

STUDY ABROAD

DISCOVER [THE WORLD] DISCOVER [YOURSELF]

DRAKE UNIVERSITY
STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK

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Why Go Abroad?

Student Writers' Contest by Kristin Hayes

I missed out

on the study abroad experience in college because college itself was simply too much fun. Nothing could tear me away from my four years of independence, not even the promise of an adventure abroad.

To make up for the missed opportunity, I chose to study abroad after college. Like so many other 20-something graduates with a liberal arts degree, I was somewhat lost. In the midst of discussion on my uncertain future, my college adviser gave me a much-needed boost. "You can do whatever you choose, Miss Hayes. Why, we could even get you into Oxford if we tried."

That was a dare. And so the journey began.

But I was still by no means certain that this journey was for me. Four months after Oxford had accepted me into its Comparative and International Education program, I still hadn't committed. The final decision came as I was strolling down a William and Mary brick path, eyes down, and spied one brick stamped with the word OXFORD. Rationally, of course, I realized that Oxford was the name of the brick company. But in my mind it was a sign! Just what I needed after weeks of tottering between staying and going. The point? Any reason for study or travel abroad is a good reason.

Without my expecting it, my year in England turned out to be the most rewarding of my life to date. The following suggestions are in retrospect the tactics that helped make that experience so special.

STUDY UP. During my pre-travel preparation, I occasionally hesitated to ask a question for fear of seeming ignorant, but I quickly realized that not asking left me far more ignorant. Ask. If you don't know the language, practice. The more you know about your destination, the easier your transition will be.

TALK TO EVERYONE. Whether you are traveling or studying, you will encounter a diverse range of people. Take advantage of it. When given the chance to interact with the "locals", take it. In my case, my British friendships earned me home-cooked meals, house parties, free stays in London, and delightful days at Wimbledon.

BE NATIVE. My best Oxford times were the warm spring days by the river, watching the Summer Eights crew races. Take lessons from those who know the country best and enjoy their traditions. You will feel more in tune with your surroundings if you do.

LEARN WHAT YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE. Time abroad will help you figure out more of what you want and don't want out of life. Follow what your journey teaches you.

ENJOY BEING WHERE YOU ARE. Travel broadens your horizons, but take time to enjoy your temporary hometown as well. And when you travel, spend more than just a day in any city. Savor the sounds and sights without too much hurry to move on to the next church or museum. You will feel far more at home.

DON'T LET ANYONE ELSE DICTATE your experience. Go your own way, and don't be swayed by co-travelers or classmates from making your own decisions.

BE PREPARED FOR OTHERS' STEREOTYPING of Americans. If only I had known that I would be expected to speak for my whole country! In Oxford's multicultural atmosphere my friends and I often represented our nations on issues of foreign policy, entertainment, and other cultural phenomena (like Britney Spears). My word sometimes became American dogma, although against my will. I learned to express things more quietly, with less American slang, and with more sensitivity now that I, for once, was the outsider. Let's face it: Americans are not viewed prettily in many corners of the earth. We are known as spoiled, loud, coarse, and invariably self-centered. Be prepared for these stereotypes, and work to break them down.

Back home, I am still a bit lost. But my time abroad provided several pointers for the future, including the completion of the research which won me my current job.

To return to the path that led me abroad: In the final semester of my senior year I confessed my fears about going to England to a friend who had spent a year in France. "I'm too little to go so far away," I said. And she replied, with a smile, "That's exactly why you should go. It will make you bigger." And so it did. ■

Kristin Hayes helps coordinate high school environmental education programming in the National Wildlife Federation's Great Lakes office in Ann Arbor, MI.

Immerse Yourself

Try foods that you've never tasted and don't waste a moment. Most importantly, meet local people. If you live with a host family, you have an advantage. Participate in "family" events. You will be amazed at what your host family can show you that cannot be found in any guidebook. You will be seeing the country through the eyes of locals. If you are not living with a host family, look for opportunities to volunteer, take a fun class at a recreation center, or join a club. I took a salsa class in France and met French people with similar interests.

Rachel Hill University of Virginia

CHECK IT

Before you leave Drake at the end of

- _____ 1 Do you have your passport ?
- _____ 2 Have you applied for your visa (if applicable)?
- _____ 3 Do you need to take a current Drake transcript with you? Have you requested it?
- _____ 4 Have you made your flight arrangements?
- _____ 5 Have you read the Drake "Study Abroad Guidelines"?
(YOU are responsible for knowing this information.)
- _____ 6 Have you met with a representative in the Student Financial Planning Office about Drake scholarships and/or loans, financial aid for study abroad?
- _____ 7 Have you investigated your insurance coverage? Does it cover medical evacuation and repatriation of remains? Do you need to get a policy for study abroad? Does your program have their own health insurance coverage? Are you required to carry this insurance?
- _____ 8 Have you turned in the Drake supplemental form/Drake medical form?
- _____ 9 Have you turned in the Drake Course Approval form with appropriate signatures?
- _____ 10 Have you given the Study Abroad Office a picture for your Drake file? (Was it part of the application the Study Abroad Advisor mailed to your program?)
- _____ 11 Have you signed your study abroad contract?
- _____ 12 Do you need to purchase an International Student Identity Card?
Is it provided by your program?
- _____ 13 Do you have a Drake hat, shirt or sweatshirt to take with you (for pictures)?
- _____ 14 Have you read everything you can about your host city and country?
- _____ 15 Have you made housing arrangements for your return semester?

AND PLAN TO DO THESE WHILE YOU'RE ABROAD...

- _____ 16 Stay in touch with your advisor and the Study Abroad Office.
- _____ 17 If your courses abroad change, contact the Study Abroad Office.
- _____ 18 Register with the American Embassy in your host country.
- _____ 19 Keep a journal and take lots of photos.
- _____ 20 Write home!

BON VOYAGE



PRE-DEPARTURE SELF ORIENTATION QUESTIONS

from the University of Kansas, Office of Study

Responsibility for the preparation of students for a study abroad experience shouldn't rest solely on the shoulders of the Study Abroad Advisor. You must take the major initiative in what can become a very exciting pre-departure self-orientation. The following list of questions may be used in many ways. Contact natives, returnees, tourists and travel organizations, libraries, natives faculty or students, friends, and relatives to seek answers to these questions. Preparation is the key to a successful study abroad experience.

TRAVEL AND ARRIVAL QUESTIONS

How do I get a passport? Why do I need one? What can I do to avoid having my passport stolen? If my passport is stolen, do I know where to go for a new one? (Did I photocopy my passport and other important documents?)

What is a visa? Will I be going to countries that require a visa? If so, have I obtained the appropriate visa?

Do I know weight and size limits for luggage on planes? Do I realize that I may be carrying all of my luggage for plane and train changes? Can I manage it alone? Should I repack?

How will I proceed to the host campus once I have arrived in the country? Have I checked train and bus schedules? What if I arrive on a weekend or late at night? Who will I call? What will I do if no one can meet me?

Do I know the currency exchange rate of the country in which I will be traveling? Do I know how and where to obtain some of the country's currency before I leave? Am I familiar with the bills and coins?

What is the value to me of an International Student ID card, Youth Hostel membership, Eurail or Britrail pass? What other discounts are available for students?

ON-SITE QUESTIONS

What will the climate be like? Do I have the appropriate clothes for the climate? Am I bringing too many clothes?

Do I have an option to live with a family? If I live in a residence hall, will I be able to stay in a single room? Can I room with local students? How close is housing to the town and university? Should I take bed linen? What laundry service is available?

Will I use public transportation to get to class? How much does it cost? Am I ready to spend 20-45 minutes on a bus to travel to class from my residence or homestay? Should I plan to buy a bike? Am I eligible to rent a car? Do I need to obtain an international driver's license? What rules govern driving, car rental, insurance?

How do I open a bank account? What are the banking hours? Is there a bank on campus? (is there a "campus"?) How

long will it take to transfer money? Do I have a bankcard?

Are local telephone calls free? Are calls charged by both time and distance, even in the home? How will I arrange to pay for calls made from a home? Are calls overseas and within the country itemized? Do I know the long distance access codes? Can I purchase a pre-paid phone card? Should I invest in a cell phone? Does it work universally?

What are the normal expectations for use of hot water, heating and power consumption? What about voltage? Plug size?

ACADEMIC QUESTIONS

Will I be eligible for financial aid while I am studying abroad? How do I apply for it? What happens if my check arrives after I have left? What kind of scholarships are available? What are my chances of getting one? How do I apply for next year?

Are the university campuses in “my” country like American ones, with lots of building close together?

When do classes begin? When am I expected to report? Do I know to whom and where to report?

How do I register for classes? Are there catalogs and class offerings posted? Who will help? What is normally considered a full class load? How will my courses transfer?

What happens if I decide to take up courses different from the ones I signed up for in the U.S? What happens if I fail a class?

Will my grades transfer or just the credit? Other exchange students have different regulations. Do I know mine?

What do I do in case of a student or faculty or even a general strike? Suppose it lasts for several weeks, what will I do?

How will I be evaluated? How often?

(quarterly, semester, annual, etc) How will I get a transcript sent back or is it taken care of? Does my home or host institution require that I sit for a final exam?

Are there semesters and terms? Will I know school calendar ahead of time? When are vacations?

What clubs are available for me to join? What other activities are available on campus?

What are residence halls/dormitories like? Do the residence halls have visitation hours? What about roommates?

What about refectory? A Mensa? How do I get tickets?

What are the library hours? For how long can I borrow books? Or, can I? How are the library fines assessed? Do students purchase textbooks?

Have all the necessary university offices been informed about my plans to study abroad? Have I arranged to have mail forwarded?

What must I do at my home institution before leaving in order to guarantee credit transfer? Will I have to re-enroll? How do I pre-register for courses while I am abroad?

Do I want to live in the residence hall when I return? What should I find an apartment before I leave?

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Have I read as much as possible about the country or countries in which I will be traveling or studying? Have I written to national tourists agencies for maps, free guide books?

Have I been reading magazines and/or newspaper to become more familiar with world news and events? Do I know what’s going on in the U.S as well? Am I prepared to discuss world events with new acquaintances?

What if any diseases are prevalent in “my” country? Have I checked into

this? What inoculations, if any, will I need to get before I leave? What medications should I carry?

What is included in the program costs and benefits? How much extra money should I take? Can I get a part-time job? Will I need a work permit? Have I planned for such additional cost as vacation travel, entertainment, gifts, etc.?

If I need medical assistance while abroad, do I know what to do? If I am sick or have an accident? How will I obtain reimbursement for cost? Have I discussed my medical insurance with my family?

Do I have any prescription drugs that I need to take with me? How about glasses or contact lenses?

Are traveler’s checks a good idea? Do I know where to get them cashed in “my” country? Do I know what to do if they are stolen? Do I have credit card in case of emergencies? Do I know about the different ways to have money sent to me in case I run out of funds? How will I transfer money? Can I use a debit card?

Do my family and friends know how to reach me while I am abroad? Have I updated my own address book?

Have I made sure everything will fit in my suitcase? Do I really need all the items I packed?

Do I have a notebook to record of my experience?

If I am staying with a family, have I selected gifts to take with me for them? Am I familiar with “hostess gift” customs?

Do I know the penalties if I am caught with illegal drugs or in the company of drug users while overseas? ■

This appeared as an article by **Mary Elizabeth Debicki** in *Transitions Abroad*, International Resource Guide No. 5

GET READY WITH THESE STUDY ABROAD BASICS

adapted from Forms Of Travel

[PASSPORT & VISAS]

PASSPORTS (WWW.TRAVEL.STATE.GOV)

“A passport is an official government document proving your citizenship and is required for U.S citizens who wish to travel in a foreign country (with the exception of Canada and Mexico which will accept other identification such as a birth certificate, etc.) Passports are valid for 10 years. Your passport must be valid for six months past your return date.

As soon as you receive your passport, sign it and fill in the information on the inside cover. Your passport is not valid without your signature. Do not allow anyone else to use your passport or alter it in any way. Your passport is a valuable document for which you are responsible. The loss of your passport could cause you considerable delay and expense. If your passport is lost or stolen, notify the local authorities and the American Embassy at once. After an investigation determining identification, the Embassy will issue you a three-month temporary passport. This process can be expedited if you make a photocopy of the first two pages of your passport and travel with them in a safe place apart from your passport. This will aid in determining identification.

When traveling from your country keep your passport with you at all times. Never pack your passport in your luggage. Once you have arrived at your program “home base” you will want to locate a safe place to leave your passport. If you plan to travel over a long weekend or break, remember to take your passport with you.

VISAS “Visas are stamped notarization in a passport authorizing entry to a specific country for a stated purpose and time.” Not all countries require a visa, so check before you travel.

WORK PERMITS

It is illegal for a U.S. citizen to work in a foreign country without a work permit. Violators are liable to be deported. Work permits are virtually impossible to obtain in Mexico. A work permit may be obtained for some countries through the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE).

[PACKING]

Use lightweight sturdy luggage with well-made fasteners, attached wheels and pull-out handle that can withstand airline luggage-handling. Purchase and use a lock accepted and recognized by TSA (www.tsa.gov). Make sure you luggage does not exceed international size regulations.

PACK LIGHT Be prepared to carry everything you take—on your own.

In most countries people have fewer clothes than the typical American. There is no stigma attached to being seen repeatedly in the same outfit. Take a small number of versatile clothing items. Take easy washables that are permanent press. Dark colors are best. The optimum articles are light weight, washable and drip dry. Interchangeability is essential. Dress in layers and be able to mix and match items.

Warning for women: some countries have strict customs regarding dress. Check with your program.

There is no need to pack a semester's supply of most toiletries. The exception is contact lenses. They can pose a problem, so it may be advisable to take adequate supply of lens solutions or obtain disposable lenses now. Take a spare pair of glasses or contacts.

Try to do without electrical appliances. Currents in foreign countries are different than in the U.S. Electrical adapters can be purchased but seldom work as well as advertisements indicate. If you decide to bring a hair dryer or computer, make sure your adapter can handle the voltage.

You may also want to take a portable CD or mp3 player, calculator for quick currency exchange calculations, extra batteries and COMFORTABLE shoes that can withstand a lot of walking.

The best way to begin packing is to set out all you wish to take, and pack only half of that.

Refer to page 9 for packing list ideas.

[COMMUNICATION]

TELEPHONING Making an international call from a foreign country may require special arrangements and is often more expensive than phoning from the U.S.

Several U.S. phone companies issue a charge card to be used by students abroad to call a single previously approved number in the U.S. The calls are charged to the number called. Most phone companies offer other special arrangements such as discounts when calling a previously designated number abroad and access to the company's overseas operator. Contact your long distance company to learn which options are available. Several Drake returnees reported that AT&T was the only card they could use anywhere! Check it out.

In many foreign cities, you may have to purchase a pre-paid phone card to place calls from a public telephone. The phone cards usually can be purchased from a convenience store. Remember that each country has different sounds to indicate a ring or a busy signal. It helps to know what sounds to expect before trying to call.

Consider purchasing a prepaid cell-phone on-site. Vodafone, T-Mobile, Orange, and O2 are all popular providers.

If you are bringing a computer, Skype is an excellent and free way to talk to your parents and friends at home. You can download the program from Skype.com. You will also need to purchase a headset with a microphone to

use the program. Your friends and parents will need to do the same.

MAIL You can use postcards that you send to family and friends (if you ask people to save them before you leave home) to put together a nice travel diary about places you've seen and things you've done. Remember that mail to and from some foreign countries may take longer than what you are used to in the U.S.

E-MAIL Some programs will offer e-mail and Internet access to international students either without charge or for a fee. Other sites may not have e-mail accessibility for international students, but you might be able to obtain access by opening an account with a commercial company. Be sure to determine all of your costs prior to investing in such a service, as it may be very expensive and availability varies widely. Don't expect to have email access unless your program specifically states its availability.

Consider starting a blog. It will help you remember your time abroad, and it will let your friends and family read and see what you are up to without spending hours writing long emails to everyone. Most blogs are free and allow you to post photos as well as text. Check out blogger.com for more information or to start your blog.

[MONEY MATTERS]

For students spending a summer or semester abroad it may be difficult or impossible to establish a bank account overseas. Other means of handling money may need to be used.

CREDIT CARDS Perhaps the easiest, most efficient and economical way to purchase items while overseas is with a credit card. But be aware of the fees. Credit card conversions are often converted at the wholesale rate and they are very accurate. Your bill also serves

as a receipt, which may be helpful if something is lost or broken. You can usually access cash with a credit card through ATMs and at large banks while abroad. You will need to apply for a credit card in advance and to verify your credit limit before you go. You will also need to get an international personal identification number. You may wish to make arrangements with your parents or other responsible party to pay your credit card bill regularly while you are abroad to avoid restricted use when you reach your credit limit. Remember, it is important to budget your spending so you do not exceed the limits decided upon prior to departure. It's suggested you take a second credit card and keep it in a safe/secure place to use in case your primary one is lost or stolen.

DEBIT CARDS Students use debit cards to obtain cash while abroad. Check with your bank regarding fees for overseas use. You should also be cautious when using a debit machine. Be sure you are not vulnerable to robbery or scams. It is best if you use your debit card when with friends.

TRAVELERS CHECKS Since carrying a large amount of cash is risky, many students use travelers checks or credit cards while abroad. Although it is sometimes difficult to get travelers checks in foreign currency before traveling this is the best way to avoid conversion fees. Travelers checks tend to have a better exchange rate than cash. The rates are usually best at local banks or a major travel service center. Before making a transaction learn the rate charged for exchanging currency. Usually banks post their rates daily.

[TRAVEL]

Most programs offer travel options as either part of their program fees or for an additional fee. You should have received information regarding the opportunities available to you.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC) Some programs include the International Student Identity Card

(ISIC) as part of their program fee. Through other programs, you must purchase it yourself. If it is not part of your program package you can obtain an ISIC at Drake's Student Life Center. Contact them for eligibility and requirements. ISIC is inexpensive and offers reduced fees for airline flights, ground transportation, accommodations and admission to museums and cultural events. It also has basic accident and sickness insurance as part of the package.

TRAVEL STA offers up-to-date information on all forms of transportation available to the student traveler. They offer special student discounts on flights, tours, accommodations, travel gear, travel insurance and rail passes such as Eurail or Britrail.

Besides rail transportation, most countries offer subway and bus transportation. Be aware that many local transportation systems work on the premise of integrity. It's assumed anyone who boards the bus or subway has purchased a ticket. This honor system is enforced with random checks and harsh punishment for those who do not have a ticket.

Many countries also rent bicycles at railway stations. Investigate the traffic and know the local traffic regulations before riding a bike in a crowded metropolitan area. Some cities are ideal for travel and site-seeing by bike, others can be extremely dangerous. For a minimal fee, bicycles can be taken on the train.

ACCOMMODATIONS Most countries have the usual accommodations; hotel, dormitory, bed and breakfast, the "Y," a private home or a hostel. Usually a youth hostel is inexpensive, offers a wide range of accommodations, but may also have restrictions. Membership is not mandatory, but often means a discount and preference during busy seasons. Reservations are suggested. Ask people in your host country for recommendations about accommodations.

Bed and Breakfasts are usually small, family-owned inns throughout Europe. They are inexpensive and you

will usually get a room and breakfast for the price. Reservations are not usually needed. You may wish to look at the room before renting as the size can vary a great deal. Breakfast is usually very modest—a slice of bread and cheese and a small glass of juice.

There are no guarantees that a shower, while abroad, will have hot water or more than a trickle from the shower head.

Another newer option is CouchSurfing. CouchSurfing is a network of people around the world who are willing to let you sleep on their couch for a few nights. The service is always free, usually you share something with your host. You can cook a meal, teach them something, or just share fun stories. Not only do you get a place to stay, but you also get a host who can show you around the city. CouchSurfing hosts may be verified through the website for added security. To take part you will need to create a profile on Couchsurfing.com.

[RESOURCES]

STA Travel: www.sta.com

Michelin Guide series. Michelin Travel Publications. Michelin North America, One Parkway South, Greenville, SC 29615; 800.423.0485, fax 800.378.7471

"Concise yet, informative guides for cultural and scenic sights. No information on accommodations, food or transportation."

Let's Go series. Harvard Student Agencies, Inc. Revised annually. St. Martin's Press.

"Written by Harvard students, these guides provide exhaustive tips for low-cost travel from the student point of view, including specifics on sights, transportation, accommodations, and food. Titles available for European countries, Central America, Southeast Asia, Israel and Egypt." ■

pack light

[really light]

Though most airlines allow you to check two bags and bring one carry-on, keep in mind that every item you pack may return to haunt your weary feet and aching back. One of your most important pre-trip investments should be a good quality backpack.

When packing try to keep your load under 25 pounds. Before you leave, walk around the neighborhood with all the luggage you plan to carry. If you find the weight too much, reduce your load. And remember to leave room for souvenirs you are bound to pick up along the way! Your best bet is to keep it simple. Use this list as a guideline:

CLOTHING

- 1 pair of walking shoes
- 1 pair of dress shoes
- 1 pair or flip flops or shower shoes
- 6-7 pairs of socks
- 6-7 pairs of underwear
- 1-2 pairs of shorts
- 1-2 skirts/trousers
- 2 shirts
- 1 sweater/sweatshirt
- 1 poncho/rain jacket
- 1 light jacket
- 1 bathing suit
- 1 hat
- 1 semi-nice outfit

DOCUMENTS, ETC

- Passport (and visa if required)
- Tickets and rail passes
- Student ID card
- Hostel membership card
- Money belt or neck wallet
- Cash, traveler's check, credit cards
- Insurance information
- Photocopies of all documents
- List of emergency and program contact information and group itinerary

MEDICINE AND TOILETRIES

- Prescription medicine and prescriptions
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Soap and shampoo
- Comb and/or brush
- Sunscreen, moisturizers, cosmetics
- Deodorant
- First aid kit (see page 12 for ideas)
- Contraceptives/condoms
- Aspirin or other pain reliever
- Tissues
- Tampons
- Razor blades
- Eyeglasses, sunglasses, contact lenses and cleaning solution
- Towel and washcloth
- Remember the liquid restrictions for air travel. Be sure that these are in checked luggage.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Camera, film and camera batteries (or battery charger)
- Pocket knife with can opener and cork screw
- Fork, knife and spoon combination
- Flashlight
- Watch
- Address book
- Travel journal or notebook
- Pens and pencils
- Pocket calculator
- Books, guides and maps
- Sewing kit and safety pins
- Plastic storage bags
- Hostel sleep sack
- Change purse
- Umbrella
- Water bottle
- Luggage lock and tags
- Battery-operated alarm clock
- Moist towelettes
- Rubber bands, scotch and packing tape
- Batteries
- Adapter and voltage converter

DRAKe-mail

TO ALL STUDENTS GOING ABROAD:

You should unsubscribe from any discussion groups prior to your departure if you are not going to be able to read your mail while studying abroad.

If we DO NOT hear from you we will do the following:

We will leave your email account as is unless there is a problem with your account. If there is a problem, such as a lot of spam mail coming into your account, we will have to delete some mail or take whatever action that is necessary. Students are requested to keep their usage on the mail server under 15 megabytes.

You can set a message that says you are abroad for the spring semester, therefore, when a person sends a message to you; the person gets a message back stating that you are currently unavailable. You will still get the message the person sent to you, but the sender knows you are not available. The person would receive this message only once during whichever number of days you select on "days between sending notice to same address." For example, if he/she sends you a message two days after the first message is sent, and you have set this to be seven days, no message would be sent back to the sender about your unavailability on the second message.

Once you are logged in to webmail, go to the preferences tab, then the mail tab. Check the box that says "Send Auto-Reply Message." With this feature you can set dates that the message will be set, so you don't have to worry about turning it off.

We can also set the mail account so that you do not receive any mail in your Drake email account while you are away. If you do this, you will need to contact your advisors and whomever, so that they know that they will not be able to send mail to you during this time. A message would bounce back to the sender stating that you are unable to receive mail. You will need to let me know when you want this option to begin. You may send me an email requesting this. You will also need to contact us upon your return to reset your account so that you will start receiving mail again.

You may want to use the webmail facility for reading your mail while you are away. The url is webmail.drake.edu

If you have questions, contact Patsy Johnson.

Have a great trip!

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what your adviser won't tell you

student writers' contest

by Elizabeth R.

There are some things

you might want to know before you go abroad that your school's study abroad office is not going to tell you. It's not that they're trying to keep you in the dark—far from it! You'll be bombarded with information until you feel you know more about your destination than Colin Powell does. But that's just the tip of the iceberg.

CLOTHES You'll have this "rule" driven into you: don't bring too many clothes because they take up space in your luggage and you'll find you don't really wear them all that much. This is misleading, to say the least. It's possible to bring too much stuff, but it's equally possible to underpack, especially if you're going to Europe. Americans tend to dress casually most of the time: jeans and T-shirts are standard on college campuses across the nation. Europeans, however, will dress up at the drop of a hat. Talk to students who have been to your destination and ask them what you'll need.

RELATIONSHIPS are one of the biggest problems for those who study abroad. If you're in one, be aware that it might not survive your trip. It's very hard to keep things going over long distances.

Moreover, it detracts from your study abroad experience; you'll miss out on a lot of terrific things if you spend all your time pining for your significant other. So, before you go, consider cooling things off. It doesn't have to be permanent; if you return and decide to reunite, the relationship will be that much stronger.

SEX, too, is something you should put some thought into. Come prepared with condoms or birth control pills and don't take any really stupid risks. Don't feel you have to live up to the "easy American" stereotype.

And don't be surprised if your preconceived notions about sexual manners are totally off. England, for example, is often thought of by Americans as a nation of prudes—stiff upper lip and all that, right? It's not. And if you're a young woman in France, don't be shocked if you get propositioned in a grocery store. (It's still a shock even if you've been forewarned. I mean, American women don't expect to hear, "I will let you use my body any way zat you want! I cannot wait to see you lie on my satin sheets!" from a total stranger in the produce aisle. I didn't anyway.)

MONEY One other thing you'll want to

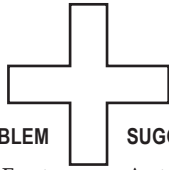
consider well—even if you've heard plenty about this from your adviser—is finances. Do whatever you have to before you go to be able to cover every conceivable expense: work overtime, take out student loans, whatever it takes. And though your adviser might tell you it's a bad idea, look into taking a part-time job while you're overseas; at the very least, there's no harm in checking the visa requirements before you go. Many students find it a great way to see another side of the culture... and the extra cash doesn't hurt.

HOME Finally, readjusting to life in the U.S. is tricky. (If you haven't heard that from your adviser yet, get a new one.) But you'll get past it, and you'll find you have a much greater sense of your place in the world than you did before you left. ■

Elizabeth R. DeHoff, a native of Littleton, CO, studied for a year at the University of Lancaster in the U.K. She is a film studies major and a freelance writer at the University of Colorado.

THE TRAVELING FIRST AID KIT

The chances are pretty good that you will not need all of the following items while traveling. However, you may want to think about where you will be going, and how accessible first aid supplies will be in each locale. Review the list, think about what problems you could encounter, and pack the appropriate supplies.



HEALTH NEED/PROBLEM	SUGGESTED ITEMS
Athlete's Foot	Antifungal powder or cream
Blisters (on feet)	Moleskin to protect areas of friction with shoes
Checking for Fever	Oral thermometer
Constipation	Laxatives
Cough	Throat lozenges, cough syrup
Cuts and scrapes	Antibiotic ointment, Band-Aids, sterile gauze pads, adhesive tape
Diarrhea, indigestion	Pepto-Bismol or Imodium capsules
Eye Care	Eyedrops, sunglasses, contact lens solution, extra glasses or contact lenses
Fever	Aspirin or acetaminophen
First aid, general supplies	Tweezers, scissors, pocket knife, needle and thread, safety pins, matches, flashlight, waterproof case or box to store supplies
Fluid and electrolyte replacement	Powdered electrolyte mix (Pedialyte, Exceed, IAMAT Oral Rehydration Salts)
Headache, minor aches and pains	Aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen
Insect repellent, personal	Insect repellent lotion containing DEET, Ultrathon Insect Repellent*
Insecticide for spray for clothing	Insecticide containing Permethrin**
Itching skin from allergy, insect bites, or minor skin irritation	0.5% hydrocortisone cream (tropical) and antihistamine tablets or capsules (Chlor-Trimeton, Benadryl, etc.)
Motion Sickness	Antihistamine tablets (Dramamine, Bonine, etc.)
Nasal congestion	Pseudophedrine and/or antihistamine (over-the-counter preparations)
Personal hygiene, general	Toilet paper, paper tissues, and/or premoistened towelettes, sanitary supplies for women, birth control devices, etc.
Skin disinfection, cleansing of cuts	Povidone-iodine solution (Betadine) or chlorhexidine solution (Hibiclens)
Strains, sprains	Elastic bandage roll (Ace Wrap)
Sun protections	Products (lotion, lip balm) with SPF 8 or higher
Toothache	Dental emergency kit, oil of cloves, dental floss
Water purification	Water purification tablets, crystals and/or filters

* Long-lasting, prevents absorption and moisture-proof up to 12 hours. Also repels ticks, biting flies, chiggers, fleas and gnats. Available at pharmacies and sporting good stores.
 ** For use on outer clothing

stay healthy and safe

adapted from NAFSA & CIEE's Health Check For Study, Work, and Travel Abroad and Forms of Travel

MEDICAL AND DENTAL CHECKUPS

Visit your family physician and dentist to make sure you're in good health before you leave. This might prevent emergencies while you are abroad. Get immunizations, including tetanus and hepatitis if appropriate. Update health records, including contact lens, eyeglass prescriptions and regular medications. Take an extra pair of glasses if you wear glasses or contact lenses. Take copies of all medical records, prescriptions in generic form and pertinent information; carry these with you in a safe place.

INOCULATIONS

Is there illness specific or endemic to the region you are traveling? Are there medications you can take to prevent these illnesses? To find out check the Centers for Disease Control's Travel Center at www.cdc.gov/travel. It will list not only inoculations that are necessary, but also other health risks/

PRESCRIPTION & OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS

Does the country have laws governing the import of medications, medical supplies, and contraceptives? Do you need to take a supply large enough to last for your entire stay?

MEDICAL KIT

see First Aid Kit list to the left

EMERGENCY MEDICAL NEEDS

(such as diabetes or epilepsy)
Learn how to get medical help before the need arises. If you require regular medical care for any conditions you have, take a letter of introduction from your physician at home, providing details of your medical condition(s), care and specific need. Ask your on-site program director for assistance in identifying who will provide care. Is there an emergency system in place with a number similar to 911? If so, what is it and what kind of service

does it provide? Who will provide routine care? How can it be accessed? The International Association for Medical Assistance (IAMAT), 739 Center Street Lewiston, NY 14092, tel: 716.754.4883 has information about English speaking physicians around the world. They also have health precautions you may need to follow.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

What kind of insurance policy and how much coverage do you need? Does your own health insurance policy cover medical services abroad? Does it include medical evacuation or repatriation of remains? Does your study abroad program require subscribing to a health plan? What kind of insurance does the International Student Identity Card include? Is it adequate?

HEALTH HAZARDS AND PRECAUTIONS

(plus basic criminal and civil laws such as disorderliness, alcohol, drugs, driving)

What is the quality of water in the host country? What are the customs, beliefs and laws in the host country concerning sexual behavior and the use of alcohol and drugs? What precautions are recommended for sexual or health practices?

IN THE EVENT OF THREATENING POLITICAL SITUATIONS

Keep in touch with the current political situations by listening to the radio or television. Stay away from potential target areas for terrorist activities, especially places frequented by Americans. Avoid political demonstrations. Do not take part in media interviews regarding political conflicts. Obtain updated information about possible volatile locations and avoid travel areas which have a travel advisory warning issued by the State Department. Be as inconspicuous in dress and demeanor as possible.

GENERAL CRIME PATTERNS

Your program will most likely inform you of sound, practical advice about your safety. Remember the rules you usually follow for your own personal safety. Stay alert. Also, it may be safer if you don't travel alone, talk to strangers, or identify yourself as an American to everyone you meet. Keep a low profile, notify an authority if unattended package or bag is left on public transportation or public place. Don't leave your belongings unattended, carry your valuables (passport, credit cards, traveler's checks) in a neck or waist pouch, and don't take any jewelry or other items with you that are valuable (sentimentally or monetarily).

RESOURCES

The Safe Travel Book: A guide for International Traveler by Peter Savage
Lexington books, Lexington, MA

Iowa State Department of Public Health Immunization: 515.281.4917
Public Health Nursing: 281-3932

U.S State Department Overseas Emergency Center: 202.647.5225
Recorded travel information

Bureau of Consular Affairs Automated Fax System: 202.647.300

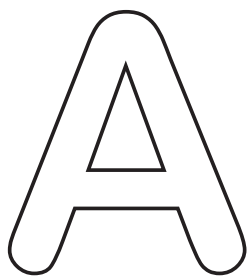
Receive information sheets of countries of your choice by return fax

TRAVEL ADVISORIES

http://travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html ■

SEX, DRUGS AND JUNIOR YEAR DOCTORS WORK TO PROTECT

by Andrea Petersen



As kids trek through Europe on post-graduation jaunts or plan soul-searching trips to Nepal and junior years abroad, many parents are worried about terrorism and mysterious viruses. They're nervous about the wrong things. The real scourges of overseas travel are far more mundane: pregnancy, drug use and mental illness. Now, doctors, colleges and youth-travel programs are stepping up their efforts to prevent these problems.

Sure, kids get into trouble with sex and drugs in their dorm rooms, but recent studies have confirmed what travel doctors and educators have long suspected: The risks rise with travel. Removed from friends, family and school and faced with the challenges of a new language and culture, even stable young adults can fall into dangerous behavior.

"My students aren't getting malaria; they're getting pregnant," said Susan Anderson, a travel-medicine doctor at the Palo Alto Medical Foundation.

In one ongoing study of young travelers to Southeast Asia, 75% said they took drugs during their trip, according to the study's author, Israel Potasman, head of the infectious-diseases and travel clinic at the Bnai Zion Medical Center in Haifa, Israel. In another study published in the *Journal of Travel Medicine* by Dr. Potasman, 11% of young travelers had an episode of psychiatric symptoms, including sleeping disturbances and depression, during their trips, compared with only 2.3% who had sought treatment before travel.

Colleges are focusing more on these tough and often delicate problems because of the soaring popularity of studying abroad. The number of students studying overseas has jumped 55% in the past five years, according to the Institute of International Education in New York. And that doesn't include the legions of kids taking off on their own trips—a favored choice for jobless graduates who are waiting for the economy to improve.

These days, physicians such as Dr. Anderson send women off with a prescription for pills that can be taken after unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy. Princeton University added a feature to its Not-2-Late Web site that lets students see what types of emergency contraceptives are available

in the countries they plan to visit.

At the University of Chicago, administrators try to identify students with mental illnesses and then make sure at-risk students have adequate medication. They sometimes even make advance appointments with psychiatrists and therapists at the students' destinations. A leading study abroad program, the Institute for the International Education of Students, has hired 20 new staff members during the past three years, primarily to deal with a surge in health and safety issues (depression and allergies are the top two) among the 3,000 college students it sends overseas each year.

About five years ago, the program had to bring six students home because they had developed severe anorexia and bulimia; it hasn't had to evacuate any students for eating disorders since the new efforts were put in place.

Of course, travel is a positive experience for most kids. They learn new languages, open up to new cultures and become more self-sufficient. But doctors say the everyday stress of having to find a place to sleep, eating strange foods, figuring out train schedules and witnessing poverty can be a catalyst for depression, anxiety or an eating disorder.

Doctors also cite a "magical thinking" phenomenon. "The environment is so

different that there's a subconscious feeling that what they do doesn't really count," says David R. Shlim, medical director of the Jackson Hole Travel and Tropical Medicine clinic in Wyoming. "So they do stuff they don't normally do, such as have more casual sex, ride a bike without a helmet or ride a motorcycle while barefoot."

As young strangers travel together, what Susan McClellan at Tulane University Health Sciences Center calls the "love boat thing" can lead to casual sex. Studies estimate that about 2% to 10% of returning travelers have acquired STDs while abroad.

More troubling, sexual assault is not uncommon during travel: It is one of the top reasons students need medical evacuations during their trips, according to International SOS Assistance Inc., a provider of travel health-insurance policies.

In response, some doctors encourage young women to carry emergency contraceptives in case of sexual assault, though other doctors say that the pills should be used under medical supervision.

Some medical-school students and relief workers get prescriptions for antiretrovirals, pills that can prevent HIV transmission after a potential exposure. Dr. Anderson in Palo Alto also prescribes the medication for women taking extended trips to rural Africa (where HIV rates are high). But the medication is expensive, has serious side effects and needs to be started almost immediately after exposure.

Young people often encounter novel and exotic drugs overseas, and they may be more willing to try these drugs since they carry less of a stigma at home. While most study-abroad programs have long had strict drug policies and pretravel lectures, some schools are enhancing their efforts.

There is little that can be done—

beyond preaching common sense—to prevent the No. 1 causes of death and injury during travel: motor-vehicle accidents and drownings. But there are many steps kids and parents can take to prevent health problems abroad.

First, check with your insurance company to make sure coverage applies while you are overseas. You can take out extra insurance from companies such as International SOS (www.internationalsos.com) or Medjet Assistance (www.medjetassistance.com) to cover emergency medical evacuations. Also, check with a local U.S. embassy to see where its staff gets medical care. International SOS operates clinics staffed by Western-trained

doctors. IJET Travel Risk Management (www.ijet.com) sells country reports that detail safety and health issues and gives information on the best hospitals and clinics.

Young adults and their parents should honestly evaluate their mental health, the stresses they could face, and the support and medication available at their destination. They should also set up an e-mail and phone-support system with friends and family before they leave, so they have a familiar person to turn to. Check with family doctors, travel specialists or student health services to see if they do e-mail consultations. Many doctors now answer e-mail from patients, often without an extra fee. ■

Andrea Petersen is a staff reporter of The Wall Street Journal



HOW DO I SAY
 Condom
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 preservativo
 baoxian tao
 ouszer
 gumi
 chapeaux americains
 kapotes

SEX &

You will be surprised by the situations you find yourself in overseas. During the process of cultural adjustment, normal boundaries, sense of self and emotions are turned upside down. To be sexual and stay healthy, you need to know relevant vocabulary, host country norms and how to assert yourself regarding safer sex.

WHY DO STUDENTS TAKE RISKS

vulnerability + self esteem + language barriers
 cultural adjustment + "not me" syndrome
 loneliness + freedom + confidence + love
 "tourist" syndrome + sexual orientation

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW

how to say and find drugstore
 how to say and find gynecologist
 stereotypes about host nationals
 stereotypes about the U.S.
 whom to seek for help/advice
 relationship patterns/norms
 cultural dynamics
 legal issues

Michelle Cumming
 Global Campus
 University of Minnesota

NOT WORTH THE RISK

DOING DRUGS ABROAD IS A BAD IDEA

From Northern Illinois University's
Handbook for Foreign Study

“More than 1,800 American citizens are in jails abroad on charges of using, possessing, or trafficking in illegal drugs. In many countries, local laws make no distinction between soft and hard drugs—from marijuana and hashish to cocaine and heroin—in arresting, detaining, and sentencing Americans on drug-related charges. Nor do they take quantity into consideration. Local pushers, often in the service of police or customs officials, increase their profits by informing on unsuspecting buyers. Carefully organized busts in private residences and public facilities occur legally without search warrants and are common in many countries.”

Penalties are severe in many countries, and pre-trial detention ranges from six to twelve months (in Mexico it can be 6-12 months, in France 4 months, in Spain and Italy, usually one year). The possibility exists of abuse at the time of arrest, confiscation of personal property, degrading or inhumane treatment and, not infrequently, extortion by prison officials. Bail is not acceptable in most countries in drug trafficking cases.

“U.S. laws do not protect Americans abroad who violate foreign laws.

Americans must understand that once overseas they are subject to the same penalties for drug violations as the nationals of the country in which they may be arrested. There are no U.S. government funds for bail, legal fees, or other expenses of an indigent American in jail abroad. The role of U.S. consular officers is limited.”

Getting in touch with an American embassy official may be extremely difficult in the outlying areas of most countries. Those arrested may spend a good deal of time in jail before the consulate is even informed or hears about the arrest through the grapevine. American consulates CANNOT pay for defense costs, loan money, provide bail or counsel, or intervene in the arrest procedures or legal processes. The consulate CAN contact family or friends at the request and expense of the arrested individual, provide lists of reliable local lawyers, doctors and translators whose services MUST be paid for by the traveler's own funds. They can make periodic visits and attempt to insure equal treatment under foreign laws. This is true of all offenses committed overseas.

Consular officials cannot prevent delays by law enforcement officials in some countries in notifying embassy and/or consular officials of the arrest of U.S. citizens nor can they prevent unusually long delays in bringing U.S. citizens to trial. Besides what consulates are officially prohibited from doing, they may not be too interested personally in disturbing good working relations with local officials for the sake of one more American busted for illegal drug use.

Those arrested, sometimes innocent people who look like potential drug users, may be subject to physical abuse by authorities. Chances are that jail diets will be not better than subsistence level. Persons held in jail will swelter in the summer, freeze in the winter and get no physical exercise. Mail censorship and/or tampering coupled with language barriers between them and fellow prisoners may cause extreme depression, psychological abuse and isolation and acute awareness of helplessness and hopelessness.

It is essential that all prospective travelers take note of the following before going abroad:

- Foreign governments are not more tolerant of drug use, nor are they more permissive in their drug laws and law enforcement than in the U.S.

On the contrary, most countries are much stricter, and their judicial/penal systems differ greatly from the U.S. Few foreign countries provide a jury trial.

- Pre-trial detention, which may involve solitary confinement for months in primitive conditions, is the rule rather than the exception.
- Penalties for possession or trafficking in any kind of soft or hard drugs range from 2 to 10 years and include a heavy fine in many countries. In a few countries, such as Turkey, Algeria, and Iran, convictions can lead to the death penalty!
- Prosecution of offenders is being intensified abroad. Arrests are being made everywhere within the territorial jurisdiction of a country, including territorial waters and air space, as well as the transit areas of international airports. There are no free ports for drug offenses.

No one takes his legal system with him when he travels. Overseas, “innocent until proven guilty” might be an unheard-of assumption. More often than not, the operative presumption is guilty until proven innocent. In many foreign countries, it is perfectly legal to be searched and arrested without probable cause, detained without being informed of charges and tried without a jury. Bail and access to free counsel may not be a part of the local legal system whereas self-incrimination may be.

In 1978 there were over 1,000 Americans in jails abroad learning firsthand about the severity of the laws of foreign governments against drug trafficking. In addition to the pre-trial detention mentioned earlier, conviction has brought verdicts of guilty, sentences from 6 to 10 years at hard labor and fines. ■

Prepared by the University of Michigan International Center based on a Department of State publication and other research

BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY

INSURE A GREAT TRIP

Does your study abroad program include health insurance and/or the International Student Identity Card with the program fees? Do they offer insurance for an additional fee? If so, does it include medical evacuation and repatriation of remains?

You should also check with your present insurance carrier. Do they cover you while abroad? How are claims handled and paid? If you decide to purchase additional insurance you should discuss with your family continuation of coverage of your present policy to avoid complications for pre-existing conditions.

Most U.S. policies do not include medical evacuation or repatriation of remains. If you are satisfied with your coverage but you wish to also include these benefits, you can get them by purchasing the International Student Identity Card. Ask the Study Abroad Advisor how to purchase this card.

If you need to purchase additional insurance, listed below are a number of insurance carriers, which offer policies for study abroad. Drake University does not endorse any of these carriers. This list is meant to be for reference only and it is by no means comprehensive.

Associated Insurance Plans International, Inc. (AIP)

1301 S. Wolf Road, Suite 203
Prospect Heights, IL 60070
P.O. Box T, Wheeling, IL 60090
office@AIP.com

Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) a division of AIFS

River Plaza, 9 West Broad Street
Stamford, CT 06902-3788
Ray Maki
tel: 800.303.8120 ext. 45441
www.AIFS.com
(click US residents, then Insurance)

Global Insurance Benefits

Ted Person, CMI Insurance Specialist
1447 York Rd. Suite 400
Lutherville, MD 21093
tel: 410.583.2595

The Harbour Group

1800 Michael Faraday Drive, #201
Reston, VA
tel: 703.733.0952

International SOS Assistance Eight Nishominy Interplex

P.O. Box 11568
Philadelphia, PA 19116
tel: 800.767.1403 or 215.244.1500
scholastic@intsos.com

MEDEX Assistance Corporation

P.O. Box 5375
Timonium, MD 210945
tel: 800.537.2029 or 410.453.6300
info@medexassist.com

OMA Limited Student Health Insurance

26 Quincy Avenue
Braintree, MA 02184
tel: 800.767.0169
omalimited@aol.com

PENTECO

1320 19th St. NW Suite 420
Washington D.C. 20036
tel: 800.247.5575 or 202.347.5575

Rust and Associates

508 Kellogg
Ames, Iowa 50010
tel: 800.336.0747
Info@rustames.com
Insurer for Drake University students
(domestic and international)

Seabury & Smith

Special Study Abroad Policy:
Medchoice International
1255 23rd Street, NW #300
Washington, DC 20037
tel: 202.457.6824
tel: 800.331.3047

Student Benefits International

202 South 4th Street, P.O. Box 161
Fairfield, IA 52556
tel: 800.747.8869
boverall@studentbenefits
international.org
www.studentbenefitsinternational.
org

Wallach & Company, Inc.

107 W. Federal Street
Middleburg, VA 20118-0480
tel: 800.237.6615

Reliance National

77 Water Street, New York, NY
10005
tel: 212.858.6602

updated 11/08

AN ADVENTURE IN AMERICAN VALUES

If you asked most Americans what the cultural values in the U.S. are, you might get some blank stares or a statement of some basic beliefs. The question may seem simple, but the answer is quite complex. In a society as highly diversified as the U.S., there is likely to be a multitude of answers.

American culture has been enriched by the value and belief systems of every part of the world. Consequently, it would be impossible to be comprehensive in this article. Nevertheless, I will try to be comprehensible by discussing a few selected values I believe are at the core of the American value system.

Whether you call it individual freedom, individualism, or independence, it is the cornerstone of American values.

FREEDOM

The one value that nearly every American would agree upon is individual freedom. Whether you call it individual freedom, individualism, or independence, it is the cornerstone of American values. It permeates every aspect of our society. Let's look at a few examples.

This concept of an individual's having control over their own destiny influenced the type of government we established and individual rights are guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution, the supreme law of the land. These rights are so protected in our judicial system that, even though Americans may complain that criminals sometimes "get away with murder," most people believe it is better to free a few guilty persons than to imprison one person

who is innocent.

While our economic system may be dominated by large corporations, the majority of American businesses are small and many are owned by an individual or family. It is part of the American dream to "be your own boss," and being an entrepreneur is one of the most appealing ways to improve one's economic future.

EDUCATION

Education is often regarded as the key to opportunity, including financial security. Americans take a pragmatic approach to learning, so what one learns outside the classroom through internships, extracurricular activities and the like is often considered as important as what is learned in the classroom. Consequently, lifelong learning is valued, resulting in many adult and continuing education programs.

Americans have many choices. In school, they decide their major field of study, sometimes with and sometimes without their parents' influence, and students even get to select some of their courses. These "electives" often confuse foreign students who are used to a more rigid curriculum.

The belief that Americans should "be all that you can be" emanates from our Protestant heritage. Since the majority of the early settlers were Protestant, they believed that they had a responsibility to improve themselves, to be the best that they could, to develop their talents and to help their neighbors. These convictions have not only influenced our educational system, but are often reflected in U.S. foreign policy. What some might consider meddling in other peoples' affairs, other believe is merely

fulfilling a moral obligation.

FAMILY

Another aspect of American society that may bewilder non-Americans is the family. The nuclear family structure (parents and children) is so alien to most cultures in the world that it is often misunderstood. The main purpose of the American family is to bring about the happiness of each individual family member. The traditional family values do include love and respect for parents, as well as all members of the family. However, the emphasis on the individual and their right to happiness can be confusing. It allows children to disagree, even argue with their parents. While in most other cultures such action would be a sign of disrespect and a lack of love, that is not the case in the U.S. It is simply a part of developing one's independence.

Many foreign students are welcomed by host families, who invite students into their homes for dinner or to join in family activities. Frequently the students are told to "make themselves at home" and, at least at times, appear to be "left alone." It certainly is nice to be treated as an honored guest in someone's home, but one of the highest compliments that an American can give a foreign guest is to treat them like a member of the family, which means to give them the "freedom of the house" to do what they want, to "raid the refrigerator" on their own, or to have some quiet time alone.

INDIVIDUALISM

Privacy is also important to Americans. The notion of individual privacy may also make it difficult to make friends in the U.S. Because Americans respect one's privacy, they may not go much beyond a friendly "hello" to a foreign student. Ironically, it is usually the foreigner who must be more assertive if a friendship is to develop.

The rugged individualism valued by most Americans stems from our frontier heritage. For much of our country's history, there was a frontier.

That experience greatly influenced American attitudes. Early settlers had to be self-sufficient. That forced them to be inventive. Their success gave them an optimism about the future, a belief that problems could be solved. This positive spirit enables Americans to take risks in many areas where others might only dream, resulting in tremendous advances in technology, health and science.

The American frontier also created our heroes, the self-reliant, strong-willed, confident individual who preferred action to words and always tried to treat others fairly. Many of these characteristics are represented by the myth of the American cowboy, and the more modern versions personified by some of the John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, and Sylvester Stallone movie characters. We can even look to future centuries and admire similar qualities in heroes of the Star Trek and Star Wars series.

CONSERVATION

In addition to such basic American values as individual freedom, self-reliance, equality of opportunity, hard work, material wealth, and competition, we see a trend toward conservation, with the emphasis on recycling and preserving the environment, and a greater sensitivity to cooperation on a more global scale.

No matter what changes the next century brings or whether you agree with American values, the opportunity to study in the U.S. and to observe Americans first hand is an experience well worth the effort. Be careful not to be ethno-centric, but to evaluate a culture by its own standards. And be aware that you will help shape American attitudes, even as they influence you. I wish you success in this grand adventure. ■

Thomas E. Grouling, Ph.D. Assistant Director,
International Center, Drake University, Des
Moines, Iowa

NON-AMERICANS TEND TO BELIEVE WE ARE

Outgoing, friendly & informal
Loud, rude, boastful, immature
Hardworking and always in a hurry
Extravagant & wasteful
Confident we have all the answers
Lacking in class consciousness
Disrespectful of authority
Racially prejudiced
Ignorant of other cultures &
languages
Wealthy & generous

CULTURAL SHOCK

Most of what you will read is about the wonderful, beautiful, and exciting aspects of life in a new country. What is often ignored is that problems exist which must be dealt with every time you enter a new culture and make cultural adjustments.

Our sense of security is tied to the known, what is normal to us. Take away the known—familiar food, language, habits, behavioral patterns—and you produce insecurity, emotional ups and downs and general feelings of depression. This is known as cultural shock. What is really important to understand in dealing with culture shock is to realize you will experience it in greater and lesser degrees. As the foreign environment becomes more and more familiar to you and you become more secure in your new environment, culture shock will eventually disappear.

The point to be made in all of this is that you are not going to Utopia. The foreign country you will be living in may look exciting and beautiful and perfect as you look at pictures and prepare for your trip, but the simple fact is that they are not perfect. It may rain a lot in Denmark, you may eat a lot of potatoes and sauerkraut in Austria, the French people may at times be very rude to foreigners, British food may be boring and overcooked, etc. The people you will meet in these places will be unfriendly. Not everything will go the way you have planned and sometimes a number of things will go wrong all at the same time and you will get depressed and ask yourself, “Why did I

come?”

Relax, stick it out, don’t panic and things WILL get better. On a bad day, don’t write home and get your family or friends upset. By the time you write to them again, you may feel entirely different. During your initial few weeks away, your emotional situation will level out, and everything will seem more normal. In fact, by the time you come home you may actually find that your “adopted lifestyle” has become so normal that when you do come home you will go through another kind of culture shock as you once again have to get used to your native lifestyle.

BE FLEXIBLE

There are several things to be considered regarding the process of getting used to a new culture. First, for those of you who will be living with a family, you should be prepared for the fact that family life is different abroad than it is here. Many more traditional habits and courtesies are still generally observed which have, over the period of the last ten to twenty years, disappeared from our own lives. Much more is practiced in the way of politeness (shaking of hands, never walking into a room where people are gathered without saying “good morning” or “good evening,” asking after a person’s health, bringing flowers for someone’s birthday, etc.).

Second, don’t go to Europe with misconceptions! Be prepared to find everything quite different from what you expected. For example, courses and methods of teaching are different. There are no “campuses” as we know

them in America. They have been tried and mostly found to be unsatisfactory. The foreign student does not focus all his/her social life on his/her own age group. Most commute or return home to family on weekends. Family ties are much stronger and there is a feeling that campuses isolate the student from “real life” (which he/she is striving to rejoin as soon as possible). For that reason, there are few equivalents to the “Student Union” beyond modest offices for student affairs and sorts. You will find that the town is your campus, the café is your student union.

Go abroad informed about America; be prepared to answer questions about American life and politics. But remember that friendships are not as facile as in the U.S. (More about this later.) But after some time and long exchanges, when friendships are formed, you will find them to be much longer-lasting relationships. You must exhibit tact and be adaptable, since Europeans tend to be more conservative.

So, be “flexible.” Have no rigid preconceptions of what you will find. Be ready to adapt to another civilization. You will enjoy the experience. The overseas centers and administrators will be most happy to help you with information and orientation. They have an “open door” policy and you can see them anytime, whenever you need guidance and counsel.

SOCIAL ROLES

Along with the more traditional, old-world type of lifestyle and behavior, another point should be made. Social

AND ADJUSTMENT

Adapted from Northern Illinois University's Handbook for Foreign Study

roles have not gone through the same types of changes to the same extent that have occurred in America. In many countries, women are still viewed in a more traditional manner. Therefore, some of the habits of the more "liberated" American woman may get different reactions than they do at home. While this does vary from country to country, there are a few points which can be mentioned which will be of some help in keeping you safe and happy.

- **Don't take any foolish risks**—just as many American cities are not safe for the unescorted female at night, the same holds true in foreign countries. There are certain places in most cities that an unescorted female (or even small groups of females) should not go at night. In the "red light districts" of some cities, young women may be viewed in the same fashion as the permanent residents.
- **Dress sensibly while abroad.** Unless at resorts, do not wear short shorts and halter tops on the streets. Observe what the natives wear and how they dress. When walking on city streets, avert your eyes when male approach. You will notice that foreign women always avoid direct eye contact on the street. Appearing immodestly dressed and being too casual and friendly may be mistaken by some foreign men as an invitation to make a pass at you. On the other hand, you may also be the target of ridicule and you may receive a good stern lecture about the lack of American morals.
- **Most foreign men** are not used to the same type of relationship common

between American men and women of college age. Quite often the "buddy" relationship is non-existent (although this is much more true in the south of Europe and Latin American countries). You will want to keep this in mind as you "make friends with the natives" as it may affect the types of relationships you develop. As mentioned earlier, habits are still much more traditional, but nonetheless, some sensitivity is necessary for all students in all countries. We don't want you to become suspicious, cold or fearful. But understand that a little restraint may be in order in terms of your dealings with foreign strangers until you get used to functioning within their system.

- **For the males**, we also have a word of advice. You may, for the first time in your life, be confronted with the phenomena of the "streetwalker." Prostitutes, where they exist, are quite bold. They will not hesitate to approach a single young man. There is one danger in being approached by prostitutes which you many not have considered—the chance for theft. These women are, more often than not, very adept pickpockets. Be forewarned!

Have your antennae out at all times. Be sensitive to the new cultural cues you will be receiving, try to be adaptable and flexible. Keep an open mind. Remember that YOU are the "stranger" and that the burden of adaptation is on you, not on the natives you will encounter. Your total experience abroad will

depend upon you, who you are, your background, your personality. Each of you will have a different experience because no two people are alike. You will get out of your experience as much as you put into it.

But the world has beggars, pick pockets and scam artists. Living in a new environment requires you to know how to handle situations you may not encounter at home.

RE-ENTRY ADJUSTMENT

It is normal when you return home to feel depressed, feel that things were better abroad, have a burning desire to return as soon as possible, and feel that your family and friends are not really interested in hearing about your experiences abroad. You may find that they are more interested in telling you what happened in their lives while you were away. Some students have told us they were actually physically ill when they returned home. Others have commented on the confusion they felt by being bombarded by the media and wealth of merchandise in the stores. They had adapted to a simpler lifestyle and had to re-adjust to the American way of life. Rest assured that you will feel this way when you return home.

To help you through this adjustment, you need to use your new knowledge and cultural awareness to educate and inform others. Get involved with international students on campus, talk to others interested in studying abroad, do presentations in the community—to church groups, clubs and organizations. ■

COMMUNICATING CULTURE

It's all set; you're going!

Whether you are going on that dream trip come true or on an assignment (either a short visit or an extended stay abroad), you will have mixed feelings about that journey to another land.

Opportunities for enriching experiences, expanding horizons, and continuing self-development are alluring. However, being a guest in another culture also carries a responsibility. In a very real sense you will be representing your country as well as yourself. You may be the American that many people will come to know. Their attitudes and opinions about the United States will be influenced by how you react to them and their culture. Recognizing this, you may be concerned about your ability to project a positive image, to cope with change, and to avoid embarrassment.

Very real, perhaps, is the feeling of fear: fear of the unknown. (What will it be like? Will I be able to adjust? I've heard stories about how "strange" everything is.) To be sure, there are challenges in adjusting to a new environment. But you are about to have one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. Your new insights into life and your broadened understanding of other people can be invaluable to you

throughout your life.

This is not intended to teach you about a specific culture. Rather, it will help you see that much of what you feel and are is largely due to your American culture, and that the world does not revolve around your system of values, beliefs, and attitudes.

As you apply this knowledge to your "new" cultural experience, you will be making the first vital steps in making that experience both positive and memorable.

WHICH IS BETTER?

As you enter a new environment, you will encounter many variations in language, food and dress, customs, religion, and basic attitudes.

People in each culture have unique traits. And it is normal for them to feel that their particular way of doing things is better than any other. (This is called ethnocentrism.) Perhaps when you see things done differently, you will catch yourself thinking, "Back home we know how to do it right." If you then ask yourself, "But why is it right?" you will probably be forced to say, "I don't know; it's just better." This is a normal reaction to your own upbringing.

The fact that other people perceive the world differently may be very unnerving to those who have thought little about it. Getting along in another culture will be easier when you understand that others' traits and attitudes are not necessarily right or wrong, better or worse—they are just be different.

UNDERSTAND YOURSELF

Knowledge, preparation and empathy are keys to a successful intercultural experience. No doubt you have already read and researched much about where you are going and about "them." This preparation cannot be minimized. However, as you begin to understand them, you also need to understand YOU. When you recognize that you are a product of your own culture, you will find the behaviors, attitudes, values, and beliefs of others more acceptable, and your adjustment will be easier.

Living and communicating with different people will demand that you understand both your own cultural perspective and theirs. ■

“ ”

BETTER TO KNOW A LITTLE BIT OF THE WORLD REMARKABLY WELL THAN TO KNOW A GREAT PART OF THE WORLD REMARKABLY LITTLE.

—THOMAS HARDY

Cross–Cultural Issues

Culture affects our lives—our sense of time, our beliefs, our relationships with nature, work, and other people. Often we are not aware of how “American” we are. We are shocked to find that our assumptions, values, behaviors and perspectives, which seem perfectly normal and natural at home, do not necessarily apply abroad. It is normal for those living in another country to feel as if they are totally out of their realm or at least mildly out of place. This is part of culture shock and is to be expected. Read and learn about culture shock to help you prepare for it.

As representatives of the United States, you will be expected to be knowledgeable about many aspects of American history and current affairs as part of your interaction with host nationals. It is also important to understand that what you observe about your host culture will be more meaningful if you have a basis for comparison.

Not only will you be interacting with host nationals, but for many of you, interacting with American peers will be a part of your program. Your skills in becoming part of a group of Americans, learning the group dynamics, coping with peer pressure and knowing how to cooperate within a group will be important to your psychological well-being and contribute to the success of your study abroad experience.

Keep in mind that you’re a guest of the country in which you will be living. Think about how you like to be treated when you are the host. What are your expectations for your guests?

SKILLS AND TRAITS HELPFUL TO ADAPTING

- Sense of humor
- Sensitivity and tolerance for difference
- Verbal and non-verbal communication skills
- Ability to cope
- Ability to live with disappointment, homesickness and frustration
- Self-reflection
- Ability to live with failure

RESOURCES

InterActs (Intercultural Press)

George W. Renwick, Editor

“A series of books analyzing how Americans and nationals of other countries see and do things differently and how these differences affect relationships.”

Culture Shock (Routledge Chapman & Hall)

Adrian Furnham & Stephen Bochner

“The first comprehensive study of adjustment experience of tourists, travelers and sojourners.”

On Being Foreign—Culture Shock in Short Fiction (Intercultural Press)

Tom Lewis & Robert Jungman, Editors

“This international anthology provides insights into culture shock and cross cultural adjustments through the eyes of fictional characters from twenty short stories.” ■

adapted from NAFSA’S Guide to Education Abroad and Ellen Summerfield’s Predeparture and Reentry

HOW WILL YOU RESPOND TO YOUR NEW ENVIRONMENT?

FEELINGS

Sadness
Anger
Frustration
Anxiety
Loneliness
Fatigue
Disbelief
Uneasiness
Helplessness
Shock
Yearning
Hopelessness
Alienation
Numbness
Emptiness
Apathy
Discouragement
Resentfulness
Shakiness
Fear
Exasperation
Confusion
Animosity

PHYSICAL SENSATIONS

Tightness in chest and throat
Oversensitivity to noise
Elevated heart rate
Weakness in muscles
Hollowness in stomach
Shortness of breath
Lack of breath and energy
Dry mouth
Disorientation
Knotted stomach

BEHAVIORS

Loss of appetite
Dream disturbances
Restlessness
Repetition of specific activities
Exaggerated responses
Forgetfulness
Reluctance to be alone
Slowing of physical responses/action

A Reader's Guide to Cross-Cultural Learning

learn before you leave

A Drake returnee from Australia said that people were always pleased and impressed that she knew things about their country that maybe they didn't know. Another returnee from Germany recommended learning at least the names—and possibly titles of important works—of the country's most famous artists, composers, and writers, even if you don't have the time or opportunity to view, hear or read the works. She said that everyone in Europe (where she traveled fairly widely), and especially Germans, had at least rudimentary awareness of, and rather fierce pride in, his/her culture's accomplishments; she felt like a "a total idiot" when people even in casual conversations mentioned a name that she didn't recognize.

The US Department of State now has a system of consular information sheets for every country of the world. The sheet lists info such as locations of embassies and consulates, unusual currency and entry regulations, health conditions, and other useful information. To receive sheets by mail, send stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Citizens Emergency Center, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Room 4811, N.S., US Department of State, Washington, D.C.

COUNTRY OR REGIONAL READING

Modern Language professors, former travelers to the area and international students at Drake are good people to ask for specific titles. One recommended was the Harvard University series *Let's Go* (such as *Let's Go, Europe*); Lonely Planet Publications (510.893.8563) has an *On a Shoestring* series, including at least 4 for Europe; and the University of California, Berkeley, puts out an *On the Loose* series, with eight books along the lines of *On the Loose in eastern Europe*.

Add History and Area Studies professor as good resources for reading materials about your destination. ■

SUGGESTED TRAVEL GUIDEBOOKS

(Study Abroad Listserv responses)

- Lonely Planet
- Frommers
- Rough Guide
- Let's Go
- Fodor's UnOfficial Guide to Study Abroad
- Culture Shock! series
- Rick Steves: Europe Through the Back Door
- First-Time Europe by Louis CasaBianca

www.nationalgeographic.com/travel

www.lonelyplanet.com

www.frommers.com

www.ricksteves.com

www.letsgo.com

www.travel.roughguides.com

"I still find the most helpful guides are those on the Barnes & Noble shelves—mostly, the *Let's Go* series, the Lonely Planet series, and even the *Frommer's* guides. While *Frommers* and *Fodor's* are priced higher in the areas of hotels and restaurants, I find that they give very specific info on museum opening times and prices, and give good info on specially guided tours, the best times to visit historical sites, etc. Also the guidebooks usually have 2-3 pages full of web sites targeted to budget travel guides."

"...All of these can be bought online or you might be able to purchase them from a study abroad returnee."

"I swear by the Lonely Planet guide book series. I recommend that to the students, but recommend that they go look at guidebooks to determine which one fits in with their personalities and goals for the tour. If the tour is geared specifically towards a particular aspect of that country, (such as bird watching in Costa Rica), they would need a field guide as a supplement. But as far as food, lodging, things to do, places to go off the beaten track, Lonely Planet has never let me down."

A Quiz of English Colloquialisms

There's more between England and the U.S. than the Atlantic Ocean

1. WHAT IS A SHORT?

- a. A term used in cricket
- b. An ugly guy
- c. A measure of liquor
- d. A yuppie

2. WHAT ARE YOUR PLIMSOLLS?

- a. Your tennis shoes
- b. Your socks
- c. Your sandals
- d. Your bare feet

3. WHAT IS A BUTTY?

- a. A commode
- b. A sandwich
- c. A younger brother
- d. A mailman

4. WHAT DOES "WONKY" MEAN?

- a. Wobbly
- b. Cheap
- c. Hung over
- d. Angry

5. IF YOU ARE KNACKERED, YOU ARE

- a. Worn out
- b. Drunk
- c. Hung over
- d. Angry

6. WHAT IS CORONATION STREET?

- a. The street where Buckingham Palace is
- b. The street in London with the best student Pubs
- c. A new wave group
- d. A popular soap opera

7. WHAT IS A YORKSHIRE PUDDING?

- a. A dessert
- b. A country yokel
- c. An accompaniment to roast beef
- d. A potato from the dales of Yorkshire

8. WHAT IS A TROLLEY?

- a. A cablecar
- b. A cart in the supermarket
- c. A guy with long hair
- d. A coffee percolator

9. WHAT ARE YOU DOING IF YOU ARE KNOCKING UP?

- a. Making someone pregnant
- b. Hitting at tennis
- c. Waking someone up in the morning
- d. Both b and c

10. IF SOMETHING IS NICKED, IT IS

- a. Bought cheaply
- b. Stolen
- c. Made from a kit
- d. Inherited

11. WHAT IS A STONE?

- a. A mass of rock
- b. Someone who smokes dope
- c. A unit of weight
- d. Both a and c

12. WHAT IS A DUSTBIN MAN?

- a. A man who is shabby
- b. A male bum
- c. A garbage collector
- d. Both a and b

1: C 2: A 3: B 4: A 5: A 6: D 7: C 8: B 9: D 10: B 11: D 12: C

SPEAK UP! YOUR SAFETY DEPENDS ON IT

adapted from ASIRT-Association for Safe International Road Travel

SPEAK UP

- Road safety abroad requires you to speak up, ask questions, and say STOP if you are concerned about your personal safety.
- You are your own best advocate. No one will speak up for you. Just do it!
- Learn the road safety and emergency language of your host country.
- If communication is difficult, enlist the communication assistance of a willing native speaker.
- Ask for safest modes of transportation.
- Ask for safest routes to a destination.
- As a pedestrian, inquire about traffic patterns and driver behaviors.
- Carry with you emergency phone numbers and addresses.
- When renting a car, ask specific questions about the car's safety features.

TRAVEL SAFE, TRAVEL SMART

- Choose the safest form of transportation in each country
- Avoid night travel in countries with poor safety records and/or mountainous terrain

WALK SAFE

- Understand "road culture"
- Be aware of traffic patterns
- Be alert to reckless driver behaviors

RIDE SAFE

When traveling by bus or taxi

- Avoid overcrowded buses and minivans
 - Be alert for reckless driving
 - Insist that the driver be responsible or get off at the first possible opportunity
 - Report reckless driving to bus or taxi company, American Embassy and ASIRT
 - Avoid motorcycle travel
 - Insist upon a helmet or bring your own
 - Avoid hitchhiking
- Travel Safe, Travel Smart

WORLDWIDE ROAD CAUTIONS

- Animal drawn traffic sharing the roads
- Deteriorating, winding, narrow roads
- Hairpin curves with no guardrails
- No traffic signals
- Poor/no lighting
- Unexpected animal crossings
- Aggressive driving
- Disregard for pedestrian safety
- Disregard for traffic laws
- Driving while intoxicated
- Failure to use headlights at night
- Little or no driver training
- Poorly maintained vehicles
- Overcrowded vehicles ■

GLOBAL ROAD TOLL FACT SHEET

- 1.7 million people die and 30 million more are injured annually on roads worldwide
- Road crashes are the single greatest cause of premature death and injury for men ages 15-45
- Road crashes are the 5th leading cause of death for women
- 20% of fatal accidents in developing countries involve children under the age of 15
- Road crashes will soon become the third greatest health burden worldwide
- Over 80% of all road deaths and serious injuries occur in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin American and the Middle East
- Over 40% of the crashes occur in countries in Asian-Pacific
- Road crashes cost developing countries 100 billion U.S. dollars annually

DID YOU KNOW?

- Americans take almost 600 million trips abroad each year
- 6,000 American die annually on foreign soil
- Motor vehicle accidents are a leading cause of death and serious injury for the traveler
- More Americans travel to developing countries each year
- Study abroad programs in developing countries are attracting an increasing number of young Americans
- Annual deaths and serious injuries from road traffic accidents in developing countries are 20 to 70 times as high as equivalent rates in developed countries
- Travel accidents in developing countries are on the increase

GOOD NEWS

Accidents are predictable and preventable

RESOURCES

Visit www.asirt.org before you travel

OH, THE PLACES WE GO!

Keep these safety tips in mind wherever you go.

IN PUBLIC PLACES

- Be aware of your surroundings. Usually people who are attacked have not been paying attention.
- Convey confidence through body language.
- Follow your intuition and trust your instincts.
- When in an unfamiliar place, get complete directions before driving.
- If you get lost, find a police, fire or service station.

ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- Arrive at the departing point no more than five minutes before scheduled departure.
- Sit near the driver or conductor, in a single or outside seat. Stay alert and move if someone bothers you. If followed, head toward a populated, well-lighted area.
- Plan ahead. Notice which places are open at your stop. Run there for help if you are followed.

ON THE STREET

- Stay in well-lighted areas and walk mid-point between curbs and buildings, away from alleys, entries and bushes.
- Carry only necessary credit cards and money.
- Walk with someone whenever possible.
- Do not stop to give directions or information to strangers.
- Never hitchhike.
- If your bag is snatched, don't fight. Report the incident.
- Walk facing traffic.
- Carry a personal alarm attached to your purse or keys.
- Check the map before you leave.

IN YOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

- Keep doors locked at all times. Use the peephole.

- Keep an accurate inventory of your possessions.
- If you return to your residence and suspect it has been illegally entered, do not enter. Call the police.
- Draw curtains after dark. Never dress in front of a window.
- The sight of valuables may tempt a burglar.
- Have a telephone beside your bed. Know how to call for help.

WHILE DRIVING

- Use caution when entering or leaving a vehicle.
- Keep windows up, doors locked and valuables out of sight.
- Before entering, check front and back seats to see if anyone is hiding. Make sure the dome light is operating.
- Open windows just enough for ventilation or to ask for directions, but not enough so that someone could put a hand in.
- Intersections and stop lights are common places for would-be attackers. Keep your car in gear.
- If you have car trouble, raise the hood and stay in the car with doors locked. If strangers stop, ask them to report your predicament to the police but do not encourage assistance.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Don't mark your key chain with your name or address.
- Bump-and-rob scams are minor rear-end collisions staged to assault a lone driver. If the driver and/or passengers in the other vehicle look suspicious and you feel you are in danger, do not get out. Drive to a police or fire station.

From Keep Safe, a personal safety program from Kappa Kappa Gamma. For more information contact Sorority Headquarters.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL SAFETY INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Office of the Spokesman
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Washington, DC February 28, 2005



As the time approaches for spring or summer breaks, many college students

are getting ready for that anticipated trip abroad. Most will have a safe and enjoyable adventure, but for some the trip will become a nightmare.

A number of vacations are ruined by one or more of the following: drugs, alcohol, disorderly behavior, and preventable accidents.

Each year, more than 2,500 American citizens are arrested abroad—about half on narcotics charges, including possession of small amounts of illegal substances. A drug that is legal in one country may not be in a neighboring nation. Some young people are victimized because they are unaware of the laws, customs, or standards of the country they are visiting.

Besides drugs, alcohol can also cause trouble for U.S. citizens traveling abroad. Students have been arrested for being intoxicated in public areas, for underage drinking, and for drunk driving. Disorderly or reckless behavior is to be avoided. In many countries, conduct that would not result in an arrest in the United States may constitute a violation of local law.

Some young Americans go abroad

assuming local authorities will overlook such conduct, believing that they are immune from prosecution in foreign countries because they are American citizens. The truth is that Americans are expected to obey all of the laws of the countries they visit, and those who break these laws could face severe penalties, including prison sentences.

Being arrested is not the only misfortune that can occur on a foreign vacation. Young Americans have suffered injury or even death from automobile accidents, drowning, and falls, in addition to other mishaps. While these accidents are sometimes chance occurrences, many are caused by alcohol or drug abuse. Sadly, other Americans have been sexually assaulted or robbed because they have found themselves in unfamiliar locales or are incapable of exercising prudent judgment while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Other hidden safety issues are of major concern as well. Because standards of security, safety and supervision are not the same in many countries as they are in the U.S., many young persons have died after automobile accidents, after falls from balconies or into open ditches, by drowning in the ocean as well as in hotel pools, and in water-sports mishaps, among others.

In some countries, the water sports industry is not carefully regulated. Unlicensed operators have been linked to assaults, and a number of Americans have been killed or injured by the improper use of jet-skis and other personal watercraft. Although it is crucial that young Americans be aware of these safety risks as they are enjoying their time abroad, it is also

important to remember that prudent behavior may help minimize these risks.

Young Americans traveling abroad should remember that the use of drugs or alcohol or engaging in reckless behavior while in another country can do more than ruin their vacation; it can land them in a foreign jail, cause them to suffer physical harm, or worse. Common sense should prevail in any activities young Americans engage in so that safety hazards may be minimized. It is possible to have a safe and fun trip if risky behavior is avoided and familiarity is attained with the basic laws and customs of the country that is planned on being visited.

In addition, even if a passport is not required to visit a foreign country, U.S. Immigration requires that U.S. citizenship and identity must be proved to re-enter the United States. A U.S. passport is the best proof of U.S. citizenship.

More information about traveling abroad is available at the Department of State's web site: <http://travel.state.gov/studentinfo.html>.

For further information contact:
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Office of Public Affairs
Press Inquiries: 202.647.1488
Internet address: <http://travel.state.gov>
Public Inquiries: toll free 888.407.4747

RESOURCE

On-line Student Safety Abroad Handbook from the SAFETI Clearinghouse Project at: <http://www.usc.edu/studentabroad> ■

updated 11/08

don't be an easy target

Theft is a crime of opportunity that can happen to anyone at any time regardless of your mode of travel. Travelers' cash and credit cards are tempting targets for thieves or pickpockets. Be alert and take precautions to safeguard your valuables whether you are a frequent flyer or are among those who seldom leave the ground.

- Never leave your luggage unattended, keep it in sight and within reach at all times.
- Never store valuables in checked luggage. Use a small carry-on bag for valuable items and keep it with you.
- Never carry or show large amounts of cash; use travelers checks whenever possible. Don't flaunt expensive jewelry or clothing or luggage, criminals pick them out of a crowd fast.
- Don't dangle a purse by the straps; carry laptops, purses and cameras close to you, especially in crowded areas.
- Do not carry your Social Security number. Carry only one credit card.
- Carry copies of your passport and credit cards.

SAFEGUARDING YOUR LUGGAGE AND ITS CONTENTS

Keep these helpful hints in mind when packing your bags and as you carry

them to and from your destination.

- Remove all old airline destination tags that might confuse baggage handlers.
- When using Sky-Caps, make sure your baggage tags have the correct destination codes and flight information attached. Watch your luggage being placed into the luggage belt system or behind the ticket counter.
- Use sturdy luggage tags that include your baggage identifying information. Use your business address and phone number whenever possible.
- Place a copy of your itinerary and owner information inside your luggage, taped to the inside lid. If the luggage tag and handle comes off, the airlines will open your luggage, read the information and return your luggage.
- Keep a list of the contents of your luggage separate from your luggage and carry-on items. This list could help identify your bags if the need arises.
- Pack your valuables in a carry-on bag that you keep with you at all times.
- Do not ask a stranger to watch your luggage, even for a short period.
- Use caution when placing bags on conveyor belts at terminal screening

stations, try to use the "Buddy" system or wait for crowd to pass.

- Be cautious of people asking to help you carry or lift your luggage.
- When using restrooms, always keep an eye on your property. Crooks will even slip your bags from underneath the stall door. Never use the coat or purse hook on the back of toilet stall doors. Keep property between your feet.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A PICKPOCKET

Don't expect pickpockets to dress like crooks or stand out in a crowd; they want to appear normal. You should watch for teams of two or three people, male or female, who may be:

- Riding escalators or elevators repeatedly in a short period of time.
- Loitering in crowded areas, such as baggage carousels, newsstands or restaurants.
- Changing seats constantly or walking in and out of lines in waiting areas.
- Carrying coats or jackets over their arms.
- Appearing to use their hands, head or eyes to signal others or to "accidentally" bump into people.

If you are bumped or distracted by a stranger, be aware that a pickpocket may be targeting you. ■

U.S. CUSTOMS SERVICE

WHEN YOU RETURN TO THE U.S.

You'll need to declare everything new you're bringing back with you into the country. If you are traveling by air or sea, you may be asked to fill out a Customs declaration form. This form is almost always provided by the airline or cruise ship. You will probably find it easier and faster to fill out your declaration form and clear Customs if you do the following:

- Keep your sales slips! As you read this, you'll understand why this is especially important for international travelers.
- Try to pack the things you'll need to declare separately.
- Read the signs in the Customs area. They contain helpful information about how to clear Customs.

Under U.S. law, Customs inspectors are authorized to examine luggage, cargo, and travelers. Under the search authority granted to Customs by the U.S. Congress, every passenger who crosses a U.S. border may be searched. To stop the flow of illegal drugs and other contraband into our country, we need your cooperation. If you are one of the very few travelers selected for a search, you will be treated in a courteous, professional, and dignified manner. If you are searched and believe that you were not treated in such a manner, or if you have any concerns about the search for any reason, we want to hear from you. Please contact the Executive Director, Passenger Programs.

YOU MUST DECLARE

- Items you purchased and are carrying with you upon return to the United States.
- Items you received as gifts, such as

wedding or birthday presents.

- Items you inherited.
- Items you bought in duty-free shops or on the ship or plane.
- Repairs or alterations to any items you took abroad and then brought back, even if the repairs/alterations were performed free of charge.
- Items you brought home for someone else.
- Items you intend to sell or use in your business.
- Items you acquired (whether purchased or received as gifts) in the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, or in a Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act country (please see section on \$600 exemption for a list of these countries) that are not in your possession when you return.

In other words, if you acquired things in any of these island nations and asked the merchant to send them to you, you must still declare them when you go through Customs. (This differs from the usual procedure for mailed items, which is discussed in the section on Sending Goods to the United States.

You must state on the Customs declaration, in United States currency, what you actually paid for each item. The price must include all taxes. If you did not buy the item yourself—for example, if it is a gift—get an estimate of its fair retail value in the country where you received it. If you bought something on your trip and wore or used it on the trip, it's still dutiable. You must declare the item at the price you paid or, if it was a gift, at its fair market value.

JOINT DECLARATION

Family members who live in the same

home and return together to the United States may combine their personal exemptions. This is called a joint declaration. For example, if Mr. and Mrs. Smith travel overseas and Mrs. Smith brings home a \$600 piece of glassware, and Mr. Smith buys \$200 worth of clothing, they can combine their \$400 exemptions on a joint declaration and not have to pay duty.

REGISTER ITEMS BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE UNITED STATES

If your laptop computer was made in Japan, for instance, you might have to pay duty on it each time you bring it back into the United States, unless you could prove that you owned it before you left on your trip. Documents that fully describe the item—for example, sales receipts, insurance policies, or jeweler's appraisals—are acceptable forms of proof. To make things easier, you can register certain items with Customs before you depart—including watches, cameras, laptop computers, firearms, and tape recorders—as long as they have serial numbers or other unique, permanent markings. Take the items to the nearest Customs Office and request a Certificate of Registration (Customs Form 4457). It shows Customs you had the items with you before leaving the U.S. and all items listed on it will be allowed duty-free entry. Customs inspectors must see the item you are registering in order to certify the certificate of registration. You can register items with Customs at the international airport from which you're departing. Keep the certificate for future trips.

You are urged to visit the U.S. Customs Service website at <http://www.customs.gov/xp/cgov/travel/> for the most current information. ■

TRANSFERRING CREDITS & GRADES

Study abroad credits are considered transfer credits (for complete details see the guidelines in the Drake catalog under "Transfer of Credit"). Drake will accept full transfer credit for courses receiving a grade of "A," "B," or "C" or the equivalent of "P" on a pass-fail system where "P" is specifically designated as indicating a quality of work no lower than a "C" on a conventional grading scale.

Grades earned in courses accepted for transfer credits are not included in the Drake grade point average, but the credits count toward the total number required for graduation. Because of differences in major requirements for the various degrees offered, there can be no assurance that all courses transferred will apply toward the college/school or major requirements of the degree sought by a particular student. Thus it is advised that students obtain prior approval for all possible courses before embarking on their semester abroad.

In other words, GRADES from your study abroad program WILL NOT transfer to your Drake grade point average, only the credits will transfer and appear on your transcript. But you must receive at least a grade of "C" for it to count. A "D" grade does not allow the credit to transfer.

It is VERY IMPORTANT that you maintain full time status (the equivalent of 12 U.S. credits or more) while you are abroad. You must be a full time student to receive scholarship or loan money. The grades you receive may effect your full time status. If you register for 12 U.S. credits and receive a grade of "D" or "F" (see above information about transfer of credit) in a course, then you would fall below the required 12 credits and would be requested to repay the scholarship and /or loan money.

You should complete a course information form before the end of this semester. You put the classes you plan to take while abroad and get approval and how they will be distributed from your advisor or an official in your college/school. The complication for students who plan to direct enroll, is that you will not have your overseas courses confirmed until you get there. This means you need to keep in touch with your advisor to get approval for specific courses if they are different than those you anticipated taking. This is usually done via e-mail. Be sure to either print out the response and keep it, and/or forward it to me to keep in your file.

updated 11/08

FROM A FELLOW DRAKE STUDENT

THE WORLD IS NOT AS SCARY

as the media and the politicians make it out to be. Remember that media goes for ratings and bad news tends to bring in viewers. Politicians... well...I don't know what to say about them. There are bad things that occur around the world don't get me wrong but there are lots of bad things that happen in the states as well. Live life, explore, and try new things.

Try not to be too materialistic. Yes I'm guilty of it but I've gotten better by living here. People aren't as materialistic as we are in the states and I think they live better lives than we do. I don't live in front of my computer screen all day. Make sure that you sitting for this dad. I only watch about two hours of TV a day! Sometimes only one! It depends on how long we take to eat (lunch lasts an hour or so...breath dad).

CHANGE IS GOOD

The world is ever-changing and evolving. It is how we deal with change that makes us who we are and defines actions we take. The States' way is not necessarily the right way to think/believe or do things. In fact, I think we have quite a few things wrong. Change is all around us so be flexible.

LANGUAGE

The best way to learn a language is to live it. You can take as many Spanish courses and you like in the states but it will not compare to what you learn

living in a different country. It isn't just the language but the culture. I encourage all to study abroad. It is amazing.

The states have a long way to go to catch up to Europe when it comes to second languages. They start to learn English (typically...it varies) when they are very young. The students here from Europe all speak English very well as well as their native language and now they are studying Spanish. Students in the states will be lucky if they take a language course in high school and even then the minimum is two years. These students have learned our language, maybe it is time for us to learn some of their languages.

DOLLARS & SENSE

The exchange rate is predicted to actually get worse before it gets better. Some analysts on the news predict the dollar sinking to \$1.35 in the next couple of months against the euro. The most important thing to remember is that it does move a lot and to check it out frequently and to look at predictions. I looked at the exchange rate but I did not look at the predictions and it really messed up finances for me. I use www.oanda.com frequently and it is reliable. Banks may also charge higher than the actual exchange rate so be prepared.

Yes, many people here think that all Americans are rich and have money to spare even though as students we usually do not have a lot or enough. It is

important not to show your wealth too much, even if you have lots of money.

ATMs usually have an English option and they are just as easy to use as in the States. This can be good and bad. Good because it is easy and simple... bad because that means withdrawing money is easy and simple so we do it often.

Budget. Go with a plan on finances. I usually plan by the week here (I planned before I left). I set a certain limit on what I can spend per week and I try to keep it at that even though that sometimes does not work but it is better than not having a budget and spending all the money in one month and have three left (I know of at least a couple of students who have been making calls home for money).

Students (at least in Spain) dress very similar to students in the States. Screen T-shirts are even quite popular with younger people. I notice them once-in-awhile. The only difference is that they do not wear sweats like they do in the States. Blue jeans are quite popular although you will find that people still wear khakis (cargo khakis as well).

Culture is a lot different than some students think so be prepared to adapt.

BRETT LARSON
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRIJA
MADRID, SPAIN
FALL 2004

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COMMANDMENTS OF TRAVEL

DO NOT EXPECT TO FIND THINGS AS THEY WERE AT HOME.
You left home to find things different.

DO NOT TAKE THINGS TOO SERIOUSLY.
Carefree mind is the start of a good experience.

DO NOT LET OTHER TRAVELERS GET ON YOUR NERVES
You are paying good money for this experience.

TAKE HALF AS MANY CLOTHES AND TWICE AS MUCH MONEY.

KNOW WHERE YOUR PASSPORT IS AT ALL TIMES.
A person without a passport is a person without a country.

IF WE HAD BEEN EXPECTED TO STAY IN ONE PLACE
we would have been created with roots.

DON'T WORRY.
Those that worry have no pleasure and few things are that fatal.

WHEN IN "ROME" ...

DO NOT JUDGE THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRY
by the person who is giving you a bad time.

YOU ARE A GUEST IN OTHER LANDS.
Those who treat their host with respect shall receive respect.



TRAVEL IS NECESSARY TO UNDERSTANDING MAN. SUCH DELICATE GOODS AS JUSTICE, LOVE, HONOR AND COURTESY ARE VALID EVERYWHERE, BUT THEY ARE VARIOUSLY MOLDED, OFTEN DIFFERENTLY HANDLED, AND SOMETIMES NEARLY UNRECOGNIZABLE IF YOU MEET THEM IN A FOREIGN LAND.

THE ART OF LEARNING FUNDAMENTAL COMMON VALUES IS PERHAPS THE GREATEST GAIN OF TRAVEL TO THOSE WHO WISH TO LIVE AT EASE AMONG THEIR FELLOWS.

—FREYA STARK, PERSEUS IN THE WIND (CENTURY)