

January 2012 Student Handbook



Mathematics and Architecture of Incas in Peru 2010



*Augustana College • Elmhurst College • Gustavus Adolphus College • Hastings College
St. Ambrose University • St. Catherine University • University of St. Thomas*

THE UMAIE MISSION STATEMENT

"To provide high-quality short-term global education experiences in diverse locales and to encourage the development of intercultural values and understanding through intercollegiate cooperation and coordination of programming resources and expertise."

Pre-Departure Checklist



Contact Information and Personal Documents

- Be sure to give parents/guardians your contact information and itinerary. Keep them updated of any changes. Create a passport emergency kit to bring with you. Make a photocopy of your passport (and visa if you have one), two passport photos, and a copy of your birth certificate. Keep this kit separate from your passport.
- Make copies of ATM and credit cards. Leave one at home, and take a copy with you.
- Make sure you have a visa (if needed) for the country where you will study.
- If you are not a U.S. citizen, make sure your U.S. visa and other papers are in order.

Financial

- Make sure your credit and ATM cards have 4-digit numerical PIN numbers. Inform your bank that you will be travelling so that they allow you to access your account while you are abroad, failure to do so could result in your card being blocked.
- Card numbers and emergency assistance numbers – leave one copy at home and take one with you, separate from the cards. Check with your bank to understand what kind of fees are associated with accessing your money abroad as well as any daily or weekly limits reading ATM withdrawals.
- Plan with folks at home for emergencies – can money be deposited in an account at home that you can access overseas?
- Contact your banks and inform them of the dates and countries where you will be making purchases or withdrawing cash.

Academic

- Bring books, syllabus, guidebooks, etc. Check with your faculty directors to determine what needs to be completed before departure (readings, assignments, etc.)

Health

- Inform faculty director if you have pre-existing conditions which may affect your participation at some point or which may be critical to know if you are ill/injured and unable to speak for yourself.
- Your health insurance card – bring it and know how payment/reimbursement works if treated overseas and if you need to bring back specific documentation.
- Get appropriate vaccinations, immunizations in the recommended time frame. Obtain prophylactic medications, if necessary.

Bring enough medication to last the entire time abroad as well as a few days extra in case of delays.

- Pack a small first aid kit including an Epi-pen if you have an allergy that may require it. A list of recommended medical supplies is listed in the Packing List. Keep prescriptions in original containers from pharmacy. Bring copies of prescriptions written in generic terms.

General

- Know electrical current and plug adapters used in your host country(ies). Obtain appropriate transformers, converters or adapters for appliances you will bring.
- Clothing packing list - Know generally accepted standards of dress. Know range of temperature and precipitation for the area you will visit.



UPPER MIDWEST ASSOCIATION FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

*Augustana College • Elmhurst College • Gustavus Adolphus College • Hastings College
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Dear UMAIE Participant:

Congratulations! Your decision to study abroad will provide you with many exciting adventures and experiences that will impact your life for many years.

We have put together this handbook to provide you with helpful information for planning and spending your time abroad. The handbook is also your primary study guide to pass your online quiz. There are excellent tips in this handbook, and it is organized in a way we hope will be user-friendly and straightforward. However, this is not the only source of information you should use when preparing for your time away. Along with reading the handbook, we suggest you talk with returnees and/or natives of your host country(ies), and acquaint yourself with current issues regarding your host culture. Preparing yourself mentally for your program will make it all the more fulfilling.

There is not a book that exists that could attempt to teach you all you will learn during your time studying abroad. Your real learning will come through experience, so experience all you can!

Good luck from all of us at UMAIE!

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UMAIE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Course Expectations

Clearly defined expectations are one important way that short-term programs become successful. When everyone knows up front what is involved in a course, students and faculty are more likely to have a rewarding, positive experience abroad.

Academic Expectations

The most important thing to remember is that study abroad programs are first and foremost academic experiences. These are not tourist trips. The syllabus and itinerary are designed to make the most of the location(s) where your course takes place and are designed to meet the objectives of the course. We encourage students to take an active role in their learning outside of class time by visiting sites of cultural importance, such as museums, houses of worship, or market places.

You will receive a detailed syllabus and itinerary for your course. Reading lists, assignments and grading standards will be explained by your faculty director. Students are expected to be present—physically and mentally—at all required course activities and to be active participants in all course activities. Failure to do so may affect your final grade or result in your being sent home at your own expense.

Course Equivalencies and Grading

Each UMAIE institution will determine its own policies regarding whether or not your course can fulfill a major, minor, or other degree requirement. Check with your study abroad office or UMAIE campus rep on your campus policies.

All UMAIE courses must be taken for a letter grade. Pass/Fail grading is not available.

Assignments and Academic Journals

Another point to remember is that you are completing roughly the same amount of work in a three-week course as you would in an entire semester on campus. There will be assignments in each course which students are expected to complete in the time allowed. For example, many courses require academic journals as an integral part of the course requirements. Your faculty director will give you more detailed directions, but here are some helpful hints:

- Don't keep a log, which merely lists events, places and people.
- Try to analyze observations about people, places, events and artifacts around you. Why does this occur or exist? What might this tell you about the culture around you, and your own culture? How does an observation relate to the subject matter the faculty director is talking about? Making these kinds of analytical connections is very important to a successful learning experience.

Computers and Laptops

Many students now prefer to bring a laptop to keep notes, check email, etc. Check with your professor as to whether a laptop will be necessary for completing assignments. Many, if not most, UMAIE professors do not expect you will be able to complete assignments on a computer.

Email access is usually available, either in Internet cafes or many hotels have wireless networks or modems/cables available. Be aware that you may have to pay for Internet access – these fees can add up over time. Internet access fees are not included in your program fee.

Also, be aware that you are responsible for transporting your laptop as you travel. Be sure you keep close track of your laptop at all times. Petty theft is common in many countries and your laptop may look inviting to steal!

Behavior Expectations

You are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the rules of your course and your home institution. When you signed the UMAIE January Term Agreement you also agreed to:

- 1. Participate in all classes and scheduled activities unless ill**
- 2. Abide by dress and cultural codes suitable to the countries you are visiting**
- 3. Not buy, sell or use illegal drugs at any time**
- 4. Not engage in abusive use of alcohol**

If you violate any of these, or other rules issued by your home institution or your faculty director, you can be sent home, immediately, at your own expense. Students who are sent home may also receive a failing grade for the course.

Please also keep in mind that you are under the Rules of Conduct of your home institution, and may face disciplinary action after you return.

Always treat guest lecturers, tour guides and other hosts as well as group members and instructors with the utmost respect. Behavior that disrupts others, be they students, faculty or citizens of the host country can lead to the offenders being dismissed from the course and being sent home at their own expense.

Finally, please remember that you will be held responsible for any property that is damaged. Previously, on a program to Ecuador, the hotel manager found a number of mattresses that had been ripped apart by a student. The student was charged for the replacement of the property.

And lastly, how you spend your spare time is YOUR responsibility. Because you will be completing a 4-credit course in three weeks, your schedule will be very full. All excursions, site visits, guest lectures, etc, are to be considered required components of your course. As participants in an intensive course, you need to be prepared for a highly structured experience with demanding assignments and a minimum of free time. Please note these things:

1. Choose wisely.
2. Choose moderately.
3. Morning comes very quickly!!

Dress and Attire Expectations

Appropriate behavior extends to the way you dress. Depending on the location of your course, your faculty director may have special instructions regarding appropriate clothing and behavior. The following general rules may help you avoid potential problems:

- Pack at least one nicer outfit (skirt and blouse for women, khakis and button up shirt for men) for cultural outings or formal meals.
- Most countries have a more formal attitude about dress than the United States. Jeans may not be appropriate at all events.
- Short or revealing clothing is almost always inappropriate.

Remember that you represent not only yourself, but also your college or university, the faculty director(s) and the United States.

Cancellation and Refund Policies

Notice of cancellation must be submitted in writing to your UMAIE campus representative. The UMAIE cancellation and refund policy is listed in the UMAIE agreement at the back of this handbook.

- Depending on the date of cancellation, the entire program fee may be forfeited.
- If cancellation occurs within 30 days of departure, there is no refund.
- No refund is given to students who wish to omit portions of the itinerary.
- Cancellations due to medical emergencies or U.S. government shut down (such as passport offices) do not guarantee a full refund, and in some cases, may involve no refund.

When do I pay for my course?

Each UMAIE institution determines its own billing and payment procedures. Ask your campus representative about your campus procedures and when billing occurs.

WAYS TO HAVE A POSITIVE GROUP EXPERIENCE

What is a successful group?

Traveling in a group is very different from traveling with family or friends. Not only is your group comprised of students from different schools, but these students come to the group with different academic backgrounds, attitudes and expectations. A truly successful group will find a way to maximize the strengths of its members and minimize any characteristics that might take away from those strengths. A positive group experience is one where members are flexible, positive and mature in their reactions. Traveling with your group, you will go through long days and may have little free time. You might be asked to walk when you are tired, eat when you are not hungry, and focus on your course for longer periods of time than you are used to on your home campus. Through all of this, it is expected that you will be present with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn the material and participate actively. Everyone has a responsibility to the group to ensure that its goals are met and that problems are minimal.

Empowering yourself as a group member

Group dynamics—the way groups work together—will have a tremendous impact on how successful your course ultimately is. We have put together a list of ways you can make sure your group has a positive experience traveling and studying together:

- **Learn about your destination.** You may have already thought about the differences in things like food, climate, transportation and language, but do you know about the variation in things like hotel room size (hotels outside the United States are likely to be half to a third the size you are used to at home!), toilets, and ideas about personal space? By being aware of such differences ahead of time, you minimize the effect they have on you and your group, and can focus on the essential parts of the course. We have included in the appendices a list of resources you can use to learn more about your destination.
- **Be patient.** You may feel that the group spends too much time in one place, or not enough in the next. You may want to have more group meals, while other students want none. The course itinerary may rarely feel “just right” to you, but to your faculty directors, who have spent considerable time and energy designing activities to make the most of your time together, it makes sense. Trust in their experience and judgment, and encourage others to do so as well.
- **Be FLEXIBLE.** There are many things, which can affect your itinerary: weather changes, circumstances in the host country, exchange rates, unforeseen transportation difficulties. If something does cause your group’s plans to change, you can limit the negative effects on your group by going with the flow.
- **Rely on your strengths.** You have encountered many difficult situations in your lifetime: adjusting to college life, learning how to live on your own, meeting the academic and financial demands of being in college. You have inner resources, which have allowed you to overcome these obstacles and meet the challenges of adulthood. When you are faced with a stressful or challenging situation in your study program, call upon those same resources to get you through.
- **Take care of your health.** By staying healthy, you ensure that you are able to actively participate in all course activities. When you are healthy, you are better able to focus on your studies, and get the most out of the course materials. You also prevent any potential problems that could affect the whole group, for example needing to stop the day’s activities for a doctor visit. Take a look at the Health section of this guide for ways to stay healthy during your trip.

How to overcome problems in groups

Sometimes, despite the best intentions of the group, problems arise. Personalities might conflict, jet lag or illness can impact group members’ abilities to actively participate in the group, and circumstances in the host country may be very different from what you are used to. With all the things that could have an affect on your course, it is a good idea to figure out ways you can go beyond the potential problems and keep the course on track. Here are some tips for you to use:

- **Be prepared to do something about problems.** If something serious is affecting your ability to fully participate in course activities, talk to your faculty director. By being proactive, you avoid letting little problems turn into major obstacles. Don’t just complain, take charge of your reactions and change the situation if you can.
- **Keep an open mind.** It only takes one member who complains that things are not the same as back home to have a negative impact on the entire group. Remind yourself that the cultural differences—big and small—are a major reason why you have chosen to do this program.
- **Focus on what’s really important to you.** Many groups will draw up a behavior compact, a sort of agreement of what kinds of attitudes and behaviors are wanted or are not wanted on the course. If you find yourself confronting some of the unwanted behaviors, remind yourself and the group of

the priorities you have set as a team. Keep focused on those goals, whether they are improving a foreign language skill or gaining insight into the history and art of your host country.

- **Recognize that there will be situations you won't be able to change.** Sometimes, you'll just have to let it go. There won't be anything that can be done about a situation. Instead of complaining and potentially sabotaging the group's progress, take a step back and look forward to the next day's activities. 3
- **Be flexible!** We've said it before, but a willingness to be flexible and accept with good grace the situations that present themselves will go far in overcoming problems that your group may face.
- **Realize you have a responsibility to the entire group.** Your behavior can have a major influence on the success or failure of your group experience. It is each member's responsibility to ensure that he/she is prepared for class, ready to be an active and eager participant in course activities. By taking responsibility for your own actions, you ensure that you and your classmates will make the most of your time abroad.
- **Keep your sense of humor!** Try to keep perspective and see the humor in difficult situations. This can often mean the difference between a good day and a terrible one.
- **Remember, this too shall pass.** Your course will take you away from home for only three weeks. Before you know it, the time will be over, and you will be on your way back home. Make the most of that time!

HEALTH

Insurance

When preparing to study abroad, it is important to consider what kind of insurance coverage will protect you from major financial consequences should you have medical problems prior to departure or while abroad. UMAIE requires that all students studying abroad be insured against any medical expenses that may be incurred while participating on a study abroad program. Consider the following:

Insurance is your responsibility

Make sure your present medical insurance covers you outside of the U.S. Also check to see if you, or your parents' homeowners policy, covers your baggage while traveling abroad. Your program fee does not include insurance. Each campus has its own required insurance coverage. Please see your Study Abroad Office for information. If you would like additional coverage, especially for trip cancellation, you must enroll for this on your own. See our list of resources in the appendices for insurance carriers that provide short-term and cancellation insurance.

You may need trip cancellation insurance

This type of insurance protects you financially if you have to cancel or interrupt your study abroad program for medical reasons. If you cancel from your study abroad program after the final deadline for any reason, you will forfeit not only your deposit but you could also forfeit the entire program fee. UMAIE then makes final non-refundable payments for your program; therefore, in case of cancellation prior to departure, you could be responsible for the entire program fee. We suggest that students seriously consider trip cancellation insurance for this reason.

Questions to ask your insurance provider:

- Does the plan include hospitalization coverage for accidents and illnesses while abroad?
- What is the maximum amount of coverage provided?
- Are there deductibles? If so, what are they?
- Will the plan include emergency room expenses?
- What is the coverage for medical evacuation?
- In the event of death, what is the coverage for repatriation of my remains?
- What do you do under the plan if you have to pay cash up front and have no money?
- Does the plan cover visits to the doctor or medication prescribed while abroad?
- What are the procedures for filing a claim, and how long does it take to get reimbursed after filing?
- If it is a trip cancellation plan, what are the guidelines regarding pre-existing conditions?
- When does the plan begin and end?
- Does the plan enable you to have continuous coverage before, during and after you go abroad?
- Is the plan the primary or secondary carrier? If secondary, when does the coverage begin?
- Is there a booklet explaining coverage in detail?

Tips For Staying Healthy Abroad

Many places you will go will have no special health concerns. Health-care systems and facilities in many overseas locations are quite similar to what we have in the United States. In other regions, however, there are different and specifically recommended health procedures. If you require regular medical care for any condition you have, tell those who can be of assistance. This may mean simply identifying a doctor or other practitioner who will provide your care. Or it could mean discussing your condition with your faculty director or on-site organization if you may need emergency intervention during your stay. Students with health concerns such as allergies, asthma, diabetes, mental health concerns, dietary restrictions, or sleep problems should consult with their health care provider before departure to make sure they know how to take care of themselves abroad.

Attend to your well-being

Despite the change in your environment, you can still keep some of your daily routines from home. Get enough rest – a challenge during the few days of jet lag. Eat nutritiously, which may mean trying some foods you're not accustomed to. Get plenty of exercise to keep your mind and body working well. Don't isolate yourself. You may have to make the first move in developing friendships, but they are an essential part of any overseas experience and, more importantly, your emotional well-being.

Remember that you are ultimately responsible for informing yourself about common ailments and diseases in "your part of the world", whether shots are required and for deciding whether or not to have vaccinations.

Pay attention to jet lag

Jet lag can have a serious impact on your health and your ability to do well in your course. Here are some suggestions for minimizing the foggy feeling you may experience after traveling across time zones.

In flight:

- Get plenty of rest before your departure.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine on the plane, which interfere with your body's natural "clock" and cause dehydration.
- Drink plenty of liquids, such as fruit juice or water.

- Exercise at your seat, in the aisles or at the back of the plane.
- Sleep for a few hours rather than watching the movie. Bring an eye pillow and earplugs to block out light and sounds that might prevent you from sleeping on the plane.
- Wear comfortable clothes on the plane, and dress in layers to account for temperature variations.
- Try resetting your watch to the destination's time as soon as you get on the plane. If it is daytime in your new destination, try to stay awake. When it is nighttime there, try to sleep.

On arrival:

- Take a short nap and a walk outdoors, if possible.
- Continue to eat and drink healthy foods to avoid getting sick.
- Try to stick to the local bedtime-you'll adjust faster that way.

Don't overlook culture shock.

Culture shock can affect anyone, from the most seasoned international traveler to one who is leaving the home country for the first time. Culture shock can have a real impact on your health and well-being during the time you are abroad, and we offer the following information to help you confront culture shock head on.

Culture shock comes in many forms. For some students, it shows up as sleep problems (either too much or too little), while others experience an increase in anxiety, anger, depression, or even feeling overly homesick. You might feel lonely or isolated, while your friends have trouble with the food and refuse to eat, for example. If culture shock takes control, you may find yourself feeling hostile or extremely negative towards your host country's culture.

Fortunately, there are a number of simple things you can do to limit the affects of culture shock. Keeping a journal might allow you to process some of the feelings you are having, and also provide a healthy outlet for negativity. Talking to other students or your faculty director about what you are experiencing can make the process of adjusting to a new culture less intimidating, and also provide an opportunity for group problem-solving. Getting more involved with the host culture, whether it is by meeting people, asking questions, or reading up on your own can clear up confusion about why things are the way they are in your new country, and provide a point of comparison for your thoughts on life back home.

Need immunizations?

Knowing and procuring required or recommended Immunizations is your responsibility.

Check with your Student Health Services for current regulations, your physician or with the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, www.cdc.gov/travel/travel.html. Be sure to know exactly where you will be in the countries you are visiting, as this will affect what vaccinations you may need. For example, you may be going to Peru, but never entering the rainforest. There are also sometimes differences between rural and urban communities, so again, consult with a travel clinic.

Have your doctor or a state health official stamp and certify an "International Certificate of Vaccination" upon completion of immunizations. You can get this card from your travel clinic, the state health department or passport office.

Tips for Avoiding Diarrhea

Avoiding traveler's diarrhea is not an exact science, but following the tips listed below will significantly decrease your chances of contracting it:

- Do not drink the local water unless you know it is 100% safe (and still question your source of information). You may drink coffee or tea, if they are brewed with water that has boiled for at least ten minutes. Pure fruit juices are usually safe, but be sure that you are using a clean glass. Bottled water and carbonated drinks are your safest bets.
- Where water is contaminated, ice is also contaminated. Ice can also contaminate drinking containers, unless the containers have been thoroughly cleaned with soap and hot water after the ice is discarded.
- It is safer to drink directly from a can or bottle of a beverage than from a questionable container. Wipe off wet cans or bottles before opening them as well as any surfaces that are in direct contact with your mouth.
- If you boil water, it must be boiled vigorously for at least ten full minutes and allowed to return to room temperature.
- Avoid salads, thin skinned fruits (such as grapes), milk and milk products, and seafood that is far from where it was originally caught.
- Be sure that cooked foods are thoroughly cooked. The longer the cooking time, the less chance of bacteria surviving.
- Choose restaurants carefully. Hotels that cater to tourists from Western countries will probably have higher sanitary standards, than smaller local hotels.

Symptoms of diarrhea can range from mild to very severe and occur with little warning. If you are one of the unfortunates who, despite careful eating and drinking habits, still develops traveler's diarrhea, here are some recommendations:

- Replace fluids — dehydration is one of the problems associated with diarrhea. The goal of treatment is not to suppress the symptoms of diarrhea, but to correct the body's fluid imbalances.
- Add salt to your diet.
- Avoid dairy products (they inhibit the body's absorption of salt).
- Use medications such as Imodium, Lomotil, Pepto-Bismol or Paregoric to relieve abdominal cramps. These medications should be used only for two to three days to give symptomatic relief.
- If symptoms persist longer than a few days, consult a physician.
- If diarrhea is accompanied by a high fever, shaking, chills, and/or blood in the stools, tell your faculty director and consult a physician immediately.

Avoid problems with your prescription medication

If you require special prescription drugs (including medications for asthma or diabetes) you must take an adequate supply with you and know how to administer them. You should also carry written instructions from your physician in case of emergency. It is appropriate to verbally notify your instructor(s) of any medications you are taking or any special health problems, in addition to the information you provide on the Health Questionnaire.

- Take a minimum supply of a month and a half, if not a full two-month supply.
- Be very careful to keep medications in a place where they cannot be lost or stolen. Carry all medications with you on the plane in case you are separated from your checked luggage.
- Keep medications in original containers with prescription labels attached to avoid problems in customs.

- Once you arrive at your destination, keep your medications in two separate places so that you won't lose your whole supply if some is lost or stolen. For example, keep one month's supply with you and one month's supply in your room.
- Prescription medicines are not always the same abroad as in the U.S. Do not plan on having prescriptions from the U.S. filled while you are abroad. If you carry a prescription, have your doctor write the drug's generic name, instructions, dosage, and reason for prescribing the drug.
- Do not plan to have medications sent to you from home. Medications often get stuck in customs and take a long time to arrive overseas.
- Check with your doctor before departure for advice on how to adjust when you take your medication so that you do not risk over- or under-dosage from the time difference between the Midwest and your destination.

Glasses and Contact Lens Wearers

If you wear glasses or contact lenses, take along an extra pair and your lens prescription. You may also want to include enough contact lens solution for your time abroad since it may be difficult to obtain in certain countries and is often very expensive when it is available.

How to Adjust to the Heat

If you are going to a country with a warm winter climate, you need to be thinking about more than just how nice it is to escape the Upper Midwest weather. Extreme changes in climate and temperature variations will affect both the comfort and health of those who are not prepared. For the most enjoyable time in the heat, follow these tips:

- Minimize the amount of time you are in direct sunlight.
- Drink plenty of fluids, especially water!
- Wear loose fitting clothing that is made of cotton or another material that is capable of absorbing perspiration.
- Wear light colors, especially white, that will reflect sunlight.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat of a light material.

Students Abroad: An Important Resource

We believe it is important to provide you with the most up to date information. The website www.studentsabroad.state.gov is maintained by the U.S. Department of State. Please browse and carefully read through the following sections:

Health

- Country info
- Staying healthy
- Prescriptions
- Vaccinations
- Mental health
- Disabilities
- H1N1 info

Emergencies

- Health emergencies
- Evacuation & natural disasters
- Victim of crime
- Arrest/incarceration
- Since you will be traveling with a UMAIE group, you have a lot of support in the case of an emergency. We ask that you read through this next section to familiarize yourself with the types of emergencies that can occur any time you travel abroad.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS WHILE ABROAD

Your actions abroad should be guided by a combination of common sense and an awareness of the conditions around you. Be especially cautious in or avoid areas where you are likely to be victimized. These include crowded subways, train stations, elevators, tourist sites, market places, festivals and marginal areas of cities.

The following tips should help keep you safe:

- **Don't use short cuts**, narrow alleys or poorly-lit streets. Try not to travel alone at night.
- **Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances.** Avoid particularly demonstrations which are likely to be anti-American in focus.
- **Keep a low profile and avoid loud conversations or arguments.** Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers.
- **Always carry the hotel name**, address and phone number with you. This is especially important in countries where English is infrequently spoken or the road signs are written in non-Roman alphabets.
- **Avoid scam artists.** Beware of strangers who approach you, offering bargains or to be your guide.
- **Beware of pickpockets.** They are often children and have an accomplice who will:
 - jostle you,
 - ask you for directions or the time,
 - point to something spilled on your clothing, or spill something on you
 - or distract you by creating a disturbance.
- **Wear the shoulder strap of your bag across your chest** and walk with the bag away from the curb to avoid drive-by purse-snatchers.
- **Try to seem purposeful when you move about.** Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going. When possible, ask directions only from individuals in authority.
- **Know how to use a pay telephone** and have the proper change, local phone card or token on hand.
- If you are using a cell phone, give your number to your faculty director(s) and classmates at your arrival orientation.
- **Learn a few phrases in the local language** so you can signal your need for help, the police, or a doctor. Make note of emergency telephone numbers you may need: police, fire, your hotel, and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.
- **If you are confronted, don't fight back.** Give up your valuables. Your money and passport can be replaced, but you cannot.
- **Keep your hotel door locked at all times.** Meet visitors in the lobby.
- **Do not leave money and other valuables in your hotel room while you are out.** Use the hotel safe.
- **Let someone know when you expect to return** if you are out late at night.
- **If you are alone, do not get on an elevator** if there is a suspicious-looking person inside.
- **Read the fire safety instructions in your hotel room.** Know how to report a fire. Be sure you know where the nearest fire exit and alternate exits are located. Count the doors between your room and the nearest exit. This could be a life-saver if you have to crawl through a smoke-filled corridor.

- **Taxis.** Only take taxis clearly identified with official markings. Beware of unmarked or unmetered cabs.
- **If you see your way being blocked by a stranger** and another person is very close to you from behind, move away. This can happen in the corridor of the train or on the platform or station.
- **Do not accept food or drink from strangers.** Criminals have been known to drug food or drink offered to passengers. Criminals may also spray sleeping gas in train compartments.
- **Do not be afraid to alert authorities** if you feel threatened in any way. Extra police are often assigned to ride trains on routes where crime is a serious problem.

HOW TO AVOID LEGAL DIFFICULTIES

You can be arrested overseas for actions that may be either legal or considered minor infractions in the United States. Be aware of what is considered criminal in the country where you are. Consular Information Sheets include information on unusual patterns of arrests in various countries when appropriate. Some of the offenses for which U.S. citizens have been arrested abroad are: Drug Violations.

More than 1/3 of U.S. citizens incarcerated abroad are held on drug charges. Some countries do not distinguish between possession and trafficking. Many countries have mandatory sentences - even for possession of a small amount of marijuana or cocaine. A number of Americans have been arrested for possessing prescription drugs, particularly tranquilizers and amphetamines, that they purchased legally in certain Asian countries and then brought to some countries in the Middle East where they are illegal. Other U.S. citizens have been arrested for purchasing prescription drugs abroad in quantities that local authorities suspected were for commercial use. If in doubt about foreign drug laws, ask local authorities or the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Photography

In many countries you can be harassed or detained for photographing such things as police and military installations, government buildings, border areas and transportation facilities. If you are in doubt, ask permission before taking photographs.

Terrorism awareness

Terrorism is an unfortunate fact of life in today's world. Terrorist acts occur at random and unpredictably, making it impossible to protect oneself absolutely. The first and best protection is to avoid travel to unsafe areas where there has been a persistent record of terrorist attacks or kidnapping. The vast majority of foreign states have good records of maintaining public order and protecting residents and visitors within their borders from terrorism.

Most terrorist attacks are the result of long and careful planning. Just as a car thief will first be attracted to an unlocked car with the key in the ignition, terrorists are looking for defenseless, easily accessible targets who follow predictable patterns. The chances that a tourist, traveling with an unpublished program or itinerary, would be the victim of terrorism are extremely slight. In addition, many terrorist groups, seeking publicity for political causes within their own country or region, may not be looking for American targets.

Nevertheless, the following pointers may help you avoid becoming a target of opportunity. They should be considered as adjuncts to the tips listed in the previous sections on how to protect yourself against the far greater likelihood of being a victim of crime. These precautions may provide some degree of protection, and can serve as practical and psychological deterrents to would-be terrorists.

- Be aware of what you discuss with strangers and watch out for anyone who may be eavesdropping.
- Try to minimize the time spent in the public area of an airport, which is a less protected area. Move quickly from the check-in counter to the secured areas.
- As much as possible, avoid dress and behavior (baseball hats, college sweatshirts, fanny packs, loud voices) that may identify you as an American.
- Keep an eye out for suspicious abandoned packages or briefcases. Report them to airport security or other authorities and leave the area promptly.
- Avoid obvious terrorist targets such as places where Americans and Westerners are known to congregate, such as McDonalds and other fast food restaurants, and U.S.-owned companies, such as The Gap.

ADAPTING TO CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Sex and Gender Issues

Sexual behaviors and gender relationships vary around the world. Most American women think of gender as only one of a number of factors that define personal identity. Get set to learn first-hand how widely standards of behavior can vary from culture to culture. Here is some information we have found helpful from the Council on International Educational Exchange publications.

Dating and Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment occurs in all countries. How it is dealt with varies from culture to culture.

Men in some countries may go so far as to touch or grab a woman in public. This behavior may be frowned on to some extent — local women especially may be offended—but it persists.

So, how do you respond? There's no simple answer. Men can be forceful, and the word "no" doesn't always carry the same weight it does in the U.S. Don't be frustrated if you try to respond in several different ways that would be considered appropriate in the U.S.—glaring, shouting, ignoring—and none have the desired effect. Cultures differ, and there is no one response that would be effective in all of them.

A good rule is to put your personal safety first. If you're unsure about what is culturally appropriate—or lack a sure command of the local language—you could easily act more passively than you normally would. Ask on-site program staff and local women what sorts of behavior provoke unwanted attention and observe how local women deflect that attention. Avoid the common problem of placing yourself in escalating romantic situations because you're concerned about offending the other person. It's honorable to be culturally appropriate, but it's better to risk upsetting another person than to risk your own physical or emotional harm.

LGBTQI students and Sexual Identity

While studying abroad, you'll be constantly comparing your host culture to what you're accustomed to at home, and that goes for everything from what you eat to who you meet to where and how you live. Here in the U.S., many hurdles to full acceptance and legal recognition still exist, but young people are finding the strength, resources, and acceptance to live their true sexual identities at a younger age than ever before.

Problems still exist in the U.S. on personal, social, institutional, and societal levels, and there's no question that some LGBTQI people still live lives of silence, invisibility, and even violence—but there's also no question

that gays and lesbians are more visible in U.S. culture and society than ever before. As you travel and study overseas, you'll find that local laws and customs may afford you fewer freedoms than you've come to expect in some places and more in others.

Abroad you'll find a new way of seeing your place in the world, and that might include new freedom to express your identity. You may have the opportunity to self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, etc.-or you may feel sent back into the closet because the environment or host culture is not conducive to outward expression of your sexuality or gender. Depending on where you study, you could encounter attitudes ranging from full acceptance of all forms of identity and expression to severe homophobia or transphobia. Striking a balance between sincere expression of your sexuality and gender and local norms can be a challenge, particularly in cultures where little tolerance exists. On the other hand, in some places where the broader cultural milieu is conservative, liberal laws may exist to protect people with differing sexual identities.

Local laws and practices differ greatly, and the reality is that how you express your sexuality and gender could pose safety concerns while abroad. Make sure you know the laws relating to sexuality and gender expression. The good news is that if you come to your study abroad experience with good planning and a keen understanding of the issues, your time abroad should be as healthy, safe and meaningful as any student's.

Minority Students and Heritage Study

For some minority students, the idea of studying in your ancestors' country of origin can be a very rewarding experience and provide an opportunity to examine your heritage, learn more about where your family comes from and explore your own identity.

At the same time, some students may experience anxiety regarding their acceptance in, or ability to adapt socially and academically to, their new culture. As a multicultural student, you may be concerned about facing potential racial bias and prejudice without the comfort of your usual support system. On the other hand, you may be looking forward to being part of the majority population for the first time in your life. Or, you may be planning a self-discovery sojourn to the country or region of your family's heritage. Whatever reasons you have for studying abroad, you will find that confronting and coping with your adjustment abroad, as painful as it may be at times, can be a positive growth experience. It may not always be fun but, in fact, it can present a unique learning opportunity that will serve you well in the future.

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

Now that you have made a decision and are in the preparations stage of your study abroad experience, you will want to do some more research on the political, cultural and historical context of the country where you will be studying. Doing so can give you information on the racial climate and help prepare you for what you may encounter.

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

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

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

Students with Disabilities

Study abroad for students with disabilities can hold great challenges and great rewards.

By studying abroad, you'll learn what makes the culture tick in a place thousands of miles away. You'll also learn how your disability is addressed in your new host country. The first part of the lesson is practical: U.S. laws and society recognize specific physical, mental, learning, and health conditions as disabilities, but not all of these conditions are formally recognized everywhere in the world. This could affect if and how you receive accommodations for your disability abroad.

Identify yourself as a person with a disability early in the process. If you do, you'll improve your chances of securing the accommodations you need to make participation possible. Don't be afraid you'll be disqualified; once you've been accepted, UMAIE will encourage you to participate. With your permission, UMAIE will need to share information about your disability with overseas partners such as host institutions and families. That way, proper accommodations and arrangements can be made.

Before arriving abroad, discuss specific needs with your UMAIE Campus Representative and Faculty Director, and communicate any new concerns as they arise. Do you need extra time on tests? Orientation and mobility training? Counseling? Wheelchair ramps? Sign language interpreters? These are all accommodations that may be more readily available to you on your home campus than they may be abroad, so it is important that you bring them up early.

For country- or city-specific information, contact national or local disabilities organizations. National Center for Developmental Education has a database of disability organizations worldwide at www.miusa.org; their staff can assist in finding others for you.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

Passports

Students are responsible for obtaining a passport on their own and applying in sufficient time so as to not jeopardize their ability to travel as planned. Your passport must have an expiration date at least six months beyond your return date.

Visas

A visa is an authorization stamped into your passport by a foreign government. It permits you to enter the country in question for a specific length of time and specific purposes (i.e. tourism or study). Not all countries require visas for North American visitors. Some UMAIE courses will require a visa. UMAIE will facilitate obtaining student visas for courses that travel to countries where US citizens are required to obtain a visa.

Airline tickets and itineraries

Course information, including your flight schedule and accommodation information, will be available on the UMAIE website in mid-October. Final itineraries will be posted to the UMAIE website in Mid-December. We recommend you leave this information with a family member or other trusted person at your home.

Day of Departure

All UMAIE students will receive information in your online course packet as to where and when to meet your professors and other group members at the airport. This course packet will be available with your UMAIE password on the UMAIE website in mid-October. If you arrive late to the airport, do not expect the group or the flight to wait for you!

Baggage

Baggage allowances vary among the airlines, and between domestic and international destinations. To avoid delays with airport check-in and coach transfers, we ask that travel course participants bring one carry-on bag and one checked bag. Although there is a range of baggage allowances among carriers and destinations, most carriers now charge a fee to check one or more bags. These fees are not built into the program cost. Please do not exceed the following restrictions: Carry-on bags not to exceed 17.6 lbs. and 45 linear inches (Length+Width+Height); Checked bags not to exceed 44 lbs. and 62 linear inches (L+W+H).

There will be times when you will be responsible for the transfer of your luggage (back packs or bags with wheels are recommended) so the lighter you travel, the happier you will be. Put your name, address and phone number on the inside of your suitcase, in the event the outside address tag is torn off. Do not lock your luggage. Due to higher security levels at airports worldwide, the list of restricted carry-on articles still includes knives and cutting instruments of any kind, and butane lighters. For liquids and gels in your carry-ons, follow the 3-1-1 rule. Each container of liquid or gel must be 3 ounces or less. The containers must be placed in 1 quart sized, clear plastic, zip-top bag and only 1 bag per traveler allowed. If in doubt, pack it in your checked bag or leave it at home. For the most up-to-date policy on U.S. security and screening procedures especially relating to liquids and gels, please visit www.tsa.gov. Also it is strongly recommended to pack all film in your carry-on luggage. X-ray screening of checked luggage can destroy film. For more information on the most up-to-date baggage policy specific to each airline, visit www.umaie.org/links.html and select your airline.

Packing Advice

Rolling your clothes into cylinders and tying them with a rubber band saves space in your suitcase and actually keeps your clothes less wrinkled. For example, try placing all toiletry items in one bag and socks and underwear in another. The separation of items makes it much easier to grab items out of your suitcase.

Always carry your passport in your wallet, purse or shoulder bag and never in your luggage. All the items you'll need during the trip, and essentials such as medication, should be carried in your carry-on luggage.

Clothing

In deciding what to bring, the key word is utility. Choose your clothing and other things wisely.

Keep in mind that in very few other cultures (if any) do students have the large number and variety of clothing items that the typical U.S. student does. No one will be surprised to see you repeatedly in the same outfit. Bring clothes that go well together in a variety of combinations. You may want to consider bringing some older clothes so you don't feel bad leaving them behind if you can't fit them into your suitcase at the end of the program.

Consider climate. For instance, students going to England might consider that the weather is not as severe as one might expect, due to the fact that the Gulf Stream serves to moderate temperature extremes. The actual climate, however, is much wetter than here, so that the cold seems colder and the warmer temperatures seem warmer. Another factor to consider is that generally residences and classrooms abroad are not heated to the same extent as here (the average temperature indoors is between 50 and 60 degrees). Therefore, the best way to keep warm is to follow the trend of the "layered look"--a jacket over a sweater over a shirt over an undershirt, for example.

Casual items such as trousers, shirts, sweater, and appropriate outerwear are essential on all programs. You should also bring a sturdy pair of comfortable walking shoes, which will adequately support your tired feet when walking for miles and miles. Remember, dress casually but you may need to dress up occasionally for a company visit, the opera, concerts or dining out. See the suggested packing list in the Appendices and ask your faculty director for specific packing advice.

Leave at home:

- valuable or expensive-looking jewelry,
- irreplaceable family objects,
- all unnecessary credit cards.

Leave a copy of your itinerary with family or friends at home in case they need to contact you in an emergency.

Bring *and* leave behind copies of these documents:

Make two photocopies of your passport identification page, airline tickets, driver's license that you plan to bring with you. Leave one photocopy of this data with family or friends at home; pack the other in a place separate from where you carry your valuables.

Copy of credit/ATM cards front and back.

Valuables

Don't bring your most prized possession on your UMAIE program. We suggest that you don't take Grandmother's beautiful cameo or a \$400 camera with you unless you're prepared to watch them attentively. If something is irreplaceable, leave it at home.

Electrical Appliances

In most parts of the world, electricity is not as cheap as it is in the U.S.. Especially if you will be living with a host family, please take note of the everyday use of electricity in your host country.

The electrical current in many foreign countries differs from that of the U.S., which operates at 110 volts alternating at 60 cycles. In much of the rest of the world the standard current is 220 volts at 50 cycles. In addition, plug prongs are often different. If you don't use the proper converter or transformer, and plug adapter, you risk burning out your appliance and causing an electrical short. The best advice is to do without gadgets or purchase them there.

If you must bring a few gadgets to a country where the voltage is higher, you can purchase a current converter, which "steps down" the higher voltage abroad, and adapters to change your plug prongs to the local variety, but the difference in the rate of cycles will cause your equipment to operate more slowly. This makes it difficult to operate appliances that do not have built in converters and can sometimes damage the appliance.

MONEY MATTERS

How much money will you need?

It is a good idea to keep close track of how you spend your money now so that you can gauge your personal spending habits and learn to budget your money carefully. Be aware that small expenses tend to add up and that you may have many such items to purchase while abroad such as bus and train fares, snacks, stamps and postcards, newspapers, beverages, gifts, telephone calls and books.

Money tips

- Know the official currency used in the country where you will be studying and the approximate rate of exchange to the U.S. dollar.
- If you choose, you may purchase some local currency before you leave the US. Foreign currency is available for purchase online, at most large banks, and at the airport. Be aware that additional fees will apply.
- Make a small guide that lists various amounts of money in U.S. dollars, and their value in the other country's currency that you can keep in your wallet to refer to while shopping (i.e. \$10=5 GBP, \$50=25 GBP)
- A small calculator or currency converter is invaluable when traveling.
- Make a note of the credit limit on each credit card that you bring. Make certain not to charge over that amount. In some countries, Americans have been arrested for innocently exceeding their credit limit. Ask your credit card company how to report the loss of your card from abroad. 800 numbers do not work from abroad, but your company should have a number that you can call while you are overseas.

How much should you budget to spend?

Because spending habits differ widely, it is hard to provide a set amount that will apply to all students. In order to determine how much you will need, you should take into account both the fixed costs, such as meals not included in the program fee, transportation during free time AND variable costs, such as independent travel, entertainment, shopping and gifts, and frequency of communication to the U.S, and your personal spending habits. As a rough guide, many students spend approximately \$100 - \$400 per week for meals and personal expenses.

Budgets vary depending upon spending habits and course inclusions. Check your course description for inclusions and exclusions. It is also recommended to contact your Faculty Director for additional clarification. As a MINIMUM guide we suggest the following amounts for budgeting:

\$8.75 for each breakfast (usually included with accommodations)

\$15.00 for each lunch

\$22.50 for each dinner (for information on the number of meals not included in the comprehensive fee, see the course description)

\$50.00 for inner city transportation (bus, subway, etc.)

\$50.00 for optional theatre performances or side trips

\$50.00 for incidentals such as toiletry articles, laundry, postage, etc.

Food/Group Meals

The comprehensive fee for each course typically includes breakfast daily and some group meals. Each course will differ in the number of meals included in the course. Check your course description for information on which meals are included and how many meals you will be responsible for on your own.

How to access money

Opinions vary on the best way to take money overseas. Some students will only take ATM and credit cards, while others rely on cash and traveler's checks. Having all options available, even if in small amounts, is recommended. Regardless of what you choose, be aware of the advantages and disadvantages.

It is possible to buy foreign currency before you leave the US--from large banks, online, or at the airport.. However, it is not necessary and additional fees can be high.

ATM Cards:

- Offer a better exchange rate than changing currency and ATM machines are generally easily accessible in large cities.
- Your card must have a "Cirrus" or "Plus" symbol in order to work outside the United States.
- PIN must be 4 digits; keep in mind that ATMs overseas do not have letters on the keypads.
- You will have access only to your checking account, not savings.
- Before departure, check with your bank to determine ATM transaction fees, limits, and customer service numbers that can be dialed from your host country.

Credit Cards:

- Usually offer the best exchange rate and are safe to carry.
- Can be prohibitively expensive to use for cash advances.
- In most countries, only Visa and MasterCard are accepted. Leave other cards at home.

Traveler's checks:

- Are no longer used by many travelers; mainly only in sites where ATM machines are not yet commonplace. Check with your faculty director.
- Can be helpful as backup in case credit cards and cash are lost.

Cash:

- Cannot be replaced if lost or stolen.
- Is easier to exchange than traveler's checks in many places.
- If you bring in the currency of your host country, it can be used immediately after you arrive to meet any expenses.

How to handle money safely:

- Do not flash large amounts of money when paying a bill. Make sure your credit card is returned to you after each transaction.
- Deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money, buy airline tickets or purchase souvenirs. Do not change money on the black market.
- If your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the local police. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance claims and as an explanation of your plight. After reporting missing items to the police, report the loss or theft of:
 - traveler's checks to the nearest agent of the issuing company,
 - credit cards to the issuing company,
 - airline tickets to the airline or travel agent,
 - passport to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER AS YOU PREPARE FOR DEPARTURE

Customs checks

Upon arrival in a new country you may have all of your bags checked by a customs official. If you have only personal items and clothing, you should experience no difficulty. Any person found with illegal drugs will be subject to the laws of the country in which they are found and the fact that the offender may be an U.S. citizen is not grounds for leniency in the punishment that may be meted out.

Communicating with Loved Ones

Explain to your family and friends that you may not be able to call them for the first couple of days that you are abroad. Of course, they will want to know that you have arrived safely, so try to communicate within the first few days. Manage their expectations; it may actually take a few days to figure out how to best communicate.

It is possible that you will find a cyber cafe in your free time. Keyboards may be different in other countries than you are used to in the United States. Ask the proprietor and he/she will assist you.

There are three basic ways to call the United States when you are traveling abroad:

1. Use Local Pay Phones: In general, the best way to make international calls from pay phones is to buy a pre-paid phone card when you are at your destination. These phone cards usually offer better rates than calling cards and are quite convenient.

2. Use an International Calling Card: If you decide to use a card from your long distance phone service, figure out before you leave how to call home from the countries you will be in. Calling cards are convenient and can be used virtually anywhere, but can have steep rates.

3. If you are considering traveling with your personal cell phone: Most major U.S. cellphone companies give you the option of choosing an international plan that allows you to make international calls. Each company offers different plans for various prices that work for a number of phone models and in designated countries. Per-minute calling rates vary for different countries. Although you can probably find a broad international phone plan from your current cellphone service provider, you will not be able to make calls from every country on earth. Be sure to check that the plan covers the destination in which you plan to travel.

Do not place a direct call from your hotel room! The costs will be enormous, and you will be subject to surcharges even if you use a calling card. Use public phones!

4. EMAIL: Internet cafés are often available depending on your particular location. You will pay an hourly or per minute fee to access the Internet. Many hotels also have internet access in a “business center” or other public location. These typically also charge a fee. You may or may not have internet access in your hotel rooms, and do not plan on internet access if you will spend time in a homestay. Check with your professor for specifics on email and internet access for your course.

Photography

People give expression to their experiences overseas in many different ways. Some of these means are journal writing, detailed letters home, art, music, and photography.

Of various forms of expression, photography is one that needs to be done with particular sensitivity and care. If you plan to take pictures while overseas, keep the following things in mind:

- Be sensitive to others’ feelings about photography and do not intrude when you are not welcome. If you plan to take pictures of people, please be in the habit of asking permission. Do not let your photography become offensive.
- Remember that memories can be created by getting to know people as well as by photographing them.
- Look and listen; do not merely see your experiences through the lens of the camera. Searching for the perfect shot can distract you from enjoying and learning from what is around you.

Digital storage space/35mm film

To maximize your use of a digital camera, consider the following:

- If you plan to print your photos, set the camera on the highest resolution possible.
- Know the storage limits on your media cards. Consider bringing a spare in the case the first one reaches its maximum.
- Figure out how much battery life you will have depending on the kind of battery. Take extra batteries, or consider how you will recharge – do you need a plug converter or voltage adapter?

If you are using 35mm film, take enough film for the entire program because it is generally more expensive overseas than in the U.S. Don’t underestimate the number of rolls you will need – better to have too much than too little. Generally 12 – 25 rolls will do it. More serious photographers may want 30 – 40 rolls. With various new security precautions now in place, research how best to transport both undeveloped and developed rolls of film before you depart.

Currently, it is strongly recommended not to pack any film in your checked luggage.

Thank you for taking the time to become an informed traveler! We wish you a safe and wonderful journey!

APPENDICES

Travelers Code of Ethics

The following statements are good international travel reminders and can apply in any destination.

1. Travel in a spirit of humility and with a genuine desire to meet and talk with the local people.
2. Be aware of the feelings of other people, thus preventing what might be offensive behavior. Remember especially with photography.
3. Cultivate the habit of listening and observing rather than merely hearing and seeing.
4. Realize that people in the country you visit often have time concepts and thought patterns different from your own. Not inferior, just different.
5. Discover the enlightenment that comes from seeing another way of life.
6. Acquaint yourself with local customs. Respect local customs; people will gladly help you.
7. Cultivate the habit of asking questions instead of knowing all the answers.
8. Remember that you are one of thousands of visiting tourists. Do not expect special privileges.
9. If you really want a home away from home, why travel?
10. Spend wisely. Remember when shopping, that the bargain you obtain is only possible because of the low wages paid to the maker.
11. Make no promises to local people unless you are certain you can fulfill them.
12. Reflect daily on your experiences; seek to deepen your understanding.

Traveler's Toilet Trauma

By Rick Steves

Every traveler has one or two great toilet stories. Foreign toilets can be traumatic. And they can be hard to find. But, when all is said and done, they are one of those little things that make travel so much more interesting than staying home. Before you dive into that world of memorable porcelain experiences, let me prepare you for toilet-shock, and pass on a few tips on finding a Water Closet (W.C.) quickly when you need one.

First, about toilet trauma. While most European toilets are reasonably similar to our own, many are dirtier than and different from what you're used to. Only Americans need disposable bibs to sit on and a paper strip draped over their toilet, assuring them that no one has sat there yet. In fact, those of us who need a throne to sit on are in the minority. Most humans sit on their haunches and nothing more. When many Asian refugees are de-Oriented in the United States, they have to be taught not to stand on our rims.

So, if you plan to venture away from the international-style hotels in your travels and become a temporary local person, "going local" will take on a very real meaning. Experienced travelers enjoy recalling the shock they got the first time they opened the door and found only porcelain footprints and a squat-and-aim hole in the ground — complete with flies in a holding pattern. When confronted by the "nontilet," remind yourself that if a Western-style toilet were there, it would be so filthy you wouldn't want to get near it.

Toilet paper (like spoon and fork) is another Western "essential" that most people on our planet do not use. What they use varies. I won't get too graphic here, but remember that a billion people in south Asia never eat with their left hand. Some countries have very frail plumbing, and toilet paper will jam up the W.C.'s. If wastebaskets are full of dirty paper, leave yours there too.

Take only a small amount of toilet paper with you from home. When you run out, tour a first-class hotel or restaurant and borrow 8 or 10 more yards of good, soft stuff. Local grade TP can be closer to wax or crepe paper — good for a laugh but not much more. The TP scene has improved markedly in the last few years, but you'll still find some strange stuff worth taking home to show your friends.

Finding a decent public toilet can be frustrating. Once I dropped a group off in a town for a potty stop and when I picked them up 20 minutes later, none had found relief. Most countries have few public rest rooms. You'll need to find a knack for finding a private W.C.

I can sniff out a biffy in a jiffy. Any place that serves food or drinks has a rest room. No restaurateur would label his W.C. so those on the street can see, but you can walk into nearly any café or restaurant, politely and confidently, and find a bathroom. Assume it's somewhere in the back. It's easiest in large places that have outdoor seating, because waiters will think you're a customer just making a quick trip inside. Some call it rude — I call it survival. If you feel like it, ask permission. Just smile, "Toilet?" I'm rarely turned down. Timid people buy a drink they don't want in order to leave one. That's unnecessary. American-type fast food places are very common these days and always have a decent and fairly "public" rest room. When nature beckons and there's no restaurant or bar handy, look in parks, train stations, on trains, in museums, hotel lobbies, government buildings, and on upper floors of department stores. Large, classy hotels are as impressive as many palaces you'll see. You can always find a royal retreat here and plenty of very soft TP. They are an oasis in Third World countries, where a pleasant sit-down toilet experience is a rare treat.

Many cities (Paris, London, Amsterdam) are dotted with coin-op telephone booth-style W.C.'s on street corners. You insert a coin, the door opens, and you have 15 minutes of toilet time accompanied by Sinatra Muzac. When you leave, it disinfects itself.

After you've found and used a toilet, you're down to your last challenge — flushing it. Rarely will you find the basic handle you grew up with. Find some protuberance and push, pull, twist, squeeze, step on, or pray to it until the waterfall starts. Electric-eye sinks and urinals are increasingly popular.

In many countries, you'll need to be selective to avoid the gag-a-maggot variety of toilets. Public toilets like those in parks are often repulsive. I never leave a museum without taking advantage of its restrooms — free, clean, and full of artistic graffiti. Use the toilets on the train rather than in the station to save time and money. Toilets on first-class cars are a cut above second-class toilets. I go first-class even with a second-class ticket. Train toilets are located on the ends of cars, where it's most jiggly. A trip to the train's john always reminds me of the rodeo. Never use a train W.C. while stopped in a station.

Men: The women who seem to inhabit Europe's W.C.'s are a popular topic of conversation among Yankee travelers. Sooner or later, you'll be minding your own business at the urinal and the lady will bring you your change or sweep under your feet. Yes, it is distracting, but you'll just have to get used to it — she has.

And finally, there are countries where the people don't use rest rooms at all. I've been on buses that have just stopped, and 50 people scatter. Three minutes later they reload, relieved. It takes a little adjusting, but that's travel.

Reprinted from Europe through the Backdoor Newsletter

UPPER MIDWEST ASSOCIATION FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION



*Augustana College - Elmhurst College - Gustavus Adolphus College - Hastings College
St. Ambrose University - St. Catherine University - University of St. Thomas*

UMAIE JANUARY TERM ABROAD AGREEMENT

I, _____ (Student's name) will be participating in a cross-cultural study abroad course _____ (course name) henceforth known as "course" for January term, 2012, offered through the Upper Midwest Association for Intercultural Education (UMAIE). Although UMAIE and _____ (enrolling institution, henceforth known as "college") are sponsoring this course, I understand that neither UMAIE, the college nor any of the Faculty Directors or Travel Arrangers will be supervising me all the time. I will have the opportunity and the right to independently leave the group periodically, subject to the Faculty Directors' requirements for participation in and attendance at classes and other activities which are a required part of the course. Therefore, I will be responsible for my own safety and cannot hold UMAIE, the members of the consortium or the college, the Travel Arranger or the Faculty Directors liable for any injuries to my person or property or any other losses as a result of my participation in the course.

I, therefore, agree that:

1. I and my heirs and successors and assigns agree to indemnify and hold harmless UMAIE, the members of the consortium and the college, its past and present trustees officers, employees, agents, and their heirs, successors, and assigns of and from each, from any and all loss, cost, damage, liability or expense (including reasonable attorneys' fees), resulting in or arising from my participation in the course.
2. If I decide to leave the course before completing my course of study, I will provide UMAIE and the college with advance written notice of my intention to leave the course. If I leave the course prior to its completion, UMAIE and/or the college has no liability to provide or arrange for transportation, housing, dining or other services to me in connection with my early departure.
3. I will comply with all rules and regulations issued by UMAIE, the college, the Faculty Director or any Coordinating Institution. It is within the Faculty Director's discretion to determine that my violation of such rules and regulations warrants my termination from the course. In that event, I will be sent home at my own expense. I further agree that I will,
 - a) not buy, sell or use illegal drugs at any time;
 - b) not engage in abusive use of alcohol;
 - c) participate in all classes and scheduled activities unless ill; and
 - d) abide by dress and cultural codes suitable in the countries visited.

4. UMAIE and/or the college may, in its sole discretion, determine that circumstances within a foreign country require the cancellation of the course within that country. UMAIE and/or the college will provide me with as much advance notice as possible of its intention to cancel the course in which I will participate. I also understand that UMAIE, the college, the overseas institution or the foreign government may prematurely terminate the course. In that event, UMAIE and/or the college will provide me with assistance in arranging transportation back to the United States. Consistent with paragraphs 1 and 2 above, UMAIE and/or the college bears no liability for any losses or claims incurred by me in connection with my own early termination from the course or UMAIE or the college's termination of its participation in the course. If I decide to remain in the foreign country after receiving notice of UMAIE's and/or the college's intent to terminate the course, I bear complete responsibility and liability for my own care and safety.
5. I am responsible for any and all required payments and charges applicable to the course. I understand the course's cancellation policies and fees and agree to abide by them: a \$500 cancellation fee is withheld for students who withdraw between September 16 and November 1, 2011. A refund for cancellations occurring after November 1, 2011 is based upon recoverable costs. The ENTIRE COURSE COST may be forfeited. Because course costs are based on group arrangements the recoverable costs cannot be calculated until the course returns. If cancellation occurs 30 days or less prior to departure, there will be no refund. Travel cancellation insurance is recommended for students with pre-existing medical conditions. This insurance must be purchased at the time of registration. Please discuss this with your campus UMAIE Board Member. Due to general inflation, a fluctuation of exchange rates, fuel surcharges, etc., UMAIE reserves the right to increase the cost of the course.
6. I hereby authorize UMAIE and/or the Faculty Director to procure all necessary medical assistance while I participate in this course and to authorize any competent medical person to do all things reasonably necessary including the administration of anesthetics and surgery to treat any injury or illness which occurs during my participation in the course. I understand I will be financially responsible for any medical treatment I receive.
7. I acknowledge that the Faculty Director cannot guarantee that special dietary needs can always be accommodated. Students with such needs are encouraged to contact the Faculty Directors with any questions prior to registering for the course.
8. I have read this entire AGREEMENT and agree to its terms on behalf of myself and my dependent.

Dated: (student's signature)

Dated: (parent's signature unless at least 18 years old)

Check out these web sites!



US State Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to apply for a U.S. passport• Entry requirements to foreign countries for U.S. citizens (includes visa requirements)• U.S. State Dept Travel warnings• Tips for travelers for different world regions from the U.S. State Dept• Up-to-date information on baggage	travel.state.gov
Guidebooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lonely Planet home page• Rough Guides• Let's Go• Fodors	www.tsa.gov studentsabroad.state.gov www.lonelyplanet.com www.roughguides.com www.letsgo.com www.fodors.com
Centers for Disease Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health Information by country	www.cdc.gov
Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resources for short-term insurance, trip cancellation insurance and more.	www.insuremytrip.com www.studyabroadinsurance.com www.travelguard.com
Ability and Study Abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information on traveling abroad for people with disabilities• Global Access• Access Abroad	www.miusa.org www.globalaccessnews.com www.umabroad.umn.edu/access
LGBT and Study Abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Links to sites dealing with issues involving the • LGBT community and international travel.• LGBT Rights by Country or Territory• Gay and Lesbian Travel & Resource Guide• NAFSA Rainbow Special Interest Group	www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbi-gay/student.htm www.ciee.org/study/advisors/identity en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_by_country_or_territory www.gaymart.com/5persorg/6city/targ.html www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbi-gay/student.htm
Race/Ethnicity & Study Abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AllAbroad.us• Diversity Abroad	www.allabroad.us www.diversityabroad.com
Gender and Study Abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Her Own Way	www.voyage.gc.ca/publications/woman-guide_voyager-feminin-eng.asp
U.S. Postal Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International shipping rules, regs and rates. Good links, too.	www.uspsglobal.com www.countrycallingcodes.com www.timeanddate.com
Currency conversions		www.xe.net/ucc
Global Information Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time zones, telephone codes and more!	www.ginfo.net
Map Quest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maps of various cities around the world	www.mapquest.com

SUGGESTED PACKING CHECKLIST

Documents and Essentials

- Money belt or neck wallet
- Passport and, if necessary, Visa
- Airline tickets
- Traveler's checks
- ATM, credit or debit card
- Insurance information and claim forms
- Phone card
- Other _____
- Other _____

Miscellaneous

- Luggage locks and tags
- Swiss army-type multi-purpose knife (packed in your checked luggage!)
- Small sewing kit
- Laundry kit – line, soap, flat drain plug
- Alarm clock (battery-operated)
- Adapter, voltage converter, transformer – if needed
- Camera and film
- Favorite music – a couple of CD's or tapes (and portable player)
- Address book
- Journal
- A notebook and pencils to get you started
- Phrase book or dictionary, if visiting a non-English-speaking country
- Small flashlight & batteries
- Sunglasses
- Ziplock plastic bags
- Earplugs
- Eyemask to block out light while you sleep
- Pictures of family/friends (for those in a home stay)
- Flipflops for the shower
- Bag to pack flat and use to carry purchases home
- Other _____
- Other _____

Medical/Toiletries

- Prescription medicine in original containers, plus written prescriptions
- Eyeglasses or contacts, spare pair, and lens prescription
- First aid kit
- Sunscreen
- Wash cloth and small towel
- Name-brand non-prescription medications
- Moleskin for blisters
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Shampoo, deodorant, hair care products, feminine hygiene products
- Over-the-counter medications such as pain relievers, cold/allergy medicine, antihistamines, vitamins, medication for diarrhea and constipation, decongestants and hydrocortisone cream.

Clothing- Cold Weather

- Heavier outerwear, as recommended (coat, mittens, gloves, hat, scarf)
- 1 pair comfortable walking shoes
- 1 pair boots or dress shoes
- 3-5 pairs socks
- 5-7 sets underwear (remember that nylon dries faster than cotton)
- 1-2 pairs of trousers or skirts
- 3-4 shirts
- 1-2 sweaters
- Long underwear
- Pajamas
- Nice outfit (shirt and tie for men, nice dress or outfit for women)
- Other _____
- Other _____

Clothing- Warm Weather

- Sunhat with brim/scarf
- 2 pairs sandals/walking shoes
- 3-4 shirts
- 2-3 pair of trousers/shorts
- Jacket/windbreaker
- 3-5 pairs socks
- 5-7 sets underwear (remember that nylon dries faster than cotton)
- Nice outfit (shirt and tie for men, nice dress or outfit for women)
- Swimsuit
- Pajamas
- Other _____
- Other _____

Yes, I'm American. How Did You Guess?

By Guy Trebay

Published: October 21, 2001

WHAT is an American? Both common sense and the census make clear that there is no single answer. But there may be a way to say what an American looks like, and it probably starts with the shoes.

Footwear is "a dead giveaway," Kathy Sudeikis, vice president of the American Society of Travel Agents, said. "There are other, more obvious things," Ms. Sudeikis added, "like Georgetown jerseys and Yankees caps." But Nikes are to the American abroad as sandals worn with socks are to the German tourist, a national indicator more foolproof than any passport.

In the weeks since Sept. 11, the United States has urged the closing of foreign schools in Muslim nations, bolstered security in Europe and Asia, warned its citizens living in the Middle East to limit their movements and cautioned all Americans abroad to keep a low profile.

"The American people need to be alert," Ari Fleischer, the White House spokesman, said in early October, days after the State Department warned Americans abroad that "obvious symbols of American capitalism" might be singled out for attack in the month to come.

The question that presented itself was: What does an obvious symbol of American capitalism look like, sound like and, more importantly, wear?

"For some reason, Americans abroad tend to look like they've taken the Boy Scout 'Be Prepared' motto to heart," Stacey D'Erasmus, a novelist, said after her return from a two-week trip through Umbria in Italy. "A lot of it is clichéd," Ms. D'Erasmus went on, "but you see Americans with the water bottle, the hiking shoes, the sunglasses and the fanny pack that makes them look like Miss Jane Hathaway from 'The Beverly Hillbillies,' while most women in Rome are wearing three-inch heels and a push-up bra to work."

The old saw counseling travelers to adopt the local coloration has rarely seemed more sensible. And in a startling bit of news for a beleaguered \$582 billion travel industry, many seem undeterred from going abroad. A survey commissioned in early October by the Travel Industry of America found that nearly 70 percent of travelers who had booked before the Sept. 11 attacks had not changed their plans. An informal survey of local travel agents this week suggests that local incidents of bioterrorism have not automatically resulted in a barrage of canceled travel plans.

"We still have people traveling all over," Jean Furukawa, a consultant at Tzell Travel, a privately owned Manhattan agency with \$300 million in annual billings, said. "The only advice we might give them is basically, if you are going to a country you have any second thoughts about, just don't be loud, boisterous and pushy, watch your language and don't use profanities."

Don't, to paraphrase the State Department warnings, become a caricature of an ugly American. To that end, say travel advisers, Americans abroad might consider abandoning such sartorial giveaways as logo T-shirts, baseball caps, Air Jordans, black Reeboks and fanny packs. Prudence also discourages the flaunting of The International Herald Tribune and, for that matter, cans of Diet Coke (or Coke Light as it is called in Europe).

As an American-born partner in C&M Media, a public relations company that represents many European luxury firms, Angela Mariani is particularly sensitive to the subtleties of social and cultural difference. "I lived through the Persian Gulf war unhappiness with Americans in Italy," Ms. Mariani said, "when you'd see protesters in the Piazza Navona with signs saying, 'Americans, we will get you.' I do think that, to a certain extent, the way one is spotted as an American is through aesthetics."

The aesthetics aren't limited to clothes. Italians, for instance, Ms. Mariani said, tend not to eat while walking down the street. "They are more dressed up in general," she said. "Women rarely walk alone. Even teens, to be really general, are a little more formal" than the average academic-year-abroad student wearing sweat-pants and a Hoyas sweatshirt.

Moreover, Americans, Ms. D'Erasmus said, "seem to displace many more cubic feet of air than anyone else around us or that we need. We're used to taking up room," she said, "and we do."

This becomes particularly conspicuous, of course, in Old World locales where, as Ms. D'Erasmus said, "it's little streets and little tables and little rooms, and Americans can seem Brobdingnagian."

In truth the ways that people employ public space define them as precisely as a Planet Hollywood T-shirt would, according to the anthropologist Edward T. Hall. In his lifelong study of the cultural perceptions of space, known as "proxemic theory," Mr. Hall, 87, has aimed to establish that "space is a basic system of communication and status, like a language in which the way you approach another person describes who you are."

Cultural expectations about space vary widely, of course. In the United States, people stand four to seven feet apart when talking. In most of Europe, studies show, that distance is cut in half. "You can't change everything about yourself, and try to blend in in Japan," Carolyn Snyder, a spokeswoman for Maupintour of Lawrence, Kan., said. But, she added, you can alter the way you behave and dress.

"I'm certainly leaving behind my 'Surfer's Supplies, Ocean City New Jersey T-shirt' when I travel," Ed Hewitt, a writer for the Independent Traveler, said. In a recent column for the online travel advisory www.Independent-traveler.com, Mr. Hewitt counseled travelers to dress "quietly" or "anonymously." His aim, he said, was to cajole American travelers away from their isolationist ways. Although the column was written before Sept. 11, recent events have served to sharpen the wisdom of his advice.

"In management training terms, you only have 30 seconds when you encounter someone to make your impression," Mr. Hewitt said. "It's a matter of carriage, simple issues of appearance, what you say and do. I'm not suggesting that people wear turbans or put the Canadian flag on their backpacks, but, in potentially perilous circumstances, if you can avoid drawing attention to yourself, that 30 seconds could be your cushion."