Quick Reference Page

Study Abroad Deadlines:
Fall semester programs — March 15
Spring semester programs — Oct. 1
Summer programs — Feb. 1

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www.facebook.com/pages/Niagara-University-Study-Abroad/184889804877039

Our office is located in the lower-level of the Gallagher Center, suite 113A.
Come visit us!
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The Study Abroad Program at Niagara University

Requirements for Study Abroad

• Students should have a 3.0 or better. Some programs will accept students with a 2.5; however, acceptance will be at the discretion of the study-abroad selection committee. Exceptions may be made when supported by additional recommendations.

• Students must have two faculty or staff references. The references must support the student’s request to study abroad.

• Students must sign a release to allow the dean of student affairs to release their conduct record to the study-abroad selection committee. If their conduct record demonstrates behaviors that could cause the university embarrassment or put the student in jeopardy, their request may be denied.

• Students should review the study abroad website to find programs that offer courses that are acceptable for their degree.

• Students make an appointment with the study abroad coordinator by calling Rhonda Shiah, 716.286.8360 and they should bring a copy of their curriculum card to their appointment.

Permission to study abroad is at the discretion of the university. It is a privilege, not a right.

Study Abroad Vision
Study abroad prepares students for positions of responsibility in the professions and in the broader society by developing critical thinking skills, communication skills and the ability to work with diverse populations. The experience fosters a strong ethical and values foundation, enhancing their search for truth in meaning and inspiring them to have respect for the God-given dignity of every person and all faith traditions. An experience studying in another country develops the whole person — mind, body, heart and soul — for the benefit of one’s personal and professional life.

Study Abroad Goals

• Students will develop increased understanding of their discipline from a global perspective.

• Students will develop increased awareness, understanding and appreciation of diversity.

• Students will develop increased understanding of themselves and their place as world citizens.

Code of Conduct
Niagara University students are expected to behave responsibly, to exercise good judgment, to respect the rights and feelings of others, and to consider the laws, customs and manners of the host country. Drug laws overseas are very harsh. Should you be arrested for suspicion of drug possession, the United States Embassy can only notify your parents and make sure you get a fair trial — it cannot guarantee that you will be acquitted.

Niagara University does not provide legal counsel to students arrested while studying abroad. If you are arrested overseas, a consular official attempts to visit you in jail, provides you with a list of attorneys, and clarifies your legal rights. The United States Department of State usually maintains contact with you and local authorities to determine how you are being treated and to make sure the process of making legal charges is not delayed unnecessarily. Any student may be required to withdraw from the program abroad or to vacate a dormitory if, in the opinion of the campus director and rules committee, the student has shown an unwillingness or inability to maintain academic or general standards of conduct. The student may appeal to the host university president or program director. Their decision is final. If a student is expelled or asked to vacate a dormitory, they must return to the United States immediately at their own expense. Students will also be responsible for any damages attributed to them by the authorities of host and may also face sanctions at Niagara University. You are ambassadors for Niagara University and guests in your host country.
Section One:
Pre-Departure
Study Abroad Checklist

6-9 Months Ahead
- Understand program costs and arrange for financial aid and/or scholarships [Page 16-17]
- Apply for or renew your passport [Page 8]
  http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html
- Check on visa requirements for your host country [Page 8]
  http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html
- Make sure you maintain required G.P.A. and eligible status

3-6 Months Ahead
- Get course selections approved
- Make flight arrangements to your host country, recommended purchase travel insurance.
  You may wish to wait until you have your visa. [Page 18]
- Confirm that you have submitted all necessary enrollment forms and program documentation as well as accommodation applications.
- Confirm that your financial aid will be disbursed appropriately.
- Look up local news online for your study abroad country.

1-2 Months Ahead
- Notify your current housing of when you will be leaving and confirm where you will live when you return to campus after studying abroad [Page 15]
- Attend pre-departure orientation.
- Make sure you have a suggested packing list for your program, including culturally appropriate clothing and household items you may need [Page 20-22]
- Look up local news online for the country you will be studying in
- Make sure you have a credit card and debit card which can be utilized overseas, contact your financial institutions and inform them that you will be out of the country for an extended time [Page 16-17]
- Learn about cultural transition adjustment http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/
- Fill out a change of address form and have current mail forwarded to permanent address in the United States https://moversguide.usps.com
- Fill out absentee voter registration
- Refill prescriptions and purchase any over-the-counter health and hygiene products that may not be available in your host country (check with your program to make sure they are legal)
- Obtain written authorization from your physician for any prescriptions, and refills for prescribed medications.
- Explore options/costs for using phone service to and from your host country [Page 30]
- Register your travel plans with Niagara’s Travel Itinerary and the United States State Department https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrui/
1 Week Ahead

- Make several photocopies of all important documents (passport, credit and debit cards front and back, travel itineraries), tickets, and travel passes (leave one copy with responsible family member and pack one copy for yourself separate from your carry-on items)
- Prepare a small travel file to hold your important documents: passport, plane ticket, insurance, emergency contact numbers, name and phone number of program coordinator, and address of school or living arrangements
- Make sure you know your airline luggage and carry-on restrictions
- After packing, walk in and out of the house three times with all your luggage to make sure you can handle your luggage on your own (if you cannot- you have packed too much) Weigh your luggage to make sure you’re not charged fees for excess weight.
- Re-confirm airline and arrival transportation arrangements
- Compile a list of emergency, program and friend contacts (phone numbers, email, and mailing address)
- Check the local weather of your host city to make sure you dress appropriate for the weather
- Look up local news online for your host country

Departure Day

- Make sure you have appropriately sized carry-on items, void of liquids and prohibited carry-on items [Page 20-22]
- Carry on necessities: passport, airline ticket/e-ticket confirmation, emergency contact information, address and phone number for destination, prescription medication, one change of clothes, toothbrush/travel toothpaste, credit card, at least $200 in cash (of host country)
- Arrive at the airport at least TWO HOURS before your scheduled departure time
You will need to obtain the following documents before you go abroad:

1. **Valid United States Passport.** If you already have your passport, be sure to check the expiration date. Some countries require that passports be valid for six months or longer beyond the date of your trip.

   **To obtain a passport:**
   - Complete an application form [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)
   - Locations near Niagara University’s campus include:
     - Niagara University Post Office (on campus) 716.286.8070
     - Niagara Falls Post Office, 615 Main St., 716.285.7561
     - Lewiston Post Office, 150 S. 8th St., 716.754.8000
   - To find the nearest passport issuing office, visit [www.usps.com/passport](http://www.usps.com/passport)
   - Bring a passport photo (not machine type). CVS in Lewiston takes digital photos for this purpose. You may need additional photos for other purposes, including the international student ID card. Other photo providers include Rite-Aid, AAA and Walgreens.
   - You’ll need your birth certificate (with seal) and a second I.D. (i.e.: driver’s license, NU student ID card). Original birth certificate will be mailed in with your application and returned to you with your completed application. Once you have a passport, guard it. Make a photocopy of the entire passport and carry the copy in a carry-on case, purse, or inside pocket. If you lose your passport while abroad, immediately contact the United States consulate or embassy and your host institution.
• Apply for your passport as early as possible, since there are sometimes processing times as long as 14 weeks.
• For more information, visit http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

2. Visa. In France, Ireland, Italy or Spain, a Visa is not required for stays up to 90 days. In the United Kingdom, a Visa is not required for stays up to six months. In Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa, Visas are required even for a short visit. http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html
• Many countries require you to go to New York City for an interview before obtaining a visa so you will need to plan well in advance, however you need your letter of acceptance for the program before applying for your visa. You will need to make an appointment to visit the consulate, so contact them a few months before to schedule.

3. International Student I.D. Card: Your international student I.D. card will enable you to obtain discounts and insurance benefits on certain travel situation. This card is provided by the study abroad office, all you need to do is simply bring in your completed, signed ISIC application to the study abroad office. Coverage is valid for Canadian students as long as the ISIC is purchased in the United States. The cost is $22 and we will bill your Niagara University account.

6. Insurance and Liability: Health insurance is absolutely necessary. Some study abroad programs provide limited health insurance. But it is best to check your health insurance policy and make sure that it covers illness and hospitalization abroad. If not, obtain application forms for health insurance abroad from the study abroad adviser. (This policy is very reasonably priced.) Carry claim forms with you while you are abroad so doctors or hospitals can complete them as necessary. Also, bring blank claim forms for your parent’s homeowner’s insurance and auto liability policies to expedite matters. If you are ill, contact the program coordinator immediately to help you obtain medical assistance. Always take your program contact numbers with you so you can call them if you need medical assistance when you travel. If you are off site, please refer to the International Association for medical Assistance to Travellers, www.iamat.org.

7. Power of Attorney. Before you leave, designate a parent or trusted individual to take care of legal and financial matters while you are away, such as allowing them to sign documents, take care of banking, and make legal decisions on your behalf.
• It must be in writing, signed by you, and notarized by a notary public. The power of attorney must state the names of you and your attorney-in-fact. You should also include a date effective and a date of expiration in the document. Niagara University has a notary on campus in available in Alumni Hall free of charge.

Make sure to make several copies of the following documents before you leave. Make two copies of each document so you have one set and your parents or trusted individual have the other. When traveling, do not store your real documents in the same place as your copies.

- Passport (Page with your picture and passport number)
- Visa (Page in the passport affixed with visa)
- ISIC Card, Driver’s License, other ID cards
- Copy of any ATM or Credit Cards (front and back)
- Any important documents from your host institution
- Power of Authority notarized letter
- Health Insurance Information
Financial Aid

Do not assume that Study Abroad is too expensive for you!

Statement of Policy at Niagara University
1. Students must apply for financial aid by completing the appropriate financial aid application forms in a timely fashion.

2. There are two types of Study Abroad Programs with which financial aid may be concerned:
   1. Niagara University affiliated program, for which NU credit is given.
      • Students enrolled in a Niagara University-affiliated program may be eligible for institutional, federal and NY State aid.
   2. Other programs, which are approved for transfer credit.
      • Students enrolled in these programs are NOT eligible for institutional aid, but may be eligible for federal and NY State aid.

3. Students who receive Niagara University scholarships, grants or tuition remissions will have their institutional aid eligibility limited to the difference between Niagara University charges and the direct cash payment by Niagara University to the study abroad program.

4. Students who are recipients of Niagara University Athletic Scholarships must first obtain approval from the Athletic Director to avoid conflicts between athletic scholarship obligations and the semester abroad.

Reference to this policy statement is made in the Niagara University Undergraduate Catalogue.

You must make an appointment to meet with a financial aid adviser once you have decided upon a program.

Tips from the Student Accounts Office:
1. Have someone appointed that can act as your agent should you need something while away. Have a Power of Attorney completed and notarized. You do not have to pay anyone to complete one, just type up a letter designating someone to act on your behalf, have the letter notarized. Make sure that person knows where you keep things in case they need to access something for you. (We have notaries on campus should you need one.)
2. Complete your FERPA information designating someone in case there are questions concerning your account. We can only talk to the people you have designated.

3. Make sure you have bills paid in advance, or set up online payments. Put a note on the check you are paying in advance. If you receive new cards with a new expiration date do not forget to call and notify any automatic payments accounts, or the payment will be declined and you could receive a late fee.

**Useful Resources:**

“Myths and Realities of Financing Study Abroad”
http://www.nafsa.org/students.sec/financial_aid_for_study/myths_and_realities_of/

“Financial Aid for Study Abroad: An Undergraduate Student's Resource”
http://www.nafsa.org/students.sec/financial_aid_for_study/

**Scholarships**

**Major Scholarship Deadlines for Niagara University:**
- Boren Scholarship: Jan. 27
- Fulbright Scholarships: Jan. 18
- Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship: Feb. 15
- Marshall Scholarship: Sept. 17

**Scholarship Listing:**
A good resource to start looking for scholarships for study abroad is: Institute of International Education Passport Scholarship Listing. www.studyabroadfunding.org With this website you are able to get a scholarship listing by country or field of study. You should do this at least one year in advance.

**American Association of University Women**
www.aauw.org/learn/fellowships_grants
The largest source of funding exclusively for graduate women in the world supports aspiring scholars around the globe, teachers and activists in local communities, women at critical stages of their careers, and those pursuing professions where women are underrepresented.

**Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship**
www.iie.org/en/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program
The Gilman Scholarship Program offers awards for undergraduate study abroad and was established by the International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000. This scholarship provides awards for United States undergraduate students who are receiving Federal Pell Grant funding at a two-year or four-year college or university to participate in study abroad programs worldwide.

**Bridging Scholarship for Japan**
www.aatj.org/atj/studyabroad/scholarships.html
The Association of Teachers of Japanese Bridging awards 100 scholarships annually for American students participating in study abroad programs in Japan.

**British Council**
www.educationuk.org
Funding and scholarship information for study in the United Kingdom.
Center for Cross Cultural Study
www.cccs.com
The Center for Cross-Cultural Study Scholarship Program is open to all students enrolled in our programs in Seville and Havana. We now offer $2,500 and $1,000 awards to our semester and academic-year students and $500 awards to our January term and summer students. Recipients of all awards are chosen based on the submission of the following: an original essay in Spanish; a short essay in English; and a faculty recommendation. All students are encouraged to apply.

CC-CS Alumni Scholar Fund
www.cccs.com
Provides former students with grants to be applied toward another study-abroad experience with CC-CS.

CCIS Scholarship Program
www.ccisabroad.org
Students are nominated by their study abroad advisor, and the applications are reviewed by a Scholarship Review Committee. The amounts awarded for scholarships are $1000 fall/spring and $500 summer. See your study abroad advisor for more information.

CIEE Scholarships
www.ciee.org/study/scholarships
A biannual competition with four different scholarships available to students traveling to Third World countries.

Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals
www.cdsintl.org/fellowshipsabroad/cbyx.php
A 12-month stay in Germany that includes two months of language training, four months professional training in a specific field, and a five-month internship. Living arrangements are with a German family.

DAAD- German Academic Exchange Service
www.daad.org/?p=47220
The educational undergraduate scholarship is a flexible scholarship program which offers short-term scholarships for participation in summer study abroad, internships, senior thesis research or summer courses at German universities, and long-term scholarships for semester or year study abroad.

Fastweb
www.fastweb.com
A very popular American college scholarship database. Registration required (no fee).

FinAid
www.finaid.org
Freeman Awards for Study in Asia
www.iie.org/programs/Freeman-ASIA
For study in Eastern and Southeast Asia. Award ranges from $3,000 to $7,000 depending on length of time for study.

Fulbright Scholarships
www.iie.org/Fulbright
For both Americans going abroad and incoming foreign students. Grants are made to citizens of participating countries, primarily for: university teaching, advanced research, graduate study and teaching in elementary and secondary schools.

GrantsNet
http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/previous_issues/articles/2008_08_08/noDOI.17874891371734369206
Funding opportunities for training in the biological and medical sciences.
**Institute of Turkish Studies (ITS)**
[www.turkishstudies.org](http://www.turkishstudies.org)
Founded and Incorporated in the District of Columbia in 1982 and currently located at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service of Georgetown University, ITS is the only nonprofit, private educational foundation in the United States that supports the development of Turkish studies in American higher education.

**Institute of International Education Passport Scholarship Listing Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development International Education Financial Aid**
[www.educoas.org](http://www.educoas.org)
EFA is the premier Internet resource for financial aid information for students wishing to study in a foreign country.

**Kakos Study Abroad Memorial Scholarship**
Available to full-time Niagara University students who possess a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA. Applicants from all majors may apply through the study abroad office. A recommendation from their department is required. Awards vary based on need.

**Marshall Scholarship**
[www.marshallscholarship.org](http://www.marshallscholarship.org)
A national competition for studies in England only. Administered by the liberal arts dean's office.

**Monbusho Scholarship**
[www.monbusho.org](http://www.monbusho.org)
Requires a language exam and interview for study abroad in Japan. Junior and seniors only may apply.

**NAFSA Grants and Scholarships**
Including ASEAN Student Assistance Awards Program Program (ASAAP), Korean Student Assistance Awards Program (KSAAP) and Rhys Glynn-Jones Memorial South Pacific Scholarship Program).

**National Italian American Foundation**
[www.niaf.org/scholarships/about.asp](http://www.niaf.org/scholarships/about.asp)
$2,500 to $10,000 merit based scholarships to any student majoring or minoring in Italian language, Italian studies, Italian American studies or a related field, or of Italian descent.

**National Security Education Program (NSEP)**
[www.nsep.gov](http://www.nsep.gov)
Offers undergraduate scholarships to United States citizens up to $16,000 for summer, semester or academic study abroad. See study abroad coordinator.

**NSEP David L. Boren Graduate Fellowships**
[www.borenawards.org/boren_fellowship](http://www.borenawards.org/boren_fellowship)
Available to applicants traveling to anywhere other than Western Europe, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Maximum award is $10,000 per semester for two semesters.

**Rotary Scholarships**
Local clubs of Rotary International offer awards for three-month, six-month, or multiple-year study. The application deadline is approximately 18 months prior to the award. The Ambassadorial Scholarships Program of the Rotary Foundation is the world's largest privately funded international scholarships program.
Social Science Research Foundation
www.ssrc.org/fellowships

Provides pre-dissertation and dissertation fellowships, postdoctoral fellowships, and advanced research grants in both the social sciences and humanities.

StudentAwards.com
At Student Awards, high school, college, and university students can search from thousands of unique scholarships, bursaries, grants, and other forms of financial assistance. It’s free, private and personalized.

StudyAbroad.com
UNESCO Laura W. Bush Fellowship
www.state.gov/p/io/unesco/programs/143138.htm
The United States National commission for UNESCO Laura W. Bush Traveling Fellowship offers funding for students who wish to undertake a short-term (4-6 week) independent project abroad.

United States Department of Education
http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp
The most comprehensive resource on student financial aid from the United States Department of Education. Grants, loans, and work-study are the three major forms of student financial aid available through the department's student financial assistance office.

Course Advisement

Steps for Signing up for Study Abroad Courses
1. Meet with your advisor to discuss what courses are appropriate to your degree while abroad.
2. Depending on which study abroad program you choose, the process of selecting your courses can vary. Contact the study abroad office for additional details.
3. Fill out course advisement form and have it approved by your adviser and assistant dean.
4. Turn all documents in to the Study Abroad Office.

Steps for Signing up for Courses at Niagara University for the Semester You Return
1. Review courses for your first semester back with your academic advisor before departure. (A copy of your curriculum can be found at www.niagara.edu/programs-by-college)
2. Check course offerings for the upcoming semester. The course offerings can be found at www.niagara.edu/courses/
3. Continue to check your NU email from abroad to be informed of registration dates and details
4. Email your academic adviser before your registration date to have him/her unlock your account for registration via WebAdvisor.
5. Register for classes on registration date, take time difference into consideration!
Housing

Withdrawal from Housing:

- Students in residence who plan to study abroad need to officially withdraw from housing a month or so before they leave.
- Withdrawal forms need to be completed in the residence life office (noting study abroad as the reason)
- Plan a checkout date with your community adviser, so they can properly check you out.

Registering for Housing from Abroad for the Spring Semester:

- If you are abroad in the fall semester and would like housing for the spring semester, you need to notify the residence office in November by letter or email (residencelife@niagara.edu).
- Simply let them know you need a room, and include a list of preferences for residence halls, type of room and roommate if known.
- Placement is based on space availability, but all efforts are made to accommodate any request. Most accommodations require a deposit.

Registering for Housing from Abroad for the Fall Semester:

- If studying abroad in the spring semester, you will need to appoint someone to go through the room selection for you to choose your room for the fall semester.
• This appointee would also need a signed letter from you authorizing him/her to act for you during room selection.

• Payment may be made online and you must print the room deposit receipt to include with the housing application card and authorization letter for your designee to present at room selection in order to be permitted to choose a room for you. The process is the same for apartment selection, if desired.

Refer to the “Living Abroad” page (page 28) for advice for living with a host family.

Money Considerations

1. Cash
Before leaving the United States you should have a small amount of foreign currency for immediate expenses upon arrival (i.e. bus, taxis, tips, etc.). Make a request from your bank and allow a few days to process or the currency exchange at the Factory Outlet Mall, Niagara Falls, N.Y.

2. Debit Cards
American ATM cards can be used at most European bank machines. If you have an ATM card, you can draw from your United States checking account directly in the foreign currency 24 hours a day, thereby getting the best exchange rate and avoiding any third-party processing fees. But be aware, the keypads at many European ATM machines have only numbers, no letters, so if your pin-code is alphabetic, make sure you know its numerical equivalent! Be sure to check with your bank regarding fees for international use of the ATM. Fees vary by bank and by ATM. However, keep in mind that debit cards are not covered by the federal regulations that protect consumers in disputes with merchants. Also, if you lose your debit card, it could deplete your checking account balance and overdraft protection. Keep a copy of your debit card with someone you trust, that way you will have your card number if your card is lost or stolen. Be sure to alert your ATM card holder that you will be out of the country!

3. Credit Cards
MasterCard and VISA cards are very useful. VISA is the most accepted credit card overseas. If you have an American Express card, you can cash personal checks at American Express offices abroad. Also, if you open a bank account upon arrival in the country, you can cash personal checks at that bank and transfer money from the United States to that account. Call your credit card provider before you leave to let it know you’ll be out of the country so it does not freeze your account while it verifies the activity. Many credit card issuers allow card holders to make notes about upcoming foreign travel online. This avoids the need to wait on hold. Always travel with at least two different cards (both a debit card and a credit card are recommended). More and more European restaurants, hotels and stores are only accepting smart chip cards rather than our magnetic-strip card that we have in the United States. Sascha Segan from Frommer’s Travel makes these recommendations:
• Get a four-digit PIN number from your credit cards’ issuing banks before leaving the United States. Just call the number on the back of each card and ask for one. Get the PIN for your credit cards — this isn’t for your ATM card. Some British businesses are comfortable with swipe cards as long as they have PINs, Hamilton says.
• You can try to stand up for yourself, but I’m not sure how far that would get you. APACS insists that every business that takes MasterCard and VISA can handle swipe cards, even if they don’t know it. But pub owners may not take too well to random American tourists telling them how to work their machinery.
• Keep an eye out for the right logos. You want VISA and MasterCard, not Maestro, VISA Electron or Carte Bleue.
• American Express is accepted at fewer locations than VISA or MasterCard, but you know your AmEx will work where the AmEx logo is shown.
• Make sure you have enough cash. As a last resort, you should be able to cover your purchases with cash.

Article: United States Credit Cards Lose Their Cachet in Europe
Read more: http://www.frommers.com/articles/4793.html#ixzz1jALZLejI

If using an automated machine and your card is rejected, such as some ATMs, new parking meters, newer gas station pumps and railroad ticket machines in some French and Spanish train stations, go to the ticket window or see the station attendant. The transaction can normally be processed there. If the bank, gas station or ticket window is closed, you are out of luck. If your credit card is frozen for unexplained charges, call the number on the back of your card. These numbers will accept a collect call. Better yet, before leaving the United States jot down the number and keep it with you in case of theft. As well as leave a copy of the cards with someone you trust.

4. Travelers Checks
Although they are not accepted by many vendors abroad, you may want to buy traveler’s checks before you leave the United States. They are fully refundable if they are lost or stolen. The most popular ones are: American Express, Barclays (in the United Kingdom they can be cashed without charge), Thomas Cook and First National. Keep a record of your traveler’s check numbers in the event they are lost or stolen. A record should also be kept by your family at home. Buy traveler’s checks in a variety of denominations. There may be fees to cash your traveler’s check, and merchants may not accept checks of larger denominations for small purchases, so you are advised to ask about check-cashing policies before you purchase anything. Before buying traveler’s checks, find out if there is a branch office near your destination. In London, open a post office savings account. Additional money can be sent via bank draft.

5. Other Important Things to Consider
When traveling in foreign countries, remember to have enough local currency to get you through weekends and national and religious holidays, when banks and all offices are closed. In small communities, they do not accept Visa cards or traveler’s checks. For currency conversion information, go to:

www.xe.net/ucc
www.xe.com/euro.htm
Also, purchase a money belt or necklace before you go to keep your money safe while traveling. For ladies, a purse that has a strap that crosses your body and has a zipper is also recommended to
protect you from pick-pocketers. Plan your additional travel plans ahead of time and set aside the money needed for your extra trips.

Travel Arrangements

Air Travel:
If you have to make your own travel arrangements, check with several airlines for the best deals. You can also search airfares through www.statravel.com as a benefit of your international student ID.

- It is recommended that you purchase travel insurance in case of flight cancellation, travel delays, illness or similar circumstances.
- When comparing airlines know the cost of checking luggage. You might be comparing two airlines of similar price, but the additional price of checking luggage might be the differentiating factor.
- Consider the possible flight connections and if they allow a comfortable amount of time to change planes. Consider international flights usually board at least an hour early, the gates could be far apart and you may need to transfer luggage from domestic to international or vice versa.

If your travel arrangements are made by the sponsoring program, inquire about the type of fare you are purchasing. If it is a charter or group fare, with established departure and return dates and nonrefundable clauses in the prepaid travel plans, you may buy International Traveler Refund Insurance. This inexpensive policy will protect you from losing money you've paid should you cancel your trip because of last-minute illnesses or injuries. The insurance provides selected amounts of coverage to insure the nonrefundable portion of the prepaid travel expenses. Note that this insurance applies only to cases of illness or death of an immediate family member. If you decide not to go on the trip for reasons other than those listed above, the insurance will not apply.

- Check out www.studentuniverse.com. This airline reservation site finds cheap flight deals for students.
Railways:
(=Check with your program to determine if you should purchase a rail pass.) Some rates require that you purchase all passes in the United States before you depart! You can purchase rail passes with your ISIC ID number through www.statravel.com. This website offers the most recent pricing on select pass and flexipass information.

- Make sure you look at the benefits of a flexipass, which allows a certain number of days travel over a period of consecutive days (i.e. seven days).
- Eurail Youthpasses: must be purchased in the United States, at travel agencies or STATravel. They are valid everywhere in Europe, except the United Kingdom. For prices and pass information, check www.statravel.com
- Britrail Youth Passes: can be purchased in the United Kingdom for different lengths of time. Visit www.statravel.com for information.
- Interrail is excellent. It can be purchased in Luxembourg or Portugal.
- NU students who have traveled abroad recommend Transalpino, a pass sold in Europe.
- Recommended to purchase Oyster Card in London,
- Eurostar inexpensive travel between Paris and London, book 1-2 months in advance
- TGV - TGV-europe.com <bonsplans@TGV-europe.emv1.com>
- Student Oyster Card - Save 30% of railway usage in London, apply online at http://www.tfl.gov.uk/

Youth Hostels: Youth hostels are an inexpensive way of traveling around Europe. Review the hostel online before booking. Make sure not to leave your valuables unattended while staying in a hostel. More information can be obtained by visiting the following Web sites:

- www.hostelworld.com/ — 25,000 hostels in over 180 countries
- www.eurotrip.com/hostels — Hostel reviews, book a hostel by country, number of nights, city/hostel, currency, and arrival date
- www.hihostels.com — The official Web site of the International Youth Hostel Federation
- hostels.BootsNall.com
- www.Hostels.com — With over 6,000 hostels listed, we’ve got the largest and most up-to-date hostel database on the Web.
• **www.travellerspoint.com/hostels.cfm** — Book youth hostels worldwide. Currently there are 1951 hostels in their system in 107 countries. Choose a country or region from the list to browse through the hostels in that country. Your secure booking will guarantee you a reservation in advance. You can also choose to search a different specific accommodation type or, if you don’t want to narrow down your search too much, you can search all budget accommodation providers included in their system.

![Image of a person packing a suitcase](image)

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**What to Pack**

Packing the right way is important if you do not want to be weighted down on your trip and especially if your baggage is not going to be checked through the whole way. When you buy things remember that eventually everything has to fit back into your bags to go home! It is a good idea to leave some room in your bags for gifts and souvenirs. As a last resort, you can pay extra if your luggage is too heavy or mail the excess home.

Try to pack clothes that match everything. Avoid bringing clothes that wrinkle easily or require dry cleaning. Bring a *jacket that is both waterproof and warm*. *Roll your clothes* when packing; doing so will save space. The following is a list of suggested items you may need, other than clothes.

- Towel(s)/Washcloth(s)
- Hangers (may wish to buy once there)
- Dictionaries (pocket-sized for the countries you will visit or phone app)
- Money Belt/Necklace
- Camera
- Adapter and voltage converter
- Catalog from your home college for reference (found online or a list of classes you plan to take, approved by advisor)
- Locks (for backpack, luggage, and hostel)
- Umbrella
- Comb/brush
- Cold Medicine, aspirin or other pain reliever, vitamins, Small first aid kit
Ear plugs, eye mask
Sunscreen
Something that stops diarrhea (Imodium A-D)
Feminine products (there may not be the brand you use and they will be more expensive)
Soap/shampoo (favorite brands may be expensive or unavailable)
Toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, mouthwash
Contact solution
Deodorant
Motion sickness medicine
Maps/guide books
Laundry line for weekend travel
Backpack
Small address book
Can opener/Swiss army knife (in checked luggage)
Flip flops (for showers)
Flashlight, book light
Rechargeable batteries
Insect repellent
Journal/pens
Sleepsack (generally made of sheets for use in hostels)
Travel alarm clock (battery operated)
Sunglasses
iPod/MP3 player
Prescription medication (in original marked container)

Packing Tips:

Regulations:
• Two pieces checked luggage: Keep in mind as you pack that you are only allowed two pieces of luggage on most airlines. Luggage size cannot exceed the size and weight stipulated by the individual airline or they will assess additional charges. Airlines have the right to refuse to carry your excess luggage.
• Subject to search: In certain situations the airline may require most or even all of your baggage’s to be checked, so be prepared to do so.
• Pressurized containers: If you bring aerosol containers, carry them on board with you. They can explode in the cargo hold
• Prohibited items: If you have an item you want to take that you think might be questionable under current FAA guidelines, visit the Transportation Security Administration website at: www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm

Luggage Tips from the FAA:
Checked Baggage:
• Pack shoes, boots, sneakers and other footwear on top of other contents in your luggage.
• Avoid over-packing your bag so that the screener will be able to easily reseal your bag if it is opened for inspection. If possible, spread your contents over several bags. Check with your airline or travel agent for maximum weight limitations.
• Avoid packing liquids if possible as they might leak in handling, if you need to pack them in seal-able plastic bag.
• Don’t stack piles of books or documents on top of each other; spread them throughout your baggage.

Both Carry-on and Checked Baggage:
• Don’t forget to place identification tags with your name, address and phone number on all of your baggage, including laptop computer. It is a good idea to place an identification tag inside your baggage as well.
• Remove laptop from carry-on bag, backpack, or laptop bag to go through security screening.
• Consider putting personal belongings in clear plastic bag to reduce the chance that a screener will have to handle them.

Further Suggestions:
• When traveling a domestic to domestic to international flight you need to check with airline to see if you will need to pick up your luggage at any point to transfer it for your international flight. Check going there and coming back because regulations may change.
• Liquids should be in a plastic container. Any item kept in plastic containers are prone to break or leak in flight due to changes in air pressure. Store them in plastic Ziploc-type bags to avoid a mess. Also consider purchasing these items abroad. Not only do they take up valuable room, but also it is sometimes fin to try new brands abroad.

3-1-1 for carry-ons = 3.4 ounce (100ml) bottle or less (by volume) ; one quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; one bag per passenger placed in screening bin. One-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. 3.4 ounce (100ml) container size is a security measure. (Transportation Security Administration) Go to the following website for more details:
www.tsa.gov/311/
• Think about leaving valuables at home. If you can’t live without something, put it in your carry-on bag, NOT in your checked luggage.
• Keep prescription drugs in their original labeled containers to avoid hassles going through customs. You may also want to keep them in your carry-on bag (or day-pack) for easy access in case of an emergency. You should also contact the consulate of your host country to learn of any regulations the country may have for the drugs you will be carrying. Also, if you plan to renew a prescription while abroad, be sure to have a chemical breakdown of the prescription rather than its name to avoid any mis-translations.
• For battery-operated items, consider bringing a good supply of batteries. They can be expensive elsewhere. Or consider buying rechargeable batteries.
• Determine voltage requirements for electrically operated items in the country you are to visit. Even with a converter and adapter, there is no guarantee that appliances will work correctly. You may want to consider buying items such as hair dryers, curling irons, and straightening irons upon your arrival, particularly if you will be there an extended period of time.
Health Considerations

Health Care Checklist: Pre-departure Essentials
- Have a general checkup by your own physician and dentist.
- Get the necessary shots (the annual flu shot, tetanus shot and polio boosters are highly recommended). For additional immunization requirements, consult your Public Health Service.
- Bring extra pairs of eyeglasses in a hard case and your lens prescription
- Bring a supply of any prescription medicine sufficient to last the entire visit. If you have allergies or any physical condition for which medical treatment or medication might be needed, you should carry information and instructions from your family physician with your passport.
- Bring adequate health insurance coverage and blank forms. Understand the policy you have if it’s included in your program fee.
- Bring contact lens cleaning solution (difficult to find in many countries)

Strongly Recommended:
- Multiple vitamins
- Sunglasses, sunscreen
- First aid kit – tweezers, bandages, Band-Aids, soap, thermometer in a hard case (Fahrenheit scale), motion sickness pills and antidiarrheal medicine.
- Aspirins or the equivalent
- Antacids and laxatives

Drugs & Alcohol

Drug Laws: Drug laws overseas are very, very harsh. Should you be arrested for suspicion of drug possession, the United States Embassy can only notify your parents and make sure you get a fair trial – they cannot guarantee that you will be acquitted. All the horror stories you have heard are true – do not trust anyone and do not deliver any unopened packages, gifts, etc.
Alcohol Policy: Niagara University shares public concern about irresponsible drinking and the socially unacceptable behavior that may result from alcohol abuse.

**Responsible use of alcohol is when:**

- A student abides by the laws of the country or state in which they are living.
- A student does not miss any scheduled event because of the effects of alcohol consumption.
- A student does not become ill due to the effects of alcohol consumption.
- A student does not engage in inappropriate behavior toward other individuals that is the result of alcohol consumption.
- A student does not engage in destructive behavior toward property that is the result of alcohol consumption.
- A student does not engage in behavior that causes embarrassment to the other members of the group, the faculty member(s) or the in-country host(s) as a result of alcohol consumption.
- Students in a group do not facilitate/encourage or ignore a fellow student who is abusing alcohol. Providing alcohol to persons under the legal drinking age is illegal and against Niagara University policy. Transporting quantities of alcohol to program sites with the intent of sharing the alcohol with members of the group is considered to be irresponsible use of alcohol.
- Students are encouraged to use good judgment if consuming alcohol at private homes or other accommodations during non-program hours and comply with the laws of the country they’re in.
- Student living accommodations in Niagara University programs will be considered the same as residence halls on the Niagara University campus. Therefore, they will be under the same alcohol policy, that is, no alcohol consumed by, or in possession of, any students.
- Student groups are encouraged to discuss issues related to alcohol abuse by other members of their group with the program supervisor/instructor.
- If a student becomes incapacitated due to alcohol overuse, or if they are in need of medical attention, others are strongly encouraged to contact the emergency medical service, faculty member or program site supervisor immediately, in order to protect the health and well-being of the affected student. The individual needing medical attention will not receive disciplinary sanction in these circumstances, but rather will be referred for assistance to address issues of chemical use/abuse. Students are encouraged to make the responsible choice to notify college or emergency personnel quickly. The person (or persons) making the call will not be subject to disciplinary action.
Last Minute Tips

• Register your travels with the United States State Department https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrui/ or the Canadian Government www.voyage2.gc.ca/Registration_inscription/Register_Inscrire/Login_ouvrir-une-session-eng.aspx

Register your travel on myNU’s Travel Itinerary

• Make several photocopies of all important documents (passport, credit and debit cards, travel itineraries), tickets, and travel passes (leave one copy with responsible family member and pack one copy for yourself separate from your carry-on items).

• When traveling a domestic to domestic to international flight you need to check with airline to see if you will need to pick up your luggage at any point to transfer it for your international flight. Check going there and coming back because it may change.

• Purchase a money belt or money necklace to ensure safe keeping of your money and passport while you travel. Ladies- purchase a purse with strap that goes across chest to keep purse safe. Also, it is recommended to buy a purse with a zipper to prevent pick pocketing. Finally, it is a good idea to get locks for your backpack to also prevent pick pocketing in a congested area.

• Determine voltage requirements for electrically operated items in the country you are to visit. Even with a converter or adapter, there is no guarantee that appliances will work correctly. You may want to consider buying items such as a hair dryer, curling iron, and hair straightener upon your arrival. particularly if you will be there for an extended period of time.
Section Two:
Arrival at Your Host
Surviving Jet-Leg

**Before Departure:**
- Good Night’s Sleep — get adequate rest the nights before your journey. Beginning a trip sleep-deprived will only make jet leg worse. Also, consider the time change adjustments you will need to make and if you will need to sleep on the plane or stay awake.
- Avoid last minute rush the day of departure. Do everything early and schedule your flight connections to make comfortable changes of planes.
- Do not over-pack in case you are forced to carry your own luggage.

**During the Journey:**
- Wear loose-fitting clothes to give the skin a chance to breathe freely and to be comfortable.
- Drink non-alcoholic liquids during flight in order to prevent dehydration, a common occurrence on long flights.
- Take good reading material such as a guidebook geared to your destination.

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

**Culture Shock**
Culture shock is an uneasy feeling of disorientation brought on by inabilities to respond appropriately to the social cues of another country which you may be introduced to in daily life situations. Your own values, perceptions, and ways of doing things may seem threatened as you begin to notice the differences between your destination country and your home. Key symptoms of culture shock include: homesickness, boredom, withdrawal, frustration and anxiety, depression, irritability, stereotyping of host nationals, and hostility toward other nations.

Culture shock and homesickness are a very real phenomena. Even if you think you are the type of person who will not feel homesick or culture shock, you may be wrong. The truth is that almost anyone who studies or lives abroad experience both of these at some time. It is completely natural. Fortunately, these feelings are only temporary. The best way to combat them is to keep a positive attitude and understand them before you go.

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

Meeting New People:
Your study abroad experience will allow you to meet many new people that you otherwise may not have. This is a great opportunity to learn about other cultures and beliefs. No matter where you go, there will always be Americans. Try to associate with people from other countries or even other parts of America. You did not travel thousands of miles to only spend time with Americans.

Living with a Host Family:
- Respect family and its own individual customs.
- Try to integrate, even though you might be paying to stay at their home. If you stay with a family, they can be a major fountain for knowledge about the language and/or culture. It’s also nice to know that you have a family in your host country.
- The host-family arrangements vary by program, so be sure to understand what is included in the housing. Many host-families are required to provide only housing, not meals or social or “familial” activities.
- Do not bring alcoholic beverages into the home.
- Do not smoke in the home without permission.
- Drug use is absolutely prohibited.
- Remember that utilities abroad are very expensive. Your host family will frown on the “overuse” of hair dryers and curling irons. Turn off lights and radios every time you leave a room.
- Tell the family in advance when you will not be home for a meal.
- Talk with them even though you do not know the language well. This is a good way to learn and besides, coming home and hiding in your room will be viewed as antisocial.
- When you come in late at night be very quiet!
- Respect the family policy for phone use.
- If there are other Americans living in your house, do not talk English in front of the family. It is considered rude. Think how you feel when you cannot understand what they are saying.
- Be open to a new culture and experience new things.
- Bring a host gift. Something local to your hometown is usually the perfect idea.

Making Your Trip a Success:
- Knowledge of the country, language and cultural aspects.
- Tolerance of ambiguity and ability to cope with vagueness
- Open-mindedness and the ability and willingness to accept diverse viewpoints
- Low goal and task expectations — do not try to accomplish too much
- Empathy — try to see through the eyes of the locals
- Nonjudgmental — accept and try to understand the differences between cultures
- A sense of humor and the ability to laugh at your mistakes as they arise
- Ability to fail, learning from your mistakes and ignorance.
Getting in Touch With Those at Home

Telephoning Home:

- **Direct dialing** is always less expensive than other options. It is possible to dial directly from some large European cities, and it is extremely simple to do. The telephone centers will instruct you on how to place your call. If you cannot call direct, you should call collect or have your family call you on a prearranged hour and day. Nightly calls are rather inexpensive, if you pre-organize your conversation. You can obtain “International Dialing” by calling the phone company’s business office. Your friends and family should have all the information they’ll need to call you without the operator’s assistance. In France, it is best to place a call from the post office.

- **Purchasing a phone in that country.** Many countries have pay-as-you-go phones in which you can add minutes to as necessary and are able to make international phone calls for some of the best rates.

- **International Phone Card** can be purchased at many stores, usually located up by the register. Your international student identity card provides an international phone card program as well. Go to [www.myisic.ekit.com](http://www.myisic.ekit.com) for more information.

Webcam:

Webcam is becoming the best and cheapest way to communicate abroad. All it requires is two computers with webcams and for those computers to have a webcam program such as Skype, AIM, Google Mail or Windows Live. It is free to use and allows you not only to talk to friends and family, but to see them as well. Also, smart phone users can now

**Smart Phones (iPhones):**

Remember to turn off data roaming to avoid international changes. Applications such as NimBuzz can be downloaded to purchase inexpensive international calling in Wi-Fi. Another application, **Text Plus**, provides free text messaging over Wi-Fi in certain countries (read fine print associated with applications before downloading). **Magic Jack** can be purchased and used to make international calls at a low cost.

**Emailing Home:**

Email is probably the easiest and one of the least expensive ways to communicate with people back home, and is convenient in terms of the different time zones. Be sure to take the email addresses of your academic adviser, department chair, dean and study-abroad adviser with you.
Tips for Safer Travel

Know Your Surroundings:
• Find out which parts of town are considered risky by the locals. As in the United States, always stay in well-lit and well-traveled areas. Be especially alert in crowded places; they are likely to be a place for thieves and muggers. In addition, avoid groups of ten or more; groups of two to three draw less attention. Of course, NEVER go with a stranger alone.
• Avoid dangerous areas, do not use shortcuts, narrow alleys, or poorly lit streets. Try not to travel alone at night.

Avoid Being a Target:
• Use money belts or “neck safes” to hold passports, cash, airline tickets, credit cards and other valuables. Do not wear them outside your clothing or visibly hung around your neck; they make you a target. Always be mindful of your bags; try to keep one arm or foot through the strap at all times so you protect your belongings.
• Watch out for beggars or “gypsy children”, particularly in Southern Europe. In an attempt to get your money or possessions, they may try to confuse you by swarming around. Also be aware of people who try to “give” you something for free, i.e. a flower or hand-made jewelry. These people will usually turn to someone else you are with and ask for payment for the “gift.” If you are in an uncomfortable situation with a beggar, try speaking strongly to them in a language neither of you understands. This will break communication, which is the essential element in their asking for money. Also, be careful to whom you give your luggage. Sometimes thieves will pose as porters or taxi drivers.
• Stay away from political rallies and demonstrations. Do not get involved in students’ causes. Remember you represent the United States and that your behavior influences foreign people’s opinion of your country. Be a good representative of your family, Niagara University and of the United States. Be aware of anti-American sentiment and stay away from discussions that evoke heightened emotion.

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

All students should read “A Safe Trip Abroad” available online at:
• **Try not to arrive late at night** in an unknown town if you haven’t already made arrangements for spending the night. Beware of people hawking their hostel or hotel at the train station. These are not always safe options.

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

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

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

Special Advice for Women:

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

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

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

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

For Anyone Traveling Alone:

• Make sure someone else knows your itinerary.

• If you feel uncomfortable eating alone, bring something to read. Go before or after dinner hours. Waiters like large parties for their tables during dinner hours.

• Find a place to stay before dark. Be very cautious of people who offer you rooms. **DO NOT** go with any strangers if you are alone.

• Avoid holding yourself to a strict schedule when traveling; relax and don’t try to see everything.

Money and Valuables:

• Carry alternatives to cash such as travelers’ checks and debit cards.

• Keep a list of credit card/debit card numbers and the toll-free phone numbers in a safe place at home. Immediately report a missing credit/debit card to the issuing company. If you report the loss before the card is used, the card issuer cannot hold you responsible for any unauthorized charges.

• Contact the fraud departments of the three major credit bureaus: Equifax, Experian, and Trans Union. Ask them to flag your file with a fraud alert, including a statement that creditors need to get you permission before opening any new accounts in your name.

• Report any loss or theft to the police or other appropriate authorities. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance purposes.
• Place additional cash and valuables in a hotel safe box.
• Keep your wallet in an inside or front pocket, never in a coat pocket.
• Always keep your luggage nearby and within your view.
• Lock your doors and windows when you leave the room.
• Report the loss or theft of your passport to the nearest US Embassy or Consulate.

Program Sponsors Generally:
• Cannot guarantee or assure the safety of participants or eliminate all risks from the study-abroad environments.
• Cannot monitor or control all of the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of individual participants.
• Cannot prevent participants from engaging in illegal, dangerous, or unwise activities.
• Cannot assure that U.S standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings or provide or pay for legal representation for participants.
• Cannot assume responsibility for the actions of persons not employed or otherwise engaged by the program sponsor, for events that are not part of the program, or that are beyond the control of the sponsor and its subcontractors, or for situations that may arise because a participant fails to disclose pertinent information.
• Cannot assure that home-country cultural values and norms will apply in the host country.

If in Need of Legal Aid: If you get into trouble with the local authorities, you are subject to local laws. The United States government can provide only a list of attorneys for legal representation and contact your family; it cannot guarantee acquittal.

If Destitute: If you become destitute, contact the closest United States Embassy or Consular Office. They will help you to get in touch with family or friends and advise you on how your family can send funds to you. If your money is lost or stolen, the consul will advise you on how to inform the local police. If the money is traveler’s checks, the consul will tell you how to notify the issuing authorities.

If Ill or Injured: If you are ill or injured while participating in a Niagara University program, you should see the appropriate office at the host university. If you are studying through an external program, notify the United States Embassy or Consular Office. The consul will help you find medical help, and notify your family, friends, or legal representative. Write the name and address of any relative or legal representative inside the front cover of your passport, so they can be notified if necessary.

*Please notify the International Office in your host country of all outside and weekend travel in case of emergency.
Being American Abroad

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

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

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

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

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

1. **Transportation:** Reconfirm your return reservation at least 72 hours before departure. If possible, get a written confirmation. If you reconfirm by phone, record the date, time, and name of agent who took the call.

2. **Customs and Immigration:** Have your passport and registration of personal foreign-made articles ready. Do not try to bring back meats, fruits, plants, or animal parts of any kind. Keep a record of what you bought for customs purposes.

3. Complete the study abroad evaluation online on myNU.

4. Put together a scrapbook or online photo journal.

5. Attend the Welcome Back Party the next semester.

6. Participate in open houses and study abroad fairs to recruit other students to travel abroad.

7. Write articles for the Index highlighting your experience.

8. Volunteer in the Study Abroad Office to gain experience in international education.
Section Four:
Important Contact Information
Study Abroad Program Coordinators Contact Information

CCIS
College Consortium for International Studies
www.ccisabroad.org

AIFS
American Institute for Foreign Studies
www.aifsabroad.com

Discover the World (Europe, Paris, Rome)
www.stjohns.edu/studyabroad

Global Learning Semesters
www.globalsemesters.com

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