educate yourself about the culture and history of your host country. This will not only help you have a more enjoyable experience abroad, but it may also prevent you from unknowingly putting yourself in uncomfortable or dangerous situations. Try to answer the following questions and find out how prepared you are! If you don't know the answers, you may find them in a country guidebook, which has sections about the history, culture, and politics of each country, or on a Website about your country.

- 1) How many people who are prominent in the affairs (politics, athletics, religion, the arts, etc.) of your host country can you name?
- 2) Who are the country's national heroes and heroines?
- 3) Can you recognize the national anthem?
- 4) Are there other languages spoken besides the dominant language? What are the social and political implications of language usage?
- 5) What is the predominant religion? Is it a state religion? What are the most important religious observances and ceremonies? How do members of the predominant religion feel about other religions?
- 6) What is the history of the relationship between this country and the United States?
- 7) What are the most common forms of marriage ceremonies and celebrations?
- 8) What is the general attitude toward divorce? Is it legal? What about extramarital relations? Polygamy?
- 9) What is the attitude toward homosexuality?
- 10) What is the attitude toward contraception?
- 11) What are the laws and attitudes toward gambling? Drinking? Drugs?
- 12) Is the price asked for merchandise fixed or are customers expected to bargain? How is bargaining conducted? If, as a customer, you touch or handle the merchandise or sale, will the storekeeper think you are knowledgeable, inconsiderate, within your rights, or completely outside your rights?
- 13) How do people organize their daily activities? What is the normal meal schedule? Is there a daytime rest period? What is the customary time for visiting friends?
- 14) What foods are most popular and how are they prepared?
- 15) What are taboos in this society?

- 16) What is the usual dress for women? For men? Are slacks or shorts worn? If so, on what occasions? Do teenagers wear jeans?
- 17) What are the special privileges of age and/or sex?
- 18) If you are invited to dinner, should you arrive early? On time? Late? If late, how late?
- 19) On what occasions would you present gifts to or accept gifts from local people? What kind of gifts would you exchange?
- 20) How do people greet one another? Shake hands? Embrace or kiss? How do they leave one another? What does any variation from the usual greeting or leave-taking signify?
- 21) How long do people talk when they use the telephone? Do friends call each other frequently to chat? How do people feel about having other people make long-distance (overseas) calls from their private house phones? What about local calls?
- 22) What are the important holidays? How are they observed?
- 23) What are the favorite leisure and recreational activities of adults? Teenagers?
- 24) What sports are popular?
- 25) What kinds of television programs are shown? What social purposes do they serve?
- 26) What is the normal work schedule? How does it accommodate environmental or other conditions?
- 27) How will your financial position and living conditions compare with those of the majority of the locals?
- 28) Are typical families nuclear or extended? At what age do people normally move out of their parents' home?
- 29) What games do children play? Where do children congregate?
- 30) What kind of local public transportation is available? Do all classes of people use it?
- 31) Who has the right of way in traffic: vehicles, animals, pedestrians?
- 32) Is military training compulsory?
- 33) Are the largest circulation newspapers generally friendly in their attitude toward the United States?
- 34) How many people have emigrated from this country to the United States? Other countries? Are many doing so at present?

- 35) What kinds of health services are available? Where are they located?
- 36) Is education free? Compulsory? In schools, are children segregated by race? By caste? By class? By sex? What kinds of schools are considered best: public, private, or parochial? In schools, how important is learning by rote? How are children disciplined in school?
- 37) Where are the important universities of the country? If university education is sought abroad, to what countries and universities do students go?