



Global Guide

An essential guide for Santa Clara University students participating in education abroad programs, designed by the Global Engagement Office (GEO).



This handbook aims to serve as a reference tool providing general guidance for members of the Santa Clara University community, especially undergraduate and graduate students, who have been approved to participate in any university-sponsored education abroad program.

These programs include all those that involve students going abroad either for study, research, or for community service.

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Pre-Departure Checklist

- a. **Learn about Your Host Country's** people, economic and political systems.
- b. **Passport & Visa:** obtain your passport and visa (if needed)
- c. **Housing:** make sure your accommodation is arranged both for your host country and for return to SCU.
- d. **Transportation:** arrange your international and local transport, and inform your program coordinator of your flight details.
- e. **Luggage & Packing:** refer to the recommended Packing List in [Appendix B](#).
- f. **STEP:** enroll on the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program.
- g. **Health & Travel Insurance:** make sure your insurance can cover your time abroad.
- h. **Physical Examination & Immunizations:** follow instructions of your host country.
- i. **Prescriptions:** take sufficient prescription medicines with you (if legal in your host country).
- j. **Bank & Credit Cards:** inform your bank that you'll be travelling outside of the U.S.; prepare sufficient funds to cover your stay abroad; refer to [Appendix C](#) for currency conversion.
- k. **Documents:** prepare all documents required, and make photocopies of them.
- l. **Academic and financial issues:** discuss your international program with your academic advisor, and talk with the financial-aid office if assistance is needed.
- m. **Cell phone:** contact your provider to see if your phone will work outside of the U.S., and find out the associated cost. Consider buying a local cell phone if your stay is longer than two weeks.
- n. **Communication and emergency plans:** make plans for communication with both SCU and your family, and refer to [Appendix A](#) to develop your own emergency plan.
- o. **Language Preparation:** be aware of the local measurements and linguistic variations, and learn the essential expressions.
- p. **Cultural Preparation:** learn as much as you can about the culture of your host country.
- q. **Special Needs:** make arrangements with your host organization based on your situation.
- r. **Read this handbook** and take it with you for [Health & Safety](#), along with other issues.



Section I: Goal Setting

It takes a great deal of courage and commitment to take on an education abroad program. To make the best of this opportunity, students are strongly encouraged to establish their goals before going abroad. Setting up goals can help students to take full advantage of the unique opportunities that an international education offers.

Below are some goals established by students who participated in education abroad programs in the past:

- ✚ Improve my foreign language skills
- ✚ Learn about specific issues, like sustainability, from a global perspective
- ✚ Connect with faculty who is teaching or coordinating the program
- ✚ Experience different and more rigorous coursework
- ✚ Live like a local, and engage with the local culture
- ✚ Deepen my understanding of social justice issues outside of the U.S.
- ✚ Understand people who speak a different language than me
- ✚ Understand the political and economic system of another country
- ✚ Understand how social entrepreneurs address the fundamental human needs of poor communities

When setting up goals, students should follow the SMART principle, which means their goals need to be Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-bound.

Section II: Learn About Your Destination

The first step students should take is to learn about the country/countries of their visit. The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** is a good resource for learning about the health risks, safety and security concerns, and local laws and culture of a destination.

2.1 Health Risks

- a. Go to the [Destination page](#), choose the country/countries of visit, and find information on international outbreaks, diseases, vaccinations, safe food and water, and more.
- b. Check Travel Health Notices for your destination. The [CDC](#) and [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) post country-specific travel notices and warnings on their websites.
- c. Check the “Special Circumstances” section on the [Country-Specific Information Page](#) for information on higher risk for certain natural disasters.

2.2 Safety and Security Concerns

The U.S. Department of State (DoS) provides helpful information about safety and security in foreign countries.

- a. Check the current [Travel Warnings](#) to see if your destination is listed;
- b. Check to see if your destination has a current [Travel Alert](#);
- c. Check the DoS [Worldwide Caution](#) web page for updated information on potential threat of terrorist action and violence against U.S. citizens and interests throughout the world.

2.3 Local Laws and Culture

Laws and cultures vary in terms of acceptable behaviors in different societies. Students should be aware of and abide by both the rules and regulations of their international program sponsor, and the local laws and customs of their host country.

a. Resources to use:

- ✚ The [Country-Specific Information Page](#) includes information topics such as country descriptions and entry/exit requirements.
- ✚ The [DoS](#) and [CIA](#) provide general background information.

b. Basic information to keep in mind:

- ✚ **Academics:** Learning styles and grading systems between the U.S. and other countries can be very different. In general, students' participation such as discussion and debate are strongly encouraged in the U.S. classroom, whereas lectures prevail in many other countries. Students should familiarize themselves with the grading system of their host country if their program is credit bearing.
- ✚ **Alcohol and Drugs:** Any breach of the public order such as intoxication resulted from binge drinking or drug abuse can lead to expulsion from the program, the country, or time in jail. U.S. citizenship means little in another sovereign state whose laws can be different, and often more stringent, than in the U.S. Attitudes towards drugs vary greatly in countries all over the world. In some countries (including Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Turkey, and Thailand), there is even the death penalty for certain drug offenders. It is students' responsibility to know what the drug laws are in their host country, see [Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad](#) for more details.
- ✚ **Homosexuality** remains illegal in some countries, and cultural norms in others may prohibit outward expression of sexual identity. In some places, even the perception of being homosexual can evoke outward hostility from locals or harassment from law enforcement officials. **Sexual Harassment** doesn't even exist in some cultures, making it difficult to address in those countries. Students should be aware that dress and behavior play a big part of communication, which can send unintended message to others. Therefore, students should make informed choices about where to go, with whom to interact, and what behaviors to choose. Female students should take cues from local women on how to handle unwanted attention.
- ✚ **Punishment** for foreigners sometimes is harsher than for the local population.
- ✚ **Pretrial Detention** might be lengthy as many countries do not provide a jury trial or accept bail.
- ✚ **Prison conditions** in many countries can be extremely harsh, and officials may not speak English.

Section III: Health & Safety Must-Dos

Students' health and safety is our top priority. For this purpose, participants of all education abroad programs are required to take the following steps:

- Enroll on STEP ([Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#)), if you are a US citizen;
- Learn about common safety concerns on the DoS [Safety Issues](#) page, especially "[A Safe Trip Abroad](#)";
- Read CDC's "[Your Survival Guide to Safe and Healthy Travel](#)";
- Develop personal [Emergency Plan](#).

3.1 STEP Enrollment

STEP is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to, or living in, a foreign country. If students enter information about their upcoming trip abroad, they can:

- Be better assisted by the Department of State (DoS) in an emergency;
- Receive updates on Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts and other information for a particular country from the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate;
- Download free [Smart Traveler iPhone App](#) for travel information at their fingertips;
- Follow the DoS on [Twitter](#) and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on [Facebook](#).

3.2 Safety Issues

a. Common safety concerns:

These are addressed on the [Safety Issues](#) page as follows:

- ✚ [A Safe Trip Abroad](#)
- ✚ [Road Safety Overseas](#)
- ✚ [Emergency Information](#)
- ✚ [Overseas Security Advisory Council](#)

b. [A Safe Trip Abroad](#)

The U.S. consular officers working in more than 250 embassies and consulates worldwide have gathered detailed travel tips to help travelers avoid difficulties during their time abroad.

✚ [What to Take](#)

- Travel light
- Do not dress in a way that is indicative of an affluent tourist
- Carry minimum number of valuables, and plan places to conceal them
- [Read more...](#)

✚ [What to Leave Behind](#)

- Valuable or expensive-looking jewelry
- Irreplaceable family objects
- All unnecessary credit cards
- [Read more...](#)

✚ [Precautions to Take While Traveling](#)

- [Safety on the Street](#)
- [Safety in Your Hotel](#)
- [Safety on Public Transportation](#)
- [Safety When You Drive](#)
- [How to Handle Money Safely](#)
- [How to Avoid Legal Difficulties](#)



3.3 CDC's Survival Guide to Safe & Healthy Travel

- a. Check the [CDC](#) website to stay up-to-date on routine vaccines.
- b. Pay attention to the [Travel Notices](#) – information about international outbreaks or other health-related issues, including recommendations for travelers.
- c. Follow the [CDC's Survival Guide](#) to be proactive, prepared, and protected in terms of health issues.

3.4 Develop Personal Emergency Plan

SCU program coordinators will provide students with information for coping with emergency. However, students are required to gather critical information and develop their own emergency procedures.

- a. Learn about your insurance company's preferred process for payment or reimbursement for your stay abroad before leaving the U.S.;
- b. Prepare your emergency supplies (e.g. a first-aid kit) and money reserves such as cash, travelers' checks, credit cards, etc. on-hand, in case banks/ATMs aren't available;
- c. Register with the local police upon arrival (which is required by many countries);

- ✚ Other forms of identification such as your driver's license, birth and marriage certificates for you and your dependents, if applicable.

Non-U.S. Citizens:

Students who are non-U.S. residents should contact the nearest consulate of their host country for visa requirements enquiry before taking an education program abroad. Meanwhile, they should notify the [ISS](#) (International Student Services) office of their international travel plans to make sure their I-20 will remain valid upon their return to the U.S.

4.2 Medical Issues

4.2.1 Physical Examination

- ✚ Check with your host country's embassy/consulate to find out what medical examination is required, as some countries require you have confirmation of good health;
- ✚ General checkups – medical, dental, and optical are recommended before departure.

4.2.2 Immunization

- ✚ Check [CDC](#) website to see what vaccines are required by your host country;
- ✚ A full series of vaccines can take up to 6 months, so start a.s.a.p. if needed.

4.2.3 Prescriptions

- ✚ Check if it is legal to bring your prescription medicines to your host country;
- ✚ If so, carry sufficient supply with you including each drug's generic name;
- ✚ Take your doctor's prescriptions for any medicine and glasses/contact lens with you, bring an extra pair of glasses if you have one;
- ✚ Do NOT expect to receive prescription medication by mail. If you have to, check with the consulate of your host country to see if it is legal to mail, and what documentation is required for shipment.

4.2.4 Health & Travel Insurance

Students must have health and travel insurance for their time abroad, and be aware that in many places, payment must be completed before any medical service is provided.

a. Securing overseas insurance

- ✚ Ask your insurance company the following two questions:
 - Does my policy apply when I'm out of the U.S.?
 - Will it cover emergencies like a trip to a foreign hospital or a medical evacuation?
- ✚ Approach [SCU's Cowell Student Health Center](#) or check through the **Medical Insurance** section on the [Country-Specific Information Page](#) of your host country for overseas insurance.

b. [ACE American Insurance Company's Travel Assistance Program](#)

SCU enrolls all education abroad students in this program; it does not replace health insurance coverage, but you can call when:

- ✚ You require a referral to a hospital or doctor
- ✚ You are hospitalized
- ✚ You need to be evacuated or repatriated
- ✚ You need to guarantee payment for medical expenses



- ✚ You experience local communication problems
- ✚ Your safety is threatened by the sudden occurrence of a political or military event

In medical emergencies students should contact Europe Assist (part of ACE).

- ✚ Inside the U.S. or Canada: **1-800-243-6124**; outside the U.S: **1-202-659-7803** (24 hour)
- ✚ SCU's reference plan code/plan number: **01AH585**; policy number: **ADD N0484905A**
- ✚ [Read More...](#)

4.2.5 Special Needs (Disabilities)

Students are responsible for contacting their program abroad to make special accommodations if needed, and should not expect such accommodations to be the same as what they are used to at SCU. Take the following actions if needed.

- Take your documentation and letter from the Office of Disabilities Resources indicating approved accommodations, as your program abroad may require a copy;
- Give enough notice for your program abroad to arrange appropriate accommodations;
- If you currently are under treatment for an eating disorder, depression, another psychological/emotional issue, or a physical disability or ailment requiring medication, check with your therapist or doctor before your departure to discuss some of the challenges that traveling abroad might give rise to or exacerbate;
- Inform your program abroad of any additional assistance you might need while you are abroad.

4.2.6 First -Aid Kit

Based on their own needs, students should prepare a well-stocked first-aid kit while traveling abroad. Depending on the destination, some basic items to be considered are:

Sunscreen, bandages, flashlight, cough/cold medicine, insect repellent, hand sanitizer and wipes, adhesive tape, aspirin or other pain relief medication, antacid, anti-diarrhea tablets, anti-malarial/itch medication, feminine products, rubber/latex gloves.



4.3 Money Matters

Going abroad makes managing one's money much trickier; good money management is essential to ensure an enjoyable and successful experience abroad.

4.3.1 Create a Budget

- ✚ Prepare enough funds for your time abroad based on the estimate of the program and your own personal spending habits and location;
- ✚ Talk to your program coordinator and/or students who are either from your host country or have participated in the same program regarding living expenses abroad;
- ✚ Create a budget for your stay abroad, making allowance for emergencies;
- ✚ Keep a record of your expenses and monitor your budget closely;
- ✚ Use xe.com and/or Bloomberg.com for currency conversion if needed.

4.3.2 Credit Cards

Credit cards make foreign currency transactions easy, and are invaluable in a financial emergency.

- ✚ Acquire a PIN number for each credit card before departure;
- ✚ Make a cash advance only if you have no other option for securing funds, as doing so will incur a financial charge;
- ✚ Consider having a backup credit card for emergency.



4.3.3 Banks & ATMs

a. Banks

Students are recommended to talk with informants (people from the host country or students who have taken the program) about the best way to use banks in their host country for an extended period of time.

- ✚ Inform your bank of the length of your program abroad;
- ✚ Find out what fees apply to various uses of your associated cards as many banks charge fees for point-of-purchase use;
- ✚ Never send cash or traveler's checks through mail, and avoid using personal checks;
- ✚ Purchase at least US\$200 worth of local currency prior to your departure, to be prepared for taxi rides and a night in a hotel in case you arrive when the banks are closed.

b. ATMs

Although ATMs are easy to find abroad, their numbers vary by country.

- ✚ If possible, find a bank that won't charge you for making withdrawals from another financial institution's ATM (Some banks are now charging up to \$4 for each withdrawal from a non-affiliated ATM).
- ✚ When you do make withdrawals, try to take out larger rather than smaller amounts of cash and keep the excess cash somewhere safe until you need it; transaction fees can add up quickly, and they apply whether you withdraw \$20 or \$200.

4.4 Luggage and Packing

Students are highly recommended to travel light; as it is common for students to travel from the airport to the train station (which might not be near each other) and on to their host organization by themselves.

a. Basic tips on packing:

- ✚ Check with your airline for luggage allowances.
- ✚ Consider what you intend to do (field research, volunteer, academic study, internship, social or cultural occasions, religious services, local transportation, etc.) and bring appropriate attire.
- ✚ Be aware of cultural norms and dress code, especially in Africa, Latin America, South Asia and the Middle East.



- ✚ Get information about the weather, seasons, and useful clothes from people who have lived there, as well as from guidebooks; take clothing that will allow you to be comfortable in the climate of your host country.
- ✚ Do not pack more than you can carry and fit in the trunk of a small taxi.
- ✚ Be mindful of the extra space you might need on the way back, since many people tend to come home with more than they brought.
- ✚ It is worth giving some things away before returning to the U.S. (to a charity, your host family, or local friends you made) as shipping from overseas is usually expensive, and items (including used clothing) may be charged a “duty fee” by Customs.
- ✚ Refer to [Appendix B](#) for items to be considered on your packing list.

b. Customs Regulations

If students wish to travel with any expensive items, such as a high quality camera, video camera, or laptop computer, they should register them with U.S. customs officials before departure and keep the receipt. To register:

- ✚ Take your passport and valuable items to the customs office in the international airport;
- ✚ Allow plenty of time as customs office hours may be limited;
- ✚ Do not plan on sending electronic equipment, such as personal computers, by mail from the U.S.; you may be charged import taxes in the hundreds of dollars; although you should be able to enter or leave most countries with any items intended for personal use.
- ✚ If you have questions about taking a particular item abroad, look at [U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#).

Section V: Language Preparation

5.1 Linguistic Variations (including Common Conversions)

Students should be aware of the differences in language use in terms of date format, measurement, etc. and linguistic variations. For example, the date format in the U.S. is mm/dd/yyyy, whereas in Europe (including the UK), it is more common to have dd/mm/yyyy. For measuring temperature, the U.S. uses Fahrenheit Scale (°F), whereas most other countries adopt the Celsius Scale (°C). See [Appendix C](#) “Common Conversions” for details.

5.2 Essential Words/Phrases/Expressions

Local language proficiency is highly recommended in order for students to immerse into the local culture, and make the best of what their host country can offer. In the event that students don’t have adequate language proficiency, they should make efforts to learn some essential words/phrases/expressions of the local language; so that they can introduce themselves, order food, find their way around, and ask for help in an emergency. Below are some examples:

a. Greetings:

- ✚ Hello!
- ✚ How are you?
- ✚ My name is xxx.
- ✚ What’s your name?
- ✚ Nice to meet you.
- ✚ Thank you.
- ✚ Good-bye.
- ✚ Sorry.



b. Ordering food:

- ✚ Where is the nearest restaurant?
- ✚ What do you recommend?
- ✚ I want (certain food you like)...

c. Find your way:

- ✚ (be able to recognize) Basic road signs near where you stay;
- ✚ Your address in your host country;
- ✚ Where is the nearest bus stop/subway station/train station, hospital/clinic, bathroom, police station, embassy, supermarket?

d. Ask for help in emergency:

- ✚ Help!
- ✚ Stop!
- ✚ Excuse me. Can you help me?
- ✚ Please take me to the nearest hospital/clinic, bathroom, police station, embassy, etc.

Section VI: Cultural Preparation

According to [Professor Hofstede](#)¹, “Culture is the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others.” It is normal that most people experience some difficulties adjusting to a new culture, as they are cut off from things that are familiar to them. Such difficulties are commonly addressed as “culture shock”, which can be overcome with good planning and preparation. This section aims to equip students with some important tools that can help minimize the impact of culture shock and promote smooth nativation of the host country.

6.1 Understanding Cultural Norms

To learn about a new culture, a starting point for students is to get familiar with the cultural norms and taboos of their host country.

a. Resources recommended:

- ✚ Talk to informants of your host country, which can be people who have lived there or students from that country;
- ✚ Read the [Country-Specific Information Page](#) about your host country;
- ✚ Research on Internet and/or find guidebooks from the SCU library.



b. Essential cultural information

It is unrealistic to understand all aspects of a culture within a short period of time; however, students could start with the following information to be able to interact with the local people effectively:

- ✚ Cultural dos and don'ts;
- ✚ Economic and political systems, and present day problems;
- ✚ The name of the President/Prime Minister of the country;
- ✚ The official language/s;

¹ Hofstede, G. “Culture.” Geerthofsted.nl. <http://geerthofstede.nl/culture.aspx> (accessed Aug. 14, 2013)

- ✚ The major religion/s and values;
- ✚ National holidays (plan your arrival date accordingly);
- ✚ Major foods and special cooking techniques;
- ✚ Popular or unique sports in the country;
- ✚ Major symbols, such as national flag, anthem, flower, etc.;
- ✚ Principal historic and/or scenic sights;
- ✚ The nation’s heroes and heroines;
- ✚ Other basic facts, such as population, natural resources, art, family organization, education, etc.

Note: this list is not exhaustive.

6.2 Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal behaviors such as facial expression, hand gesture, tone of voice, body movement, use of space, etc., are inextricably intertwined with verbal messages; together, they shape the way people communicate with others. Nonverbal symbols can be interpreted very differently in different cultures. For example, the Okay sign (connecting the thumb and forefinger into a circle) means things are fine in many countries including the U.S.; however, in some Mediterranean countries such as Turkey and Brazil, it can represent a vulgar expression or insult. As such, students should pay close attention to their nonverbal symbols when interacting with locals.

6.3 Hofstede’s Model of Cultural Dimensions

Professor [Hofstede’s cultural dimension model](#) is a useful tool, resulting from decades of research and numerous interviews with people working in different countries. The Hofstede Centre² explains the five dimensions of culture as follows:

a. [Power Distance \(PDI\)](#)

This index refers to “the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally.” A society with a high PDI tends to be more hierarchical; whereas the opposite is more egalitarian.

b. [Individualism versus collectivism \(IDV\)](#)

Individualism is on the high end of this dimension, with collectivism on the low end. A society scores high on IDV prefers “a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only.” On the other hand, a collectivistic society has a much more tightly-knit framework where group interest is taken more seriously than individual interest.

c. [Masculinity versus femininity \(MAS\)](#)

A society with a high score of MAS seeks for “achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material reward for success” and is generally more competitive. On the contrary, “cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life” is valued more in a feminine society, which is usually more consensus-oriented.

d. [Uncertainty avoidance \(UAI\)](#)

This dimension refers to “the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity.” People in a society with a weak UAI like to control the future; whereas people in countries with strong UAI believe that the future can never be known.

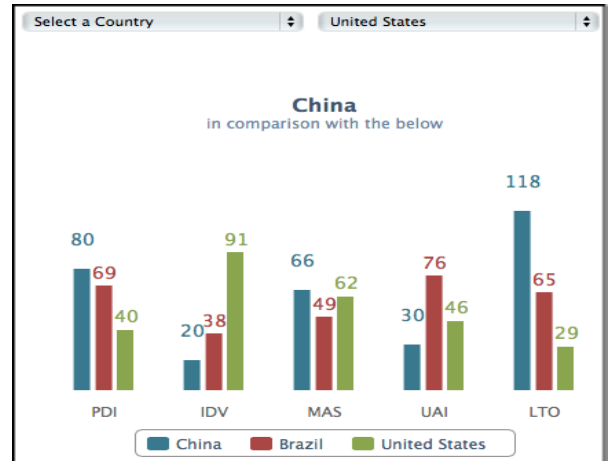
² The Hofstede Centre. “Dimensions.” Geert-hofstede.com. <http://geert-hofstede.com/dimensions.html> (accessed Aug. 14, 2013)

e. Long-term versus short-term orientation (LTO)

This dimension refers to how a society deals with its search for virtue. People in a short-term oriented society respect traditions, do not like to save for the future, and seek for quick results.

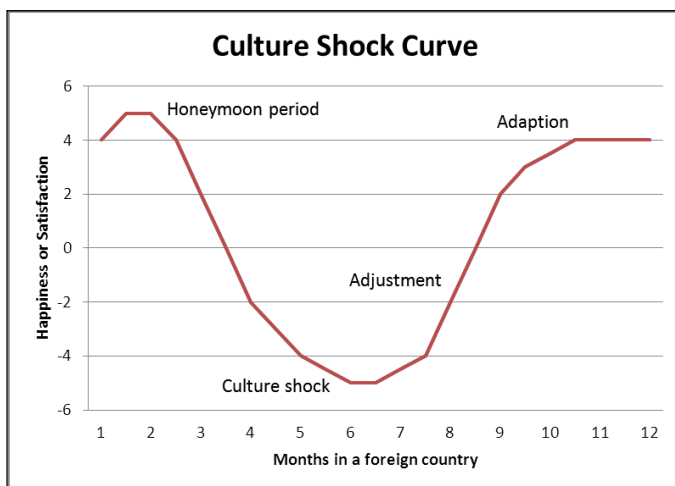
Read more...

Hofstede's cultural dimension model puts together national scores (1 being the lowest, and 120 the highest), with which, international comparison between cultures can be made. This is an excellent resource for students to generate a big picture of their host culture through comparison with the U.S. and other countries (The graph on the right is a screenshot of China's scores in comparison with Brazil and the U.S.).



6.4 Cultural Adaptation

A good knowledge of the local culture will help students settle in the new environment; however, it is expected that cultural adaptation takes time and effort. Lysgaard³ displays the process of cultural adjustment in a U-shaped curve, shown in the diagram below:



This Culture Shock Curve does not apply to every traveler and has its limitations; however, many individuals spending a significant amount of time in a foreign culture do follow this adjustment cycle. According to this theory, the adjustment process is carried out in the following four stages:

a. Cultural Euphoria

This is the initial “honeymoon stage”. Everything is new, exciting, and wonderful; and the new comers are ready to explore the new culture.

b. Cultural Confrontation

This is the most challenging stage. As the initial

excitement diminishes, travelers start to feel confused, frustrated, and even confronted by the new culture. Their attitude changes dramatically from very positive to extremely negative; thus their emotional satisfaction drops to the bottom of the U-Curve.

c. Cultural Adjustment

In this stage, the travelers start to interact with the local people more effectively. Gradually, they transition out of culture shock and begin to make adjustment to the new culture.

d. Cultural Adaptation

Finally, the travelers are able to see things from local people’s perspective, and have integrated many of the values, customs, and behaviors of the local culture into their daily life. As such, they start to feel like a local and are very comfortable navigating in the new culture.

³ Lysgaard, S. (1955). Adjustment in a foreign society: Norwegian Fulbright grantees visiting the United States. International Social Science Bulletin, 7(1), 45-51.

6.5 Immersive Learning

Probably most will agree that the ultimate goal of education abroad is to reach a stage where one thinks and lives like a local. Many students are under the illusion that this will come naturally by setting their feet on a foreign land and being among locals, a misconception termed as “Contact Hypothesis” by international education professionals. Studies have shown that mere exposure to another language or culture does not automatically lead to learning, it is what people do with this exposure that matters. It is based on this realization that SCU has chosen/designed education abroad programs that help promote immersive learning. However, ultimately, it is up to students themselves to make this happen. The following approaches will help students integrate into a new culture:



- a. **Be open-minded:** In the face of a new culture, uncertainties and unpredictabilities are inevitable. Keep your mind open to a new life, suspend your judgment when interacting with the local people, and develop tolerance for ambiguity. As Kohls explains it, “There are different ways of doing things that are neither wrong nor inferior...that one’s own culture does not possess the single right way, best way, or even a uniformly better way of providing for human needs and enjoyments” (pp.101-102).⁴ This concept will help you to see the world from other perspectives.
- b. **Display respect:** Show the local people that you respect their culture through use of both verbal and nonverbal messages.
- c. **Learn the language:** We strongly recommend that you develop a good command of the local language before leaving for your host country. Without a deep understanding of the language, your interaction with the local people would be superficial. The more proficient you are in their language, the deeper your communication with them will become. The fact that you are learning their language also demonstrates that you respect their culture.
- d. **Participate in local events:** Through online sources, local people, and media, find out what activities or events will take place during your stay in the country, and participate in them if you can.
- e. **Make friends with locals:** Join local clubs, find local students for language exchange, and actively participate in local events. All these will provide you with opportunities to engage with the local people and make friends with them.

Section VII: Important Contact Information

7.1 Essential Numbers to Acquire

Students should acquire the following contact information before and upon their arrival:

- ✚ Your on-site 24-hour program coordinator;
- ✚ Your host organization;
- ✚ Your 24-hour U.S. contact;
- ✚ Your health insurance company;

⁴ Kohls, L. R. (2001). Responding to culture shock. *Survival kit for overseas living (4th ed.)*, (pp. 101-108). Boston, MA: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

- ✚ The local police station;
- ✚ The nearest [US Embassy or Consulate](#)⁵;
- ✚ Rent-a-car or a local taxi service company;
- ✚ The nearest western style hospital that is recognized by your health insurance company;
- ✚ The equivalent to “911” in your host country.

7.2 Useful Numbers to Keep

a. Information on medical, financial, or legal problems abroad

- ✚ U.S. State Department’s Overseas Citizens Emergency Center: 1 -202 -647-5225

b. Up-to-date information on travel restrictions

- ✚ Contact the U.S. embassy, or call
 - 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in U.S. & Canada
 - 1-202-501-4444 from other countries

(Available: 8a.m. to 8p.m., Eastern Time, Monday to Friday, except U.S. federal holidays.)

c. Medical referrals, evacuation, repatriation or other services

- ✚ Call ACE Travel Assistance Program:
 - 1-800-243-6124 (Inside the U.S.)
 - 1-202-659-7803 (Outside the U.S., Call Collect)
- ✚ Email: OPS@europassistance-usa.com

d. Any emergency

- ✚ Contact SCU Campus Safety:
 - Tel: 1 -408 -554 -4444;
 - Email: campussafetygroup@scu.edu

Acknowledgement

In preparing this guidebook, we have referred to the websites of the U.S. Department of States (DoS) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for guidance. Meanwhile, we have borrowed some ideas from the “Study Abroad Student Handbook” by the Cornell University’s Office of Undergraduates Study Abroad, and the “Study Abroad Handbook 2013-14” by the Office of International Programs of the Brown University. We would like to express our appreciation to the aforementioned government offices and universities for sharing the information and resources.

⁵ Non-U.S. citizens need to find the contact information of the nearest embassy/consulate of their own country.

Appendix A: Personal Emergency Plan (Template)

Student Name:	Nationality:
Passport #:	SCU Student ID #:
Your Local Address:	
Directions:	
Name of the Host Organization:	
Tel:	Fax:
Address:	
Directions:	
On-site Staff Name:	24-Hour Contact #:
In the case of Medical Emergencies (Accident, Injury, Illness)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Get immediate medical attention!</i> • <i>Contact Europe Assist (part of ACE) if needed</i> • <i>Be aware of your emergency transportation options</i> 	
Name of the nearest western-style Hospital:	
24-Hour contact #:	Fax #:
Address:	
Directions:	
ACE American Insurance Company's Travel Assistance Program	
<p>In medical emergencies, students should contact Europe Assist (part of ACE); the 24-hour access numbers for ACE are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inside U.S. or Canada: 1-800-243-6124</i> • <i>Outside U.S.: 1-202-659-7803</i> 	
In the case of other emergencies (crime, civil unrest, etc.)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Contact on-site staff at:</i> • <i>Contact the nearest US. Embassy or consulate at:</i> • <i>Contact the local Police Station at:</i> • <i>Contact SCU Campus Safety for advice at 1-408-554-4444</i> 	
Tel # of the nearest US embassy:	Fax:
Address:	
Directions:	

Tel # of the Local Police Station:		Fax:
Address:		
Directions:		
Emergency Transportation Options (Contact #)		
Rent-a-Car:		
Host country's 911 equivalent:		
<p>Important Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACE's Travel Assistance Program: SCU enrolls all education abroad students in this program. Our reference plan code/plan number is 01AH585, and policy number is ADD N0484905A. Call when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ You require a referral to a hospital or doctor ➤ You are hospitalized ➤ You need to be evacuated or repatriated ➤ You need to guarantee payment for medical expenses ➤ You experience local communication problems ➤ Your safety is threatened by the sudden occurrence of a political or military event • Emergency Services to U.S. citizens Abroad: The U.S. State Department's Overseas Citizens Emergency Center at (202) 647-5225 is a good source of information on medical, financial, or legal problems while abroad. • SCU Campus Safety: You can always call 1-408-554-4444 for advice or help in any emergency. • Non-U.S. citizens need to find the contact information of the nearest embassy/consulate of your own country. 		

Appendix B: Packing List

Documents

- Your passport with visa/s for your host country/countries;
- A few passport photos;
- Letter of acceptance (to your program or institution abroad);
- Itinerary and tickets (plane, train, or bus tickets) for international traveling;
- Prescriptions for any medicines you will take, including those for eyeglasses or contacts;
- Medical and dental records including immunizations and vaccinations;
- Confirmation of good health;
- Other forms of identification such as your driver's license, birth and marriage certificates for you and your dependents, if applicable;
- A copy of your own emergency plan;
- Other documents you might need for your stay abroad;
- 2 sets of photocopies of all above documents and both sides of your credit cards (one set to leave at home, another to carry with)

Clothing

- Good walking shoes
- Flip-flops (for showers in hostels)
- Rain jacket
- Bathing suit
- Hat (for sun and/or cold)

Medical & Toiletries

- Prescription medicine (carry copy of prescription)
- Sunscreen
- First aid kit
- Aspirin
- Feminine products
- Razors/blades
- Extra eyeglasses
- Extra contact lenses and cleaning solutions
- Tweezers
- Nail file
- Linens and towels (if not provided by program site)

Miscellaneous

- Adapter and voltage converter/appropriate plugs
- A small sewing kit
- A hardcopy or electronic dictionary
- Flashlight
- Small lock
- Umbrella
- The Global Guide handbook
- Small gifts (for your host family and local people that you might make friends with)

Appendix C: Common Conversions

Length

1 centimeter (cm)	=	10 millimeters (mm)
1 inch	=	2.54 centimeters (cm)
1 foot	=	0.3048 meters (m)
1 foot	=	12 inches
1 yard	=	3 feet
1 meter (m)	=	100 centimeters (cm)
1 meter (m)	≅	3.280839895 feet
1 furlong	=	660 feet
1 kilometer (km)	=	1000 meters (m)
1 kilometer (km)	≅	0.62137119 miles
1 mile	=	5280 ft
1 mile	=	1.609344 kilometers (km)
1 nautical mile	=	1.852 kilometers (km)

Area

1 square foot	=	144 square inches
1 square foot	=	929.0304 square centimeters
1 square yard	=	9 square feet
1 square meter	≅	10.7639104 square feet
1 acre	=	43,560 square feet
1 hectare	=	10,000 square meters
1 hectare	≅	2.4710538 acres
1 square kilometer	=	100 hectares
1 square mile	≅	2.58998811 square kilometers
1 square mile	=	640 acres

Speed

1 mile per hour (mph)	≅	1.46666667 feet per second (fps)
1 mile per hour (mph)	=	1.609344 kilometers per hour
1 knot	≅	1.150779448 miles per hour
1 foot per second	≅	0.68181818 miles per hour (mph)
1 kilometer per hour	≅	0.62137119 miles per hour (mph)

Volume

1 US tablespoon	=	3 US teaspoons
1 US fluid ounce	≅	29.57353 milliliters (ml)
1 US cup	=	16 US tablespoons
1 US cup	=	8 US fluid ounces
1 US pint	=	2 US cups
1 US pint	=	16 US fluid ounces
1 liter (l)	≅	33.8140227 US fluid ounces
1 liter (l)	=	1000 milliliters (ml)
1 US quart	=	2 US pints
1 US gallon	=	4 US quarts
1 US gallon	=	3.78541178 liters

Weight

1 milligram (mg)	=	0.001 grams (g)
1 gram (g)	=	0.001 kilograms (kg)
1 gram (g)	≅	0.035273962 ounces
1 ounce	=	28.34952312 grams (g)
1 ounce	=	0.0625 pounds
1 pound (lb)	=	16 ounces
1 pound (lb)	=	0.45359237 kilograms (kg)
1 kilogram (kg)	=	1000 grams
1 kilogram (kg)	≅	35.273962 ounces
1 kilogram (kg)	≅	2.20462262 pounds (lb)
1 stone	=	14 pounds
1 short ton	=	2000 pounds
1 metric ton	=	1000 kilograms (kg)

Temperature

