PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION:
PROGRAM FOR STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS UTILIZING THE ON-CAMPUS
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

A CREATIVE PROJECT
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IN
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BY
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ABSTRACT

Title: Pre-departure orientation: Program for study abroad students utilizing the on-campus international community

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The purpose of this creative project was to create a pre-departure orientation for Ball State University study abroad students utilizing the resources of international students. However, the project can be altered to fit any university’s study abroad program. The project was conceptualized to give study abroad students the most pertinent information about the country they are studying in. The project will provide readers with specific instructions on how to create a pre-departure orientation involving international students to provide firsthand knowledge about their home country.

The goal of this project was to provide study abroad students with the most helpful information about living in another country before they departed. The students will learn about culture and custom issues before they depart, which will allow them to prepare for the differences. The international students volunteering for the pre-departure workshop will be helpful to the American students, because the American students will be able to ask them specific questions about their home country. The presence of the international students is significant because students will become familiar with a new person from a foreign land. The workshop will allow students to begin thinking about
independent travel excursions, studying techniques, and culture issues. This pre-departure orientation will allow students to get the most out of their study abroad experience, and will help them truly understand the culture of the country of their study abroad choice.

College provides students with multiple ways for students to develop mentally, behaviorally, and emotionally. Studying abroad was a way for colleges to embrace and enhance student development. It was necessary for study abroad students to move beyond their borders to understand themselves and their home nation. The pre-departure orientation will assist students in gaining the most from their study abroad experience.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The popularity of studying abroad rose in the past decade. “In 2005-2006, 223,534 U.S. students studied abroad, an increase of 8.5% from the previous year” (Institute of International Education, 2007, ¶ 2). One of the reasons for the increase in studying abroad is the awareness of globalization by society (Di Pietro & Page, 2008). Students took note that they needed to be prepared to work in diverse settings with the immerging global marketplace. With the awareness of converging cultures, students chose to study abroad to learn or improve their foreign language skills and to eventually excel in the global market of their industry.

College provides students with multiple ways for students to develop mentally, behaviorally, and emotionally. Studying abroad was a way for colleges to embrace and enhance student development. It was necessary for study abroad students to move beyond their borders to understand themselves and their home nation (Goodwin & Nacht, 1988). This experience caused anxiety for students. Culture shock occurs when people are introduced to a new culture different from their own (Church, 1982). Therefore, orientation is crucial to help students understand the host country’s history, traditions, academic standards, and activities offered (Walker, 1999). This creative project takes the practice of orientation and uses international students to help prepare students to depart into an unknown land. The issues of culture shock, independent travel excursions, and
studying techniques will be discussed in the proposed project, with the assistance of citizens from the study abroad sites.

Chapter one is an introduction of a creative project about a pre-departure orientation for study abroad students utilizing the international students currently on-campus as a resource. This project gives a framework for a workshop of necessary information for study abroad students about to depart. The creative project creates an outline of events to occur during the workshop with special emphasis on cultural knowledge, which will be introduced by international students who are on-campus. This chapter includes a statement of purpose, the significance of the study, scope and limitations, and organization of the paper.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this creative project was to create a pre-departure orientation for Ball State University study abroad students utilizing the resources of international students. However, the project can be altered to fit any university’s study abroad program. The project was conceptualized to give study abroad students the most pertinent information about the country they are studying in. The project will provide readers with specific instructions on how to create a pre-departure orientation involving international students to provide firsthand knowledge about their home country.

Significance of the Creative Project

The goal of this project was to provide study abroad students with the most helpful information about living in another country before they departed. The students will learn about culture and custom issues before they depart, which will allow them to prepare for the differences. The international students volunteering for the pre-departure
workshop will be helpful to the American students, because the American students will be able to ask them specific questions about their home country. The presence of the international students is significant because students will become familiar with a new person from a foreign land. The workshop will allow students to begin thinking about independent travel excursions, studying techniques, and culture issues. This pre-departure orientation will allow students to get the most out of their study abroad experience, and will help them truly understand the culture of the country of their study abroad choice.

Scope and Limitations

This orientation workshop was designed with the hope of having international students willing assist as volunteers at Ball State University. Therefore, the study is limited to the resources of Ball State University. If not enough international students were willing to assist, the main culture component of the workshop may suffer. Alternative cultural supplements could be conducted in place of having international students, but this is not ideal. The project is limited by the university’s pre-departure content and what they like to convey to their students.

Organization of the Paper

This creative project is comprised of four chapters. Chapter two will review the related literature on study abroad and study abroad orientation programs. Chapter three outlines the methodology used in the creative project and how it will be implemented into this project. The implementation of the pre-departure workshop will appear in Chapter four.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Project Summary

The workshop for pre-departure study abroad students utilizing international students who are currently on-campus was devised for students to have a well-rounded study abroad experience. The workshop will provide students with information about the country that they are about to immerse themselves in. The highlight of this workshop is that there will be international students from those countries to provide study abroad students with firsthand knowledge about the country’s culture and customs.

Who Studies Abroad?

The popularity of studying abroad rose in the past decade. “In 2005-2006, 223,534 U.S. students studied abroad, an increase of 8.5% from the previous year,” according to the Institute of International Education’s website (2007, ¶ 2). Johnson (2006), added "study abroad is now recognized as an important component in promoting American ideals around the globe” (p. 311). With the current political situation in the United States, other countries did not favor the country and studying abroad positively affected the attitude of people in other countries.

Demographics

Research on the demographic of study abroad participants looked at their parent’s education level. Di Pietro and Page (2008) found a parent’s education level had a strong
correlation to students studying internationally. The decision to study abroad was supported more by parents who had a higher education level because they were able to financially support the experience. However, the importance of studying abroad is being realized and more funding has been given to students and will continue in the future. With funding not weighing heavily on the consideration, other selection processes were implemented. Norton (2008) discovered minority students were concerned with the cost of studying abroad, and made the opportunity a lofty dream. There was funding for students who wanted to study abroad, but it was not easily found. Many minority students were awarded Pell grants as part of their financial package, and as a result benefited from an additional $1,200 - $4,000 to study abroad.

Students with higher grades were more likely to study abroad (Di Pietro & Page, 2008). Many universities implement a selection process due to their study abroad program’s popularity, and grades were usually the main factor. Furthermore in 2004-2005, it was found that 23 percent of students who studied abroad majored in the social sciences, 17 percent in business management, 12 percent in humanities, and seven percent foreign languages (Obst, Bhandari & Witherell, 2007). A majority of the majors had flexibility to take some of their core courses abroad, as well as electives.

Most participants who studied abroad were enrolled at Doctoral/Research universities (Obst et al., 2007). Many research universities had a large percentage of people who studied abroad because they had large student populations. Furthermore, “only two percent came from Associate’s institutions” (p. 16). Community colleges award associate degrees, and enroll “over 50 percent of all students in higher education” (p. 16). However, they had the lowest percentage of study abroad students. There is a
large potential for community colleges to market study abroad programs to their students. However, the largest majority of minority students attend community colleges. In 2005, minority students only “accounted for 17 percent of undergraduates who studied abroad in 2005-6.” (Obst et al., 2007, p. 19). Comparatively, 83 percent of students who studied abroad in the same year were Caucasian. It was not that minority students did not want to study abroad, they did not know it was a possibility because of the financial aspects. Minority students confided that there was not a presence of minority students marketing the opportunity to study abroad.

The majority of international study abroad participants were female (Di Pietro & Page, 2008; Johnson, 2006). McKinney (2007) conducted a study to determine if more women were studying abroad than men. This research was fueled by her observations as the Director of Study Abroad programs at a university. She found most females felt the need to obtain travel experiences, marriage, and kids by a certain age. Female college students wanted travel experience, a career and children, in that order. Most women did not think they would have time to travel after having children. Therefore, they felt the need to study abroad promptly with a safe study abroad program sponsored by the university. Furthermore, interviews at a liberal arts college provided insight into males not studying abroad. Jendraszak (2008) presented her findings about men’s study abroad habits. She found that one of the reasons some men were unwilling to study abroad was because it required them to emerge from their comfort zone. Also, they did not see how studying in a foreign land helped find a job at the end of college. The research found advertising methods were not targeted towards men. They wanted facts and figures in the advertising followed with employers stating they wanted people with international
experiences. In 2007, men and women were not studying abroad at the same rate, mainly because of poor targeted advertising.

Why Study Abroad?

Students claimed they wanted to study abroad to improve their chances of obtaining their dream job (Di Pietro & Page, 2008). Globalization became more evident in the past decade, and students took note that they needed to be prepared to work in diverse settings. Seventeen percent of study abroad students majored in business management. They needed to study in diverse environments to function in a global world after graduation (Di Pietro & Page, 2008; Kneale, 2008; Obst et al., 2007; Walker, 1999). After the study abroad program, 90.3% of the students agreed studying abroad had increased their interest in world affairs (Hadis, 2005). Employers liked candidates that studied abroad, because it showed they had an adventurous spirit and they took initiative (Goodwin & Nacht, 1988). Five years after studying abroad, many international traveled students were able to land a job based on skills acquired during the study abroad experience such as, language proficiency and professional knowledge of host country (Maiworm & Teichler, 1996).

Students also chose to study abroad to learn or improve a foreign language and to excel in the global market (Di Pietro & Page, 2008). It was suggested that “a truly imaginative program during ten weeks on a Mexican campus could provide the equivalent of three years of language instruction in the United States” (Goodwin & Nacht, 1988, p. 16). However, a different language could be mastered in America, and when those students traveled to another country they would have a multitude of experiences, rather than just learning a language.
Furthermore, students studied abroad to gain self-awareness and independence. However, these developmental gains were not a goal going into the program, but rather a realization after the program ended. Students were able to develop confidence in themselves and interact with other cultures (Di Pietro & Page 2008; Griffiths, 2003; Kneale, 2008; Walker, 1999). It was necessary for study abroad students to move beyond their borders to understand themselves and their home nation (Goodwin & Nacht, 1988). With such efforts increasing a global world, many study abroad participants sought to improve international relations in the future because of their international experiences.

Issues while Studying Abroad

Studying abroad has significant advantages to the student, but there are risks involved. The study abroad director weighs those risks and gives pertinent information to students so they can make informed decisions about leaving the country. According to Luethge (2004), “services seem to be riskier purchases to consumers than tangible products” (p. 25). The experience of studying abroad could not be tested prior to purchase, and created a risk for parents and students who were use to a free-trial society. Financial risks concerned most parents. If a student went abroad and had an awful time, the money paid to study abroad was lost. The physical danger was explored prior to departure. This risk was more likely to become an issue in countries that were not favorable to United States citizens. Also, physical harm occurred to some of the students when he or she was not briefed on the culture of the country. This resulted in inadvertently insulting a host country citizen.

One issue Johnson (2006) discovered was missed opportunity for disabled students to study abroad. For example, one student in a wheelchair wanted to study with a
program going to Australia to learn about the Outback. The program required traveling with independent transportation providers, and was unable to provide wheelchair accessible vans. The student was denied a spot in the program. Laws in the United States may have required the independent transportation provider to allow the student, but study abroad programs could not force small businesses in other countries to abide by the laws of the United States. Eventually, the student sued and lost because of those reasons. However, fully developed study abroad programs had to have alternative programs that were handicap accessible.

*Transitional Issues*

For many people the experience of leaving the country for the first time occurred while studying abroad (Johnson, 2006). This experience caused anxiety for students. Culture shock occurs when people are introduced to a new culture different from their own (Church, 1982). Symptoms include “anxiety, helplessness, irritability and longing for a more predictable and gratifying environment” (p. 540). The symptoms of culture shock occur because one is not comfortable with the changes that are occurring around them in a new cultural setting (Iowa State University Study Abroad Center, 2002). Culture shock manifested through excessive drinking, eating, fears of being cheated or robbed, fits of anger toward or avoidance of locals, and yearning to be with people from their home country (Church, 1982). Culture shock allows students to develop in a new way outside of school and interaction with new cultures.

*Developmental Theory*

How individuals dealt with studying abroad was studied by Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003). First, study abroad students had denial of cultural differences.
During this phase isolation and separation occurs. Then students go through a defensive state and act superior to the host individuals. Students realize differences between cultures, but are unable to accept individuals of the host country. Finally, cultural differences are minimized, and students are able to connect with locals more easily. This is when universalism began. Specifically, this is when people regardless of their nationality come together in harmony.

*Personal Development*

Many study abroad participants gain personal skills which allowed them to progress through their life and careers successfully. Students who were not fluent in their study abroad host country’s language when they arrived experienced language shock (Church, 1982). This occurred when one first arrived and was unable to speak the language fully. However, with time and persistence students were able to fully develop the language skills necessary to survive (Kneale, 2008).

Furthermore, students studying abroad are able to develop self reliance through their experiences (Laubscher, 1994). For example, students navigate themselves around a foreign country and learn how to manage without friends or family. The act of traveling encourages self-reliance because of the tasks that go into traveling such as, finding hotels, train connections, and money exchanges.

Students also develop independence (Laubscher, 1994). They leave their parents and are unable to contact them constantly, for the first time. They are also motivated by their own ideas, rather than other’s ideas. This gives students a true sense of what characterizes them, which helps students develop tolerance. It took some people their entire experience to fully develop this trait. But, at the end of their experience, many
learn to be more accepting of other cultures. This development allows students to then look at America through different lenses. They are introduced to new political systems and different cultural traditions. Some students became more patriotic because they compared their way of living to other countries. Therefore, they appreciate their home country and had knowledge of how others live.

How Universities Prepared Students to Study Abroad

Because of the amount of uncertainty associated with study abroad experiences, universities create programs to prepare students for studying abroad. The execution of the program depended on the study abroad office’s resources for advancing the experience. The time frame for awareness programs spans from six weeks prior to departure and some continue until after the study abroad experience finished.

*Emotional Intelligence*

Emotional intelligence was taught to Masters of Business students before they departed to China (Ornstein & Nelson, 2006). Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2008) defined emotional intelligence as “the ability to engage in sophisticated information processing about one's own and others' emotions and the ability to use this information as a guide to thinking and behavior” (p. 503). Students able to pay attention to their emotional intelligence were able to use it to understand their emotions and others. The purpose of the series of lessons was to teach students to be emotionally intelligent before their trip commenced (Ornstein & Nelson, 2006). The underlining purpose for introducing emotional intelligence was to teach students to control their emotions and create an enjoyable experience. This trait was important to learn before embarking on a new situation where intense feelings surfaced. For example, a student felt anxious away
from his or her home. If he or she recognized those feelings, proactive actions occurred with emotional intelligence. For example, emotional intelligence encouraged the participant to ask to be alone, or to apologize if he or she became withdrawn. With a heightened emotional intelligence students, had “higher self-esteem, empathy, self-motivation, and cooperativeness” (p. 43). The lessons on emotional intelligence were deemed successful. Students claimed the lessons legitimized real concerns they had in preparation for studying abroad. The faculty approved of emotional intelligence lessons, because the program was more likely to run smoothly with the emotional intelligence theories in place. Also, organizers claimed a well-organized program was more likely to attract future students. The discussed methods of implantation for future emotional intelligence practices included lecture format, discussion, pre-assigned readings, or video tapes. During the trip, faculty are encouraged to schedule discussions about emotional intelligence when issues surfaced. Furthermore, it was important to encourage leaders to use emotional intelligence when crisis occur.

Risk Reduction

To simply reduce risk, the best policy was to inform students of the foreseeable dangers (Aalberts & Evans, 1995; Luethge, 2004). Luethge (2004) claimed the best way to inform about risk was to use print handouts or television ads. For example, a print ad informed students that mountain climbing and other harmful independent activities were not associated with the university’s study abroad program. If any harm occurred to the student, it would be brought upon themselves. Facts of possible harm were important for students to think about before they begun their journey abroad. Also, information transmitted verbally from one past student to the next was effective in reducing risks.
In extreme circumstances, programs were cancelled to reduce risk to students. Aalberts and Evans (1995) discovered programs to the Middle East were discontinued when Israel experienced violence in 1988. This was the best course of action due to a civil war eruption. However, Johnson (2006) warned study abroad programs about cancelling excursions, because it caused “super-cautious foreign programs” (p. 316). The appeal of study abroad programs is the naturally unique experiences for students. If study abroad programs operated too cautiously, then studying internationally did not appeal to students.

To prevent harm while abroad, Aalberts and Evans (1995) insisted that students know the primary language of the country visited. This prevented locals from discriminating against students for lack of effort to know the host country. Also, it was important that students be briefed on the laws of the country visited. Most countries either had stricter or more lax laws than the United States. It was necessary for students to understand the laws and not get into trouble with local authorities. If students broke university rules, the university still had responsibility over the student. The study abroad contract between the student and university diminished the amount of liability the university had on the student, but not all responsibility was taken away with a study abroad contact.

Orientation

To help students prepare for international studying, pre-departure orientations are important to international departments. Walker (1999) discovered orientation was crucial to help students understand the host country’s history, traditions, academic standards, and activities offered. Furthermore, Iowa State University’s orientation program began six
months before departure with informal sessions to address cultural issues (Iowa State University Study Abroad Center, 1998). In these sessions, cultural books were suggested about the host country to familiarize one with the customs. Logistics meetings were conducted before departure to inform about flights and daily activities. Also, a semester prior to departure, a study abroad course was required. The final step was a welcome luncheon at the host country university to acclimate students to the new campus. Iowa State University’s orientation program had many facets that other study abroad programs picked from depending on the amount of students enrolled in abroad courses and the department’s resources.

Indiana University offered students who were going abroad for a year an orientation session focused on culture. Kendra Nelson, Assistant Director of Study Abroad at Indiana University, mentioned that the cultural session was only offered to students who were studying abroad for a year, because they needed more of a “big picture” mindset before they departed from the United States (personal communication, May 7, 2009). The cultural session lasted for two hours and addressed topics of American stereotypes and culture shock. The study abroad department also invited the specific one-year exchange students on their campus to the cultural orientation. The international students were present to answer the one-year study abroad student’s questions. This program was well received by the small group of students.

To prevent harm during the study abroad experience, risk management was determined in advance. First, seminars were organized to fully inform prospective study abroad students about the program’s threats (Luethge, 2004). Successful programs involved past study abroad participants to discuss their experiences (Kneale, 2008;
Luethge, 2004). Successful past risk management plans were able to increase awareness by providing information about the program through print ads or television commercials on the university station (Luethge, 2004). Also, correct price information at the beginning of the study abroad search process was important to many potential participants.

In the past, study abroad operations did not specifically target minority students. In 2005-2006, “minority students only accounted for 17 percent of undergraduates who studied abroad” (Norton, 2008, ¶ 5). However, there were methods that encouraged minority students to study abroad. It began with advisors in the international department. Joy G. Carew, associate professor of pan-African studies and associate director of international programs at the University of Louisville stated, “campus advisers need to frankly discuss how students’ ethnicity may influence their experiences abroad” (¶ 15). If advisors discussed the precautions upfront, it eliminated minority student’s fears. Furthermore, the University of Pittsburgh gave minority students a booklet entitled, “The World Is in Your Hands” which described the experiences of black students abroad (Norton, 2008). This gave the minority students a real life glimpse of some of the issues that minority students encountered. Being upfront helped students prepare for any uncomfortable situations.

Re-entry Orientation

When students returned to their national country, La Brack (2006) found re-entry workshops assisted students with reentry culture shock. Reverse culture shock occurs after participants re-examine “priorities, values, and what they think of themselves and the United States” (Center for Global Education, n.d., ¶ 1). Upon arrival, students have an idealized view of their home and they believe they could pick back up where they had left
off. However, things are not the same as when they left. Students feel like family and friends do not care about their experiences, which results in feelings of “frustration . . . alienation, and mutual misunderstandings between study abroad students and their friends and family” (¶ 6). The University of the Pacific offered four hour and half long sessions (La Brack, 2006). The sessions dealt with student struggles after an abroad experience. In the first session, students brought photographs from their study abroad experience and talked about their overseas experiences. The second session discussed how students adapted to other ways of thinking. Student’s transition involved loss and change in their lifestyles after living internationally. In session three, students gained a greater understanding of how they perceived their own culture. Finally, in session four conversations were lead to celebrate growth and change. The sessions were successful for students that attended. However, the sessions were not mandatory so students not in attendance dealt with reentry culture shock alone.

Summary

The opportunity and popularity of study abroad programs increased in the past due to an increasing need and curiosity for knowledge about other cultures. Many college students, especially females, felt their college years were the best time to pursue international travel. However, minority students did not have role models encouraging them to study abroad from their international education departments, and as a result many minority students did not studied abroad. The urge to study internationally stemmed from a desire to learn a foreign language, or to develop personality traits, such as independence or self-reliance. For development to occur, universities prepared students prior to departure with orientations about the cultures of study abroad sites. Some study abroad
offices developed programs to combat re-entry culture shock, which allowed students to
digest their experiences. Efforts were made to assist study abroad participants before their
departure. However, partnerships between study abroad participants and international
students were not evident. The international office was a resource not tapped into by
study abroad programs. Further programs would include a partnership between study
abroad participants about to depart and the international students on their host country’s
campus.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this creative project was to create a pre-departure orientation for Ball State University study abroad students utilizing the resources of international students. However, the project can be altered to fit any university’s study abroad program. The project was conceptualized to give study abroad students the most pertinent information about the country they are studying in. The project will provide readers with specific instructions on how to create a pre-departure orientation involving international students to provide firsthand knowledge about their home country.

Method

First, a literature review was conducted about study abroad to understand its role and importance in academia. The purpose of the literature review was to understand the study abroad industry by looking at the literature and gaining a complete understanding of how the study abroad process works. Then, examples of other university’s pre-departure workshop were considered and expanded upon. It is helpful to look at how other universities conduct their study abroad orientations because some of their components could be used. Additionally, individuals in university’s study abroad offices were interviewed to gain specific details about their orientation programs.
Design of Project

The pre-departure workshop was designed to give study abroad students the most information about the country they were traveling to, including cultural aspects of the countries through international student’s knowledge. The main components of the pre-departure workshop will work around the time frame of the international volunteer students. To have their support is an important priority of the workshop, so extra effort will be made to ensure international students are available to assist with the workshop, because their information is valuable to the mission of the workshop. The international volunteers will be contacted based on where the study abroad students will be studying to match the cultures properly. Once volunteers have been established, they will be encouraged to stop by the Study Abroad Advisor’s office to have a brief meeting about what the workshop is looking to accomplish with their first hand knowledge of their home country. The international students will be given the specific areas of where the study abroad students will be living, so they can be prepared to answer explicit questions about the area. Then, the international students will be given topics to discuss during the workshop, such as: logistics of the host university (if they have attended the same university), weekend getaways, public transportation logistics and deals, etc. The international students will be encouraged to bring pictures or anything interesting from their home country to share with the study abroad students. Also, the international students will be asked for ideas about interesting laws of their country that will be used for an icebreaker in the workshop.

When the American students arrive at the workshop they will be greeted with international themed music and colorful flags, the purpose is to help students get excited
for their new cultural experience with an inviting atmosphere. Some students may still be apprehensive about leaving the country, so this workshop is to help elevate their fears by combating their doubts with knowledge. The tone of the workshop will be informative and participative to get students comfortable with the setting. The first portion of the workshop will lead with an icebreaker. Then the workshop will cover the logistics and liability. The paperwork will be fully explained, so students understand all of the logistics and liability when they are abroad.

The next portion of the workshop will be interactive with international students from the country they are studying in. The participants studying abroad will be divided into groups according to their study abroad location. This section will be led by the international students. It is the most influential portion of the workshop because students will meet someone from their study abroad country. The international students will give a brief overview of their country, including interesting facts. Then, students will have the opportunity to ask questions about the country. Finally, the international students will cover topics pertaining to the countries that were not brought up during the question and answer portion.

The final portion of the workshop will include everyone coming back together to talk about culture shock and re-entry culture shock. This may be a difficult concept for students to comprehend, because they are so excited about traveling and they do not believe that they could miss home. However, the presentation will give students information about what culture shock and re-entry culture shock are and what signs can be associated with these issues. Also, the students will be given methods to combat symptoms of culture shock and re-entry culture shock.
Summary

The pre-departure orientation specific for Ball State University was guided by literature and other orientation programs to serve the study abroad students before they depart. The project takes some of the logistical information pertinent to Ball State University’s study abroad process and adds cultural information to the sessions. The cultural sessions assist in student’s understanding of the country they will be living and studying in.
CHAPTER FOUR

PROGRAM FOR STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS UTILIZING THE ON-CAMPUS INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Project Summary

The workshop for pre-departure study abroad students utilizing international students who are currently on-campus was devised for students to have a well-rounded study abroad experience. The workshop will provide students with information about the country that they are about to immerse themselves in. The highlight of this workshop is that there will be international students from those countries to provide study abroad students with firsthand knowledge about the country’s culture and customs.

The project includes the following items:

Example Timeline……………………………..page 23

Obtaining International Student Volunteers…. page 24

Workshop Agenda……………………………..page 25

Workshop Session and Activities………………pages 25-28
Example Timeline for Students Studying Abroad in the Spring

Email to International Volunteers – November 9, 2009

Email to Study Abroad Students – November 10, 2009

Individual Meeting with International Volunteers – November 18-25, 2009

Workshop - December 5, 2009
Obtaining International Students Volunteers

An email will be sent to students from specific countries that are needed for the study abroad pre-departure orientation (Appendix A). If there are not enough responses from the proposed email, then the International Adviser will be contacted to recommend specific students from each country that would be willing to assist with the per-departure workshop.

Once a sufficient amount of international students are willing to be volunteers, they will be contacted about making a private meeting with the Study Abroad Advisor to discuss how they need to prepare for the workshop. The international students will be given the specific areas of where the study abroad students will be living, so they can be prepared to answer explicit questions about the area. Then, the international students will be given topics to discuss during the workshop, such as: logistics of the host university (if they have attended the same university), weekend getaways, public transportation logistics and deals, etc. The international students will be encouraged to bring pictures or anything interesting from their home country to share with the study abroad students. Also, the international students will be asked for ideas about interesting laws of their country that will be used for an icebreaker in the workshop.
Workshop Agenda

10:45am-11am  Arrival
11am-11:20am Introduction and Icebreaker
11:20am-11:45am Activity with International Student Volunteers
11:45am-12:45pm Lunch Break
12:45am-1pm PowerPoint Presentation about liability and logistics
1pm-1:25pm Activity Fictional Cultural Activity
1:25pm-1:45pm Continued PowerPoint Presentation about liability, logistics and re-entry culture shock
1:45pm-2:15pm Discuss the Study Abroad Handbook
2:15pm-2:20pm Final Questions

Workshop Session and Activities

Arrival

When the American students arrive at the workshop at 10am on Saturday morning they will be greeted with international themed music and colorful flags. The purpose of this atmosphere is to help students get excited for their new cultural experience with an inviting atmosphere. There will also be beverages and snacks for all of the participants. Some students may still be apprehensive about leaving the country, so this workshop is to help elevate their fears by combating their doubts with knowledge. The tone of the workshop will be informative and participative to get students comfortable with the setting. The first portion of the workshop will lead with an icebreaker.
**Icebreaker**

The first session of the workshop will be a short icebreaker to get everyone comfortable with the atmosphere and each other. The chairs will be arranged in a circle. Then, each person individually introduces himself/herself and tells an item that he/she would bring with them while stranded on an island that also begins with the same letter as his/her first name. Then, each person must recall the previous person’s name (from the beginning of the circle) and what he/she plans to bring. For example, “My name is Doug, I plan to bring a dog with me on an island, and this is Greg and he plans to bring his guitar.”

**Activity with International Student Volunteers**

In order for the program to run smoothly and have the international students be a part of the introduction, their activity time will be next on the agenda. Depending on how many students are going to the same country or area will determine how many different cultural groups are formed to discuss the topical information.

The next portion of the workshop will be interactive with international students from the country they are studying in. The participants studying abroad will be divided into groups according to their study abroad location. This session will be led by the international students. It is the most influential portion of the workshop because students will meet someone from their study abroad country. The international students will give a brief overview of their country, including interesting facts. Then, students will have the opportunity to ask questions about the country. Finally, the international students will cover topics pertaining to the countries that were not brought up during the question and answer portion. There is some formality to the session, but the mission is for it to be
informal so the students can get the most pertinent information possible. Once this session is complete, there will be a brief five minute break to bring everyone back together.

*Liability and Logistics PowerPoint Presentation*

This workshop will cover the logistics and liability. The paperwork will be fully explained, so students understand all of the logistics and liability when they are abroad. See PowerPoint (Appendix B). In the middle of the PowerPoint presentation a fictional cultural activity will take place.

*Activity: Fictional Culture Game*

Instructions for the presenter: form two groups and send the groups to opposite sides of the room. Copy the Fictional Culture laws listed here, and give one copy to each member of one of the groups. Tell the Fictional Culture group members to study the laws so they can act them out with the other group. When the Fictional Culture group is ready, have the two groups mingle to establish friendships. Have the members of the "regular" group try to figure out the laws the Fictional Culture group members are using just by interacting with them.

Fictional Culture laws are:

1. Never frown at someone you don't know well.
2. Constantly wink at someone if he or she is a close friend.
3. When someone approaches you, the polite thing to do is to turn your back to him or her.
4. Loud or aggressive people are attractive, and you're drawn to them.
5. It's appropriate to shake hands only when you're angry with someone and want to start a fight with him or her.

6. If you want to talk with a stranger, you immediately sit cross-legged on the floor in front of him or her.

7. If you want to tell someone that you like him or her, stick out your tongue, hold your nose, and hop in place.

8. Never speak English.

   The purpose of this activity is to assist students in understanding that some laws and rules may seem weird and uncalled for. However, there may be similar cultural observations while they are studying abroad, but it is important to adhere to the cultural cues and laws of the country they are visiting.

*Re-Entry Culture Shock*

   The final portion of the workshop will include everyone coming back together to talk about culture shock and re-entry culture shock. This may be a difficult concept for students to comprehend, because they are so excited about traveling and they do not believe that they could miss home. However, the presentation will give students information about what culture shock and re-entry culture shock are and what signs can be associated with these issues. Also, the students will be given methods to combat symptoms of culture shock and re-entry culture shock.
REFERENCES


Iowa State University Study Abroad Center. (2002). *Students, study abroad student handbook* [Brochure]. Iowa State University.


Jendraszak, L. (2008, November). *Barriers to the outside world: College men and the reasons they won’t study abroad*. Paper presented at the meeting of National Association of Foreign Student Advisors, Lexington, KY.


APPENDIX A

EMAILS TO STUDENTS
Email to International students about being volunteers

The study abroad department needs YOU! We have Ball State students who are traveling to your home country to study next semester. During their pre-departure orientation we would love it if you could give them cultural, logistical and any other information about your home country they would find helpful in their transition. Please email me to learn more about this great cultural opportunity.

Sincerely,

Dena Roberts
Study Abroad Advisor
Email to Study Abroad Students

The MANDATORY pre-departure orientation will be occurring in the next month. There will be international students attending the session to provide you with first-hand knowledge of the country will be studying in. So, make sure to come to the workshop with any cultural or logistical questions about their home country.

Workshop Agenda

10:45am-11am    Arrival
11am-11:20am    Introduction and Icebreaker
11:20am-11:45am Activity with International Student Volunteers
11:45am-12:45pm Lunch Break
12:45am-1pm    PowerPoint Presentation about liability and logistics
1pm-1:25pm      Activity Fictional Cultural Activity
1:25pm-1:45pm   Continued PowerPoint Presentation about liability, logistics and re-entry culture shock
1:45pm-2:15pm   Discuss the Study Abroad Handbook
2:15pm-2:20pm   Final Questions

If you have any questions, please email me or address them at the meeting. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Dena Roberts
Study Abroad Advisor
APPENDIX B

POWERPOINT FOR PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION WORKSHOP
Study Abroad Workshop
December 5, 2009
Dena Roberts, Study Abroad Advisor
Study Abroad Orientation

- Pre-Departure Checklist
- Financial Aid
- Liability Release Agreement
- Conduct and Statement of Responsibility

Pre-Departure Checklist – Make sure you check everything off in the next few weeks before the semester ends. If you have any questions please ask!

Financial Aid – If you have any financial aid that you would like to be used in the next semester, please sign this paper so it will be used. If you have questions about how much and what kind of aid can be applied to your time abroad please contact Judy Nichols in the Financial Aid Office. If you do not have financial aid or do not want to use it for your time abroad just hand it back to me.

Liability Release Agreement – Please read over all of the points on this sheet and sign the back. If you are under the age of 21, you must have your parents sign the sheet, as well. The overall liability form is to make you aware that Ball State is not responsible for you if any harm occurs to you while you are abroad. So, any legal or medical issues will have to be taken care by yourself. However, you will have insurance so that will help with any medical issues. You will be responsible for all of your decisions and their consequences.

Conduct and Statement of Responsibility – If you are under the age of 21, your parents must sign this sheet.
Study Abroad Orientation

- Emergency Information
- Health Evaluation
- Study Abroad Grade Transfer Policy

Emergency Information – The people that you put on your emergency contact sheet will be able to access your information. For example, if there is an earthquake in your area, and your parent calls who is not on your emergency contact sheet, we will not be able to tell them anything. This is also true about your financial aid information. So, think about that when you are filling this sheet out.

Health Evaluation – You must have a physical before you depart for your study abroad program. This can be done at the Health Center or your family physician.

Study Abroad Grade Transfer Policy – Once you initial each box, this signifies that you understand that you must request your study abroad classes and get permission for their perspective academic departments before you depart. This is a very important step in this process. Also, be aware that you will also have to register for you next semester classes while you are abroad. Be aware that your transcripts will not arrive until a few months after your return.
Study Abroad Orientation

- Course Request Sheet
  - 1st – Research classes offered at your study abroad institution and determine how they fit into your class schedule.
  - 2nd – Make an appointment with the appropriate BSU department that the study abroad courses would transferred to.
  - 3rd – Bring a course description of the study abroad class to the BSU department chair. He/she will then determine which BSU class it corresponds with, therefore allowing a transfer of your study abroad classes.

- Handbook Review Form

Course Request Sheet – you must decided which classes you want to take at your study abroad institution, then approach the applicable BSU department to make sure that they will give you credit for the classes. You may have to make meetings with a few different BSU academic departments, depending on where the classes correspond.

Handbook Review Form – You have a copy of the study abroad handbook. Please read over it and sign the sheet. This is a very helpful handbook and I encourage you to read it for your own benefit.
Activity: Fictional Culture Game

- Split into 2 groups.
- Study the laws given to you.
- Mingle to establish friendships mimicking the laws given to you.
- Have the members of the "regular" group try to figure out the laws the Fictional Culture group members are using just by interacting with them.

Questions for the participants: What was the purpose of this activity?
**Study Abroad Orientation**

- International Student ID Card Application
- Benefits: www.isic.org
  - Internationally recognized proof of student status
  - 1,200 discounts on flights, buses, trains and ferries
  - 2,800 discounts on entrance to the world’s leading museums and cultural sites
  - 2,700 discounts on entertainment and attractions
  - 2,400 discounts on youth hostels and hotels
  - 21,000 discounts worldwide on bars, restaurants and shopping!
  - Access to a free 24-hour, multilingual ISIC Emergency Help Line
  - ISICConnect - an all-in-one discount communications package including phone, SMS, email and voicemail
  - Access to a global network of 5000 travel organizations that specialize in the needs of student and youth travelers in 106 countries
  - Access to a personalized trip planner and travel guide

International Student ID Card Application – The international student ID card is a great benefit for you and it is mandatory. It is $22 lasts for 1 year. It gives you added insurance.

Access to a personalized trip planner and travel guide – save all the useful travel advice and destination information you find on this website on your personal web page to check out while you’re travelling or to email to a friend.
Study Abroad Orientation

- International Student ID Card Application
  - Insurance Benefits:
    - $25,000 Accident Medical Expense
    - $165 Per day sickness/Hospital Benefit (up to 61 days)
    - $100 Baggage delay
    - $100 Travel delay (domestic only)
    - $300,000 Emergency Medical Transportation
    - $25,000 Repatriation of remains
    - $500 Travel Document Replacement (covers Admin. Fees)
    - $5000 Accidental death and dismemberment – air
    - $1000 Accidental death and dismemberment – other
Study Abroad Orientation

- Health Insurance
  - You will have to pay medical costs up front and then get reimbursements
- Prescriptions
  - Work with your family physician to get at least 3 months of your prescription.
- Vaccinations
  - Check https://www.cdc.gov/travel to determine if your country requires any vaccinations
- Country Information:
  - Visit https://www.state.gov/countries/

Prescriptions – an extra month of your dosage would be advisable, just in case your luggage was lost.

Vaccinations – if you do require vaccinations, it would be in your best interest if you made this appointment at the same time as your physical exam.
Passports – CVS/Wal-mart have photo studios to take passport photos. Make sure you do this ahead of time.

Visas – not all countries need visas.

Registration with Embassies – To make your presence known to the government is important in case of in emergencies in the country.

Student Legal Services – Power of attorney may be something for you to consider while you are studying abroad. This allows the person (parents, guardian, spouse) to act on your behalf while you are out of the country. They can have access to paying your bills, or collecting your student loan checks. This is a free service offered by BSU legal service. Just call to make an appointment.
Re-entry Cultural Shock

- You have had an amazing experience - you've seen places and done things that most people will never see or do - and it was YOUR experience! It is deeply personal, and precisely for that reason you cannot hope to make others understand what you went through and are now going through.

- Coming home is a period of adjustment to your home culture and of the integration into your life of what you have learned abroad. Students cope with reentry at various levels.

- Reverse culture shock occurs after participants re-examine "priorities, values, and what they think of themselves and the United States."

It may be difficult to understand that you will have to adjust back to American culture just as you had to do with the country you traveled to, but keep these PowerPoint notes in your files to refer back to when you arrive home from your study abroad experience.

Upon arrival, students have an idealized view of their home and they believe they could pick back up where they had left off. However, things are not the same as when they left. Students feel like family and friends do not care about their experiences, which results in feelings of "frustration . . . alienation, and mutual misunderstandings between study abroad students and their friends and family."
Re-entry cultural shock - Family

You may be expected to fit back into your family but find it difficult to communicate effectively because your family has not shared your experiences overseas. Your family may have difficulty adjusting to your new-found independence and changed values.

- Strategy:
  Share your experience with your family (slides, stories, etc.) and let them know how much you appreciate the opportunity they have given you to grow in new ways.
Re-entry culture shock - Friends

You and your friends may no longer be as close as you once were. You need to be sensitive about discussing your experience with them. You may also miss the friends you made overseas.

- Strategies:
  Ask about and listen to what they have experienced while you were away. Ask to be brought up to date on local events. Try and do new things together to get the relationship on a new footing.
Re-entry culture shock - School

You may see your campus in a new light. You may also miss the feeling of being part of a close-knit group of students.

- Strategies:
  Talk over your academic experience with your advisor, especially if you are considering new career goals. Seek out the Center for International Programs to find out about meeting international students on campus. Talk with the study abroad advisor about volunteering to spend time with students who are planning to study abroad. Seek out other students who have studied abroad - you are not alone!
Re-entry culture shock - Country

Your home culture may no longer be entirely to your liking and you may have the sense that you no longer fit in. In the future you will probably continue to evaluate ideas and events in the context of the broader cultural perspective you have acquired.

• Strategies:
  Come to terms with the fact that we all tend to look past the shortcomings of our home culture when we are away, and to criticize it on the basis of changed perspectives when we return. Make friends with interest in international or intercultural affairs. Keep up with news of your host country through reading newspapers, magazines, etc.
Re-entry culture shock - Self

You have become accustomed to a high level of activity and anticipation that your home and campus cannot possibly match. You may feel restless or a bit depressed for a while after you return.

- Strategies:
  - Recuperate from the physical journey. Think over the ways you have changed: What did you learn about yourself? How have your family and friends reacted? Keep a journal so that you can see how your thoughts evolve over time. Talk with other returning students who may feel the same way.
Re-entry Workshop

- Workshop through the Counseling Center after you come back from studying abroad.
  - For students that have returned from their life-changing experience.
  - Discussion topics – encountering new cultures, reentering the US culture, and exploring the impact on your developing identity.
  - Coping styles to apply to your cross-cultural experience.
  - Increase your chances of making your reentry process positive.
  - Contact TaeSun Kim tskim@email.bsu.edu to sign up.
Study Abroad Handbook

Give copies to the students and let them look at it for a few minutes and allow them to ask questions.

Most of the information will help them prepare for their experience.
Ball State University Center for International Programs

Study Abroad Handbook

Preparing for your International Experience
Introduction

Congratulations! You’ve already made the hardest decision of all - choosing to study in another country. This book is meant to be a guide to help you through the rest of your exchange process. The information within these pages was gathered from many different resources in order to provide you with a comprehensive guide. However, it is not a substitute for your own site-specific research. It is up to you to get involved and learn as much as you can from books, websites, study abroad returnees, international students and your advisor.

It is up to you to get involved and learn as much as you can from books, websites, study abroad returnees, international students and your advisor. International education is a very rewarding experience, which results in both academic and personal growth. But, it is ultimately up to you to take responsibility for your own success. Taking initiative, remaining flexible, and keeping a positive attitude will help you to get the most out of your time abroad.

If you need help, or have questions, please contact us:
Ball State University
Center for International Programs
L.A. Pittenger Student Center, 102
Muncie, Indiana 47306
Ph: (765) 285-5422 / Fax: (765) 285-3710

Hours:
M-F: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., academic year
M-F: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., summer
Section 1: Pre-Departure Planning

What to know before you go

Documents & Legal Issues

Passport

A valid passport is required to travel internationally. If you already have a passport, make sure that it will be valid for at least 6 months after your program ends. If you do not have a passport, you will need to apply several months before your departure date. You can apply at the main postal branch in your hometown or at the Muncie Post Office at 501 W. Memorial Drive.

Passport Application Checklist:

- Application Form (available at www.travel.state.gov/passport_services.html)
- Two identical passport photos ($15.00 if taken at Muncie post office, also available at Kinko’s, CVS Pharmacy, Walgreen’s and Meijer.)
- Proof of U.S. Citizenship (Original U.S. Birth Certificate, Naturalization Certificate, etc.)
- Evidence of Identity (Driver’s License is acceptable)
- $55.00 check/money order made out to the "U.S. Department of State" (.90 extra for cash)
- $30.00 check/money order made out to the "Postmaster" (.90 extra for cash)

Be sure to keep a copy of your passport in a safe location, apart from the passport itself. If your passport is lost or stolen while abroad, immediately contact the U.S. consulate.
Documents & Legal Issues

Visa

Many countries require you to obtain a student visa. A visa is an endorsement made on a passport by the proper authorities representing that the passport and other documents have been examined and that the passport holder may proceed to that specific country.

Visa requirements vary from country to country. Fees and regulations will differ. Contact the consulate of the host country to determine what is specifically required. Common requirements are an application form, a valid passport, an application fee, a sponsorship letter, and one or more passport-sized photographs. Keep in mind that you will have to send away your passport to obtain your visa, and visa processing can take as long as 5 months.

To obtain a visa, you must send your application and materials to the correct consulate of your host country. See Appendix A for a list of foreign consulates and their contact information.

International Student Identification Card (ISIC)

The ISIC Card is required for all Ball State students who study abroad. You may purchase your ISIC card at the Center for International Programs for $22.00. You will need to visit our office to receive the application form and schedule an appointment with Carol Block.

Card Benefits include: discounts on airfare, transportation, accommodations, dining, attraction tickets, admissions, etc. It also provides basic insurance that would cover the cost of evacuation, if you were to be seriously injured while abroad. For more information, call 285-5422 or visit www.statravel.com.
Power of Attorney

Before you leave, designate a parent or trusted individual to take care of legal and financial matters while you are away. By giving them power of attorney, you allow them to sign documents, take care of your banking, and make legal decisions on your behalf. This would also allow this person to collect student loan checks, etc.

There are two decisions you must make in order to establish a power of attorney. First, you must choose the person you wish to be your “attorney-in-fact.” This is the person who will take care of the aforementioned financial matters for you while you are away. By state law, the attorney-in-fact must be at least 18 years of age. Second, you must determine what powers to grant your chosen attorney-in-fact, (i.e. handling bank accounts, filing tax papers, etc.)

After making these decisions, power of attorney can be executed. For it to be valid, it must be in writing, signed by you, and notarized by a notary public. The power of attorney must state the names of you and your attorney-in-fact. You should also include a date effective and a date of expiration in the document. The power of attorney remains in effect until the date specified in the document, until revoked, or until death. For more information, visit Student Legal Services (SC 17). They can prepare the appropriate documents and answer any questions you may have, free of charge.

Copy Checklist

As a precaution, you should make copies of all important documents before your departure. Make 2 copies of each document so you may leave one set with your parents and take one set with you. When traveling, do not keep or store your real documents in the same place as your copies. Instead, try to leave the copies in a safe central location once you’ve arrived at your host country.

Document Copy Checklist:
- Passport (Page with picture and passport number)
- Visa (Page in passport affixed with visa)
- ISIC card, Driver’s License, other ID Cards
- Copy of any ATM or Credit Cards for your parents, especially if they will be paying bills in your absence
- Any important documents from your host institution
- Power of Attorney notarized letter
- Health Insurance Information (especially ISEP participants)

Be prepared in case of an emergency: copy all important documents and keep them in a safe place separate from the originals.
Money Matters

Managing Money Abroad

A good rule for managing money abroad is to have several ways to access your money. This includes credit cards (which can be used in an emergency for a cash advance), ATM cards, traveler's checks, U.S. and local currency.

Cash

In case of emergency, you should try to have some cash with you at all times. You may need to catch a cab, or make a phone call, and sometimes small restaurants and stores only accept cash. However, avoid carrying large sums of money, which could easily be lost or stolen. It may be useful to obtain some of your host country's currency before departure. Many banks will change some of your own money into another currency and send it to you for a small fee. Note that personal checks will be useless abroad.

Get local currency before you go: ask your bank about exchanging some of the money in your account for a different currency.

Traveler's Checks

Traveler's checks are widely accepted and can be issued by your bank for a small fee. There is also a fee to cash the checks. If lost or stolen, the check numbers can be reported, and your money will be refunded. Be sure to write down the numbers of all of your checks and keep track of them as they are cashed. Traveler's checks are also available through American Express, Thomas Cook, Citicorp, Visa and BankAmerica. Compare these companies against your bank to get the best rate.
Money Matters

ATM Cards

A more popular, and less expensive option is to use your ATM card to withdraw money while abroad. Many debit and ATM cards can be used overseas. Both the foreign bank and your home banking institution will charge a fee, but this is usually only a few dollars per transaction. The benefits of using and ATM card are that you will receive a good exchange rate, encounter fewer fees, and have access to your money in any currency. It is important to contact your bank in advance to find out what type of fees will be charged and if the card will work in other countries. You should never rely on your ATM card alone.

Credit Cards

Credit Cards are helpful for making purchases while abroad and provide a sense of financial security. Purchases made on credit card will be charged at that day's current exchange rate. Most credit card companies will charge you a small fee to convert the currency to U.S. dollars. You should call the phone number on the back of your credit card to determine their policy in advance. If you decide to use credit cards abroad, also consider that someone back home will need to make the minimum payments for you.

Other Options

The New TravelFunds Card available from American Express is a prepaid, reloadable card that is a new safe way to carry money. If it's lost or stolen, the balance is refunded, usually within 24 hours. Unlike a debit card, it isn't linked to your bank account because it is prepaid. For more information on this option visit www.americanexpress.com and click on the Travel & Entertainment link.
Packing Tips

Rules You Can Use

❖ Pack Light! - Bring as few pieces of luggage as possible. Remember you will always be responsible for carrying your own luggage.
❖ Practice! - Pack your bags and then carry them around the block once or twice. Then go through your bags and take out all those needless items.
❖ Think Small! - The maximum size carry-on bag for most airlines is 45 linear inches (the total of the height, width, and depth of the bag). Anything larger should be checked.
❖ Think Smart! - Check with your airline before packing to determine its carry-on guidelines regarding the number of items you may carry-on and the maximum size of those items.

All U.S. airports perform random security checks. Pack your bags with enough room to allow for a security search, and to ease your task of re-packing once the search is finished.

Regulations

❖ Two Pieces Checked Luggage - Keep in mind as you pack that you are only allowed two checked pieces of luggage on most airlines. Luggage size cannot exceed the size stipulated by the individual airline. Airlines have the right to refuse to carry your excess luggage.
❖ Subject To Search - In certain situations the airline may request most or even all of your bags to be checked, so be prepared to do so.
❖ Pressurized Containers - If you bring aerosol containers, carry them on board with you. They can explode in the cargo hold.
❖ Visit www.customs.ustreas.gov/about/about.htm for current Customs Regulations.
❖ Prohibited Items - If you have an item you want to take that you think may be questionable under current FAA guidelines, visit the Transportation Security Administration at http://www.tsa.gov/public/litest/faq/litest_faq.xml for a current list of permitted and prohibited items.
Packing Tips

Luggage Tips From The FAA

Checked Baggage:
- Don’t put film in your checked baggage, as the screening equipment will damage it.
- Pack shoes, boots, sneakers, and other footwear on top of other contents in your luggage.
- Avoid over-packing your bag so that the screener will be able to easily re-seal your bag if it is opened for inspection. If possible, spread your contents over several bags. Check with your airline or travel agent for maximum weight limitations.
- Avoid packing food and drink items in checked baggage.
- Don’t stack piles of books or documents on top of each other; spread them throughout your baggage.

Both Carry-on and Checked Baggage:
- Do NOT pack or bring prohibited items to the airport. See permitted and prohibited items on FAA website.
- Put all undeveloped film and cameras with film in your carry-on baggage. If your bag will pass through the X-ray machine more than 5 times ask for a hand inspection to prevent damage.
- Don’t forget to place identification tags with your name, address and phone number on all of your baggage, including your laptop computer. It is a good idea to place an identification tag inside your baggage as well.
- Consider putting personal belongings in clear plastic bags to reduce the chance that a screener will have to handle them.

Do not put film in your checked bag. The screening equipment will damage it. Film should be fine in your carry-on bag but if you will pass through the X-ray machine more than 5 times, ask for a hand inspection.
Packing Tips

Luggage Types

The Type of Luggage should match the trip, i.e., a five-piece matching set of Samsonite is useless if you plan to hitchhike or backpack for a month. Many students have found backpacks, either external or internal frame styles, to be the most convenient (and least painful) luggage choice. Consider a day-pack for small walks.

Some backpacks now come with detachable day-packs that look like a large outside pocket. Purchase locks for your luggage, even if it is a backpack. Label all luggage (inside and out) with your name and address.

See Appendix B for companies and websites who sell specialty backpacks.

To ensure your safety, purchase locks for all luggage, including backpacks and day-packs.

What to Pack

Clothing:

- Clothing should be lightweight, drip-dry and wrinkle-proof. Dark colors are more practical because they don’t show dirt, and mix-and-match items provide for more variety.
- Think about the geographical location(s) you will be visiting and what the weather will be like. Also consider the culture and customs of your destination.
- When considering which items of clothing to bring, think layers. Not only will this enable you to dress appropriately for any temperature, but also it will increase your wardrobe possibilities.

Other Items:

- Scarf or bandanna
- Travel alarm clock
- Camera with good supply of film
- Nylon clothes line
- Photos of your home and family
- Sufficient supply of prescription medication for duration of your trip
- Shower sandals
- Towel and washcloth
- Sewing kit, safety pins
- Passport pouch or money belt
- Journal to record your experiences
- Aspirin, anti-diarrhea pills, motion-sickness pills
Packing Tips

Suggestions

- Liquids should be in plastic containers with rubber seal caps. Any items kept in plastic containers are prone to break or leak in flight due to changes in air pressure. Store them in plastic Ziploc-type bags to avoid a mess. Also consider purchasing these items abroad. Not only do they take up valuable room, but also it is sometimes fun to try new brands abroad.

- Think about leaving valuables at home. If you can’t live without something, put it in your carry-on bag, NOT in your checked luggage.

- Keep prescription drugs in their original labeled containers to avoid hassles going through customs. You may also want to keep them in your carry-on bag (or day-pack) for easy access in case of an emergency. You should also contact the consulate of your host country to learn of any regulations the country may have for the drugs you will be carrying. Also, if you plan to renew a prescription while abroad, be sure to have a chemical breakdown of the prescription rather than its name to avoid any mis-translations.

Consider buying toiletries in your host country. You’ll get more room in your bag and the chance to try something new.

- For battery-operated items, consider bringing a good supply of batteries. They can be expensive elsewhere.

- Determine voltage requirements for electrically operated items in the country you are to visit. Even with a converter and adapter, there is no guarantee that appliances will work correctly. You may want to consider buying items such as hair dryers, curling irons or radios upon your arrival, particularly if you will be there an extended period of time.
# Checklist

## Packing Checklist

**Required:**
- **Passport** - your most important means of identification abroad
- **Visas** - (if needed) permission from foreign governments for you to enter their countries
- **Letter of Acceptance** from host university or program sponsor
- **Transportation** between U.S. and foreign destination
- **Money** - cash (some), traveler’s checks (lots), ATM card, credit cards
- **Luggage** - as little as possible, but no more than two checked bags
- **International Student Identity Card** - makes you eligible for a broad network of discounts overseas

**Strongly Recommended:**
- **Insurance** - health and accident, baggage, trip cancellation
- **Guidebooks** - geared to your own travel style and itinerary. See Appendix B for a list of travel websites that offer guidebooks.
- **Background reading** about the countries and people you will see
- **Language** - new languages could be studied, old ones brushed up
- **Photocopies** - of all important documents listed on page 5
- **Extra passport photos** - in case your passport is lost or stolen, or for ID cards once you are overseas

**Consider:**
- **International Youth Hostels Card** - allows you to stay in youth hostels all over the world
- **Railpasses** - such as Eurail, BritRail, etc.
- **International Driver’s License** - only if you will be driving abroad
- **Health Items** - medical/optical prescriptions, contacts, medicines, etc.
Section 2: Arrival in Host Country

Adjusting to a New Life

Surviving Jet-Lag

Before Departure

- Good Night's Sleep - get adequate rest the nights before your journey. Beginning a trip sleep-deprived will only make jet lag worse.
- Avoid last minute rush the day of departure. Do everything early and schedule your flight connections to make comfortable changes of planes.
- DO NOT OVERPACK in case you are forced to carry your own luggage.

During the Journey

- Wear loose-fitting clothes to give the skin a chance to breathe freely. You may want to remove your shoes in flight, as feet often swell.
- Drink lots of liquids while in flight in order to prevent dehydration, a common occurrence on long flights. Also, avoid alcohol as it contributes to dehydration.
- Take good reading material such as a guidebook geared to your destination.

After Arrival

- Don't over-exert your body when you first arrive. If you intend to do any sightseeing the day of arrival, you should plan to rest for a few hours before beginning.
- Try to maintain as normal a schedule as possible for your new time zone in order to reset your body clock. Go to bed at a regular hour for your destination.
- Take care of your body and realize it will take a few days for your body to adjust so plan accordingly.

Don't over-exert your body. Take time to rest in the days before your departure as well as the days after your arrival.
Arriving Safely

Tips for Safe Travel

- Check in with your airline as soon as possible and proceed immediately through security clearance. All shops and services available in the non-secure area will also be available after you have passed through security clearance.
- Label your luggage with your name and address (both home and foreign address, if known, inside and out).
- Watch for unattended pieces of luggage. If you see any, move out of the area immediately and notify security personnel.
- DON'T ever leave your baggage unattended.

When landing in airports abroad, do not be surprised or alarmed to see military guards or police. They are there to protect you.

- NEVER carry packages or letters for strangers.
- Do not carry on your person, or in your hand luggage, anything that could be regarded as a weapon. Matches, lighters, razors, etc. are forbidden in baggage. For a list of all current restrictions, visit http://www.tsa.gov/public/special/tsa_policy/tsa_policy_0010.xml.
- On the plane, check under your seat and in overhead luggage compartments. Report anything suspicious to airline personnel.
- When landing in airports abroad, don't be surprised to see military guards or police. They are there to protect you.
- Have your passport handy. When landing for the first time on foreign soil, officials will need to see this identification.
- Pack a snack. The airline may not serve dinner until a few hours into your flight. Even then, it is possible that it may not be to your liking. Take a small snack to avoid feeling too hungry.
- Don't forget your water. It is so easy to become dehydrated on a long flight. Make sure you drink plenty of water to fend off jet-lag when you arrive.
Safety Abroad

Know Your Surroundings

Find out which parts of town are considered risky by the locals. As in the United States, always stay in well-lit and well-traveled areas. Be especially alert in crowded places; they are likely to be a place for thieves and muggers. Whenever possible, avoid places frequented by large numbers of Americans, military personnel in particular. Also, avoid places frequented by British military personnel. In addition, avoid groups of ten or more; groups of two to three draw less attention. Of course, NEVER go with strangers if you are alone.

Avoid Being a Target

Use money belts or “neck safes” to hold passports, cash, airline tickets, credit cards and other valuables. Do not wear them outside your clothing or visibly hung around your neck; they could make you a target. Always be mindful of your bags, try to keep one arm or foot through the strap at all times so you protect your belongings.

Watch out for beggars or “gypsy children,” particularly in Southern Europe. In an attempt to get your money or possessions, they may try to confuse you by swarming around. Also be aware of people who try to “give” you something for free, i.e. a flower or hand-made jewelry. These people will usually then turn to someone else you are with and ask for payment for the “gift.” If you are in an uncomfortable situation with a beggar, try speaking strongly to them in a language neither of you understands. This will break communication, which is the essential element in their asking for money. Also, be careful to whom you give your luggage. Sometimes thieves will pose as porters or taxi drivers.

Be especially alert of your belongings in crowded places; they are likely to be a place for thieves and muggers.

Just Plain Common Sense

Try not to dress blatantly American. It’s important to realize that such displays may bring unwanted attention. Baseball hats and white athletic shoes worn for non-athletic events will highlight the fact that you are American—and some people will resent you for that fact.

Try not to arrive late at night in an unknown town if you haven’t already made arrangements for spending the night. Beware of people hawking their hostel or hotel at the train station. These are not always safe options.
Safety Abroad

Just Plain Common Sense

Be aware of local laws and regulations. Do not take pictures of police or military installations. You should not take photos at topless or nude beaches or baths; your camera could be confiscated. Realize that illegal drug use and possession are SERIOUS crimes. If you are arrested, you are subject to foreign law, not U.S., and the consequences could be harsh—including the death penalty.

Use the safety deposit box if you are staying in a hotel. Leave your passport and any money you don’t expect to need that day safely locked away.

It’s been said before but it’s important—try not to travel alone in a town you don’t know very well. If you do go solo, try to make friends on the train or at your hostel. This is a great way to make international friends. However, don’t be too trusting of people you just met. It’s kind of a tightrope walk. Best advice is to stay smart and trust your instincts.

Special Advice for Women

○ Be prepared to learn as much as possible about the social customs of the culture you are about to visit. This can help you avoid difficult situations, as well as ensuring that you’ll have a better time.

○ Do not wear questionable clothing that could be considered provocative (especially in Greece, Italy, and southern France). In the Mediterranean area, and other parts of the world, mere eye contact from a woman is considered a come-on.

○ Wearing a ring can usually get you out of uncomfortable situations with men. You can excuse yourself by declaring your marital fidelity—flash your “wedding band” to prove it. Also always speak clearly and emphatically if you want to be left alone.

○ Walk confidently as if you know exactly where you’re going—even if that means walking around the block twice. Try to always wear comfortable and functional shoes.

○ More advice and helpful hints can be found on the web. A list of helpful sites for women travelers appears at the end of this handbook in Appendix B.

Diversity Issues

See Appendix B for a list of other resources pertaining to diversity issues. There you will find helpful web links for minorities, religious issues, those who have accessibility or special needs and information for gay/lesbian/bi-sexual/transsexual students.
Safety Abroad

For Anyone Traveling Alone

- Make sure someone else knows your itinerary.
- If you feel uncomfortable eating alone, bring a newspaper to read. Go before or after dinner hours. Waiters like large parties for their tables during dinner hours.
- Find a place to stay before dark. Be very cautious of people who offer you rooms. DO NOT go with any strangers if you are alone.
- Avoid holding yourself to a strict schedule when traveling; relax and don't try to see everything.

Travel Information

No matter what you may think now, it's highly likely that you will be doing some traveling once you are abroad. Whether you explore your host country or you decide to check out the whole continent, there are tons of resources to help you plan your trip. Guidebooks are an excellent place to get site-specific information at your fingertips. Most have detailed restaurant/attraction/hotel reviews which include addresses and contact information. Transportation is key to your journey, but how do you get from A to B? Public transportation is pretty much the best way to get around in most countries abroad, especially Europe. See Appendix B for websites that offer great travel tips, transportation deals, and other travel needs abroad.

Always take your guidebook with you on your other travels. It provides reading material for long train rides as well as alternative hotels/attractions in case your original plans don't work out.
Culture Shock

Four Stages of Adjustment

1. **Initial Euphoria** - Everything seems wonderful and exciting at first and you’re struck by how similar people seem to be.

2. **Irritation and Hostility** - Your focus turns from the similarities to the differences. You blow up little difficulties into major ones.

3. **Gradual Adjustment** - The crisis is over. You are able to interpret some of the subtle cultural cues and clues. The culture seems more familiar.

4. **Adaptation and Biculturalism** - You are able to function in two cultures with confidence. You are at the point where returning to the United States will cause reverse culture shock.

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The more you learn about your host culture before you go, the more comfortable you will feel upon arrival.

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Minimizing the Effects of Culture Shock

- **Be prepared.** Learn as much as you can about the host culture before going.
- **Look for logical reasons** behind everything in the host culture that seems different.
- **Resist looking down upon** or making jokes about the host culture and to avoid others who take part in such derogatory remarks.
- **Make friends with a host national.** It always helps to share your feelings with someone.
- **Have confidence in yourself** and in the good will of the people of your host country.
Being an American Abroad

Things to Consider

As an American abroad, you will be exposed to different perspectives, particularly in times of international conflict or political unrest. You should be aware that the media coverage and public opinions in your host country might differ from those back home. It is important to keep an open mind. If you try to learn from these differences, you are likely to develop a better understanding of your own culture. The following information, from AHA international, can be helpful in learning how to prepare for this new form of confrontation.

Dealing with Criticism

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Try to understand the critic’s motive(s):

Americans are fond of saying “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” Outward appearances are not always enough to make a judgment about a situation where you are being confronted with anti-American sentiment. Ask your critic questions that may explain this person’s beliefs about the United States and why he or she might hold them. Does this person get ideas from the media? Is this something being taught in school? Has this person experienced some sort of harassment from an American? If you understand the critic’s motive(s), or where his or her information comes from, perhaps you can find some common ground and a more tolerant way to respond.

Draw upon personal experiences and observations:

When someone asks you a question like, “Why are Americans so wasteful of natural resources?” your first response might be to say, “Oh, not me.” Whether or not the question is based on fact, one way to respond might be to draw on your own experiences and observations. In this case, you can say that while you cannot speak for the rest of the American population, you have your own personal practices, such as recycling, water conservation, or use of public transportation.

Avoid becoming defensive:

You sometimes can’t help becoming defensive when your culture is being criticized. Try to avoid getting defensive as much as possible. Keep an open mind, and remember to try and understand your critic’s motives.

Become familiar with common U.S. facts and policies:

It’s a common belief overseas that Americans are uneducated. How can you dispel that stereotype? People in other countries will probably ask you a lot of questions about the United States on such varied topics as geography, politics, pop culture, etc. They may be intelligent questions like, “Who decides whether a person is guilty of a crime?” and they may be very stupid questions like, “Do all Americans wear cowboy boots and ride horses?” However, it is not uncommon to find that people overseas know a lot more about U.S. politics and policies than you do. You should familiarize yourself with basic U.S. facts and policies because you do not want to appear uneducated or ignorant of these basic facts. Some areas of suggestion are: U.S. geography, political system, judicial system and foreign policy (especially in regard to your host country.)
### Checklist

**Adjustment Checklist**

For a Smooth Transition:
- **Beat the Jet Lag** - get plenty of rest and drink extra fluids before you travel.
- **Arrive Safely** - be conscious of your luggage at all times to avoid becoming a target.
- **Remember Safety Abroad** - know your surroundings and use common sense to avoid attracting unwanted attention from thieves and beggars.
- **Overcome Culture Shock** - recognize the four steps of culture shock when they happen to you. Also, don’t focus on what you wish your host country had. Instead, discover new treasures you couldn’t find in the U.S.
- **Plan Your Travels** - Use resources such as guidebooks, websites, and maps to plan any side trips you might take while abroad.
- **Deal with Critics** - make sure you know some basic U.S. facts before you go so you are better prepared to deal with critics you may encounter.

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Keep an open mind. If you try to learn from cultural differences, you are likely to develop a better understanding of your own culture.
Section 3: Preparing for Re-entry

What to Expect When You Return

Reverse Culture Shock

Understanding Re-entry Shock

Coming home is a period of adjustment to your home culture and of the integration into your life of what you have learned abroad. Students cope with re-entry at various levels.

Family

You may be expected to fit back into your family but find it difficult to communicate effectively because your family has not shared your experiences overseas. Your family may have difficulty adjusting to your new found independence and changed values.

Strategies: Share your experiences with your family (slides, stories, etc.) and let them know how much you appreciate the opportunity they have given you to grow in new ways.

Realize that some of your values will have changed while abroad. Don’t be afraid to talk about issues with family, friends, and other returnees.

Friends

You and your friends may no longer be as close as you once were. You need to be sensitive about discussing your experience with them. You may also miss the friends you made overseas.

Strategies: Ask about and listen to what they have experienced while you were away. Ask to be brought up to date on local events. Try and do new things together to get the relationship on a new footing.

School

You may see your campus in a new light. You may also miss the feeling of being part of a close-knit group of students.

Strategies: Talk over your academic experience with your advisor, especially if you are considering new career goals. Seek out the Center for International Programs to find out how to meet international students on campus. Talk with the study abroad advisor about volunteering to spend time with students who are planning to study abroad. Seek out other students who have studied abroad—you are not alone!
Reverse Culture Shock

Country

Your home culture may no longer be entirely to your liking and you may have the sense that you no longer fit in. In the future you will probably continue to evaluate ideas and events in the context of the broader cultural perspective you have acquired.

Strategies: Come to terms with the fact that we all tend to look past the shortcomings of our home culture when we are away, and to criticize it on the basis of changed perspectives when we return. Make friends with interest in international or intercultural affairs. Keep up with news of your host country through reading newspapers, magazines, etc.

Your experience abroad may change your perspective of the world. You will now be able to see events from a different angle than before.

Self

You have become accustomed to a high level of activity and anticipation that your home and campus cannot possibly match. You may feel restless or a bit depressed for a while after you return.

Strategies: Recuperate from the physical journey. Think over the ways you have changed. What did you learn about yourself? How have your family and friends reacted? Keep a journal so that you can see how your thoughts evolve over time. Talk with other returning students who may feel the same way.

"Culture Shock"

As you plan for re-entry, you may be interested to know about a new Ball State student organization. The group, Culture Shock, is concerned with providing an outlet for study abroad returnees to share their experiences and promote international education. This name expresses the adjustment of arrival in a new country, as well as the adjustment of re-entry.

The idea for the organization originated with student Inka Ach. She had heard of other universities that have study abroad support groups and wondered if she could do the same here at Ball State. Kelly Wright was just as enthusiastic. She now serves as the group's faculty advisor.

Culture Shock focuses not only on providing support for returnees of study abroad experiences, but also raising awareness of the importance of international education. They would like to start a study abroad scholarship fund with the proceeds of fund-raising events, as a way to encourage others to study abroad.

Although many of the students are returnees, looking for a support network, the group's membership is not limited to those with international experience. It does not matter whether a student has studied abroad, would like to study abroad, or is simply curious about the possibility. All students are encouraged to join.

If you are interested in attending a meeting or helping with an event, please contact Kelly Wright to find out when the next meeting is scheduled. This is a great way to ease your transition and get involved on campus!
Checklist

Re-entry Checklist

A New Adjustment:
- Reverse Culture Shock - understand that you will have changed abroad and now your home, school and country may seem foreign to you. Discuss your feelings with friends and family and especially other returnees.
- Relationships - it may be difficult at first to reconnect with friends and family. This may be a good time to try a new activity together to strengthen your bond.
- Missing your Host Country - keep up on the news of your host country through the internet and world newspapers. This is a good way to always keep you connected to your experience.

To Build on your Experience:
- Check out “Culture Shock” - this is a fun, student-run organization where you can make more friends, memories, and make a difference.
- Seek out Returnees - these are people you can relate to! They know exactly what you're going through and what you went through.
- Get Involved in international activities on campus. See what events are going on at the Center for International Programs and ask how you can help.
- Language - proud of your new language skills and want to show them off? The Department of Modern Languages & Classics is always looking for peer tutors for students in lower-level language classes.

Still Can’t Get Enough? :
- Study Abroad, Part II - Ask your Study Abroad coordinator about other opportunities. It is possible to study abroad more than once.
- Other Opportunities - there are so many! There are many volunteer/intern/work abroad programs out there. GoAbroad.com is a good place to start but there are countless programs out there. Happy Travels!
Appendix

Where To Go To Get the Info You Need

Appendix A: Consulate Information

Websites and Addresses

- **France** - Consulate General of France Chicago:
  - [http://www.consulfrance-chicago.org/main_visas_eng.htm](http://www.consulfrance-chicago.org/main_visas_eng.htm)
  - Visa Section of the Consulate General of France in Chicago
  - 205 N. Michigan Avenue - Suite 3760 - Chicago, IL 60601
  - Tel: (312) 327-5229 - Fax: (312) 327-5201
  - Email: visas@consulfrance-chicago.org

- **Germany** - Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany Chicago
  - 676 North Michigan Ave., Suite 3200
  - Chicago, IL 60611
  - Tel: (312) 580-1199 - Fax: (312) 580-0099

- **Spain** - Consulate General of Spain in Chicago
  - 180 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1500
  - Chicago, IL 60601
  - Tel: (312) 782-4588/4589 - Fax: (312) 782-1635
  - Email: cspspain.chicago@mail.mae.es

- **Italy** - Italian Consulate Detroit
  - [www.italconsdetroit.org](http://www.italconsdetroit.org)
  - Buhl Building
  - 535 Griswold
  - Suite 1840
  - Detroit, MI 48226
  - Tel: (313) 963-8560 main number - Fax (313) 963-8180
  - E-mail: detroit.italcons@itwash.org

- **Netherlands** - Netherlands Consulate-General, Chicago, IL
  - 303 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 2600, Chicago, IL 60601 - USA
  - Tel: (312) 856-0110 - Fax: (312) 856-9218

- **Chile** - Consulado General de Chile en Chicago
  - [http://www.chile-usa.org/visarequirements.htm](http://www.chile-usa.org/visarequirements.htm)
  - 875 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 3352, Chicago IL 60611
  - Hours: 9:00 - 4:00 pm
  - Tel: (312) 654-8790, (312) 654-8946, (312) 654-8114 - Fax: (312) 654-8948
  - Email: cgchicago@ameritech.net
Appendix A: Consulate Information

- **Australia** - Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs in Washington, D.C. - Embassy of Australia
  http://www.austemb.org/DimA/fees.html
  Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
  1601 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC 20036-2273
  Tel: (202)797-3000 - Fax: (202)797-3100
  Counter hours:
  Mon.-Fri. 9:00 -11:00 am
  Email: visas@consultfrance-chicago.org

- **Denmark** - Royal Danish Consulate General, New York
  One Dag Hammarskjold Plaza
  885 Second Avenue, 18th Floor
  New York, N.Y. 10017
  Tel.: (+1) 212 223-4545 - Fax: (+1) 212 754 1904
  Email: information@denmark.org

- **Japan** - Chicago Consulate-General Japan
  http://www.chicago.us.emb.japan.go.jp/
  Olympia Centre, Suite 1100
  737 North Michigan Avenue
  Chicago, Illinois 60611, U.S.A.
  Tel: (1-312) 280-0460 - Fax: (1-312) 280-9568

- **Switzerland** - Consulate General of Switzerland
  http://www.eda.admin.ch/washington_emb/e/home.html
  Olympia Center, Ste 2301
  737 N Michigan Avenue
  Chicago, IL 60611
  Hours: Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon.
  Tel: 312.915.0061 - Fax: 312.915.0388

- **United Kingdom** - Consulate General of Switzerland
  http://www.eda.admin.ch/washington_emb/e/home.html
  Olympia Center, Ste 2301
  737 N Michigan Avenue

- **Mexico** - Consulate of Mexico
  Visa information only:
  http://www.consulmexay.org/eng/english.htm
  39 Jackson Place, Indianapolis, IN 46225
  Tel: (317) 951-0005

- **Other Consulates** - A list with more foreign consulates and embassies can be found at this Yahoo Directory page:
  http://dir.yahoo.com/Government/U.S._Government/Embassies_and_Consulates/Foreign_Embassies_and_Consulates_in_the_United_States/
  ...or go to Yahoo.com and type this in the search box:
  “directory foreign consulates in the United States”
# Appendix B: Useful Websites

## Documents & Money Matters
- **www.travel.state.gov/passport_services.html** - Passport Application.
- **www.americanexpress.com** - American Express. For Traveler’s Checks and the new TravelFunds Card. American Express also will exchange U.S. dollars for foreign currency.

## Flying & Luggage Regulations
- **www.customs.ustreas.gov/about/about.htm** - For U.S. Customs Regulations.

## Luggage & Gear Retailers
- **www.StaTravel.com** - Sells several types of backpacks and gear including money belts.
- **www.HikingandBackpacking.com** - Website says it’s “the fastest way to find out who has the best deals on outdoor gear including backpacks, hiking boots and shoes, clothing and accessories.” Site has a list of backpack manufacturers and their websites.
- **www.jansport.com** - Offers a wide variety of backpacks and luggage for any type of travel.
- **www.gorp.com** - “Great Outdoors Recreation Pages” Travel trips listed by activity (bike-riding, snorkeling, etc.) Also has travel gear, books, stories and tips.
- **www.Galyans.com** - Sporting goods store with one of the best selections of travel gear of all types.

## Good Flight Deals
- **www.StaTravel.com** - This really is a multi-purpose website that should be your first stop as you start to plan your journey. The site offers student-discounted airfare anywhere in the world in addition to the ISIC card, travel gear, and tons of useful information.
- **www.RyanAir.com** - If your host country is in Europe, and you plan to travel elsewhere in the continent, nobody beats RyanAir’s airfare for European flights. For example, a flight from Paris to Dublin has been as low as 20 euros one-way.
# Appendix B: Useful Websites

## Diversity Issues

**Women Travelers**
- [http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/globaled/safeti/v1n2_newport.html](http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/globaled/safeti/v1n2_newport.html) - "Sexual Harassment And Prevention In College Students Studying Abroad" This On-Line Newsletter addresses issues of safety in study abroad. This article explores how women can minimize their risk of being sexually harassed while traveling abroad.
- [http://travel.state.gov/tips_women.html](http://travel.state.gov/tips_women.html) - The U.S. State Department lists tips for women traveling alone.

**Gay/Lesbian/Bi-sexual/Transsexual Issues**
- Additional resources and information about GLBT issues abroad can be found at [www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/](http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/). This site is maintained by staff of Indiana University and produced by international education professionals who specialize in GLBT issues.

## Religions Issues

## Minority Resources

## Accessibility/Differing Abilities

## Miscellaneous
- [www.contiki.com](http://www.contiki.com) - Specializes in travel tours for 18-35 year-olds.
- [www.budgetbritain.com](http://www.budgetbritain.com) - Devoted to budget travel in Britain with an emphasis on nightlife and attractions.
- [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com) - Maps and directions for nearly every city in the world.
- [www.wcather.com](http://www.wcather.com) - Global weather forecasts.
- [www.hostels.com](http://www.hostels.com) - Site boasts "every hostel, everywhere."
- [www.hihostels.com](http://www.hihostels.com) - Hostelling International website. Search for hostels that belong to the organization, sign up for the HI membership, and start saving.
- [www.raileurope.com](http://www.raileurope.com) - Railpasses for travel throughout Europe.
## Appendix B: Useful Websites

### Miscellaneous
- **http://travel.state.gov** - US Department of State consular reports on all countries. Information on travel warnings. Information on getting or replacing US Passport.
- **www.passporthelp.com** - Information on how to get a passport ASAP.
- **www.cdc.gov/travel** - Center for Disease Control - Information on travel vaccinations required to visit a particular country. Comprehensive country information regarding outbreaks and epidemics.
- **www.istc.org** - This organization links student travelers with discounts on travel expenses including airlines, travel agents, guides and magazines, hostels and budget accommodations.

### Great Guidebooks & Tips
- **Fodors** - [www.fodors.com](http://www.fodors.com) - the largest English-language travel-information publisher, advice from travel experts, discussion areas, links, and numerous planning tools. Through their booking affiliate, Expedia, Fodors.com users can check prices and book hotels, airline tickets, cruises, rental cars, and vacation packages.
- **Let's Go** - [www.letsgo.com](http://www.letsgo.com) - the world's bestselling travel guide not only has the hard facts you need to get around, but also the information you need to make sense of the place you're in. With new features focused on current events, culture, and politics, this year's Let's Go series provides depth you won't find in any other guidebook.
- **Frommer's** - [www.frommers.com](http://www.frommers.com) - Frommers.com is an essential online destination for those planning the perfect travel excursion. Not only can Frommers.com visitors easily find candid, timely articles written by Frommers.com experts, they also can read excerpts from and purchase Frommer's Guidebooks, while gaining additional insights from their lively message boards and purchasing travel products and services from their booking partners.
- **Lonely Planet** - [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) - Publishes over 650 guidebooks in 14 different languages. Lonely Planet also offer a range of services to aid and inspire travelers at home or on the road. They include newsletters, the Lonely Planet Phonecard, Lonely Planet Images, and more.
- **Rough Guides** - [www.roughguides.com](http://www.roughguides.com) - Travel Guides. Comprehensive, contemporary coverage of destinations far and wide from Amsterdam to Zimbabwe. Country and regional guides include in-depth site information, listings for a range of budgets, color photographs and maps. City guides take you neighborhood by neighborhood, break out listings by cuisine and neighborhood and contain easy-to-use color maps for streets and city transport.