



IAESTE United States
An AIPT Program

WORK ABROAD HANDBOOK

Administrative Procedures
Finances
Travel
Communication
Cross-Cultural Adjustment
Health and Safety
Important Contacts

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Administrative Procedures	<u>Page 5</u>
Passports	
Visas/Permits	
U.S. Permanent Residents	
Non-U.S. Citizens	
Pre-Departure Orientation	
Internship Credit	
Medical Insurance	
The International Student ID Card (ISIC)	
Language Proficiency	
Important Documents	
Income tax	
Voting while abroad	
Returning to your university	
Trainee Reports	
Deposit Refunds & Certificates	
Photo Contest	
Scholarships and Awards	
Chapter 2: Finances	<u>Page 9</u>
Maintenance Allowance	
Financial Aid	
Handling Money While Abroad	
<i>Traveler's checks</i>	
<i>ATM Machine</i>	
<i>Debit Card</i>	
<i>Express Cash</i>	
<i>Cash Advances</i>	
<i>Bank Checks</i>	
<i>Wiring Money</i>	
<i>Online Banking</i>	
<i>Sample Budgets</i>	
<i>Extra Expenses</i>	
<i>Tips to save on these expensive extras</i>	
Chapter 3: Travel	<u>Page 13</u>
Making Your Flight Arrangements	
<i>Round-trip tickets</i>	
<i>Open-ended round-trip tickets</i>	
<i>One-way airline tickets</i>	
<i>Consolidator and Courier companies</i>	
<i>Frequent Flier Tickets</i>	
<i>Newspapers, Travel Guides</i>	
Arrival, Immigration, and Customs	
Travel While You Are Abroad	
Popular Travel Guidebooks	
<i>Lonely Planet</i>	
<i>Let's Go</i>	
<i>Berkeley Guides</i>	
<i>Blue Guides</i>	
<i>Frommers Budget Travel Online</i>	
<i>Rick Steves Europe Through The Back Door guidebooks</i>	
Other Travel Resources	
Packing tips and suggestions	
<i>Luggage</i>	
<i>Clothing</i>	
<i>Electricity Converters</i>	
Packing List	

Chapter 4: Communication	<u>Page 20</u>
By Telephone	
By e-mail	
By cell phone	
By fax	
Chapter 5: Cross-Cultural Adjustment	<u>Page 22</u>
Understanding Culture Shock	
Responding to Culture Shock	
Bring an open mind and learn to appreciate the differences that make up diversity!	
Returning Home	
Chapter 6: Health & Safety	<u>Page 28</u>
Before You Go	
<i>Research</i>	
<i>Embassy Registration</i>	
<i>Immunizations</i>	
<i>Medical Services Overseas</i>	
<i>Medic Alert</i>	
<i>Physician's Letter & Prescriptions</i>	
<i>Corrective Lenses</i>	
<i>Medical Directories</i>	
<i>First Aid Kit</i>	
Once You're Abroad - Health Issues	
<i>Living Abroad & Depression</i>	
<i>Eating Disorders</i>	
<i>Substance Abuse & Sexual Assault</i>	
<i>Contraception</i>	
<i>Preventing AIDS & Sexually Transmitted Diseases</i>	
Once You're Abroad - Safety and Security Issues	
<i>The Law</i>	
<i>Drugs and Alcohol</i>	
<i>Street Safety</i>	
<i>Driving While Abroad</i>	
<i>Keeping your valuables safe</i>	
<i>Violence and Terrorism</i>	
<i>Anti-Americanism</i>	
<i>U.S. Department of State</i>	
Chapter 7: Health & Safety for Women Abroad	<u>Page 35</u>
Sexual Harassment and Prevention Abroad By Nancy Newport	
<i>Introduction</i>	
<i>Cultural Sensitivity</i>	
<i>Personal Boundaries</i>	
<i>The Ultimate Boundary - Your Body</i>	
<i>Concept of Male Friendship - A Boundary Misunderstanding</i>	
<i>Assertiveness</i>	
<i>Actions</i>	
<i>Persistent People</i>	
<i>Trust</i>	
<i>Harassment Burn Out</i>	
<i>Potential Predator Behavior—Progressive Intrusive Invasion of Boundaries</i>	
<i>Conclusion</i>	
DATE RAPE DRUGS: Important Information You Should Know	
<i>Four major types:</i>	
<i>How can I protect myself?</i>	
<i>Signs that you may have been drugged</i>	
<i>If it happens to you...</i>	
Safety Tips and Common Sense for Women Abroad	
<i>Women's Crises Support Centers Abroad</i>	
<i>Travel Tips</i>	
Chapter 8: Important Contacts	<u>Page 41</u>

Preface

Dear IAESTE Participant,

Congratulations on your decision to work abroad!

This handbook is intended to make your work abroad experience as problem-free and rewarding as possible. One goal of the Work Abroad Handbook is to provide a valuable resource for you as you prepare for your experience abroad. The Handbook aims to cover a variety of meaningful issues and resources while striving to convey in part the amazing benefits that one receives as a work abroad participant. Please read this handbook carefully, pack it for your internship abroad, and don't forget to fill out the emergency and contact information in the back of the handbook.

You should, of course, also refer to any handbooks or information provided by your university's international programs office, as well as the wealth of country-specific information available on the Web. Some universities also offer pre-departure orientation sessions for students.

Most importantly, enjoy your experience abroad! Take advantage of the wealth of opportunities that will come your way. I am confident that you will find this to be one of the most enriching experiences of your life.

If you have any questions or are in need of assistance, please don't hesitate to contact our office by phone (001-410-997-3069), fax (001-410-997-5186), or e-mail (outbound@aipt.org).

Good Luck!

Best wishes,



Mike Jackson
University Relations Manager
IAESTE United States

CHAPTER 1: ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Passports

It is necessary to have a valid passport in order to enter any foreign country. If the country in which you will be working requires you to have a visa or work permit, you must have your passport prior to the visa application deadline. If you already have a passport, be sure that it is valid for the duration of your program, including any post-program travel you plan to do. If it will expire during your stay, you need to have it renewed before leaving. We recommend (and some countries require) that your passport be valid for at least 6 months after the tentative end date of your stay. Please make sure to fill out the emergency contact information in your passport.

Processing can take as long as 8 weeks during the peak summer travel season, so apply for your passport **immediately** if you haven't already done so. For complete information about obtaining a U.S. passport, please contact your local U.S. Post Office or go to http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.

Visas/Permits

The type of work authorization needed for your IAESTE internship varies greatly according to the country of training, your citizenship, the length of your stay, and several other factors. You may be required to obtain a work permit, residence permit, and/or visa in order to enter and legally work in your country of training. Every country has different requirements, and they are always subject to change. After being accepted by your overseas employer, our office will give you a customized set of instructions as to what sort of documentation you will need, as well as how to obtain it. Please follow these instructions carefully and immediately, as failure to do so may result in being refused permission to enter the country.

If you will be traveling to countries outside of your country of training, you should check on visa requirements for these countries as well. If, before leaving the U.S., you find out that a visa is not required for a country you would like to visit, you should still call the U.S. Embassy or Consular office in your host country to double-check directly before your departure. Visa requirements are subject to change at any time. We recommend that you get a multiple-entry visa for your country of training.

U.S. Permanent Residents

U.S. permanent residents must be certain that they have valid passports or special travel documents in addition to the Alien Resident Card ("Green Card").

Non-U.S. Citizens

Foreign students on "F" or "J" visas must have valid passports. You must also have a properly issued I-20 form (for F-students) or DS-2019 form (for J-students), as well as a valid U.S. visa and re-entry document if you plan to return to the U.S. after training. Even if you don't plan to return to the U.S., some countries will not issue you a visa without a valid U.S. visa. At least 2 weeks before your scheduled departure date, you must contact your foreign student advisor to have him or her sign and re-validate your documents.

Pre-Departure Orientation

Once you have been accepted to the IAESTE program, you should check with your university's office of international programs to see if there are any pre-departure orientation sessions that you can attend. These pre-departure orientations are extremely helpful in a variety of aspects and well worth your time!

Internship Credit

You should inquire with your school or department advisor about the possibility of receiving credit for your internship.

Medical Insurance

Medical insurance is extremely important, and IAESTE requires that you have complete coverage before departing for your internship. You may purchase insurance through IAESTE, or you may provide us with proof of your own insurance coverage. If providing your own coverage, you need to make sure that it meets the IAESTE minimums, including coverage for medical evacuation and repatriation (travel expenses for returning home if your medical condition warrants it). You will receive more detailed information on IAESTE insurance requirements with your acceptance papers. Some countries also require that you purchase insurance in country; you will be notified if this is true for you.

The International Student ID Card (ISIC)

It is recommended that students going abroad purchase the International Student ID Card ("ISIC"). This card is the only internationally recognized proof of your student status. Additionally, cardholders have access to various discounts and benefits around the world. These benefits include low airfares, reduced rail, bus and ferry prices; and discounts to museums, galleries, other attractions, accommodation, and meals, both overseas and in the U.S. A 10 percent discount on AT&T phone calls made back to the U.S., and reduced rates for packages shipped by Federal Express to the U.S. are also included.

In addition, ISIC also provides you with automatic supplemental medical/accident insurance anywhere you travel outside the U.S. for the entire validity period of the card. **Please note, however, that the insurance coverage offered by ISIC does not meet IAESTE requirements.**

The ISIC card can be purchased through IAESTE United States for only \$25. If you have not already purchased a card when completing the online Student Nominated form, please contact outbound@aipt.org to inquire about obtaining your own ISIC card.

Language Proficiency

Although many IAESTE employers do not require proficiency in the language of the host country, it is in your best interest to learn as much of the language of your host country as you can before leaving the U.S. This is important in understanding the culture, even if your work will be in English. Do not panic, however, if you are not completely fluent. There is no better way to learn a language than to spend time working and living in a place where that language is spoken.

If you have no experience at all with the language of your host country, you should try to take a language course, listen to some language training tapes, or have someone tutor you privately before you leave. Developing foreign language skills requires effort, but you will learn much more about the host country and the culture if you are able to communicate in the local language.

Important Documents

You should leave photocopies of all your important documents in the U.S. with your parents or someone else you trust. It is also helpful to pack a few copies of your passport and keep them apart from your passport. If your passport is stolen you will then be able to show the copy to the U.S. Embassy. You should also give your parents or someone you trust the Power of Attorney to handle your finances (such as tax returns, bills, money transfers) on your behalf. If something should happen to you, your parents may need copies of these items as references:

- Passport
- All credit cards. Make sure the names, numbers, and expiration dates are visible
- Driver's license, student ID and ISIC card
- All travelers check numbers
- Several signed checks and deposit slips
- Medical insurance information
- Airline/Transportation Information

Income tax

Even if you are abroad, or have earned income that is exempt from taxes, you may still be required to file U.S. income tax returns while you are abroad. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) information and tax forms can be obtained from U.S. Embassies and Consulates on the Web at <http://www.projectvisa.com> and <http://www.embassy.org>. Tax laws change from year to year and vary depending upon the tax treaty with your country of training so be sure to ask any questions you may have at the consulate. You can also find federal tax information on the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov>. You can obtain additional tax forms and information from your state office. Be sure that they send you the state and city tax forms; the embassy will not have these. If you are a non-U.S. citizen you should check with the appropriate authorities in your country for taxation information. Please consult a tax professional for further details. You may also have to file taxes in your host country, depending on your length of stay and the country. IAESTE encourages participants to contact Tax Back International (www.taxback.com) for additional assistance in filing U.S. income taxes.

Voting while abroad

If you will be abroad on Election Day, the easiest thing to do is to request an absentee ballot. You may do so in person or by mail to your local election office if you are already registered to vote.

Returning to your university

Before you go, you should make arrangements for class registration and for housing after your return.

Trainee Reports

Each IAESTE placement program participant must submit the Trainee Report upon completion of the internship. IAESTE will provide you with an evaluation form prior to your departure from the U.S. **In order to receive your \$100 deposit refund you must return the report to the IAESTE United States office by December 1** (If your training ends after November 15, you have one month from the end date of your training to submit your Trainee Report). Students who submit reports late will not receive a refund. Students will receive their refund four to eight weeks after it is received by IAESTE United States.

These reports are used to evaluate the overall performance of both the program and the host employer. It is important that you submit your Trainee Report on time, with as much detail as possible, enabling us to review the information and make improvements and alterations to the program in the future, if necessary.

Trainee reports can be completed as an online survey. You will receive the survey website when upon your return to the United States.

Deposit Refunds & Certificates

Upon receiving your evaluation forms by the indicated deadline, we will send you a \$100 refund of your deposit fee, as well as an IAESTE Certificate, verifying your internship abroad.

Photo Contest

IAESTE United States sponsors the annual Nathan Harrell Photo Award for the IAESTE Technical Internship program students. Award guidelines and details will be sent to each program participant prior to departure from the U.S. IAESTE United States must receive all entries no later than December 1. Winners will be notified by December 15, and results will be posted on our Web site.

Scholarships and Awards

IAESTE United States is pleased to offer several scholarships to which members can apply after they have completed an IAESTE internship. Students will be sent information about the available scholarship opportunities; further information can be found on our Web site at: <http://www.iaesteunitedstates.org/us-students/scholarships/index.htm>

In order to qualify for a scholarship, applicants must:

1. Be a member of IAESTE United States at the time of the internship.
2. Be enrolled at a university that has a Local Committee on campus
3. Submit a Scholarship Application.
4. Submit a photo of the internship experience.
5. Submit the scholarship-specific materials.

Scholarship applications are due on December 1st. Students who begin their programs prior to December 1, 2009 should send in their scholarship materials on or before December 1, 2009. Students who begin their internships after December 1st, 2009 should apply in 2010.

CHAPTER 2: FINANCES

Living abroad will likely present some increased costs compared with living and working in the U.S. You will be exposed to many new and different activities, food, and cultural events. The costs depend largely on the activities you choose, the country you are visiting, and your personal spending habits. This chapter is intended to address some of these issues and to present some suggestions for successful financial management while abroad.

Maintenance Allowance

The salary you will be paid by your employer should be sufficient for you to live modestly yet adequately during your training. The IAESTE committee in your host country is responsible for ensuring that this allowance, after taxes, will cover at least food and lodging costs.

Your IAESTE internship is not a moneymaking proposition, but is intended for you to gain practical experience in your field. Employers are enthusiastic to hire IAESTE trainees, setting aside certain amounts of their yearly budgets for this purpose. To request an increase would be an insult to their generosity and would leave a bad impression. Under no circumstances may you approach an employer for an increase in the amount of stipend offered.

Financial Aid

You should check with the study abroad or international programs office on your campus to determine if you are eligible for any scholarship or grants through your university. IAESTE United States also offers scholarships for students. Please see Chapter 1 for further information on scholarships or visit the scholarship section of our Web site at <http://www.iaesteunitedstates.org/us-students/scholarships/index.htm>

Handling Money While Abroad

Upon arrival at your international destination, you may not have a chance to exchange money at the airport. You will need cash to pay for a taxi, food, porters, etc. You should take about \$100 worth of foreign currency with you when you leave the U.S. You can exchange most foreign currency at major airports, AAA, and any bank in the U.S. However, some banks do not keep a supply of foreign currency on hand and must order it, so plan ahead. You should check out currency exchange rates before you leave. These can be found on the Web at <http://www.oanda.com>. ATMs are increasingly available worldwide. Please consult the most up-to-date guidebook to see if any ATMs are readily available in your host city, as they often are in large international airports.

For the most part, receiving money while overseas is not very complicated. Options that may be available to you for receiving money abroad are briefly explained below. We strongly recommend that you have several alternatives to access money while abroad. Some possibilities include:

Traveler's checks

Traveler's checks are the safest way to carry cash overseas. They are known and accepted worldwide. However, they are not always accepted in non-traditional destinations or smaller towns. Traveler's checks are also insured and will be replaced if lost or stolen. In order to make a claim for lost or stolen traveler's checks it is essential to know the numbers of the missing checks. You should keep a good record of your check numbers and keep this separate from your checks. Traveler's checks may be purchased at any bank, American Express, or AAA. It is possible to buy traveler's checks in Dollars or in units of a Foreign Currency. Usually, either will be accepted. Most banks and other businesses charge a small fee for cashing traveler's checks. Smaller stores and markets will rarely accept traveler's checks, but larger companies or places that sell high-priced items usually will.

ATM Machine

In many cities, the simplest way to obtain cash is through an ATM machine. Withdrawing money from your bank account in the U.S. through an ATM will also give you the best exchange rate for the day. You should check with your bank before leaving the U.S. to find out where their ATM cards are accepted. Be sure to ask about the country you will be living in as well as any countries you plan on visiting. **IMPORTANT:** In order to use an ATM machine, you must know your PIN number! Some banks

assign a different PIN for overseas transactions. Check with your bank to find out which PIN you should use in your destination country. Also, please note that a foreign withdrawal surcharge may apply to your transactions.

Debit Card

Most banks now offer a Check Debit Card rather than a regular ATM card. A Check Debit Card can be used almost anywhere a Visa or MasterCard is accepted. This is a very convenient method to pay for things while abroad. And, as with any ATM transaction, the best exchange rate for the day is given. Again, you should confirm whether additional fees will apply to transactions overseas (up to 3% of the amount purchased).

Express Cash

American Express provides a service called "Express Cash" for its cardholders. This service allows you to withdraw money from your checking account in the U.S. via any American Express ATM. American Express has many travel offices and ATMs worldwide. See their Web site (<http://www.americanexpress.com>) for a list of locations.

Cash Advances

Another possibility for obtaining money while abroad is to make cash advances on a credit card through an ATM. This may come in handy in the event of an emergency and if you have someone back in the U.S. who can pay the bills for you. Just remember that when you make a cash advance, the interest, often higher than the rate for purchases, starts to accrue immediately. Also, you must know your PIN number to make cash advances. If you do not know your PIN number, call the phone number on your credit card, and have it sent to you.

Bank Checks

If you have a large sum of money that you would like to take with you when you leave the U.S., you can take it in the form of a check issued by your bank. When you open a bank account in your host country, you can deposit the bank check. This takes less time to clear (about a week, depending on which country you are in) than a personal check from the U.S., which can take four or more weeks.

Wiring Money

Wiring money involves transferring money directly from one bank account to another. Before leaving the U.S., it is a good idea to ask your bank if they have relations with a particular bank in your host country. If they do, you should open a bank account there. This will make money wiring simpler, and possibly less expensive. The fee for wiring money is fairly expensive. The person in the U.S. who is sending you money will pay \$30-\$50 and you will be charged a similar fee upon receiving the money. The benefits of wiring money are that it is safe and quick, especially if you are in an area where there are no ATM machines.

Online Banking

Many banks offer online banking as a way to manage your money and pay your bills via the internet. You should check with your bank and enroll in the program before you leave.

Sample Budgets

Sample monthly budgets from students who went abroad in several different countries are presented below. Keep in mind that many costs are dependent on an individual's lifestyle. Some of these costs may be the result of an extremely frugal or an extremely extravagant lifestyle. Also, the exchange rate for the American dollar that year can have an important impact on the costs of living abroad.

<p>London, England: Lifestyle: Above Average Rent (in Central London): \$540 Transportation (Zone 1 Tube): \$90 Food: \$135 Entertainment/Drink: \$200 Total: \$965/month Comments: It is possible to get by on around 100 pounds a week (that doesn't count accommodation) without having a lot of fun and eating a lot of potatoes.</p>	<p>Helsinki, Finland: Lifestyle: Above Average Rent: \$410 Transportation: \$20 Food: \$200 Travel: \$40 Phone: \$100 Total: \$770/month</p>
<p>Lausanne, Switzerland: Lifestyle: Frugal Rent: \$320 Transportation: \$40 Food: \$200 Travel: \$150 Entertainment: \$100 Misc.: \$25 Total: \$835/month Comments: Food costs a lot more than it does in the U.S. However, other things like ski passes can be a lot cheaper than the U.S. Plan to spend more than you normally would. Switzerland is now not much more expensive than England.</p>	<p>Amsterdam, the Netherlands: Lifestyle: Above Average Rent: \$400 Transportation: \$30 Food: \$200 Travel: \$300 Entertainment: \$100 Misc: \$30 Total: \$1060 Comments: The introduction of the Euro in 2002 and the exchange rate of the dollar to Euro has made Amsterdam a much more expensive place to live for US students.</p>
<p>China: Lifestyle: Average Rent: \$60 Transportation: \$20 Food: \$160 Travel: \$100 Misc.: \$40 Total: \$220/month</p>	<p>Munich, Germany: Lifestyle: Not thrifty Rent: \$265 Transportation: \$30 Food: a lot! Entertainment: a lot! Phone: \$60 Total: \$850/month</p>
<p>Monterrey, Mexico: Lifestyle: Frugal Rent: \$250 Transportation: \$20 Food: \$200 Travel: \$50 Entertainment: \$100 Misc.: \$50 Total: \$670/month</p>	<p>Brazil: Lifestyle: average Rent: \$0 Brazil usually has home hospitality Transportation: \$.50/bus ride Food: \$7-10 for a nice meal out Travel: \$10-30 for a coach bus to major cities Misc.: \$20 Total: \$100/month</p>

Extra Expenses

Based on the experiences of other students who have worked abroad, some of the little things that can add up are:

- Cultural Activities (movies, concerts, plays, operas, museums, etc.)
- Eating out
- Photography (including cost of film and development)
- Laundry and dry cleaning (generally more expensive than in the U.S.)
- Newspapers and magazines
- Gifts and souvenirs
- Postage and freight
- International phone calls

Tips to save on these expensive extras

- Don't waste your money on expensive English language movie theaters—wait and catch the latest Hollywood blockbuster on video when you get home.
- Check local newspapers for free cultural events.
- Always ask if there is a student discount.
- Try cooking at home if you can.
- Put rolls of film in envelopes labeled with the dates and main locations, and then develop the film when you get home. Added bonus - reliving your experience when you get the film developed months later.
- Take clothes that are easy to hand wash. Try to avoid dry cleaning - keep this in mind when you are packing.
- Get used to wearing clothes more than once before you wash them - this is normal. It is not uncommon to see someone wear the exact same outfit a couple days in a row.
- Forgo English language newspapers and magazines. Read periodicals online instead.
- Shipping things home will be expensive. Keep this in mind when packing before your trip. Leave some extra room in your bags, or take an extra bag that you can fill during your stay. Note: there will still be limits on your baggage for your return flight, so be sure not to exceed your allotted amount.
- Bring a large supply of toiletries and some gifts for people you will meet, that way you will have more room for your souvenirs on the way back.
- Before you leave, investigate prepaid phone cards. You can get great deals using MCI pre-paid cards, or other similar phone cards.

CHAPTER 3: TRAVEL

Traveling is an important aspect of working abroad. This chapter will discuss travel to and from the U.S. and travel once you are abroad, review several different travel guidebooks, and provide some useful packing tips.

Making Your Flight Arrangements

Travel arrangements between the United States and your destination abroad are your personal responsibility. If you start planning early, you will have more time to be on the lookout for special fares and good deals. Seat availability can also be a problem, especially if you are traveling in high season (summer for Europe). So plan ahead and shop around! However, please note that you should not purchase your plane tickets until you have received final employer acceptance and appropriate work authorization. Your final dates of training may change if there are delays in obtaining the acceptance or work authorization.

Cancellation policies vary by airline. If you think you might need to cancel a reservation for any reason, ask about it first. IAESTE also recommends that you purchase trip cancellation insurance. Please consult your travel provider for options and rates.

You have several options for your airline tickets:

Round-trip tickets

Usually the least expensive option. However, you must specify your return date at the time of purchase and travel must be completed within one year. Take this into consideration if you are unsure of when your internship will be over, or if you plan on doing any post-program travel. Most airlines will charge you a fee (\$100 and above) if you change your flight. Due to tighter restrictions, some may not allow you to change your flight at all.

Open-ended round-trip tickets

The choice that most students studying or working abroad opt for. Open-ended means that you are not required to specify the date of your return flight at the time of purchase. Because of this convenience, open-ended tickets are usually more expensive than regular round-trip tickets. Like round-trip tickets, open-ended tickets require travel to be completed within one year. If you buy an open-ended return ticket, you should book your return flight home as soon as you can.

One-way airline tickets

Sometimes it is possible to find really good deals on one-way fares, especially with charter flights. Just remember that if you buy a one-way ticket to leave the U.S., you will have to buy a one-way ticket for your return. You should start looking for a return ticket well in advance (4-5 months)!

Consolidator and Courier companies

Companies that sell discounted airline tickets. Consolidators (also known as "Bucket Shops" in Europe) are companies that buy unsold seats from airlines for international flights, and then sell them at a cheaper rate. There are no baggage restrictions, and tickets don't need to be purchased in advance (in fact, they are cheaper closer to the departure time). Courier companies "hire" you: they use your checked luggage space for freight, so you can only bring on carry-ons. You must be over 21, have a passport and appropriate visas. Most flights are round-trip with fixed-length stays. To get information about Couriers, call 1-800-822-0888 or see <http://www.courier.org>.

Frequent Flier Tickets

A great way to fly for free. In many cases companies have numerous sales representatives, corporate managers, and other employees traveling on a regular basis. See if you can contact any companies that have employees with vast amounts of frequent flier miles. They may be willing to donate their miles to you or purchase a ticket for you. They may even be able to deduct it on their taxes. It is also a great way for them to help a "local" student afford the chance of a lifetime. Please let us know if you are able to find any of these generous souls!

* Please note that some airlines are currently offering cancellation policies due to global conflicts and the decrease in airline activity. It is important for you to understand your airline's flight cancellation policy.

To make your travel arrangements, you have several options: going through a travel agent, booking independently, or going through a Consolidator. Searching online for tickets is always a quick, easy way to research prices. Here are some of the national resources available to you:

Travel Agencies:

- STA Travel (formerly known as Council Travel) (<http://www.statravel.com> or 1-800-777-0112)
- Let's Go Travel (<http://www.letsgo.com> or 617-495-9649)
- Student Universe (<http://www.studentuniverse.com>)
- Kasbah, an International Search Engine, (<http://www.kasbah.com>)
- Travel Agency Online (<http://www.cheaptickets.com>)
- Budget Travel Agency (<http://budgettravel.com>)
- Search ALL airlines and discount websites at www.Kayak.com
- Discount Travel Agency and budget travel info for Europe (<http://www.discount-airfare.com>)

While using budget internet airlines, always be sure to check it against the airline listed. Sometimes Orbitz and Expedia are only \$5 more (their service fee).

Newspapers, Travel Guides

Another good place to look for reduced fares is in the travel section in the *Sunday New York Times*, *Washington Post* or the *LA Times*. Most budget travel guides also have good advice on how to find discount flights.

Arrival, Immigration, and Customs

As you enter ANY country from another country via an international flight (or other means) you have to show your passport and any required visas and proof of immunizations. This process usually occurs immediately after you have deplaned and entered the airport and before you have taken your baggage through customs. Remember that admission to the country is entirely at the discretion of the immigration officer. It is wise to be polite and to dress neatly. The immigration officer, who determines the length of stay to be authorized and stamped into your passport, will normally ask you about the purpose of your visit and how long you plan to remain in the country.

After your passport has been stamped, and you have collected your luggage, you must pass through a customs inspection. You will probably receive a customs declaration form to be filled out on your plane (or train). Your bags may be very carefully examined, and you may be detained or asked to pay duties if there are any irregularities or violations of customs regulations. You may also be waved through with no special attention whatsoever. **Note: Do not "JOKE" about 'bombs' or smuggled items!**

Reminder: since you may be asked to provide a deposit on your housing, we strongly recommend that you have enough money with you to cover the cost of living for your first month abroad. It may take a few weeks for the necessary arrangements to be made so that your employer can pay you. In most cases, someone from either your employer's office or IAESTE will be able to meet you at the airport. In the rare case that this is not possible, we will do our best to obtain detailed instructions for what you should do upon arrival. If someone will be meeting you at the airport, we will try to either put you directly in touch with that person or give you as much information about that person as possible. Most students meet their contacts without any problem, especially in smaller cities. However, you should have a backup plan prepared in case something happens and you do not meet your contact. Some steps you can take:

- Have a second contact, if possible.
- Research a hostel that's close to the airport/train station where you will be arriving.
- Have a travel guide with you in case that hostel is sold out.

- Take contact information for our office, your supervisor, the IAESTE national committee, and the Local Committee (if applicable), and have it on your person, not in your checked luggage.

Travel While You Are Abroad

As a student abroad, you are most likely planning to travel within your host country, and possibly to neighboring countries as well. It is a fabulous opportunity for you to see a new part of the world. Take advantage of your weekends, your vacations, and the time before and after your internship. The costs and logistics of traveling abroad will depend largely on the country you are working in. Public transportation abroad will most likely be by bus or by train. Talking to students who have visited a country before you is an excellent source of information about travel, and consulting a guidebook is highly recommended. It is important for you to visit the State Department's Web site before traveling to other countries at <http://www.travel.state.gov>. This will give you up-to-date information and dangerous areas to avoid.

If you are working in Europe, the best mode of transportation is by train. Eurail passes are the most economical way to travel in Europe. You may purchase Eurail passes that are tailored directly to your travel plans. Passes are available for every country in Western Europe, as well as most Eastern European countries. For detailed information on the different passes available and prices consult a travel agent, or the Eurail Pass store on the web at <http://www.railpass.com>. You can also compare prices at www.raileurope.com. Eurail passes may only be purchased in the United States. If you decide you want to buy a pass while you are abroad, you should ask a friend or family member to purchase it in the U.S., and mail it to you. Alternately, paying full price for train travel in Europe can become very expensive. After living in a European country for more than 6 months, you are eligible to purchase an Interrail Pass, or a EuroDomino pass. Detailed information on these two options may be obtained at major train stations in Europe. They are similar to Eurail passes; however, they may be more or less expensive depending on the current exchange rate.

Visit the website and do some research before you purchase. Eurail passes are great if you're visiting a few countries in a short period of time and covering a lot of distance. If you're visiting neighboring countries individual tickets might be cheaper. You may qualify for the Youth Pass if you're under 26.

In addition to the trains, many students have taken advantage of some of the low-cost airlines that have emerged in recent years. In Europe, there are now several low cost airlines that travel out of small airports near major cities. Airlines such as Easy Jet (<http://easyjet.com/>) and Ryan Air (<http://ryanair.com/>) offer extremely low fares if you book early. Buses can also be a convenient and inexpensive method of travel.

Hostels are low-cost overnight accommodations where travelers can sleep and eat. Accommodations are usually dormitory style with separate bedrooms and bathrooms for males and females. Many hostels offer private and family accommodations as well. A self-service kitchen where meals can be prepared and common rooms for socializing create an atmosphere that encourages travelers to share experiences. Some hostels have mail pick-up service, laundry facilities, baggage and bicycle storage. Overnight fees generally range from \$10-\$30 per night depending on the location and season. In the busy summer months, you should make reservations if possible. Some hostels may require you to be a member of Hostelling International; see <http://www.ihf.org> for details. Another great place to find youth hostels and make reservations is <http://www.hostelworld.com>.

If you travel to countries beyond your internship site and expect to be there for more than a week, register upon arrival at the U.S. consulate or embassy having jurisdiction over the location. **For any trip lasting more than one day, make sure that you provide itineraries to a family member, IAESTE and/or your host employer so that you can be contacted in an emergency.**

Popular Travel Guidebooks

If you are traveling in any country, you should have some sort of a guidebook. If you want to have a guidebook in English, you should consider purchasing one before you leave the U.S.

Lonely Planet

Lonely Planet guides are very popular with student travelers. They provide very detailed, complete information on places to visit, history, and culture. Publishing over 100 guidebooks, on over 100 countries and regions, they cover the globe the most extensively. Lonely Planet's Web site, www.lonelyplanet.com, also offers information and a forum for travelers to share questions and concerns. IAESTE offers several Lonely Planet guides at a 25% discount from the cover price. Contact IAESTE United States at iaeste@aipt.org for more information.

Let's Go

Let's Go guidebooks are written and published by students at Harvard University. The information in Let's Go is directed toward budget and student travelers. They publish books on 21 countries, cities, and regions. Let's Go guidebooks generally contain very good practical information, such as locating a hostel or hotel. They provide general overviews of cities and list major tourist attractions.

Berkeley Guides

In format and content, the Berkeley Guide is very similar to Let's Go. It is written by Berkeley students for the budget, student traveler. If you like nature and outdoor activities, the Berkeley Guide is probably a good choice for you. They purposely place an emphasis on the outdoors. Their guides contain a lot of hiking information, and try not to direct their readers toward tourist traps.

Blue Guides

Blue Guides are a series of guidebooks written by British writers. These guides are written differently than American handbooks in that they provide tips for living as a resident and traveler as opposed to a tourist. These are for those to delve into the culture and its idiosyncrasies.

Frommers Budget Travel Online

Arthur Frommer's website on travel offers many helpful hints, articles, discounts, and links. www.frommers.com

Rick Steves Europe Through The Back Door guidebooks

Rick Steves writes guidebooks for Europe which attempt a balance between famous and lesser-known destinations. The Web site has lots of great tips and links for the budget traveler. www.ricksteves.com

Other Travel Resources**Travel Document Systems:**

Get visa, travel, and general information on most every country you can think of.
(<http://www.traveldocs.com>)

Rough Guides:

All new resource for info on more than 4,000 worldwide locations.
(<http://www.roughguides.com>)

Recreation Travel Library

Has lots of links to practical information on a wide variety of destinations and topics.
(<http://www.travel-library.com>)

Transitions Abroad

A great resource for cheap travel, work, and study ideas.
(<http://www.transitionsabroad.com>)

Festivals.com:

Festivals and events worldwide. (<http://www.festivals.com>)

Lonely Planet Online

Packed full of humor, resources, and information for the independent traveler.
(<http://www.lonelyplanet.com>)

Hostels.com:

This site lists many resources for hostels, budget guidebooks, travel agencies, etc.

Latin American Travel Advisor:

Travel resources for the Latin American community. (www.amerispan.com)

"10 Tips for Travelers with Disabilities":

Is included in "Free Tips for Travelers." Get a copy by calling 1-800-637-2256.

Journey Woman:

For women living and traveling abroad. The site provides general travel tips, as well as ones specific to women, such as clothing and safety. (<http://www.journeywoman.com>)

Low Cost Airlines:

easyJet.com (www.easyjet.com) 36 destinations, mostly Western Europe from 12 hubs

RyanAir (www.ryanair.com) 50 destinations throughout Western and Eastern Europe and Scandinavia from 8 hubs

Air-Berlin (www.airberlin.com) 40 cities in Southern Europe, Middle East (Turkey/Egypt) and North Africa from 13 German hubs

Virgin Express (www.virginexpress.com) 20 destinations in Western Europe and Scandinavia from 2 hubs (Brussels/Amsterdam)

BMI Baby (www.bmibaby.com) 24 destinations mostly Western Europe from 3 UK hubs (British Midlands, Manchester & Cardiff)

My Travel Lite (www.mytravellite.com) A dozen locations including Amsterdam, Geneva and Barcelona from 1 hub, Birmingham UK

Packing tips and suggestions

Packing all of your personal belongings that are essential to your survival for a summer or year into the weight and luggage constraints enforced by the airline companies will be the first big challenge of your international experience. This section will provide you with some hints on how get through this frustrating endeavor.

Make sure to carry-on medicine, jewelry, cash, credit cards, traveler's checks, and other valuables (cameras etc.).

Luggage

The first thing you should do is call your airline company and find out the exact luggage restrictions. You will most likely want to pack as much as you can within these limits; however, there are other factors you may want to consider. Will you be able to manage all of your bags yourself once you arrive at your final destination? You will also accumulate stuff while you are abroad, and you should consider how you intend to bring these things home with you within the same luggage restrictions. If you cannot fit everything you need within the luggage restrictions, you may want to consider shipping some of the lighter items.

Please pay close attention to new restrictions for permissible carry-on luggage items. Consult the Federal Aviation Administration's Web site for details. <http://www.faa.gov/>.

A large backpack is a really good investment for anyone spending time abroad, and it serves well as a carry on bag. They are lightweight, comfortable, and leave your hands free. A backpack will also prove to be very useful for traveling on weekends and during vacations once you are abroad. Do not bring your belongings in a trunk or footlocker because they are very heavy. Make sure that you have ID on the outside and inside of your luggage; outside identification often falls off during the trip.

When you are packing to return to the U.S., you will face another big challenge. The gifts and souvenirs will probably take up much more space than you imagined. So, don't wait until the last minute to pack up. You may need time to mail some boxes home. Mailing *to* the U.S. is usually much more expensive than mailing *from* the U.S.

Clothing

Depending on where you are working abroad, doing laundry may be less convenient (and much more expensive) than in the United States. Plan to take comfortable clothes that require as little care as possible; you may end up washing a lot by hand. You should consider taking a limited amount of clothing, and just plan on wearing it out during your stay. Take comfortable shoes, appropriate clothing for your workplace and the climate of the country you are visiting, and one dressy outfit for special occasions. For women, there is a Web site that will give you some idea about appropriate clothing for women travelers in various countries: <http://www.journeywoman.com>

Electricity Converters

The voltage of electricity varies from country to country (i.e. in the U.S. and Mexico it is 110 volts, whereas in England it is 240 volts). This means that any electrical appliances that you use in the U.S. will not work in a foreign country. This includes hairdryers, stereos, TVs, alarm clocks, electric razors, etc. Department stores, travel agencies, office supply stores, and Radio Shack sell electricity converter kits (about \$25) that will allow you to use your 110-volt appliance in another country. If you are going abroad for a year it is probably better for you to purchase anything electrical you need once you are in your host country. The converters work well, but they are not designed for extended use, and they tend to break (i.e. blow up) if they are used continuously. Another alternative to electric appliances is battery-powered devices; batteries are the same everywhere in the world.

Sometimes you can buy cheap converters at local electric stores. Because many countries import products that are not compatible with their outlets, converters are common.

Packing List

Here is a list of items that you may want to bring:

Books

- A foreign language dictionary
- Foreign language phrase book
- An address book with email addresses of friends & important contacts at your university
- Travel journal/diary
- Guidebook in English

Clothes

- Waterproof walking shoes
- Flip-flops
- Socks and underwear
- Shorts
- Skirts/Pants
- Shirts
- Sweater/Sweatshirt
- Warm clothes (hat, gloves, scarf, long underwear, etc.)
- Light jacket
- Bath towels, wash cloths
- Bathing suit
- Belt
- Hat

Medicine & Toiletries - Keep in mind toiletries can be purchased overseas

- Prescription Medicine** (It could be expensive or difficult to obtain, bring an extra supply. You must carry all prescriptions in the original container that includes the dosage and doctor's name. Do not take prescription medicines out of their original container.)
- Copies of prescriptions, including eyeglasses**
- Contraceptives
- Toothbrush, toothpaste
- Soap, shampoo (to save space, bring travel size items and purchase more once you're settled in.)
- Comb, brush
- Cosmetics
- Deodorant
- Small First-Aid Kit
- Aspirin
- Sunscreen

- Tissues (travel size packs)
- Tampons (enough for your entire trip if it's important to you)/pads
- Razor/razor blades
- Eyeglasses/contact lenses
- For Women, Yeast Infection Medication
- Any American toiletry that you can't live without!

Essentials & Documents

- Passport/Visa
- Plane/train tickets
- Medical Insurance Card and Coverage Plan (please make sure to read this first)
- Student ID, ISIC
- Photocopies of your passport, travel documents, traveler's checks, and credit cards packed in a different location from the actual documents
- Hostel membership card
- Money belt/Neck wallet
- Money/Traveler's checks
- Credit Cards/ ATM Card
- Phone cards
- Backpack with internal frame/Book bag
- Camera, film, camera battery
- A small gift for your supervisor or host family, if applicable
- Electricity converter kit
- Miscellaneous
- Music player/headphones
- Batteries
- Any food you can't live without
- Pictures of family and friends
- Clothes hangers
- Flashlight
- Sewing kit
- Bed sheets/sleeping bag for hostel
- Luggage locks & tags
- Alarm clock
- Sunglasses
- Phone numbers of family and friends (in case you can't remember them without your cell phone!)

CHAPTER 4: COMMUNICATION**By Telephone**

International phone calls can be very expensive. Some phone companies offer special services and rates to make international phone calls simple and more affordable. Call around to find the best phone card deals. Expect to pay a modest monthly fee, and then per minute rates that are usually under \$1 a minute. Another cheap way to call home is by using callback services, where you call the U.S., hang up after one ring, and a computer calls you back giving you a dial tone. Callback services allow you to make phone calls at U.S. rates, and the connections are sometimes better than foreign phone services. You may be able to purchase an international phone card in your host country as well. Avoid using hotel room phones, which can add surcharges that make calls more expensive.

Internet VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) services such as Skype can be an inexpensive (or, in some cases, free) alternative to traditional phone calls if you have ready internet access.

Your cellular phone will likely not work outside of North America, although some satellite companies are expanding their services to include global cellular phone capabilities. Look into the possibility of getting an international cell phone.

Some services you may try:

AT&T Direct (1-800-222-0300)

<http://www.att.com/traveler/>

Mobal: Cell Phone Rental (888-888-9162)

<http://www.mobalrental.com/>

Telestial

<http://www.telestial.com/>

Skype

<http://www.skype.com/>

By e-mail

If you do not receive an e-mail account at your workplace, you may be able to access a server at your university, or you can also get a free email address from many vendors on the Internet. Most cities have Cyber Cafes that rent Internet access for varying costs.

Some services for you to try:

America Online - <http://www.aol.com>

CompuServe - <http://www.compuserve.com>

Platinum Service Premiere Worldlink (email by voice) - <http://www.premtek.com>

Email address providers:

<http://mail.yahoo.com>

<http://www.netaddress.com>

<http://www.rotfl.com>

<http://www.lycosemail.com/member/login.page>

<http://www.hotmail.com>

By cell phone

It is now very common for people to purchase cell phones. They are generally inexpensive and have pay-as-you-go plans. Many countries have free in-coming calls (even international calls), cheap local/international text messaging and free 800 numbers (for AT&T, etc.).

By fax

If you ever need to send a fax abroad, most post offices have public fax machines. Faxing a letter is quick, reliable, and a lot less expensive than Federal Express.

CHAPTER 5: CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Based on L. Robert Kohls' *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*

"Culture shock" is now a common term since the exchange of people across borders has dramatically increased. Culture shock is the process of adjusting to another culture. How much you feel "culture shock" will depend on your personality and how immersed you are in the culture in which you are living. Take a minute to learn more about what culture is at <http://www.pacific.edu/sis/culture/>. This website is not only fun, but it is a great online cultural learning resource for students preparing to go abroad.

Understanding Culture Shock

Culture shock is a slow, cumulative feeling of frustration. Many factors contribute to the mounting feeling of culture shock. It can cause intense discomfort, often accompanied by hyperirritability, bitterness, resentment, homesickness, and depression. In some cases, distinct physical symptoms of psychosomatic illness occur.

Culture shock comes from:

- Being cut off from the cultural cues and known patterns with which you are familiar (for example, how you buy a piece of fruit at a store or get onto a bus). Expression of feelings and subtle, indirect ways a person relates to others often causes great tension when being in another culture.
- Living and/or working over an extended period of time in a situation that is ambiguous.
- Having your own values (which you had before considered as absolutes) brought into question -- which yanks your moral rug out from under you.
- Being continually put into a position in which you are expected to function with maximum skill and speed but where the rules have not been adequately explained.

The following chart lists the multiple reactions which people normally have to culture shock.

Overall Symptoms	Withdrawal Symptoms	Aggressive Symptoms
Anxiety	Physical and/or psychological withdrawal	Compulsive eating & drinking
Homesickness	Spending excessive amounts of time reading	Exaggerated cleanliness
Helplessness	Need for excessive amounts of sleep	Irritability
Boredom	Only seeing other Americans or Westerners	Family tensions
Depression	Avoiding contact with host nationals	Marital Stress
Fatigue	Short attention span	Excessive chauvinism
Confusion	Diminished productivity	Stereotyping
Self-doubt	Loss of ability to do work or study effectively	Hostility toward host nationals
Feelings of inadequacy	Quitting and returning to your home country early	Verbal aggressiveness
Unexplained fits of weeping		Physical aggressiveness
Paranoia		Deciding to stay but permanently hating the country and its people
Physical ailments and psychosomatic illnesses		

Not everyone will experience a severe case of culture shock, nor will all the symptoms be observed in any single individual. Some people sail through culture shock with relative ease, only now and again experiencing the more serious reactions. But many do not. One might say that culture shock is the occupational hazard of overseas living that one has to be willing to go through in order to have the pleasures of experiencing other countries and cultures.

In order to understand culture shock better, you should recognize that there are distinct stages of personal adjustment while living abroad. These stages are:

1. Initial euphoria
2. Irritability and hostility
3. Gradual adjustment
4. Adaptation to the new culture

1. Initial euphoria

Most people begin their work abroad experience with great expectations and a positive mindset. If anything, they come with expectations that are too high and attitudes that are too positive toward the host country. At this point, anything new is intriguing and exciting. But, for the most part, it is the similarities that stand out. The newcomer is really impressed with how people everywhere are really very much alike. This period of euphoria may last from a week or two to a month, but the letdown is inevitable.

2. Irritability and hostility

Gradually, your focus turns from the similarities to the *differences* and these differences, which suddenly seem to be everywhere, are troubling. You blow up little, seemingly insignificant difficulties into major catastrophes. This is the stage generally identified as culture shock, and you may experience any of the symptoms listed in the chart above.

3. Gradual adjustment

The crisis is over and you are on your way to recovery. This step may come so gradually that, at first, you will be unaware that it is even happening. Once you begin to orient yourself and are able to interpret some of the subtle cultural clues and cues that passed by unnoticed earlier, the culture seems more familiar. You become more comfortable in it and feel less isolated from it. Gradually, too, your sense of humor returns and you realize the situation is not hopeless after all.

4. Adaptation and bi-culturalism

Full recovery will result in an ability to function in two cultures with confidence. You will even find a great many customs, ways of doing and saying things, and personal attitudes which you enjoy -- indeed, to which you have in some degree acculturated -- and which you will definitely miss when you pack up and return home. In fact, you can expect to experience "reverse culture shock" upon your return to the United States. In most cases reverse culture shock causes greater distress than the original culture shock because it is not expected, after all, you are going home to your native culture.

The interesting thing about culture shock is that there is routinely not one but two low points and, even more interestingly, they will accommodate themselves to the amount of time you intend to spend in the host country! That is, they will spread themselves out if you're going to stay for a longer period or contract if your initial assignment is for a shorter time.

How long will culture shock last? As we have suggested, that varies with the length of your assignment, but it also depends to some extent on you and your resiliency and the degree to which you are immersed in the culture. You can expect a letup after the first dip, but be prepared for the second downturn, which will probably be somewhat more severe. Stop a moment and consider what you can do on your own to combat the onset and alleviate the effects of culture shock.

Responding to Culture Shock

1. Realize that, in fact, practically everybody who goes overseas for a substantial period of time experiences culture shock in some form and/or to some degree. It is natural and not a sign that you're deficient or strange -- and you'll live through it as thousands of others have.

2. Be ready for the lesson culture shock teaches. Culture shock stems from an in-depth encounter with another culture in which you learn that there are *different* ways of doing things that are neither wrong nor inferior. It teaches a lesson that cannot be learned as effectively by any other means: that one's own culture does not possess the single right way, best way or even a uniformly better way of providing for human need and enjoyments. Believing it does is a kind of imprisonment -- from which the experience of culture shock, as painful as it may be, can liberate you. Culture shock will allow you to gain new insight into yourself and your culture (bring a journal!).
3. Select one or two areas of interest and investigate them more thoroughly than the other topics. If you are a fan of American football, for example, don't just sit around and grouse about missing the weekly games. Cultivate an interest in their football (soccer) or other national sports.
4. Begin (if you haven't done so already) consciously to look for logical reasons behind everything in the host culture that seems strange, difficult, confusing, or threatening. Take every aspect of your experience and look at it from their perspective. Search for patterns and interrelationships. You may be surprised to find that the pieces fit together once you discover where they go. Relax your grip on your own culture a little in the process. There's no way you can lose it any more than you could forget your knowledge of English by learning another language.
5. Make a list of all the positive things that you can identify about your present situation. (Ignore the negative -- which you've probably been concentrating on too much anyway.) Then tack the list up somewhere where you'll see it during the course of your day. You may find it helpful to find an American who has been there longer, experienced culture shock, and has a positive attitude towards the host country. Discuss your feelings and try to get a new sense of perspective.
6. Avoid those Americans or other foreigners who are in a permanent state of culture shock and who spend their days seeking company to commiserate with. They will only perpetuate any feelings of culture shock that you already have.
7. Don't succumb to the temptation to disparage the host culture yourself. Resist making jokes and degenerating comments ("Well, what else would you expect from these people?"). They only reinforce your beleaguered sense of self or shaky feelings of superiority and slow down the process of adaptation and of recapturing the true feelings of worth you are searching for. Avoid other people who make such jokes too.
8. On the other hand, work at maintaining a healthy sense of humor. Especially, be ready to laugh at yourself. It's one of the best antidotes to culture shock there is. Making silly mistakes because of your unfamiliarity with the culture may cause you to feel foolish or childish, but the embarrassment will pass. Share your gaffes with family and friends and get them out of your system with a good laugh.
9. Make friends with host nationals and try to develop a deeper, more intimate relationship with one or two of them. Discuss with them the problems you've been having, taking care to present them in a way that doesn't sound like you're criticizing their culture. It is a truism that Americans who spend their time associating only with other Americans or other Westerners never do adjust to the host country.
10. When you look for advice, focus on how you are feeling -- what is going on inside you -- rather than on what you consider the causes of your problems, especially when you're inclined to think they lie in what is wrong in the host culture.
11. As you adjust to and function more comfortably within the value system of your host country, don't worry that you may lose your own values. This is a thought that comes quite naturally at some point or other to most people who live abroad. Your values are much deeper and more permanent than that. To act according to the customs of your host country (when and where it is appropriate) does not make you less of an American. It only makes you more comfortable and enables you to feel more at home.
12. During the deepest plunges into culture shock, take a trip -- get away to a scenic spot or a nearby country. When you return, be open to having good "coming back home" feelings.
13. Prepare some kind of presentation about the U.S. for your hosts, using slides, film, or some other kinds of visuals (you will have to prepare this eventually before you leave home). Become an

“unofficial ambassador” whose mission it is to correct some of the many misconceptions, which replays of *Beverly Hills 90210*, *Baywatch*, and *NYPD Blue* have created in people’s minds overseas.

Even during the worst times -- and especially at the worst times -- have faith that you will work your way through culture shock to the brighter days that lie ahead -- even if you do nothing but wait. Effective cross-cultural adaptation has a way of sneaking up on you as you accumulate bit by bit the knowledge you need.

There you have it: a program to get you safely through culture shock and to make sure that the rewards which come with the overseas experience will be yours to relive for the rest of your life.

Bring an open mind and learn to appreciate the differences that make up diversity!

Returning Home

Returning home may be more difficult than adjusting to your host culture. This is due to the fact that you do NOT expect it to be difficult. What you may not be aware of is the degree to which you have been changed by the experience. During your absence changes have taken place in the United States -- rapid and sometimes radical changes -- and reading about them in *Time* or *Newsweek* isn’t the same as experiencing them. Perhaps things seem not to have changed at all, but you have. You may think it will be easy to pick up where you left off; that’s where the reentry shock comes in.

Reentry Shock. Some call it reverse culture shock. The culture shock adjustment curve is somewhat similar for reentry, though the time frames will probably be different. You’ll recall we said that the stages of the adjustment process are:

1. Initial euphoria
2. Irritability and hostility
3. Gradual adjustment, and
4. Adaptation

In Stage 1, you may be very pleased, even euphoric, to be back in your own country, and others may be equally delighted to have you back. But after people express their pleasure at seeing you again and listen politely to your stories for a few minutes, you may suddenly and/or painfully realize that they are not particularly interested in what happened to you abroad and would much rather prefer to talk about their own affairs.

You may, therefore, find yourself entering Stage 2 more rapidly than you did overseas. Suddenly you are irritated with others and impatient with your own inability to figure out why the way you are doing things doesn’t work. While some people move readily into the adjustment and adaptation stages, others continue to feel alienated, even though they put on the outward appearance of doing well. Underneath, resentment, loneliness, disorientation, and even a sense of helplessness may pervade as they experience the kinds of culture shock symptoms identified before. Depression, marital stress, or, in children, regression to earlier stages of development may also be associated with reentry shock. The gap between you and your family and friends, or your social group at college if you’re a student, may be a source of significant irritation. So much that is different will have happened to you and to them that finding common ground may be harder than expected. You also will have learned new things: a foreign language, perhaps, or some local folk dances, or how to bargain in a market. But there’s no outlet for them at home. Ways to use your skills can be found, but it takes effort and patience, and the frustrations tend to mount. You may feel let down because daily life in the United States does not readily provide the opportunity to meet as many kinds of people as you’ve known overseas. And the people you do meet seem very provincial and uninterested in things international.

What you can do to counteract reentry shock. The battle is mostly won when you understand that returning home involves an adjustment process similar to the one you experienced when first going abroad. Indeed, the practical steps we are going to recommend are quite similar to those suggested for overseas adaptation. Here are a few concrete coping strategies adapted from Syracuse University’s brochure, “There and Back Again, a Guide for Coping with Reentry”:

**Family and Friends:* You have probably become more independent while overseas, structuring your life just as you wish. Your own family and school may seem overprotective and restrictive. Friends may seem uninterested in your experience.

You can: Share your photos and your stories ASAP so that your family and friends understand your overseas experience. Be sensitive to your family's feelings and try to relate your international experiences to events at home. Try to share not only your stories, but also the feelings you had while living overseas. Sharing feelings instead of experiences sounds less like bragging. Ask your friends to update you on campus and personal events. Let your parents know how much you appreciated the opportunity to work and travel abroad. You may also want to send a letter of thanks to your employer and keep in touch with coworkers, bosses, and friends.

**School:* Your studies may seem too classroom oriented after the work you experienced during your IAESTE internship. Student and faculty contacts may seem less personal or more demanding than your overseas coworkers.

You can: Talk over your internship with your academic advisor ASAP. Explore ways to actively use your experiences in your classes. Consider another internship, volunteer position or other opportunity to nurture your interest in internationalism and to use your cross-cultural skills. Live in a language house or International house, to maintain your language skills. Get involved in the IAESTE Local Committee on your campus, or if there is not a Local Committee think about starting one. A great way to be involved in the Local Committee is to help with hosting international students on your campus or raising jobs in your community to allow more students the opportunity to work abroad.

**Country:* You may return to the U.S. with a heightened awareness of differences in beliefs, customs, and values. Political, economic, and even popular culture changes may make you feel like a stranger. The longer you're immersed in another culture, the more pronounced the differences or shortcomings of the U.S. might seem.

You can: Find informants about the United States just as you did about your host country. Be the learner. Don't let your new attitudes, values, and perceptions block that learning process. Pretend the U.S. is a foreign country and apply some of the same strategies you used early in your host country. Ask questions. For example: suspend judgment, write your grievances in a journal, set some concrete goals of activities which will use your international skills and language, and, of course, keep your sense of humor. Consider getting on the mailing list of the nearest consulate of your host country to receive press releases, magazines, posters, etc.

Self:* Personal growth is difficult to quantify, but changed you are. Your life off-campus has been varied, rich and demanding in very important ways. Your family and school probably won't be able to match that. You may feel restless or let down as a result. **You can: Recognize the physical toll of international travel. Allow time for your body to readjust. Think about how you've changed (Which changes do you like? dislike? How did your internship and new friends influence your values and ideas? How did your U.S. friends react to the changes in you?) Use a journal to reflect and synthesize ideas and feelings. Interact with other students who had international experiences and seek foreign nationals with whom you can speak the language you learned and continue to share the common experiences that you enjoyed. You can also volunteer your skills through the international and career center offices or be host to an exchange student.

Some additional resources on reentry:

The Art of Returning Home (1996). Defines the general states in the reentry process. \$17.95 plus shipping, international shipping extra. Intercultural Press, P.O. Box 700, Yarmouth, ME 04096; Telephone: (207) 846-5168 or (800) 370-2665.

Coming Home (1986). Addresses common benefits and problems that emerge from an overseas study experience, and suggest ways to maximize the positive aspects of the experience. \$15. Oregon International Council, P.O. Box 111, Salem, OR 97308; Telephone: (503) 375-5447; Fax: (503) 375-5448; E-mail: oic@willamette.edu.

Cross-Cultural Reentry: A Book of Readings (1986). A collection of articles that deal with general reentry issues. \$14.95. Abilene Christian University Press, 1634 Campus Court, Abilene, TX 79601; Telephone: (915) 674-2720 or (800) 444-4228.

Looking Forward, Looking Backward: The Cultural Re-adaptation of International Students (1986). Collection of essays that focus on the states of reentry, and practical methods for easing the reentry transition. \$10.95. Texas Tech University, International center for Arid and Semiarid Land Studies, P.O. Box 4620, Lubbock, TX 79409-1037; Telephone: (806) 742-2468.

Professional Integration for a Smooth Passage Home (1986). Video that examines the challenges of the reentry transition. \$25. NAFSA Publications, P.O. Box 1020, Sewickley, PA 15143; Telephone (202) 462-4811 or (800) 836-4994; Fax: (412) 741-0609.

Returning Home: Adjusting to Life After Study Abroad (1992). Booklet to help cope with reentry issues. \$6.75. Educational Advisory Service, Fulbright Commission, 62 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2LS, United Kingdom.

CHAPTER 6: HEALTH & SAFETY

When traveling outside the United States, you should be aware of some additional health and safety concerns. We hope you will give serious consideration to the topics addressed in this chapter so that you will be better prepared to deal with any safety or health concerns that you encounter during your overseas travels.

Before You Go

Research

One of the most important things you can do to ensure your safety during an overseas trip is to research the country to which you will be traveling so you can better understand the health and safety issues that you may encounter. Illness, crime, civil unrest, natural disasters and terrorism are issues which might affect your stay. Pay particular attention to the crime issues. While street violence may be rare, muggings and theft can be quite common in larger cities and you should know how the locals protect themselves from being victims. *Each year, several program participants fall victim to mugging or theft while they are abroad.* Do everything you can to make sure you are not one of them!

The State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs offers helpful country profiles which describe safety and health concerns. You can access these profiles at http://travel.state.gov/travel/warnings_consular.html. The State Department also offers safety tips at http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html.

Also, try to find out what the emergency number is in the country you will visit. For example, you will call 112 in most European countries.

Embassy Registration

IAESTE United States requires all students to register with the nearest U.S. or their home Embassy or Consulate online before departure or upon arrival in person. The registration process allows the embassy or consulate to contact you in case of emergency. We recommend that you also register with U.S. or your home embassy in other countries you may visit if your stay extends beyond one week. If you are a U.S. citizen, please go to http://travel.state.gov/travel/abroad_registration.html. For more information on services offered by the U.S. Embassy you can visit <http://travel.state.gov/>.

Immunizations

You may not be allowed to enter a country if you don't have the proper immunization(s). Contact your doctor, clinic, or local or state health department regarding immunizations. Check with the embassy of the country you will be working in (as well as countries you plan to visit) about immunization requirements. If the U.S. Health Service requires a shot that you didn't obtain, you may be quarantined upon your return to the U.S. You should make sure that your tetanus shot is updated. The Center for Disease Control's Web site (www.cdc.gov) also offers a great deal of health information for international travelers.

Medical Services Overseas

The style of medical care abroad is largely dependent on the country. It is extremely important that your medical insurance provides you with international coverage, because non-routine medical costs (including hospitalization), dental care, and eye exams are generally the full responsibility of the student. Please read your medical coverage plan fully to understand your benefits and services. Please make the program staff aware of any medical issues or disabilities, so that we can make necessary arrangements and advise you regarding conditions and resources abroad.

If you suffer from a chronic or serious physical condition, you should consult with your physician before making the decision to intern abroad. We cannot guarantee access to the same kind of medical care or medications you receive in the U.S.

Medic Alert

If you have specific allergies that are debilitating or life threatening, or if you have a medical condition that is not immediately apparent or easily identifiable (such as diabetes, allergies to drugs, or epilepsy), you should wear a medic alert bracelet. You may also want to notify your roommate, housemate, or supervisor so that he/she knows what to do in case of an emergency.

Physician's Letter & Prescriptions

If you take a narcotic or more than two medications, ask your physician for a letter that describes your medical condition and lists the generic name and dosage of each prescription. If you require routine injections, carry a physician's letter detailing your condition and the need to carry needles and syringes for medical purposes. Take sufficient amounts of all necessary prescription drugs with you, including birth control pills.

Corrective Lenses

If you wear glasses or contact lenses you should take an extra pair with you; a lost or broken pair of glasses can be difficult to replace in a short time. If you have contact lenses you should also take a supply of cleaning solutions.

Medical Directories

The International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers (IAMAT) publishes a directory of English-speaking doctors on duty 24 hours a day, have a set fee schedule, and can be found overseas. To obtain a directory, write to one of the following organizations:

IAMAT
1623 Military Rd., #279
Niagara Falls, NY 14304-1745
www.iamat.org

World Medical Association
536 North State Street
Chicago, IL 60610

International Health Care Service
New York Hospital
Cornell Medical Center
1300 York Avenue
New York, NY 10021

*Beware: Many prescription drugs are sold over-the-counter and may not be FDA approved.

First Aid Kit

Make sure to pack a small first aid kit with you, and include the following: insect repellent (30% DEET), a thermometer, Band Aids, Pepto Bismol, antacid, aspirin, antidiarrhea medication, cough and cold remedies, a mild laxative, sunburn medication, and antibacterial cream. You might also be able to buy these things for a very low cost at a local pharmacy once you arrive. Keep in mind that all instructions and packaging may be in the local language.

Once You're Abroad - Health Issues

Take good care of yourself! There is so much to do and see overseas that many students who go abroad have a tendency to try to cram everything in a very limited amount of time. Make time for adequate rest, especially when you are traveling.

Differences in climate, food, water, and bacteria common to a given area can affect your health. These differences may cause health problems such as colds, sore throats, the flu, and the almost inevitable gastrointestinal problems. Your body simply needs time to acclimate itself.

In some places, you should not drink tap water, eat uncooked foods washed in tap water, or use ice cubes without checking local conditions first; many people drink only bottled water as a precaution. Another option is to bring water disinfectant from home.

Another option to making water potable is to boil it. You must wait until the water is boiling profusely and let it boil for 3 minutes. After has cooled you will be able to drink it.

After your body is acclimated to your host country, you may find that the same problem happens when you go to other places. Before traveling to another country, you should find out about health precautions. For example, in some places, it's risky to eat food from sidewalk stands. Talk to your host IAESTE committee about things you are unsure of.

Living Abroad & Depression

When you are overseas, you may feel more stressed rather than more relaxed. This is due to the added pressures of learning a new language, meeting new people, and the inevitable time management demands of working and traveling. When you first arrive you may also experience jetlag: where your body hasn't adjusted to your new time zone and sleeping and eating times.

If you have had psychological difficulties in the past or if you are hoping that time spent overseas will help you "solve" a problem facing you at home, you should talk with a counselor before deciding to work abroad.

While abroad, keep an open mind. Use your time alone to get to know yourself. Make sure you eat nutritious balanced meals, get adequate sleep, and regular exercise. Keep yourself active so you won't spend too much time thinking about home.

Eating Disorders

It is very easy when you are abroad to become susceptible to eating disorders: you are in a different place and the food is different. Your stomach may not agree with the types of food there, or you may feel like you're eating too much. You may also experience depression or loneliness manifesting itself in the form of an eating disorder. If you think you may have a problem, talk to a counselor or nutritionist and learn about good nutrition. You can contact the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa at <http://www.anad.org> for more information.

Substance Abuse & Sexual Assault

Especially when in a foreign place where you may not fully understand the culture or language, particular care should be taken when going out to bars, clubs, discos, etc.

The following precautions are highly recommended:

- Limit alcohol consumption so you are better able to assess your surroundings
- Be cautious about mixing different types of alcoholic beverages
- Eat substantive food before consuming alcohol
- Make arrangements to go home with a friend before you go
- Don't leave beverages unattended
- Don't take any beverages from someone you don't know well
- Do not accept open-container drinks at parties
- Accept drinks at a bar only from the bartender
- Be alert to the behavior of friends and ask them to watch out for you too
- Be aware of your surroundings

If you have been sexually assaulted, get to a safe place and call a rape crisis center or the police. If you want to report the incident, you may not be allowed to shower, douche or change clothes until medical evidence is collected. Contact the IAESTE committee in your host country.

Contraception

Information on contraception may be more difficult to obtain outside the U.S. You should inquire before you leave. If you plan to be sexually active, purchase condoms before you go.

Preventing AIDS & Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Take adequate precautions to avoid contracting sexually transmitted diseases. Use latex condoms during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Do not use intravenous drugs or share needles. Be aware that tattoos, acupuncture treatments, and injections for medical or dental procedures may put you at risk. Avoid the use of locally produced immune globulin and blood-clotting factors in countries where the blood supply is not routinely tested for communicable diseases. If a blood transfusion is necessary, contact the nearest American Embassy or consulate for advice. If you are concerned that you may have a sexually transmitted disease, see a doctor immediately.

Once You're Abroad - Safety and Security Issues

* You can always check the safety link on IAESTE's Web site, <http://www.iaesteunitedstates.org/us-students/abroad.htm#thi>, for additional information. We will update this page periodically, as necessitated by current circumstances.

You should be registered at the U.S. or your home country Embassy/Consulate when you arrive in your host country. If you have not already registered online, please do so once you arrive in your host country. If you are a U.S. citizen, ask the U.S. Consulate/Embassy if there is a warden network in your host country. In the case of an emergency, warden networks disseminate vital information. It is important for each participant to ask about the Warden Network and their set up in your host country, as they vary country to country.

The Law

American travelers abroad are subject solely to the laws of the country they are visiting. They are NOT protected by U.S. laws. You are responsible for obeying all of the laws of the country you are in, regardless of whether you are traveling or a resident; penalties are often much tougher than in the United States. IAESTE cannot intervene if you are arrested or prosecuted for violation of local laws, including laws on drug use, currency exchange, and disturbances of the peace. What may seem to you like a harmless prank may have serious consequences. Do not assume that, as an American or a student, you will be treated leniently; the opposite is often the case. Do not count on the American Consulate or Embassy to assist you except in a superficial advisory capacity. If you do become involved in any legal problems, notify IAESTE immediately.

Drugs and Alcohol

Be aware of the drug and alcohol laws of your host country. Several countries, especially those in the south and east, have drug laws that are far stricter than those in the U.S. Penalties can range from years in prison to death. Be aware that U.S. customs officials are extremely thorough in their inspections for smuggled drugs coming into this country. If any of your prescription drugs have even small amounts of illegal substances as part of their composition, have your doctor write a note indicating why that drug is in your prescription. Even that small amount could get you arrested in another country.

Street Safety

While you are abroad, you will have to be particularly street savvy. Gender roles, traffic laws, and drinking laws may not be the same as in the United States. As a traveler, it is your responsibility to be observant and cautious.

In many places, pedestrians do not necessarily have the right of way. Traffic laws might not be obeyed. Use caution on busy city streets, and do not assume that any car, truck, bus, or scooter will stop for you.

Know where you are going when you leave. Just like in any big city, a foreigner holding a huge map could invite trouble. Take time to study a map before you go out, and get to know your city's layout and culture.

Observe local behaviors. Cues will be different than what you are used to. In particular, body language is not universal. Your actions may be interpreted very differently than you intended. For example, Americans often present conflicting body language to what they say, such as smiling while saying no. Be aware of your own mixed signals.

Remember that safety in numbers is a smart idea wherever you are.

Driving While Abroad

Let us begin by stating that we do not recommend that students drive while they are abroad. However, if you choose to drive, please take the following tips into mind. Be certain of your responsibilities and the status of your insurance. Familiarize yourself with the rules of the road for the location in which you will be using an automobile.

Be certain that your automobile always contains at least a half tank of fuel. Make sure your lights, signals, horn and brakes are in proper order.

Avoid traveling by road after dark (especially in rural areas). Park in a well-lit place.

Avoid riding motorcycles - if you do, wear a helmet.

Pay particular attention to all of the following, which are common on the roads of some countries:

- Passing on the right and cutting in front of other vehicles from the right side.
- Unexpected stops or turns without signaling for any apparent reason.
- Stopping in unexpected locations to pick up or let off passengers by cars, buses, and trucks, including main highway entrance ramps, intersections, and along major highways.
- Trucks parked at night without lights on the highway rather than on the side of the road.
- Disabled vehicles parked without warning signs.
- Many countries also require that all vehicles have certain equipment available (i.e. first-aid kit, reflective warning triangle, spare fuses and light bulbs, fire extinguisher), check local laws.

The Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT) collects, analyzes, and distributes Road Travel Reports to travelers. These reports enable travelers to make informed travel decisions and may, therefore, minimize the risk of road accidents abroad. Go to <http://www.asirt.org> for more information.

Keeping your valuables safe

Here are some tips to secure your valuables during travel:

- While you are traveling, you should always wear a money belt or pouch to keep your money, passport, traveler's checks, and other valuables safe from theft. This is especially important on long trips when you may fall asleep, when it would be easy for someone to go through your purse or backpack.
- Buy a padlock for your backpack. This is useful while traveling, and when you leave your backpack unattended at a youth hostel.
- Don't carry everything in one place! You should organize your funds and essential documents into two separate packs. When in country, one of these packs should always be left at your residence as a back up.
- If you must carry a purse, use a shoulder strap and keep the purse in front of your body. Carry your wallet in an inside coat or front pant pocket.
- Don't leave your luggage or handbag unattended anywhere. Should you put a backpack down, place it on the floor between your legs and wrap a strap around a fixed object.

Violence and Terrorism

While most countries in the world have less street crime and personal violence than is potentially present in urban and suburban America, public political demonstrations are not uncommon in some cities and countries abroad. Do NOT participate or go to observe these demonstrations as your hosts may not appreciate that you, a foreign visitor, are publicly opposing their political or social system. Your behavior abroad is your responsibility, not IAESTE's, and you should think about the consequences before acting.

Violence and terrorism are now clear realities of the twenty-first century, and are not likely to diminish significantly. Nevertheless, there are certain rather obvious precautions that American students abroad can take:

- Do your homework, listen and heed the counsel you are given.
- Keep a low profile and try not to make yourself conspicuous by dress, speech, or behavior, in ways that might identify you as a target or uniquely American. This includes: wearing U.S. college or university insignia clothing or heavily patriotic American clothing, wearing baseball caps or U.S. sports teams' shirts or jackets.
- Do not draw attention to yourself either through expensive dress, personal accessories (cameras, radios, sunglasses, etc.) or careless behavior.
- Avoid crowds, protest groups, or other potentially volatile situations. Keep abreast of local news. Read local newspapers, magazines, etc. and speak with local officials to learn about any potential civil unrest. If there should be any political unrest, **do not get involved**.
- When in large cities and other popular tourist destinations, avoid or spend as little time as possible in potential target areas for terrorist activities, especially places frequented by Americans: bars, discos, and U.S. fast food restaurants; branches of American banks; American churches; and American consulates or embassies.
- Try not to engage in conversations about contentious political issues with host nationals and avoid retaliating against hostile or bigoted remarks about Americans.
- Be wary of unexpected packages and stay clear of unattended luggage or parcels in airports, train stations, or other areas of uncontrolled public access.
- Report to the responsible authority any suspicious persons loitering around residence or instructional facilities, or following you; keep your residence area locked; use common sense in divulging information to strangers about your study program and your fellow students.
- If you haven't already done so, please register with the nearest Embassy or Consulate of your home country. Additionally, if you travel to countries beyond your internship site and expect to be there for more than a week, register upon arrival at a consulate or embassy of your home country having jurisdiction over the location.
- Make sure that IAESTE or your host employer always knows where and how to contact you in an emergency (make sure that someone always knows where you are!).
- Develop a plan with your family for regular telephone or e-mail contact, so that in times of heightened political tension, you will be able to communicate with your parents directly about your safety.

Anti-Americanism

American travelers abroad should be aware that anti-Americanism is on the rise in some countries around the world. Many people cite the United States' foreign policy, popular culture, collective personality or the negative effects of globalization as reasons why they feel negatively towards the United States. The current geo-political situation has increased anti-American sentiments around the world. While it may be easy to dismiss these attitudes as irrelevant, there are very real problems which arise when the United States loses friends in the world. It is bad for American businesses and products, it means there is less cooperation on issues important to our country, and it means that countries may be less hospitable to American travelers or workers.

As an intern overseas, there are many things you can do to help combat negative impressions of the United States. You may not be able to do much to influence America's foreign policy or the negative impacts of globalization, but you can change how people view America's popular culture and collective identity.

American products are pervasive around the world, and some people only know the United States by McDonalds, Coca-Cola, and Jerry Springer. While overseas, share some of the lesser known aspects of American culture with your new friends, such as an art, jazz music, sports like ultimate Frisbee or baseball, local traditions from your hometown/ state, or literature. You should also make sure that you are showing respect and appreciation for your host country's culture.

You can also do much to combat the negative impressions of America's collective personality. Some people feel that Americans are loud, arrogant, insincere, wasteful and ignorant of world affairs. Be mindful of these stereotypes and do what can to make a positive impact. Use your internship as an opportunity to serve as an unofficial ambassador of the United States.

While in general, anti-Americanism does not pose a personal threat to travelers abroad, you may want to follow the below precautions to help prevent conflict during your time overseas.

- Do not attend political demonstrations against the United States.
- Do not speak loudly or behave boisterously when in public.
- Do not frequent American chains or travel with large groups of Americans.
- Treat people respectfully.
- Follow local customs with regards to manners.
- Do not wear overtly American clothing or flags.
- Do not respond with anger when you hear anti-American rhetoric. Listen first and take time to decide whether the criticism is valid or not. If you choose to engage in discussion about America, make sure that you are not speaking emotionally. Present your thoughts calmly and rationally.

U.S. Department of State

The U.S. government monitors the political conditions in every country around the world. Their website contains country background reports, travel advisories, contact information for U.S. Embassies and consulates worldwide and much additional information for U.S. citizens traveling abroad.

All IAESTE interns are required to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy/Consulate or their home Embassy/Consulate upon arrival in their host country. This is helpful to students and their families if there is a need to locate family members in the event of an emergency.

See the following links for more information:

- U.S. Department of State: <http://www.state.gov>
- Travel and Living Abroad: <http://www.state.gov/travel/>
- Links to U.S. Embassies and Consulates Worldwide: <http://usembassy.state.gov/>
- Bureau of Consular Affairs - Travel Warnings/Public Announcements/Consular Information Sheets: <http://www.travel.state.gov>
- Travel Tips for Students: http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1219.html
- Services for U.S. citizens abroad: http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/living_1243.html
- Important Telephone Numbers (for crises involving U.S. citizens abroad, the number to call is 202-647-5225): http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1212.html
- Passport services: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html
- Foreign Entry Requirements (for U.S. citizens traveling abroad as tourists): <http://travel.state.gov/foreignentryreqs.html>
- Foreign Consular Offices in the U.S. (for visas): www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/fco/
- Travel Publications: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1231.html

CHAPTER 7: HEALTH & SAFETY FOR WOMEN ABROAD

Sexual Harassment and Prevention Abroad By Nancy Newport

Introduction

It has been my experience over the years as a Consultant to the U.S. Peace Corps that the issue of sexual harassment for women can become a major stress factor that can greatly affect the entire overseas experience.

The information included in these pages comes directly from the work I have done with hundreds of inspiring and courageous Peace Corps Volunteer females as well as my own personal experience as a 22 year old Peace Corps Volunteer in Brazil many years ago. I have listened to and experienced the struggles, fears, frustrations, dilemmas, as well as joys of being a female in a developing culture. I have learned a great deal from the experience and from the incredible women with whom I have had the privilege of counseling. My life and my clinical work have been immeasurably enriched by the experiences we have shared together.

Cultural Sensitivity

We all want to be culturally sensitive, to get along, to be respectful, and to fit in, to not offend. In training, cultural sensitivity is emphasized and highly valued. It can be the doorway through which a college student studying or working abroad gains entry to and acceptance with the community abroad.

It is very important that the cultural sensitivity training provided never requires that you submit to behaviors that invade your personal boundaries and that feel unsafe or even uncomfortable to you. If it feels inappropriate or makes you uneasy, get yourself out of the situation. Never sacrifice yourself or your sense of safety for the sake of cultural sensitivity.

Personal Boundaries

Personal boundaries are the personal space around us, physically and emotionally, that serves to preserve our physical and emotional integrity. When someone gets too close, an alarm sounds inside. We need to listen for, respect, and respond to that alarm. We also need to respect the personal boundaries of each other. These areas can be very confusing for students for several reasons:

Reason One: All people are raised in very different types of families with varying types of boundaries. We can be raised in a household with loose boundaries, rigid boundaries, or inconsistent boundaries.

Reason Two: Social conditioning in college has influenced boundary understandings by increasing tolerance for loose, fluid boundaries. Many college students have been acclimated to a very loose-boundaried college culture. Students may "crash" in each other's dorm or apartment...males and females may share sleeping space for convenience without sexual expectations. They may have become accustomed to, and therefore have a high tolerance for loose personal boundaries.

Reason Three: We assume every one has the same understanding about personal boundaries as we do. Now enter another country and find the whole issue of boundaries and personal space is highly influenced by cultural norms and very different from what you are accustomed to. And the amount of personal space has a certain meaning in one culture and a different meaning in another culture. Like learning a foreign language, customs and personal boundaries in a new culture are not to be assumed to be known, but must be learned for your safety.

The Ultimate Boundary - Your Body

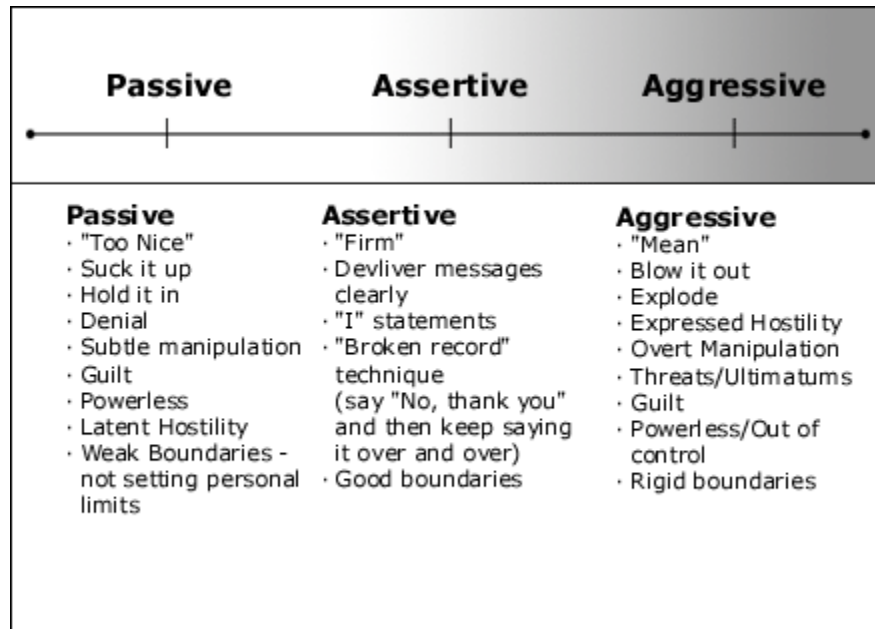
In some cultures, allowing a man to enter your house is symbolic of letting him enter your body. Many men have told women that they assumed she wanted sex just because she allowed entry into her house. Staying outside on the porch is a safer way to receive male guests. Where is the best place to entertain men in a safe way without misunderstandings where you live in the U.S.? Where will the best place be to entertain men in a safe way without misunderstandings where you live/study abroad?

Concept of Male Friendship - A Boundary Misunderstanding

American women are accustomed to the concept of male friendship. It has a meaning that may not translate in the new culture. Being seen with a man, talking with a man, going out with a man may have a different meaning in the culture than a female student may intend. What does it mean in the culture you are in? Is that your intention? If no, change your behaviors to send the message you intend.

Assertiveness

The Difference Between Passive, Assertive, and Aggressive



Actions

Actions speak louder than words. Make sure your body language is congruent with your words. If you say no with a smile on your face or in a weak, unconvincing voice, the words lose their force and power. Say no firmly and swiftly and follow that up with removing yourself from the situation and getting assistance if needed to back you up.

Persistent People

Use the broken record technique when faced with a situation when someone will not take no for an answer. Do not be coerced into backing down from your position by the persistence of the person insisting. **Just because they did not accept your "no" does not mean you now need to come up with another reason or excuse.** Keep saying the same answer over and over again, without developing a new reason or excuse each time the other person doesn't accept it. You don't have to be creative. **Stick to your answer and just don't budge.**

Trust

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

Harassment Burn Out

Harassing behavior is annoying at best and threatening and dangerous at worst. All students should seek assistance if harassment towards them becomes out of control and/or causes increased anxiety and

anger. Many students reach a point, after which time they can no longer tolerate the catcalls on the street with the same humor they had when they arrived in country. For some, the irritation escalates to anger and retaliation. Some students have acted out toward men on the street (yelling at them, insulting them, throwing things, hitting them) out of exasperation. This aggressive behavior is dangerous. It is a warning sign that needs to be addressed for your protection. It is very understandable that the harassment has gotten to you, but exhibiting aggressive behavior back can put you at risk. This “burn out” is a signal that it’s time to take a break. Get out of town. Take a vacation. Go talk to a friend, coworker, and/or counselor. Do some stress relieving exercises that work for you. Talk to someone. Do something different!

Potential Predator Behavior—Progressive Intrusive Invasion of Boundaries

If in a situation there is someone giving you more attention that you want, or is finding excuses to touch you, this can be potentially dangerous to your safety. For example, a guy comes up to a woman and gently brushes his shoulder up against her, flipping her hair off her shoulder, grazing her hand. She’s thinking, “This is creeping me out, but I’m sure I’m overreacting, I’m sure he doesn’t mean anything.” This is where danger begins. He is thinking, “How much will she tolerate and allow? How long can I get away with this without her calling me on it? How far can I go?”

Touch:

- Uninvited, seemingly unintentional touching (brushing up against a woman’s leg or arm, touching her hair)

Escalated touch:

- If not acknowledged and objected to, the touch will escalate (hand on thigh, hand on arm, sitting very close)

Forced sense of indebtedness:

- Creating a sense of indebtedness (buying an unsolicited drink or meal for example) and then expecting her attention in return (a dance, to walk her home, to spend time with her)

Conclusion

While some men are harassed, women experience the majority of sexual harassment and sexual assault. If you are a female student, this reality undoubtedly frustrates and angers you to have to be so very aware of your safety. If you are a male student, it likely dismays and angers you that women are ever treated disrespectfully.

There are steps to take to minimize risk while traveling abroad and maximize fun and a rich cultural experience. It is important for women to:

- Integrate into their community
- Make friends with local women
- Learn from the women about self protection and practice what you learn
- Dress according to local customs
- Interact with men according to the local customs
- Behave according to the local customs
- Stay in control; staying sober and alert keeps your senses in place to protect you
- Have a buddy system: having at least one other person with you that you trust can help you in regular circumstances as well as in problematic situations (what if someone spikes your drink). It is generally a good idea to travel in groups
- Pay attention and respond to any inner signal (intuition) that “something isn’t right” and remove yourself from the situation

Do not try to behave like you would in the States. You are here to experience a different way of life, one that allows you to assimilate into your village, to join the community, to have a full, rich cultural experience. Enjoy it. You are not giving up yourself—you, indeed, are expanding on your choices as a female. This article has been created as an invitation to you to be awake and aware and to acknowledge the realities of potential safety issues around you. To live your life as if this isn’t so is to deny yourself adequate protection. Treat yourself well.

DATE RAPE DRUGS: Important Information You Should Know

Four major types:

- Rohypnol: Roofies, Ruffles, R2, Ruffles, Roche, Forget-Pill
- GHB: Liquid Ecstasy, Liquid X
- Ketamine: Hydrochloride ("K", Special K, Vitamin K)
- Ecstasy: MDMA

Date rape drugs have become infamous because they can cause memory blackouts, periods of memory loss that follow ingestion of the drug with alcohol. Victims who have been raped with these drugs have reported waking up in strange rooms, with or without clothing, sometimes with a used condom on the bed, occasionally with bruises on their body . . . but they have no memory of the previous night.

Predators dissolve a few tablets of the drug in a drink and give it to an unaware victim. The victim drinks the contents and within twenty to thirty minutes begins to feel the effects of the drug. Among other effects, these drugs act as a sedative and muscle relaxant, and cause amnesia. When mixed with alcohol, the effects occur more rapidly. People who use it often pass out or become so dazed that they cannot remember nor control what is going on around them. Assailants will often rape or sexually assault the victim once they have become affected by the drug since unconscious victims are not able to put up a fight.

How can I protect myself?

Educate yourself. Find out which date rape drugs are currently in use, what they look like and the effects they have. If you recognize a drug or its packaging at a party, LEAVE IMMEDIATELY and call the police.

Bring your own drinks. Bring your own beverages to parties when possible.

Do not accept drinks from anyone other than a bartender or server. If someone offers you a drink from the bar at a club or party, accompany the person to the bar to order your drink, watch the drink being poured, and carry the drink yourself. Always open your own drinks if they are offered by someone at a party.

Do not accept drinks from a punch bowl or other open container. Don't drink from a container that is being passed around. Don't share or exchange drinks with anyone.

NEVER leave your drink unattended. If you go to the bathroom or to make a phone call, take it with you. If you get up to dance, finish it or take it with you. A friend left to watch your drink can easily get distracted. If you realize that your drink has been left unattended, discard it.

Don't drink anything that has a funny taste, smell, or color. Watch especially for salty or bitter taste, excessive foam, or unexplained residue.

Party by the buddy system. Check in with friends every 20 minutes. If something seems strange, LEAVE IMMEDIATELY. Watch for signs of over-intoxication. If one of your friends appears very intoxicated, gets sick after drinking a beverage, passes out and is difficult to awaken, seems to be having difficulty breathing, or is behaving in an uncharacteristic way, take steps to ensure your friend's safety. Even when used by itself, affected persons can appear extremely drunk, with slurred speech, no coordination, swaying and blood-shot eyes . . . with no odor of alcohol. If necessary, seek emergency medical assistance.

Signs that you may have been drugged

- If you feel a lot more intoxicated than usual after drinking within your normal tolerance level
- If you wake up very hung over, feeling "fuzzy," experiencing memory loss either in small or large gaps or if you remember taking a drink but don't remember what happened after that
- If you feel as though someone had sex with you but can't remember any or all of the incident
- If you feel violated in any way, or have strange bruises or body aches that you can't explain

If it happens to you...

- Get to a safe place
- Get help immediately
- Ask a trusted friend to stay with you and assist you in getting the help you need
- Call the authorities
- Get medical care at an emergency department as soon as possible for an examination and evidence collection
- Request that the hospital take a urine sample for drug toxicology testing—there is a special test to detect Rohypnol and GHB
- Preserve as much physical evidence as possible—do not urinate, shower, bathe or throw away the clothing you were wearing during the incident
- Call a rape crisis center for information and support

Safety Tips and Common Sense for Women Abroad

- Always be aware and alert. Know your surroundings if at all possible. Have a map. When possible ask another woman for directions. Act like you know where you are going even when you don't. Project a confident attitude. When leaving a public place, especially after dark, walk on a well-lit and public street.
- Know how the phones work in whatever country you are in and be prepared to use them. That is, if you need a phone card, buy one.
- Have extra money for a more expensive hotel, an upgrade to first-class on a train or a taxi to remove yourself from bad situations or bad parts of town.
- Trust your instincts. Let me repeat that: Trust your instincts. Instincts are not a conscious thing. If you feel something is off, wrong, strange—get out, move on, flee, whatever is appropriate. Do it quickly. Listen to your inner voice—your intuition.
- Basically use the same safety measures that you would take here in the United States. Know when you're putting yourself in a bad situation, for example, drinking at a bar alone and becoming intoxicated. If a situation seems uncomfortable or even vaguely unsafe, remove yourself from it immediately. Know where you would go for help if you are the victim of a crime or dangerous harassment. Know in the language of your host country how to ask for help. Always be prepared for unexpected events.
- If you're alone, find a place to stay before dark. Be very cautious of strangers who offer you rooms. **DO NOT GO WITH ANY STRANGERS IF YOU ARE ALONE.**
- Don't use drugs. Some countries have harsh laws for illegal drug possession, from jail sentence to possible death, as in Singapore.
- Beggars may approach you with screaming children (some have been known to pinch children to make them cry). Children may offer to carry bags, but be careful—without showing disrespect, politely decline. Giving money to beggars is a personal decision, but no matter what your decision is, do not put yourself in danger. Remember that although there are many people in this world without enough money on which to live, many times when beggars approach you in a foreign country, it's a ploy.
- If you plan on staying in hostels, carry a combination lock with you to secure your backpack to your bed or in a locker if you are leaving your room. It is also useful to attach your backpack to the luggage rack in a train compartment.
- Be sure to carry emergency contact information on your person at all times. You should have at least two or three different contacts: your parents, any friends or family within your host country, local committee members within your host country, and the IAESTE office within your host country (Please see the last page of this Handbook).
- Always carry the important documents that you would really be inconvenienced to be without including your passport, credit cards, cash, and onward tickets. Never wander around without your passport or a copy of your passport; it is your ultimate identification to foreign authorities.
- It can be very difficult to know what is considered offensive or suggestive in segregated societies, such as orthodox Muslim areas. At times you may feel uncomfortable or vulnerable. You may not know if the local men view you as a sex symbol or immoral. So take your cues from the local women. Ask other American women who have experience in this culture for their advice.

- If you have to wait somewhere, look for other women or families to sit with. If you are seated with someone, it is unlikely that you will be approached or harassed. Ask for help or company if you feel uncomfortable.
- If a group of men or young boys approaches you on the sidewalk, cross to the other side of the street to give them space and you peace of mind.
- Study a map before you leave your lodging or car so that once on the street you know where you are headed. Try to avoid struggling with a map or looking like a tourist.
- Be firm and assertive when you say NO. Be clear and direct to be certain that you are understood.
- Don't carry large quantities of money and don't, under any circumstances, flash cash or traveler's checks in public places. You will only be asking for trouble.
- Be careful of talking about sex. It may equate to a come-on. Be careful of asking men to dance in clubs. Be aware of going to clubs alone. This may be interpreted as an "open invitation."
- Remember that certain things might be acceptable for locals, but not for Americans. Be sure to check with locals (coworkers, local IAESTE or friends) if you are unsure.
- Don't respond to the many cat-calls that you will receive. Just walk on.
- Be aware that things that may appear as normal to you, such as getting drunk and asking someone to walk you home, may be misconstrued as an indication of poor character and may place you in uncomfortable situations.
- Violence against women is a growing concern all over the world. Sometimes when women are out of familiar environment, guards are let down. Always be alert and use the same safety precautions that you would use in the U.S., no matter where you are going. If something disconcerting or violent should happen to you, go to someone related to your program for assistance or to the proper authorities. Unfortunately, in many countries the issue of female harassment is handled quite lightly and you may be treated accordingly.
- Remember, above all else, these safety tips are not here to frighten you. It is to prepare you for any situation that you might experience while working abroad. Being prepared gives you the tools to handle any possible scenarios that might occur. You can do it! Have a wonderful, safe trip!!

*Adapted from Peace Corps Handbook, 2001. Used with Permission from UNC Charlotte's Study Abroad Handbook for Women.

Women's Crises Support Centers Abroad

<http://www.rainn.org/rccs.html>

Travel Tips

- It is suggested that for over-the-counter remedies, women should take a long at least a hefty supply of both aspirin and a non-aspirin pain relief compound, antacid tablets, anti-diarrhea medication, feminine products and yeast infection medication.
- Pack a destination-specific traveling medicine cabinet. Most pills and sprays that you'll want are available over the counter at home but may be harder to find abroad.
- Check the expiration dates on all of your credit cards and your passport to make sure that they will not expire while you are traveling. Check with your credit card companies about what additional services they offer, such as travel insurance and guarantees for merchandise.
- In some countries you will need to pay in order to use a public toilet.
- Call the international Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers (716-754-4883) for a list of English-speaking doctors worldwide. They can also be reached via e-mail: info@iamat.org or visit their website at <http://www.iamat.org>.

CHAPTER 8: IMPORTANT CONTACTS

If you experience any problems or have any concerns during your time abroad, please do not hesitate to contact IAESTE. If it is a minor problem, you can consult your host employer or the IAESTE Local Committee (if applicable) in your city. For major problems or concerns, please contact IAESTE in your host country and IAESTE United States. Our contact information is provided below, as well as several other important contacts.

You should list all other important contacts in the spaces provided.

IAESTE United States

Tel. 1-410-997-3069

Fax 1-410-997-5186

Email: iaeste@aipt.orgWeb: <http://www.iaesteunitedstates.org>**IAESTE National Committee in your host country**

Phone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Web _____

IAESTE Local Committee in your host country (if applicable)

Phone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Web _____

Nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your host country

Phone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Web _____

U.S. Department of State

Phone 1-202- 647-4000

Fax _____

Email _____

Web <http://www.state.gov>**Local Police in your host country:**

Phone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Web _____

The equivalent of 911 in Europe is 112.

University Registrar's Office

Phone _____
Fax _____
Email _____
Web _____

Departmental Advisor

Phone _____
Fax _____
Email _____
Web _____

Parent/Guardian

Phone _____
Fax _____
Email _____
Web _____

Friend

Phone _____
Fax _____
Email _____
Web _____

Other:

Phone _____
Fax _____
Email _____
Web _____

Other:

Phone _____
Fax _____
Email _____
Web _____

Other:

Phone _____
Fax _____
Email _____
Web _____

NOTES

NOTES

Special Thanks...

This handbook is adapted from **Carnegie Mellon University's** Office of International Education *Study Abroad Handbook*. The information on safety abroad for women was adapted from the University of North Carolina - Charlotte's *Study Abroad Handbook for Women*.

Acknowledgements:

NAFSA Association for International Educators Task Force for Safety & Responsibility for Study Abroad

L. Robert Kohls: "Survival Kit for Overseas Living. For Americans planning to live and work abroad." Third Edition.

University of Minnesota Health Advice for International Travelers

1998 Travelers' Resource Guide, Hostelling International

Syracuse University brochure: "There and Back Again, a Guide for Coping with Reentry".

University of Southern California, Center for Global Education, SAFETI Clearinghouse.

University of North Carolina - Charlotte, Office of Education Abroad, *Study Abroad Handbook for Women*

Additions? Suggestions?

If you would like to add anything to this handbook, such as sample budgets, personal experiences, or other travel hints, it would be much appreciated. We would especially like submissions from students who have participated in non-European internships. Please send all ideas to outbound@aipt.org.



IAESTE United States
10400 Little Patuxent Parkway
Suite 250
Columbia, MD 21044-3519
Tel 410-997-3069
Fax 410-997-5186
E-mail iaeste@aipt.org

www.iaesteunitedstates.org