

## **Congratulations on your decision to study abroad!**

This handbook has been prepared for all students planning to study abroad on any of Dickinson's summer or short-term programs.

Information specific to the program you have chosen will be made available through orientation sessions and/or e-mail correspondence.

Copies of this handbook will be mailed to your parent(s)/ guardian(s) for their reference and to assist in making arrangements.

Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the handbook's content, so that you can plan to follow up as needed. You will need this handbook as a reference tool before, during, and after your time abroad.

**PLEASE REMEMBER-** You are expected to be familiar with and abide by all policies outlined in this handbook.

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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**Center for Global Study and Engagement:**

Center for Global Study and Engagement  
Dickinson College  
P. O. Box 1773  
Carlisle PA 17013-2896  
TEL. 717-245-1341  
FAX: 717-245-1688  
E-mail: [global@dickinson.edu](mailto:global@dickinson.edu)  
Web site: <http://www.dickinson.edu/global>

**Program Contact in Center for Global Study and Engagement:****Summer Programs:**

Samantha Brandauer  
Director of Global Education  
E-mail: [brandaus@dickinson.edu](mailto:brandaus@dickinson.edu)

**Globally-Integrated/Mosaic Programs:**

Samantha Brandauer  
Director of Global Education  
E-mail: [brandaus@dickinson.edu](mailto:brandaus@dickinson.edu)

**Major Emergency Protocol:**

If you need to contact the Center for Global Study and Engagement after hours for emergency assistance in a very serious situation, call the Dickinson College Public Safety 24-Hour Hotline **717-245-1111**, identify yourself and the program, describe the emergency briefly, and give a number for call back. The operator will locate the proper Center for Global Study and Engagement staff, who will return the call.

**Center for Global Study and Engagement Travel Agency:**

Advantage Travel  
313 East Willow Street  
Syracuse, NY 13203  
TEL: 1-800-788-1980  
FAX: 315-471-6264  
Contact: Mary Anne Clark  
[maclark@advantagecny.com](mailto:maclark@advantagecny.com)

**Department of State Announcements:**

Department of State web site: <http://travel.state.gov>  
U.S. travelers may hear recorded information by calling the Department of State in Washington, DC at 202-647-5225 from a touchtone phone, or receive information by automated telefax by dialing 202-647-3000 from their fax machine.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

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## General College and Center for Global Study and Engagement Policies

### College Non-Discrimination Policy:

Dickinson College is an academic community that values justice, free inquiry, diversity, and equal opportunity. It is a fundamental policy of Dickinson College to respect pluralism and to promote tolerance, civility, and mutual understanding within its community. On that basis, Dickinson College does not discriminate as to race, color, sex, political and religious beliefs, marital status, age, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origins, veteran's status, or disability.

### Student Agreement Form (see Appendix II):

The Student Agreement form, which applicants filled out as part of their application process, acknowledges awareness of inherent risks associated with foreign travel and that the student is participating in the program voluntarily. By signing the form, the participant agrees to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Dickinson College from and against any claim that the participant, the participant's parents or guardian or any other person may have for any losses, damages, or injuries arising in connection with participation in the overseas program. Signing this form automatically enrolls the student in the Dickinson College's "Supplemental Emergency Travel Assistance and Medical Evacuation Insurance Program." **However, this is NOT a substitute for your primary health insurance coverage.** (See Appendix II for more information on this insurance.)

### Credit Transfer:

For successful completion of the short-term program, students will earn one (1) course credit, the equivalent of four semester hours\*. Students will receive a letter grade for this course.

For Globally Integrated or Mosaic Programs, successful completion will include participation in the overseas component of the program. Students will earn the designated credit associated with the program and a letter grade for this program.

### Status of non-Dickinson Students:

Students from other institutions who participate in Dickinson College study abroad programs are considered "guest students" of the College for the duration of the program; as such, they will enjoy all the rights and privileges granted by the program. The only restriction is ineligibility for Dickinson grant money and endowed scholarships.

## Conduct and Discipline Policies

### What is this all about? (IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ!!)

At Dickinson College, study abroad is not about travel to an exotic destination. It means becoming an active participant in the life and culture of a foreign locale in order to gain useful knowledge about a place and its people. By applying to a particular program, you have taken a significant step toward expanding your mind, engaging other cultures, and becoming a more active participant in our global society.

In a very real sense, you go abroad as an ambassador of Dickinson College. Your attitude, interactions, and presence abroad will speak volumes about you and about us. You are privileged to be there as a full-time learner, both academically and in all other aspects of daily life. Many study abroad participants are used to being the "majority," and once they become a minority abroad they realize their actions are viewed as representative of their entire group. Resist playing the role of the

“ugly American” stereotype. Resolve instead to develop understanding and show respect for the culture you are visiting.

### **Code of Conduct:**

All students studying abroad are expected to abide by the code of conduct as expressed in the Student Agreement that you have signed. This form is reprinted as Appendix II of this handbook. Please read it again.

It is a fundamental expectation that students will respect the norms of the host culture with regard to behavior and dress and will obey host country laws as well as all policies and regulations of the host institution and/or Dickinson Center. It is further expected that students participating in Dickinson programs will:

- attend and participate in classes and complete assignments
- participate in planned group excursions
- observe the rules and respect the property of the program’s center and/or of the host institution
- for safety purposes, provide the Program Director with contact information and/or itinerary to the extent possible when they leave for private travel.

Students shall respect the rights of other students whether on the program or at the host institution, as well as those of homestay families, staff, and faculty. Dickinson College policies regarding student conduct as outlined in the Dickinson College Student Handbook, including academic infractions such as plagiarism, apply to students enrolled overseas as well. In Dickinson programs abroad, the Program Director will serve as the Judicial Hearing Officer for alleged violations.

### **Drinking and Drug Use:**

Most cultures have well-established customs with regard to acceptable social drinking. Mature behavior and respect for local customs is expected of all students. The misuse of alcohol will not be tolerated and can result in dismissal from the program. The use, purchase, or sale of illegal drugs is prohibited. A student caught using, purchasing, or selling drugs will be sent home immediately without refund.

Legal penalties with regard to drugs and alcohol may be more severe in the host country than in the U.S. and may entail fines and/or jail time. A student charged with breaking local laws will be subject to the rulings of local courts. U.S. laws and constitutional guarantees do NOT apply. The ability of program staff or U.S. Embassy personnel to assist is very limited. In most countries release on bail while awaiting trial is not an option.

### **Removal from Program for Disciplinary Reasons:**

Students can be dismissed from programs for violating policies, rules or regulations, for engaging in disruptive behavior, for academic infractions or failure, and for conduct that could bring the program into disrepute. In such cases, students will be discharged without a refund. The Executive Director of Global Education will make the judgment in consultation with the Program Director.

## **Early Withdrawal and Program Cancellation Policies**

### **Refund Policy and Financial Consequences for Early Withdrawal:**

Early withdrawal from a program will have financial consequences. Both the \$40 application fee and \$300 confirmation payment are non-refundable. Before making a final decision to withdraw, you should note the following policy that applies in **all cases of early withdrawal from a short-term program, regardless of the reason for withdrawal.**

A student's date of withdrawal is determined by either:

- 1) The date the student notifies the Center for Global Study and Engagement in writing of his/her decision to withdraw, or
- 2) The date the student is officially dismissed from the program

A student who withdraws **prior to the 45<sup>th</sup> day before the start of the program** will receive a 100% refund, less the non-refundable confirmation payment.

A student who withdraws **on or after the 45<sup>th</sup> day before the start of the program** will receive an 80% refund of the program fee less the non-refundable confirmation payment.

A student that withdraws after the program starts will forfeit 100% of the Program Fee.

### **Financial Aid Refunds**

For students receiving financial aid, refer to the financial aid refund rules as stated in the Dickinson College Bulletin under the Dickinson College Refund Policy. It is important to understand that, since the financial aid refund and the refund to the student's account are calculated using different methods, the refund to the student account may not fully cover the required refund to the financial aid programs, and the student may end up owing funds to the college after the refund to the financial aid programs has been made.

### **Program Cancellation Policy:**

All decisions concerning the cancellation (or required modification) of a Dickinson College program will be made by the Center for Global Study and Engagement in consultation with responsible authorities on campus and overseas. These decisions will be based on, but not limited to, State Department warnings. Students whose program is cancelled prior to the start date will receive a full refund of the program fee, including the confirmation payment.

## **Program Fees**

Dickinson College program short-term fees include the following: tuition and fees, room and board, and scheduled group excursions. Not included in the program fee are: required primary health and accident insurance (purchased in the U.S.), travel to/from program site, and other personal expenses. You may check the student budget sheet to see what your program specifically covers. Invoices sent out by the Student Accounts Office will show credit for the \$300 confirmation payment and for any financial aid for which you are eligible and have applied to the program.

If the balance due on your account is not paid by the deadline noted on the billing, or if special arrangements have not been made with Student Accounts (Tel. 717-245-1953 or email: [stuacct@dickinson.edu](mailto:stuacct@dickinson.edu)), you will not be allowed to participate in the program.

### **Student Budget Sheet:**

The Center for Global Study and Engagement prepares a student budget sheet for each Dickinson program to help students and parents anticipate expenses not covered by the program fee. At the top of the sheet the program fee is given, followed by a listing of what is included. Below that there is a table of estimated costs not included in the program fee. These estimated costs are then divided into required and optional cost sections. The estimate for personal expenses is an average amount, and you may not actually incur all expenses listed; some students get by with less, whereas others spend a lot more. Budget sheets can be found on the program pages at <http://dickinson.studioabroad.com>.

# PROGRAM PREPARATIONS

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## Limited Power of Attorney

In case your signature is needed for any reason during your absence, such as for a Stafford loan check, you should consider making arrangements for "limited power of attorney" to be held by an appropriate person stateside to act on your behalf. This is usually a parent or guardian, but can be another relative or close friend. It must be someone you trust to act responsibly on your behalf in legal and financial matters. You may use a standard "Limited Power of Attorney Form" (A240), available from the Office of Student Accounts or at the Center for Global Study and Engagement in the Stern Center. Examples of the kinds of things you might want to authorize the person(s) to do would be: acting on your behalf in federal loan matters or withdrawing or transferring money from a specific bank account. You should have the statement(s) notarized and request a couple of originals in case the bank or other entity requires an original.

## Insurance Information

### Health Insurance:

**You are required to purchase primary health insurance in the United States** that is valid overseas to protect against the costs of hospitalization and medical care in the event of sickness or an accident while abroad. **This cost is not included in the program fee.** The following section includes a list of things to consider with regards to your current health insurance coverage.

- ☐ Selecting and paying for adequate primary health insurance coverage is your responsibility. You should read your insurance policy to determine what is and is not covered. Pre-existing conditions, sports injuries, and dental care, for example, may not be covered by basic medical insurance. It is your responsibility to determine whether your policy meets your particular needs.
- ☐ Before deciding to use your health insurance policy, you should contact the provider to determine whether the policy will cover you **overseas** for the **duration of your stay**. Find out what sort of documentation you must present for reimbursement of costs incurred overseas. You may also purchase the policy used by Dickinson students during the academic year\*. Please contact the Office of Student Accounts for further information about the Dickinson health insurance plan. (\*This is for Dickinson students only).
- ☐ On the **Student Agreement form**, which you signed when you applied, you provided the **insurance company name and policy number** for your medical coverage. **If that information should change, please notify the Center for Global Study and Engagement immediately.** Up-to-date, accurate insurance information is needed in case of emergency and is also mandatory if your program requires a letter issued by the Center for Global Study and Engagement in support of your student visa.
- ☐ Make note of your insurance company contact information and policy number in your own essential records, which you take with you overseas. Also leave the information with someone at home.
- ☐ If you have **special health needs**, discuss them with the On-campus Coordinator and/or the Center for Global Study and Engagement before departure. Thinking ahead about how you will cope with special health needs is essential. Do not assume that the same services or medications you use at home will be available in the host country.

- ☐ As a rule, an insurance card will not be accepted for payment of medical expenses overseas. Be prepared to **pay cash for treatment and keep receipts** to present to your insurance company for reimbursement. Before going overseas, contact your insurance company to know exactly what you will need to send them in order to be reimbursed. Verify if the documents provided by doctors and pharmacies from another country will have to be translated into English.
- ☐ In some countries with socialized medicine, country-specific student health insurance coverage is required and is included in the program fee. While this usually covers most routine care, it is NOT a substitute for the required primary health and accident insurance purchased in the U.S.
- ☐ Canceling your policy while abroad puts you at serious health and financial risk, in the case that you become ill or need medical attention while abroad and have no health insurance coverage.

To evaluate personal sickness and accident insurance coverage, we offer the following questions:

- Does the plan include hospitalization for accidents and illnesses while abroad?
- What is the maximum amount of coverage provided?
- Are there deductibles? If so, what are they?
- Will the plan include emergency room expenses?
- What is explicitly not covered?
- Does the plan cover visits to the doctor or medication prescribed while abroad?
- What is the procedure for filing a claim, and how long does it take to be reimbursed?
- When does the plan begin and end?
- Does the plan have continuous coverage before, during, and after you go abroad?
- Is there a publication explaining the coverage in detail?
- Is there coverage for medical evacuation or for repatriation of remains?

### **Supplemental Travel Assistance and Medical Evacuation Insurance:**

Dickinson College provides "Supplemental Travel Accident and Medical Evacuation Insurance" for all students participating in a program overseas. However, this is NOT a substitute for your primary health insurance coverage. Please see Appendix I at the back of the handbook for an overview of coverage and limitations.

### **Liability Insurance for Belongings:**

Students are not covered by the College for personal liability, including the loss or theft of personal property. It is the responsibility of each program participant to purchase liability insurance, if needed. Students who bring laptops are advised to purchase adequate coverage. Check first to see whether the homeowner's insurance of your parents/guardian will cover personal liability while overseas. Normally, a copy of the police report filed at the time of loss or theft will be required by the insurer before any claim will be considered.



# Health Matters

## Medical Check-ups:

Before leaving the United States, you should visit your physician, gynecologist, eye care specialist, and dentist. Make sure you are in good health before going abroad so that you can avoid any potential problems.

## Immunizations/Inoculations:

All students going abroad should consult with the Dickinson College Health Center or your personal physician to make sure that all of your routine inoculations are up-to-date. These include measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) and diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (DPT). The Center for Global Study and Engagement will notify you if any specific immunizations or medications are required for your program. For more up-to-date country-specific information about immunizations and other health precautions, consult the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website at [www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/).

## Medications:

Prescription/non-prescription medication(s) should be in the original container from the pharmacy and labeled with your physician's name, your name, and the medication name and dosage. **Do not transfer any medication into an unmarked container.** You should also carry a written letter or prescription from your physician verifying that this medication was prescribed by a licensed practitioner and is necessary for medical reasons. If you are on prescription medications or take particular over the counter medications, such as a certain painkiller, you should take enough with you to last the duration of your stay. It is neither advisable nor legal in some circumstances to ship medications by mail. It is your responsibility to make sure that your medications are legal in your host country. You can find this out by consulting the consulate website of the country you will be visiting. You may also want to take along some cold/flu medication, anti-diarrhea, and anti-fungal medicine. Women prone to gynecological infections should take a supply of medication. Be aware of recent changes in airport security regulations limiting the types of liquids or gels that can be transported in carry-on luggage.

The Center for Disease Control recommends that students with diabetes or health situations that require routine or frequent injections should carry a supply of syringes sufficient to last their stay abroad. If you carry narcotics or syringes, you should also bring a copy of the prescription and a statement from the prescribing physician.

## Mental Health, Stability, and Stress:

For students under the care of a counselor or psychiatrist, please be sure that you see him/her before you depart from the US. Participating in a study abroad program in another country will not lessen any emotional issues that you may presently be experiencing. When you are abroad, you will probably experience various states of excitement and frustration as a result of the opportunities and differences presented by the new culture. These alternating emotions are usually related to the natural phenomenon of culture shock, which occurs when people adapt to a new culture and surroundings. As you become accustomed to your new surroundings and establish a routine, these feelings will begin to subside. If homesickness, depression, or eating disorders persist, consider seeking out professional assistance.

## Special Accommodations:

The accommodations available to students with disabilities in the United States may not be available to students studying abroad. It is unlikely that you will find the same medications, medical and/or psychological care, or support services at your study abroad site that you would at home. For you to fully assess whether you will be able to successfully complete a study abroad program, we encourage any student with special needs to review the program descriptions and to visit websites about the

community in which you will be living and learning. If you wish to have assistance from the College in helping you to assess your ability to succeed in studying in a particular program or in identifying programs where more support may be available, you are encouraged to disclose your situation on the medical forms you completed during the application process or to come talk to the Center for Global Study and Engagement. Such disclosure is completely voluntary. If you travel to an abroad site, you will be expected to fully participate in the program. Therefore, you need to inform yourself about the demands of the program in order to plan ahead and to prepare to cope with your health needs in a new environment.

### **Health and Safety in Flight:**

For safety and comfort, wear loose-fitting, natural-fiber clothing during your flight. Do not wear snug-fitting or heeled footwear! If possible, avoid wearing contact lenses. Low humidity in flight tends to remove the moisture from the eye's surface. It is helpful to do seat exercises or to walk in the aisles in order to maintain good circulation. One easy exercise you can do is to tap your toes while keeping your heels on the floor. This pushes blood up your legs and reduces swelling. Tap for several minutes every hour or so.

It is always advisable to sleep during long flights. You should avoid alcoholic beverages in flight because they cause dehydration. Recycled air also has a drying effect, so you should drink only non-alcoholic beverages regularly. If you require a special diet, be sure to notify the airline at least 72 hours before departure.

The most common difficulty or problem that can result from flying is known as jet lag, which is the sudden sense of fatigue or wakefulness at the "wrong" time. Jet lag is more pronounced flying east than flying west. Veteran international flyers recommend going to bed and getting up at the customary local time from the beginning. This helps the body adjust quickly. Avoid naps until fully adjusted to the new time zone; the body confuses naps with night sleep.

### **Health Tips:**

By using common sense and taking everyday precautions, you can safeguard your health. Here are some tips:

- Inform yourself about the particular health risks of the country you will be visiting and be meticulous in observing recommended precautions.
- Students with existing medical conditions should consult their personal physicians regarding special precautions they may need to take. It is important to tell your physician the location(s) you will be visiting.
- If you wear glasses or contact lenses, take along an extra pair, plus a copy of your lens prescription. Pack enough lens cleaning solution for the entire trip.
- Always carry a wallet card or wear a necklace or bracelet stating any special conditions you have (such as diabetes, asthma, etc.). Be sure to list allergies to specific medications.
- If you are sexually active, use a condom. You may have trouble finding reliable brands of condoms abroad; consider taking a supply.
- Take care of yourself while traveling: try not to wear yourself down, avoid excessive exposure to the sun, drink plenty of liquids to stay hydrated, and try to get enough sleep.

# TRAVEL PREPARATIONS

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## Passports and Visas

The responsibility for ensuring that you have a valid passport and visa in time for your program is ultimately your responsibility.

### Passport Information:

A valid passport **that does not expire for 6 months beyond the end date of the program** is required to enter any country. If your passport expires before the required validity, you will have to acquire a new passport before departure and/or before applying for a visa (if your program requires it). **If you have not applied for your passport, you must do so immediately.** You can find more information at the Center for Global Study and Engagement or the US Post Office located on Louther Street in Carlisle.

### Applying for a Visa:

A visa is a stamped endorsement placed in your passport by the embassy or consulate of a foreign government that allows you to enter that country for a specific period of time. Visa requirements and costs differ from country to country. **You will be notified by The Center for Global Study and Engagement if a visa is required for your program.**

### Information for International Students:

**If you are not a U.S. citizen**, it is your responsibility to research your status, and whether or not you need to obtain a visa, obtain any special entry papers, or other documentation that may be required for entry. Contact the host country embassy in your country of citizenship for assistance. Depending on the country's requirements, you may have to apply in person at that Embassy/Consulate.

## Packing and Flight Information

### Packing Tips:

When planning what to take with you, the first rule is to take the minimum amount of clothes possible. You will accumulate things during your visit, so when in doubt – leave it at home! Travel with no more baggage than you can carry! When planning what to take with you, be practical and focus on the essentials of a wardrobe. Choose clothes that can be mixed and matched and layered to serve different seasons and temperatures. Dark, conservative colors can be worn longer without laundering and will help to make you appear less conspicuously American.

Here are some general wardrobe suggestions for items to pack (Check with your program director for any specific things to pack):

- a sturdy, comfortable pair of walking shoes that you have BROKEN IN and a nice pair of shoes for formal occasions;
- appropriate clothes for the season
- a folding umbrella for rainy days or a rain coat with zip-in lining
- 1 towel, 1 washcloth
- a swim suit and sandals for the beach (if applicable)
- 1-3 nice outfits (tie for men)- may vary for January-term programs
- 15-18 socks and underwear- may vary for January term programs
- Winter clothing (if applicable): jacket, hat, gloves, scarf, etc
- 10-14 tops- may vary for January-term programs
- 6-8 bottoms- may vary for January-term programs
- Sweatpants/pajamas
- Extra contact lenses, glasses, and prescription

### Other Useful Suggestions:

- a day bag or backpack for traveling around
- If you already have one, a laptop with wireless capabilities. Most recent laptops come with converters built in the AC adaptor, but make sure you check this. If you do not have the proper converter (i.e. one that can convert 220 volt current), then you will ruin your hard drive. Please note this isn't always necessary for short-term programs.
- Adapters and converters for US electronics
- a USB memory device for transferring documents and photos between computers
- Space/Vacuum bags (can be found at Wal-Mart or Target and condense the amount of space your clothing uses in your luggage)
- luggage ID tags both inside and outside of your luggage
- International phone numbers for computer and credit cards
- a small supply of toiletries
- a travel alarm clock (with extra batteries)
- a money belt and/or neck pouch to carry valuables
- a travel sewing kit (with safety pins)
- a small first aid kit
- any preferred health and beauty supplies
- a Swiss army knife with corkscrew, bottle opener, and scissors (packed in your suitcase – not your carry-on luggage)
- a camera
- playing cards
- sunglasses & sunscreen (if applicable)
- all medications, prescription or non-prescription, should be carried in the original, labeled container; take copies of all prescriptions with you
- notebooks, school supplies, etc (if applicable)
- language-specific dictionary (if applicable)
- a few token gifts, something typically American or representative of the area in which you live in the U.S., or from Dickinson College – an especially a good gift if you are living with a host family.

For the first few days, pack basic toiletries, toothbrush and toothpaste, and a washcloth in case you are not able to get to a store right away. Depending on the country, most toiletries should be available, although brands are frequently different. **If you have a particular type of toiletry that you like to use, you may want to bring it with you.**

### Packing Tips from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA):

- Do not pack oversized electronics (laptops, full-size video game consoles, DVD players and video cameras that use cassettes) in your checked baggage when possible. However, please be advised that you will be required to remove these items from your carry-on bag and submit them separately for x-ray screening. Small electronics, such as iPods, can remain in your carry-on.
- Prepare your 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag of liquids before arriving at the airport, following the 3-1-1 guideline (place liquids into 3.4 ounce bottle or less (by volume); all bottles should be carried in one 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag)
- Pack all your coats and jackets in your checked baggage when possible. All coats and jackets must go through the X-ray machine for inspection.
- Do not wrap gifts. If a security officer needs to inspect a package, they may have to unwrap your gift. Please wait until you've reached your final destination to wrap gifts.
- Undeveloped film should go in your carry-on bag. You will be able to declare film that is faster than 800-speed to a transportation security officer for physical inspection to avoid being X-rayed.

- You are required to remove footwear for X-ray screening so wear shoes that are easy to take off and put back on.
- Double check the contents of your pockets, bags, and carry-on luggage to ensure no prohibited items were inadvertently packed.
- When in doubt, leave it out. If you're not sure about whether you can bring an item through the checkpoint, put it in your checked bag or leave it at home.
- For more information, visit [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov).

### **Carry-on and Checked Luggage:**

**BAGGAGE REGULATIONS:** You should call the airline directly or go online to inquire about baggage regulations. A backpack with a frame must be checked as one of these allowed pieces. (It should be noted that this type of “backpackers” backpack has been found useful by past participants due to the amount of traveling you will be doing). Attach a label on the outside of your luggage and place a name and address label inside.

In most cases, you are allowed one piece of carry-on luggage not to exceed 45 total inches, which must fit under the seat in front of you or in an overhead bin. Make sure that your luggage follows TSA regulations. Weigh your luggage before you arrive at the airport to ensure that it is not overweight. Remember that bags should be small enough to go up narrow stairways, go down crowded train aisles, and fit on luggage racks. A coat and a handbag, briefcase, or laptop may be carried on. Also, in case your luggage is delayed for a few days, be sure to pack a change of clothes and any medicine or toiletries you would need in your carry-on bag.

**LAPTOP:** If you bring a laptop, it should be considered one of your carry-on items. You should purchase insurance to cover it in case it is stolen or damaged.

**VALUABLES:** Carry extra cash and travelers checks in a money belt or neck pouch. Do not carry all your cash in one place. Never pack money, valuables, or important documents in your checked luggage!

**LOST LUGGAGE:** Make a list of everything you pack, bring a copy of the list with you and leave a copy at home. This will be helpful if your luggage is lost and you need to identify the items and cost of your luggage. If your luggage is lost or mishandled, you must file a claim with airline personnel immediately. Do not leave the airport thinking it will be easier to do it at a later time. It won't be.

Airlines don't refund lost baggage unless there are original receipts, so keep the things you care about with you at all times during travel.

### **Travel Documents:**

Before departure you should make copies of all of your important documents. Leave one set of copies with your family and take one with you to keep in a safe place separate from your original documents.

- The information page of your passport
- Any entrance visas (if applicable)
- Insurance policies and contact information
- Your airline ticket
- Front and back of credit cards and phone numbers for credit card replacement (you cannot dial an 800-number from overseas, so you will need a direct number)
- Travelers check numbers
- Contents of your wallet
- Prescription medications

**Immediate Cash/Travel Funds:**

Depending on your destination, having a small “emergency fund” of \$50- \$100 in and some travelers checks (in small denominations) may be worth considering. You may want to withdraw money at the airport upon arrival, since banks may be closed if you arrive on a weekend. More information is available in the Financial Information section of this handbook (p. 16).

**Flight Arrangements:**

Airfare is NOT included in the program fee unless otherwise noted. Specific travel guidelines will be provided for students after they are accepted. For some programs, group flight options may be arranged.

You will need to be at the airport at least 3-4 hours before departure (depending on the weather). Be sure to leave yourself plenty of time because of delays created by recently increased security measures.

## **WHILE YOU ARE ABROAD**

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### **Living Accommodations**

Living accommodations vary by program. Usually students in language intensive programs live with host families in order to foster their language acquisition. Students on other programs may stay in dormitories or hotels. No matter what type of living accommodations you stay in, always remember to be respectful.

For those students staying with a host family, please find some general tips below for living with a host family while abroad.

**Host Family Accommodations:**

Living with a host family overseas can be an intensely rewarding experience, but students need to be prepared for a period of challenging inter-cultural adjustment. Your host family has a different way of life (and a different set of rules) from what you are used to at home or on campus. Naturally, it will take you a while to feel ‘at home’ in this new environment. In the beginning, you may act like and be treated like a boarder. Whether you remain that way or whether you eventually integrate yourself into the life of the household will depend upon your initiative, adaptability, and acceptance of traditional habits and attitudes toward life in general. As you interact, you will notice differences. Some of these will be easy to accept and adjust to, while others may at first feel uncomfortable. Flexibility and openness to learning the family’s ways of doing things will increase your success in learning about your new culture.

Although each host family is different, be aware that host families generally expect to have an adult relationship with the students they house. They will respect your independence while remaining open to exchanging ideas and conversation. Mutual respect and open communication is essential for a successful relationship. There is no infallible recipe for the success of your home stay, but the tips below may help you to adjust more smoothly and quickly.

**In the beginning...tips for daily life:**

1. Do not hesitate to ask your host family questions or to start conversations with them. Remember, your host family is there to help you. By starting conversations, you are initiating an immediate rapport. Hiding away in your room will communicate to the family that you do not wish to interact with them. Communication is the key to a successful relationship with your host family.
2. Although you might feel awkward at first, it is very important to communicate openly with your host family. A problem that seems complicated for you to solve (the heat is not

working correctly in your bedroom) may be very easy for your host family to fix (the radiator works differently than what you're used to and your host family can show you how to use it). Your host family would surely prefer that you ask for their help rather than be unhappy in their home!

3. We suggest keeping your schedule as flexible as possible in order to take advantage of family activities. By joining your family when invited, you will get to know each other better while improving your language acquisition at the same time.
4. Be yourself with your family, and be polite. Remember, although you are living with them and would like to be a member of the family, you are still a guest in their home. Do not assume immediately that you are afforded certain privileges just because you live with them. When you take meals with your family, ask if you can help set the table, clean up, etc. Be sure to ask to watch TV and to use the family phone. If you do not want your host family to clean your room, tell them that you will clean it yourself and ask them for what you need (vacuum cleaner, dust cloths, etc.). Be sure to leave the bathroom clean after each use.
5. Do your best not to betray your host family's trust. Respect their rules, and always ask their permission before inviting anyone into their home. If you feel the rules of the host family are unreasonable, talk to your Program Director.
6. Be open-minded and flexible; there will be differences, so accept them. Adopt your family's patterns, such as keeping doors closed at all times and being careful not to waste hot water and electricity.

The following categories are frequent causes of friction between students and their host families:

**TELEPHONE:** You should ask permission and determine if there are any rules or restrictions before using the telephone. Generally, telephone use is more expensive overseas than in the U.S. and long, wide-ranging telephone calls are not the custom. Be aware that there may be a charge for local calls, not just for long distance. Most families have only one line and no call waiting. Therefore, be considerate, learn the family's expectations, and go by them.

If you receive permission to use the home telephone for incoming calls, you should discuss with your host family when it is appropriate for your family and friends to call. Inform your family and friends of these times as well as the time difference between the U.S. and your location. Friends should be asked not to call during mealtimes. It may be necessary to use an international pay telephone for your long-distance calls; or, in some cases, you might have to go to the local post office to make your calls. Other forms of communication, such as Skype, may be more convenient; please see the Communication Information section of the handbook (p. 18).

**ELECTRICITY/WATER:** The cost of electricity overseas is much higher than it is in the U.S. The people you are staying with will most likely be energy conscious and want to conserve energy because of a general belief in conservation. Be respectful of this in your behavior. Switch off lights and other electrical devices when you leave a room. If you come in late at night, do not leave the lights on in the corridor or hallway. Do not be impatient or annoyed when reminded about leaving lights on or about energy consumption in general. Open your curtains during the day to make use of the sun's rays.

Similarly, you may notice greater concern for water conservation as well. In most families, you may be allowed to shower (or bathe) every day, but you will soon notice that they may not do so, nor are they in the habit of taking extended showers. You should try to follow the example of those around you and remain flexible and understanding as you adjust. Do not let friends shower at your place unless you have been given permission first.

**VISITING HOURS:** Before inviting friends over, always ask permission from your host family and check for their plans and expectations. Consideration for others is always a good rule to follow. During the week, visitors should not remain past 9 or 10 p.m. unless your host family has given you special permission. The people you are living with often have to get up early and must consider their neighbors living close by or small children in the house or building. You can expect restrictions in the number of visitors you may have at one time. Moreover, you cannot assume you will be permitted to invite friends of the opposite sex. Be sure to discuss these things with your family first so that you understand what is expected. **Do not invite guests to your host family's home without their permission when your host family is absent.**

Another frequent source of tension is when friends or family members arrive on visits from the U.S. Your host family is not required to accept these visitors in their (or your) rooms. Permission to have someone stay overnight would normally be an exceptional occurrence, not generally or lightly given. Do not make the mistake of regarding your room as a hotel.

**KITCHEN PRIVILEGES:** Kitchen privileges are usually not included in the home stay agreement, even if you are eating meals with the family. You might want to wait awhile and observe family customs and practices in the kitchen before you ask permission to use it. In any case, you should not expect more than very limited use. If you are granted permission, be appreciative and remember the following useful hints:

- Restrict yourself to light cooking. If allowed to use the oven, make sure you know how it works and how to convert Celsius temperature settings.
- Cook at reasonable (what your family considers reasonable, of course) hours and always ask permission so that you do not interfere with the normal household cooking.
- All pans and cooking utensils should be washed and put back. Stove, oven, and other areas of the kitchen should be left spotlessly clean.
- Do not use household cooking supplies (e.g., sugar, butter, oil), unless you have first asked and received permission to do so.
- Turn off lights and appliances when you are done.

**LAUNDRY:** Ask the family/program about laundry arrangements.

**PERSONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE:** As stated in the Liability Insurance for Belongings section, the program does not cover personal liability. So, when using appliances in your home stay, take care. Accidents happen and you will be held personally responsible for damage regardless of whether or not negligence was a factor.

**FINAL REMARKS:** This section reviews only some aspects of life with a host family, so be aware that this new experience will require adjustment in many ways. One could say that adjustment is the primary vehicle of cross-cultural learning. The homestay experience will reward you richly if you remain flexible, keep an open mind, and maintain a sense of humor. Your family will be ready to help you, but both sides must share in making your stay a success, and both must realize that it takes time to establish a routine and achieve integration.



## Financial Information

### **ATMs:**

Automatic teller machines (ATMs) are a convenient way to transfer money and exchange currency. ATMs connected to international networks such as Cirrus and Plus allow you to retrieve cash in the local currency directly from your bank account in the United States. Inquire at your bank to be sure that your ATM card will allow cash withdrawals abroad. ATMs overseas will only accept cards that access checking accounts in your name. Also, you shouldn't rely exclusively on ATMs because you may not be able to find an ATM as easily as you would in the U.S. Your home bank may charge fees for foreign withdrawals.

### **Credit Cards:**

Many major credit cards (e.g. Visa and MasterCard) are accepted abroad, depending upon the country. A credit card can be very useful for big purchases: restaurants, hotels, shops, and airline tickets, or for an emergency, in which you can track your spending. When you use a credit card it should be in your name. Verify your credit limit before you depart the US.

### **Check on Fees with Bank and Credit Card Companies:**

Before leaving the U.S., check with your local bank and credit card companies about fees for using your card overseas. If the fees are hefty, consider withdrawing larger amounts of cash from the ATM and taking only what you need and keeping the rest in a safe place. Only use credit cards with high fees for big purchases or in emergencies.

You should notify your bank and credit card companies that you are going abroad for an extended period of time, and be sure to inform them as to which countries you will be traveling. Otherwise, when they see charges on your card from a foreign country, they may assume that your card has been stolen and suspend your account. Keep a separate record of your credit card numbers and phone numbers of the companies so you can report theft or loss of your card quickly.

### **Travelers checks:**

Traveler's checks are becoming less common in certain locations, especially Europe, but are worth considering as an emergency fund of last resort. The first signature line on traveler's checks should be signed when you buy them, so that they cannot be used by anyone else. Keep a separate record of the numbers so that checks can be replaced if lost or stolen. You usually have to cash travelers check at a bank and there is usually a charge.

### **Spending Money:**

Students sometimes ask how much spending money they should plan to have during their time abroad. This amount depends, of course, on the lifestyle you adopt and how much you plan to travel. Please consult the Student Budget sheet you received in your acceptance packet for more information.

## Communication Information

Students sometimes tell family/friends that they will phone home the minute they arrive. However, plans often go awry because of plane or train delays, unavailability of an international phone line, etc. To save parents and loved ones worry, we suggest an agreement to call at the earliest convenient time, rather than promising to call at once.

E-mail, cell phones, and Skype allow students to keep in closer touch with family and friends back

home than ever before. There is a good side to this, but it is possible to overdo it so that you focus too much on home to the detriment of your abroad experience. Consider writing frequent letters, postcards or a blog instead. These can be reread and kept as a record of your time abroad.

### **Skype (International calls through the internet):**

One of the most inexpensive ways to make international phone calls is through the Internet. Skype is one of the most common programs for this type of service. All that is required is access to a computer with an Internet connection and a headset or external microphone. Skype offers several options:

- 1) **Skype to Skype:** Have your family and friends download and register with Skype. Once you have both registered and have a headset or external microphone, you can talk for FREE!
- 2) **Skype Out:** A low cost way to make calls at a local rate to people that have traditional land lines or mobile phones.
- 3) **Skype In:** For a small fee, you can receive a local U.S. phone number that your friends can call. When someone calls, you will receive the phone call on your computer where you can communicate with your friend using a headset or an external microphone. This option also has free voicemail.

For more information, please visit the website at [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com). Please note that this might not be appropriate for all programs due to privacy or access issues.

### **Phone Cards:**

You can make a direct long-distance phone call from any regular pay phone or from your host family's home phone **with a pre-paid phone card**, available from the post office or at tobacco shops. Another option is having your parents set up a low cost international calling service (it is usually cheaper to make international calls from the U.S. than vice versa), and arrange for a time for your parents to call you. Please note the time difference between your abroad location and the U.S.

### **Cell Phones:**

For short-term programs, cell phones probably aren't necessary. However, you should consult with your program director to find out what is suggested. For some programs and locations, a cell phone can be an excellent way to communicate with other students on the program, to be accessible to family and friends at home, and to be reachable in the event of an emergency. It may, however, be very expensive to make international calls from your phone. Students can check with their current cell phone provider to see if their phone has international calling capabilities. If so, you will have to find out the procedures for using your cell phone abroad. More than likely, you will purchase pre-paid cell phone minutes that don't require subscribing to an overseas cell phone service.

### **Computers and Internet Access:**

Since you will be abroad for only a short period of time, it might not make sense to bring a laptop. However, some students do choose to bring one in order to have ready computer access. If you plan to take a personal computer, make sure it is compatible with the voltage of the country you will be living in. Some laptops have built-in converters, but a personal computer will need a plug outlet converter, which can be tough to find in other countries. Also, be sure to buy adequate insurance for it. Computer and Internet access will vary at each program site, however, more than likely you will always be able to find Internet cafés at your site. In any case, we encourage you to limit your Internet use to create a healthy balance between staying in touch with your friends and family in the U.S. and taking advantage of the time you spend.

### **E-mail:**

Be sure to clear your Dickinson Inbox regularly so that messages can reach you. Make sure you also empty your Sent and Deleted messages box regularly.

# Health Care while Abroad

## **Health Culture:**

If necessary, be prepared for medical care to be different from what you would expect in the US. Get any exams taken care of before departing and talk with your doctors about any medications you will be taking with you.

For more information about health preparations before going abroad, please see the Health Matters section on 9.

## **AIDS and STDs Overseas:**

You are at the same risk for AIDS and STDs while abroad as you would be at home since your risk of infection depends on your behavior. Therefore, if you are sexually active, use good judgment and common sense. It is also highly recommended that you carry a personal supply of condoms and birth control, especially if traveling to underdeveloped regions of the world.

# Safety and Emergency Procedures while Abroad

## **Overview of Emergency Precautions:**

The Center for Global Study and Engagements has always taken seriously our students' safety while studying abroad. In the wake of the September 11 events, safety concerns are even more urgent. With the continuing threat of terrorism around the world, we are obviously concerned about the global security situation and continue to monitor it, and we encourage students and parents to do likewise.

We depend on a variety of sources to assess situations overseas, including the news, our own resident directors, and other on-site contacts abroad, as well as professional colleagues and publications. One of the most important sources is the U.S. State Department. Please review the Department of State web site (see next section), as well as any others you may find useful. All past decisions about canceling or closing programs have been informed by Department of State or World Health Organization recommendations.

We consider it essential that students take responsibility for their own safety, and we expect their cooperation. For example, students are asked to share flight itineraries with our office; our Program Directors ask students to inform them of any travel plans away from the site. We share DOS warnings and announcements with students and remind them frequently to review common sense safety and security measures, such as those printed below in this section. Each student is given a key chain with emergency phone numbers and instructions and is asked to carry it at all times. In a serious emergency, administrative staff of the Center for Global Study and Engagement can be accessed 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.

Dickinson Centers and partner institutions are in regular contact with the Center for Global Study and Engagement in Carlisle, and contact information is updated routinely for students overseas, on-site staff, partner institutions, and local emergency officials at our program sites, as well as U.S. Consulates and Embassies. Our staff abroad remains in contact with local university and civic officials on an ongoing basis.

Dickinson College has developed emergency plans that can be implemented in the event of a crisis directly affecting any of our programs abroad. In the unlikely event that it became necessary to return students to the United States, every effort would be made to offer alternative means for

students to complete their academic program. For important information about Program Cancellation, see page 6.

Dickinson College is concerned about the health and safety of its students traveling abroad. We review our approach frequently and make every effort to anticipate health and safety issues. This said, it remains true that many of the risks in traveling abroad cannot be reasonably anticipated or prevented.

### **Department of State Announcements:**

Department of State travel information and publications are available on the Web at <http://travel.state.gov>. Every student going abroad is responsible for becoming familiar with the Department of State web site and the information available there.

### **Before leaving, read the Consular Information Sheet for your host country.**

- For your safety, do the same while abroad for all countries you visit.
- Current Travel Warnings and Public Announcements are accessible through the State Department web site.
- The DOS home page links to their Travel Safety Information for Students page, which has good advice and many links, including the fact sheet Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad.

The Center for Global Study and Engagement occasionally sends students Department of State announcements that are relevant to their host country. These announcements are not to alarm students (unless warranted), but instead inform them of current situations in their host country or surrounding countries that they may possibly travel to.

(U.S. travelers may hear recorded information by calling the Department of State in Washington, DC at 202-647-5225 from a touchtone phone.)

### **Parents and the Public Safety number:**

Parents, too, may use the 24-hour Dickinson Public Safety number if they need assistance in contacting their son or daughter after hours in a serious emergency, or if their son or daughter has contacted them because of such an emergency. The procedure would be the same as above.

### **Requests for Contact Information and Itineraries:**

To have emergency contact information at our fingertips, we prepare emergency books for each program. Parents' work and cell phone numbers and email addresses are extremely useful, should we need to contact parents quickly. We therefore ask you to cooperate with our requests for parental contact information. We also need to know student flight itineraries. Our travel agent, Advantage Travel, informs us of group and individual flights they book for Dickinson programs. If you are arranging your own flight, please share your itinerary with us by sending it to [global@dickinson.edu](mailto:global@dickinson.edu).

## **Safe Behavior Abroad**

Travel abroad is always an adventure for students. A common sense approach to the risks involved goes a long way toward assuring safe travel and pleasant memories. We offer the following suggestions for your own safety:

- When you travel on your own during your time abroad, give a copy of your itinerary to your Program Director. Even if your plans are vague, leave whatever information you can, such as the names of travelers, expected destinations, lodging, phone numbers, and if available, mode of travel, and dates of departure and return.
- Check State Department advisories on the web for all countries you will be traveling through to be prepared for any special conditions or dangers, visa requirements, etc.

- Travel with at least one other person.
- Carry your passport, travelers checks, money and other important papers in a pouch around your neck or waist under your clothing.
- Avoid travel in large, predominantly American groups. It is easier to meet local people. It is also easier to organize trips and sightseeing in smaller gatherings. It's also safer.
- Always carry some local currency. Keep the equivalent of at least \$50 cash in reserve while traveling.
- DO NOT HITCHHIKE. Travel by bus, train, local transportation, or car.
- Don't leave money, tickets, your passport, or other valuables in a hotel room while you are out. Take them to the front desk and ask the clerk to place them in a safe.
- Keep a low profile in demeanor and dress. It is wise to adapt to local dress codes; avoid clothes and behaviors that call attention to yourself as a foreigner who doesn't know the culture.
- Leave expensive jewelry at home. It's best to wear little or none.
- Every year backpacks are stolen from students who set them down at their feet or sling them over the back of the chair in a café. Be careful with your belongings because replacing your passport, credit cards, keys, etc., is quite a hassle.
- Be polite, low-key, and sensitive to local customs; always observe signs and regulations in public places.
- Speak the local language wherever possible.
- Student guidebooks such as Let's Go or Lonely Planet are generally a good source of information.

### **In Troubled Times...**

Avoid the following:

- controversial discussions/situations in public places such as pubs
- street gatherings, demonstrations, picketing, etc.
- dangerous areas, shortcuts, narrow alleys, or poorly lit streets
- walking around in a large group speaking English
- heated sports matches and public events characterized by crowd excitement.

In times of heightened political, religious, or ethnic tensions, be particularly careful in:

- identifiable American institutions such as Embassies, American Express, McDonald's, Hard Rock Cafés, lobbies of American chain hotels, discotheques, and other places such as bars and restaurants identified with Americans or where Americans usually gather
- military or diplomatic installations and war memorials
- highly visible and crowded churches, mosques and synagogues
- train stations and airports; do not hang around ticket offices or airline counters – go quickly to your train or the lounges beyond passport control.

Some advice concerning terrorism:

Be especially careful to help maintain security both at your study site and while traveling.

Because terrorist actions are usually preceded by a surveillance period, the U.S. State Department asks all American citizens "to be alert to anyone who might appear to be following them, or anyone whom they notice in the same place repeatedly, or anything unusual near their vehicles, workplaces, or locations frequented by Americans. Any unusual activity of this sort should be reported to local police."

Remember that terrorist attacks are usually planned months in advance. They often involve innocent accomplices. Students in foreign countries are considered easy to recruit. Be

cautious when you meet new people. Do not give your address, your telephone number, or contact info for your study site.

Further recommendations when traveling:

- Do not accept any package, parcel, or suitcase from anyone asking you to carry, look after or store items for them.
- Do not borrow suitcases; make sure that no one has put anything in your luggage. A few years ago, a bomb found at Heathrow Airport in England had been planted in the bag of a young woman by her boyfriend whom she had known for over a year.
- Never drive a car for someone else, especially across national borders.
- Remain alert in public places; look around; get away from any package or bag which appears abandoned, and notify the employees or local police.
- Do not leave your own bags unattended, not only because they may be stolen, but also because the police may consider them dangerous and confiscate or destroy them.

### **Health and Safety information resource online:**

Check out the Student Study Abroad Safety Handbook at <http://www.studentsabroad.com>.

This is a resource intended for students' and parents' direct use. It offers exhaustive checklists and resources covering all kinds of topics related to safety abroad.

### **Personal Safety:**

While abroad, students should always be aware of their surroundings and use common sense. It is easy to fall into a false perception of safety and to let your guard down. Students abroad can be easy targets for crimes involving theft, such as pick pocketing, purse snatching (from a motorized vehicle), theft of unattended backpacks or baggage, and the like. Criminals often operate around bus and train stations as well as tourist attractions (including museums, monuments, schools, subways, beaches, etc.). Safeguard your documents and money at all times! Do not walk home alone late at night. Do not make yourself an easy target. Use the buddy system or call a cab. Also, always keep the local emergency numbers for the police, fire station, and ambulance with you.

### **Emergency Procedures:**

In the case of an emergency affecting the public, please abide by any emergency procedures put in place by your program director.

### **Safety while Traveling:**

If you have an emergency while traveling, contact local authorities and the program director at once. In a medical emergency, be prepared to pay up front and submit receipts to your insurer for reimbursement later. In case of the loss or theft of your passport, contact the local police and the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

### **Family Emergencies:**

Since you will be far away from home for an extended period of time, it is good to discuss with your family what to do in the case of a family emergency while you are overseas. This should include what you would do if a family member becomes ill or dies.

It is important to consider how your family will respond if you are involved in an accident or suffer from a severe illness while abroad. We advise one or both parents to obtain a current passport in case of emergency. This should be done before you depart the U.S.

### **Final Thoughts:**

Observing these mentioned precautions will be reassuring to you and to your parents, relatives, and friends at home. However, being overly concerned with safety should not interfere with the enjoyment of life and study in another country.

# CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

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## Being Informed about the Host Country and World Affairs

What do you know about your host country?

1. Can you name the capital city and the head of state?
2. Can you name the major political parties and what they stand for?
3. How is the government organized in your host country as compared to the U.S.?
4. Name five large cities, identify their location and a feature they are famous for.
5. What are the key historical events of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century in your host country?
6. What are the major religions in your host country and what role do they play?
7. Who are the major literary and/or cultural figures of the last two centuries?
8. What is the state of the economy? What are its problems, successes, and how is it organized?
9. Can you identify on a map the major rivers, mountain ranges, and other significant geographical features?
10. Can you identify on a map the states, provinces, or other political subdivisions of the country?
11. How is the educational system organized and funded?
12. What is the predominant view in your host country regarding current U.S. foreign policy?

Without researching the answers, most of us would do poorly on this little quiz. However, most local people at your study abroad destinations could probably answer most of these questions about U.S. Think about it!

Before you leave, do some serious research to educate yourself about your host country. Travel guidebooks and encyclopedias offer a respectable starting point. Read books, magazine articles, and newspapers about host country history, literature, geography, cuisine, etc. Foreign films are also a good resource. Take the initiative and get acquainted with international students at Dickinson's campus before going abroad.

No matter where you go, you will be asked hard questions about U.S. foreign policy. It is crucial that you have an understanding of what is going on internationally. Read newspapers and magazines that cover international affairs in depth. Include foreign news sources to expose yourself to other perspectives and a different set of facts abroad. The point is: you do not want to arrive abroad poorly informed or be caught off-guard by an encounter with viewpoints sharply different from your own. You especially need to be knowledgeable about the situation in Iraq and the Middle East, and how your host country and the United States stand in relation to those areas. People will have strong opinions and want to engage you in dialogue. Prepare for these situations and recognize their value as learning opportunities.

### **New York Times e-delivery:**

The New York Times runs an email service that provides daily delivery of the International section of the New York Times to your email box! You receive a brief overview of the article and a link that takes you to the full article.

To subscribe to the service, go to <http://www.nytimes.com/>.

Down the left side of the page, there is a MEMBER CENTER, where E-Mail Preferences are listed. You have to "sign-up" with the NYT, which is free. Once you sign up, you can click on a box that says "International" and you will receive an email with headlines from the NYT every day.

Now is the time to prepare for your study abroad learning experience. We urge you to engage in learning about the world now!

## Country Specific Cultural Information

We do not maintain country-specific orientation handbooks for short-term programs; however, cultural information about some program sites is available in the Dickinson program orientation handbooks for all-year/semester programs. If you would like a copy of the orientation handbook for a Dickinson all-year/semester program, please contact The Center for Global Study and Engagement at [global@dickinson.edu](mailto:global@dickinson.edu).

## CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

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### Stranger in a Strange Land...

Students head out into the global village, armed with sensible shoes, sharpened pencils, and bright hopes. They arrive at their destination, settle in, and head out again to discover local charms. They buy a Tube pass. Eat borscht or sushi. All goes well ... a few minor complications ... that begin to pile up ... until suddenly CULTURE SHOCK strikes! and the notion of "Home" gains an unprecedented, intense appeal.

Some form of this experience awaits almost everyone who goes abroad for the first time (and also for the second and every other time to follow). Culture shock is a natural phenomenon, the frustrating, but temporary first step toward the profound personal growth and broadening of horizons that is a central reason for studying abroad. A great deal depends on how you respond to it.

The two articles reprinted in this section are intended to help you navigate the experience of cultural adjustment you will soon face. If you are studying in a non-English speaking country, be sure to read the story of the woman who overcame her fear of using her clumsy beginners' Russian.



# Cultural Adjustment: Responses to Living Abroad

Even though you will be abroad for a relatively short period of time, it is normal to experience some form of culture shock. In order to understand what culture shock is, you need to remember that your ability to function in the world depends on your being able to read hundreds of signs, to respond to subtle cues, and to behave according to countless explicit and implicit rules. At home, much of what you do in your daily life is automatic and requires little thought. Overseas, the reverse is true, and simple tasks can become difficult. Because you are not always able to understand the messages you receive and cannot always communicate what you mean, you may suffer anxieties. When you are confronted with new ways of thinking and acting, including oftentimes a different value system, you can become disoriented. Your 'normal', 'common-sense', or 'logical' way of looking at things suddenly may not apply. Suffering culture shock can, at its worst, lead to severe stress and depression. Even a light case of culture shock will manifest as frustration and irritation.

Culture shock usually manifests itself as a cycle of readjustment phases that may last quite a while before one adapts. Most people experience at least two lows during a stay overseas, but the length and severity of these vary greatly for each individual. Fortunately, culture shock is both predictable (it will happen) and manageable (you will survive it). If you are prepared for it, you can do a great deal to control it or at least understand its effect. The best advice may be to remain flexible and open-minded to new things, maintain a sense of humor about the mistakes you will make (and you will make some), and try to integrate as quickly as possible into your new culture. Whatever happens, the program director is available to help you through rough periods. We encourage students to talk to the program director when they meet problems and not to wait until the problem gets bigger and more complicated.

## **Our Advice:**

Soon after arriving, you will undoubtedly confront the temptation to withdraw into the American group. Work hard to resist this crutch. Extreme dependence on the American group will limit ties and friendships outside your immediate circle. You should make a genuine and constant effort to penetrate and become part of the host culture. Opportunities are there from the moment you arrive, but you must take the first step and probably the second and third.

Beware of cultural stereotypes! They can operate against you, as well as against the culture you are living in. Stereotypes are destructive because they can interfere with getting to know the local people and prevent you from getting to the rich reality behind the surface.

Avoid making negative comparisons with how you do things or what you have in the U.S. It can be a challenge to understand why things are done differently, but try to be patient and figure out what the difference is and why. Remember, you are not going abroad just to find the same things that exist here in the States. Beware of ethnocentrism, the attitude of superiority of one group over another. We tend to think our culture and society is the most important, worthy, and civilized in the world, and you may be surprised to find that others do not share our view.

What can you do to survive with grace? Re-organize and learn to budget your time. Keep a journal for future reference. Be patient; you will not learn the language perfectly or make friends in the first two weeks after arrival. Accept that you cannot become totally submerged in host culture. Be proud, although not intrusively so, of being an American. You will unavoidably carry your American cultural background with you. Accept that wherever you are is the center of the world for the people who live there. Behave as a guest, and show the inhabitants that you feel lucky to be there, in the center of their world.

And most importantly, remember that early disorientation is normal, healthy, and OK!

# KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR TIME ABROAD

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## **Keeping a Journal:**

You are about to embark on a journey where you will be a foreigner. As you interact with the people and customs of your new surroundings, your views of yourself and some of your most cherished values will be challenged and undergo subtle changes.

One of the best tools for gaining insight into these changes is to keep a journal. There you can reflect on the puzzling and wonderful things you have seen, experienced, and overheard that sticks in your mind. A custom that appears strange at first will often become understood as you continue to observe it in its own context. Writing down incidents, thoughts, questions, ideas, and reflections will help give depth and insight to your experience and can also be therapeutic. A journal can be especially helpful when traveling because it will be easier to remember the amazing places you visited – and a great reminder of your time abroad when friends and family ask about your semester.

It is always a challenge to put this experience into words, but make a start and stick with it. Go beyond the mere recording of incidents to recording your feelings and conjectures. Why did that comment sting? Why did people react so strangely to my shirt, or smile, or joke? You will see sights that strike you as barely imaginable back home. What does that say about the host culture? What does it say about your own? A month later you may see things differently and you should write that down too. Record stories or poems you are inspired to write, etc. The journal will capture your thoughts at a specific moment. Years later the journal will be a treasure. Keep a journal, you will not regret it!

## **Taking Pictures:**

Some people may not be particularly fond of writing or just can't find the time to keep a journal regularly. Keeping a camera close at hand is another great way to document all the memories you will make while abroad. Also, upon returning to campus, there will be a photo contest for returned studied abroad students during which your photos will be displayed and eligible for prizes. More details about the photo contest will be sent out upon your return from studying abroad.

## **Dickinson Study Abroad Blog:**

Dickinson College has a blog for students participating in study abroad programs. You may want to consider keeping a journal on the blog and to share your experiences and insights with your friends or other students interested in going on your program. It also serves as a good tool to keep you connected with Dickinson students studying at different locations and to exchange information. You can find the blog at <http://blogs.dickinson.edu/abroad/> If you're interested, send an email to Todd Bryant at [bryantt@dickinson.edu](mailto:bryantt@dickinson.edu). He will create your blog and send you the basic instructions to get started.

**Appendix I: Accident and Health Insurance**

**Appendix II: Health Issues While Traveling**

**Appendix III: Student Agreement Form**

**Appendix IV: Refund Policy for Overseas Programs**

## APPENDIX I: ACCIDENT AND HEALTH INSURANCE

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Dickinson students are covered by a global medical and medical evacuation policy, currently provided by Arch insurance and paid for by Dickinson College. This policy is secondary coverage and only applies if your personal health insurance does not apply overseas. While it satisfies the minimum requirement for health and accident insurance for our students on overseas programs, you are advised to examine the policy to see if the coverage meets your specific needs.

Like Dickinson students, guest students attending Dickinson programs from other colleges and universities must also have health insurance coverage. Non-Dickinson students **are not** provided this coverage.

Questions: Please contact Tim Cummons at: [Dickinson@rcmd.com](mailto:Dickinson@rcmd.com).

## APPENDIX II: HEALTH ISSUES WHILE TRAVELING

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### HEALTH ISSUES WHILE TRAVELING

#### *Travel Clinics*

Carlisle Travel Clinic Carlisle Internal Medicine 11 Sprint Drive, Suite C Carlisle, PA 17015 Phone: 717-245-9765	Holy Spirit Travel Health Program Holy Spirit Hospital 503 North 21 <sup>st</sup> Street Camp Hill, PA 17011 Phone: 717-972-4351	Hershey Medical Center Clinic Phone: 717-972-4222 Phone: 1-800-243-1455
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**Internet Resources:** <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm><http://www.travelhealth.com>

#### *Prior to traveling*

Check the CDC web site to get information on the country you are going to. Read about any epidemics or outbreak in progress. Read about water and food precautions. The CDC site will also give you the immunizations you need to be up to date along with any additional vaccinations needed for that specific country. Some vaccinations need to be given weeks before departure, so don't wait, make an appointment as soon as you know where you will be going, so that any needed vaccines may be given in the appropriate time frame.

#### *Immunization*

All the following immunizations should be up to date:

- Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)
- Tetanus and Diphtheria (Td) - within the past 10 years or 5 years if you will be doing work outside around soil or potentially rusted material
- Hepatitis B (series of three shots)
- Polio

For persons who have received a complete series of polio vaccine, an additional single dose of vaccine should be received by persons 18 years of age and older traveling to the developing countries of Africa, Asia (East and Southeast), and Middle East, and the Indian subcontinent, and the majority of the new independent states of the former Soviet Union.

Additional immunizations are recommended for those over 65 or anyone at high risk such as asthmatics, or immuno-compromised people (HIV, long-term steroid use due to organ transplant, chemotherapy treatments, etc.). They are:

- Influenza (flu) vaccine (seasonal and H1N1)
- Pneumococcal vaccine

#### *Malaria*

Medication for Malaria must be taken before, during and after your trip to be effective.  
Expose as little skin as possible during your trip to areas where malaria is prevalent.

**\*\*THERE MAY BE ADDITIONAL VACCINES THAT ARE SITE SPECIFIC, SO CHECK THE CDC WEB SITE\*\***

#### *Medications*

If you are taking prescription medication you should keep the medication in its original container from the pharmacy which will have your name, the medication name, dose, and the name of the health care practitioner who prescribed the medication. Do not transfer any medication into any unmarked container. You should also have a written letter or prescription from your physician also verifying this medication was prescribed by a license practitioner and is necessary for medical reasons. You should calculate the amount of medication you will need while you are away, and bring enough so you do not run out.

#### *Food and Water*

The number one cause of illness in travelers is from food and waterborne diseases. Diseases from food and water can cause diarrhea, vomiting, fever and liver disease (hepatitis). Tips on how to stay healthy when abroad can be found on the CDC site.

Some suggestions include:

- Drink only bottled water, boiled water or carbonated drinks in cans or bottles
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself
- Don't eat food purchased from street vendors
- Don't drink beverages with ice
- Don't eat dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized
- Don't handle animals especially monkeys, dogs, and cats
- Don't brush your teeth with tap water

#### Items to take on your program

- Over the counter anti-diarrhea medicines such as Pepto-Bismol, or Imodium. Stronger prescription medications may make your condition worse.
- Iodine tablets and water filters to purify water
- Sunblock, sunglasses, hat

#### Common Sense

- Automobile accidents account for fifty percent of fatalities and medical evacuations
- Wear seat belts
- Don't drive OR SWIM drunk
- Do not walk on dark roadways at night
- Look both ways several times before crossing the street. Many countries drive on the opposite side of the road from the US, and students have been hit because they look one way only due to habit, and step into the path of an oncoming car.

#### Other Points

- Make sure you will have health insurance while abroad. Call your insurance carrier to find out procedure for obtaining care while outside the U.S., and get it in writing.
- Diabetics need to know country's regulations on needles.
- TB screening after returning is a good idea. This can be done at the Health Center.
- Certain countries require HIV testing prior to entry.
- Some antibiotics may cause oral contraceptives to be less effective. Always use a backup method if you have to be on an antibiotic.
- Emergency contraception (ECP) and birth control pills may be illegal in some Islamic countries. If the country allows it and there is even a remote possibility you will be sexually active, women should take ECP's with them. Please call the Health Center to ask about this.
- In Tropical areas don't walk around barefoot. Spray yourself and cloths with DEET or similar anti-bug spray, and cover skin completely with clothes. Wear hat.

# APPENDIX III: Student Agreement Form

## STUDENT AGREEMENT

In consideration of my selection for participation in a Dickinson College Study Abroad and/or Domestic Off-Campus Program, I hereby agree to the following conditions of responsibility:

1. I acknowledge that the Dickinson College study abroad and domestic off-campus programs represent the broad values of liberal education and bonds between cultures. As a guest in a host country or with a host family, I will strive to understand and respect norms of conduct and patterns of the host culture. I agree to represent the College responsibly and to abide by dress and cultural codes suitable to the cultures visited.
2. I agree to abide by all policies and regulations of the host institution/Program and/or the regulations of the Dickinson Center I may be attending. I understand that as a participant in a study abroad or domestic off-campus program I remain enrolled at the College and will continue to abide by all College policies, rules or regulations outlined in the *Student Handbook*. I understand that the College has the right to, and will, withdraw me from the program at any time if, in the judgment of the Associate Provost of the Center for Global Study and Engagement, on the advice of the Program Director, I have violated such policies, rules or regulations or have engaged in disruptive behavior, academic infractions, or conduct which could bring the program into disrepute or disrupt the operation of the program. I agree, specifically, that I will have no involvement with illegal drugs, will not engage in illegal or abusive use of alcohol, and will participate in all classes and scheduled activities. I agree further that a decision to withdraw me from the program is final and that I am not entitled to any refund.
3. I further agree that the College may withdraw me from the program and send me home at any time during the program at my expense if the College determines that my continued participation in the program will adversely affect my health, safety or welfare, or the health, safety, welfare or enjoyment of the program by others. I agree further that a decision to withdraw me from the program is final and that I am not entitled to any refund.
4. I understand that the procedures outlined in this section for dealing with discipline and well-being are different than those outlined in the *Student Handbook*, and I agree that the procedures outlined in this agreement shall apply while I am a participant in a study abroad or domestic off-campus program. Further, I understand that a determination made by the Associate Provost of Global Education may be the basis for further disciplinary action by the College, in addition to causing my withdrawal from the program.
5. I understand and agree that in order to be assessed and receive credit for academic work completed while studying off campus, I must participate fully in the program. I also recognize that I am expected to complete the entire program and may forfeit credit should I choose to arrive after the program begins or leave the program early without the prior consent of the Program Director, the host institution, and the Center for Global Study and Engagement.
6. I agree to indemnify and hold the College harmless from and against all claims and actions for property damage or personal injury sustained by me or any other person or entity, which arise out of my participation in the program, including but not limited to, violations of the policies and regulations of the host institution, violations of the policies, rules and regulations of Dickinson College, violations of law, and/or which are due to my sole or concurrent negligence with the College.

7. I, on behalf of myself, my heirs and personal representatives, hereby release Dickinson College and any cooperating institution and each of their officers, employees, successors and agents from any and all claims and causes of action for inconvenience, damage to or loss of property, medical or hospital care, personal illness or injury or death arising out of my participation in the study abroad program and/or travel or activity conducted by or under the control of Dickinson College or any cooperating institution.

8. I understand and acknowledge that there are risks and delays common to travel abroad and that there may be special health risks associated with living and studying in the country or area I have chosen. I understand that I have a responsibility to exercise due caution in my behavior while in the program and agree further that I am personally responsible for obtaining adequate health insurance, health information, instruction, immunizations, and prophylactic medications appropriate to my study abroad program.

9. I have read and understand the refund policies of Dickinson College as outlined in the program orientation handbook published by the Center for Global Study and Engagement, and I understand that the application fee and confirmation payments are non-refundable.

10. I understand and agree that I will provide all completed materials, forms, and payments by the due dates specified and recognize that failure to do this may result in either added costs or in my being withdrawn from the program. Further, I have read or will read and understand all general information provided on this program by the Center for Global Study and Engagement, and will attend and participate in all orientation meetings and other pre-departure briefings.

11. This agreement shall be construed in accordance with the substantive laws of Pennsylvania without regard for its conflicts of laws provisions. The Courts of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Cumberland County or the United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any issue or dispute arising under or out of this agreement. Still further, each of the undersigned individuals hereby consents and submits to the personal jurisdiction of the courts set forth in this provision and waivers any challenge to the venue or jurisdiction of such courts over them.

12. I grant permission to the Center for Global Study and Engagement to request on my behalf an official or unofficial transcript from the Registrar's Office at Dickinson College for the purpose of reviewing my GPA or to send the transcript directly to the institution to which I am applying. If I am from another school or have a transcript through another school, it is my responsibility to request a transcript with current information to be sent to the Center of Global Study and Engagement.

13. I grant permission to the Center for Global Study and Engagement to release my name and contact information to fellow program participants and to future students interested in applying to study off-campus.

14. In the event of a medical or mental health care situation while I am abroad, I give Dickinson my permission to contact and consult with any or all of the health care professionals I list on the Medical Background questionnaire, that will be requested of me after I have been accepted, without further consent in order to assess my ongoing ability to participate successfully in the program.

I have read and agree to the above:

Participant signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX IV: Refund Policy: Early Withdrawal/Cancellation**

### **Refund Policy for Early Withdrawal for Dickinson College Short Term Programs Administered by the Center for Global Study and Engagement**

A student's date of withdrawal is determined by either:

- 1) The date the student notifies the Center for Global Study and Engagement in writing of his/her decision to withdraw, or
- 2) The date the student is officially dismissed from the program

A student who withdraws **prior to the 45<sup>th</sup> day before the start of the program** will receive a 100% refund, less the non-refundable confirmation payment.

A student who withdraws **on or after the 45<sup>th</sup> day before the start of the program** will receive an 80% refund of the program fee less the non-refundable confirmation payment.

A student that withdraws after the program starts will forfeit 100% of the Program Fee.

#### **Financial Aid Refunds**

For students receiving Financial Aid, the financial aid refund rules apply as stated in the Dickinson College Bulletin under the Dickinson College Refund Policy. It is important to understand that, since the financial aid refund and the refund to the student's account are calculated using different methods, the refund to the student account may not fully cover the required refund to the financial aid programs, and the student may end up owing funds to the college after the refund to the financial aid programs has been made.

### **Refund Policy for Emergency Cancellation Dickinson College Semester/Academic Year Programs Dickinson College Short term Overseas Programs Administered by the Center for Global Study and Engagement**

All decisions concerning the cancellation (or required modification) of a College program will be made by the Center for Global Study and Engagement in consultation with responsible authorities on campus and overseas. These decisions will be based on, but not limited to, State Department warnings. In the unlikely event of an emergency program cancellation, every effort will be made to accommodate the academic needs of program participants by offering an alternative to enable students to complete their course work. For example, one possible alternative for Semester/Academic Year programs would be to offer suitable coursework on-campus during the summer.

Students whose program is cancelled prior to the begin date will receive a full refund of the Program Fee, including the confirmation payment.

If a program is cancelled after it starts and an alternative for credit completion is offered, no refund will be given.

If a program is cancelled after it starts and an alternative credit completion is NOT offered, the student will receive a full refund including the confirmation payment.