



Education Abroad Handbook

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WHY STUDY ABROAD?

Perhaps the greatest power of educational exchange is the power to convert nations into peoples and to translate ideologies into human aspirations. - J.W. Fulbright

You can do business in English. No question about it. But what about your friendly competitors? The average European student speaks English, his own native language, and a second foreign language. What advantage does that give them? -Gary Thull, Pioneer Overseas Corporation, Des Moines

How shall I talk of the sea to the frog, if he has never left his pond? How shall I talk of the frost to the bird of the summer land, if it has never left the land of his birth? How shall I talk of life with the sage, if he is a prisoner of his doctrine? -Chung Tzu, 4th Century B.C.

Through our scientific and technological genius, we have made of this world a neighborhood, and yet we have not had the ethical commitment to make of it a brotherhood. Somehow and in some way we have got to do this. We have to live together as brothers, or we will all perish together as fools. -Martin Luther King, Jr.

Alert, job-orientated students have come to realize that as the world shrinks, many of the best jobs are going to go to college graduates who possess international skills. - William H. Honon, New York Times

WELCOME AND CONGRATULATIONS!

Participating in a study abroad program is a significant and exciting part of completing a university degree. Past participants often tell us that their time abroad was the best part of their education.

The Office of International Programs is dedicated to helping you plan and participate in your program. Our staff has extensive experience in education abroad and we want you to feel welcome to come to our office or contact us by phone if you have any questions or need assistance.

Please also know that your family is welcome to share in your planning as much as you want. Although ultimately you as the student participant will need to plan and prepare for your program abroad, we welcome you to invite others to any orientations or other events.

The Study Abroad Handbook should answer most of your questions, but we know that having the opportunity to speak to members of our staff, past students, and students who will be participating in your program enhances your preparation for study abroad. In addition to our open door policy which allows you to come any time during our office hours, we also schedule individual meetings and hold a series of group orientations each semester. Past student evaluations indicate that participating in pre-departure planning and orientations will help you make the most of your time abroad. All of the staff from the Office of International Programs is here to help you. We hope this is just the beginning of your opportunities to experience the diverse and beautiful countries of the world.

Please read this handbook at your earliest convenience. We recommend that you keep the handbook and take it to your program site for future reference. All students participating in study abroad are required to read all orientation materials prior to departure.

Pre-Departure Checklist

Submit to UNLV International Programs at least thirty days prior to departure:

_____ Agreement/Release Form or USAC Program Agreement

_____ Emergency Contact Information

_____ Photocopy of Your Passport (The Data Page, Which Includes Your Name, Photo, Etc.) And Visa (If Required).

_____ Photocopy of Your Flight Itinerary

_____ Proof of International Medical Insurance. International Medical Insurance is required for all UNLV sponsored programs. International Medical Insurance is provided for participants in USAC programs and is included in USAC program fees. Participants in all other programs must purchase the UNLV mandatory international medical insurance and provide proof of purchasing the insurance to the UNLV Office of International Programs at least 30 days prior to departure. Information is available from UNLV International Programs.

_____ Current Address

It is your responsibility to keep the program administration informed of your most current address, telephone number or personal contact information before and during your participation in the program. Failure to provide your current information may result in your exclusion or removal from the program.

Required Items

PASSPORT- Documentation of your identity and citizenship.

VISAS OR TOURIST CARD - Documents stamped in or attached to your passport; permission from foreign government to enter.

TRANSPORTATION-Check with your travel agent or student travel services (see Appendix). USAC students should contact USAC. Non-USAC students must provide their itineraries to UNLV International Programs.

CONTACT INFORMATION - The Study Abroad Handbooks; emergency contact information; emergency evacuation information; program updates, arrival information, program director address and phone number; group tour hotel name, address, and phone number must be read and understood by all program participants. If you have any questions please contact UNLV International Programs. Take program information with you to your study abroad site. Please provide your contact information to your family.

IMMUNIZATION AND MEDICAL CHECK-UP-Most travel requires more lifting (of luggage) and walking than you may be accustomed to, and physical preparation is important. Discuss any special conditions, medical needs, allergies or other health issues with your physician and UNLV program staff. Carry a list of your blood type, allergies, and medical needs with you. If you have special medical needs, consider obtaining a medical alert bracelet before you depart. If

you have any medical or dental needs, plan to complete as much of your care as possible before your departure. Obtain copies of all your prescription medicines to take with you so that you may take them with you to a doctor's visit in the event you need to order refills while traveling. It is strongly recommended that you take a sufficient supply of prescribed medications with you. Prescriptions may not be able to be filled at some program sites. Prescription lens wearers are advised to carry spare glasses or contacts.

IF YOU HAVE A DOCUMENTED DISABILITY that may require assistance, please contact the UNLV International Programs Office (702) 895-3896, Classroom Building Complex, Building B, Room 325 and the UNLV Disability Resource Center (DRC), (702) 895-0866, TDD (702) 895-0652, drc@unlv.edu Reynolds Student Services Complex room 137, for the coordination of your academic accommodations. You will need to notify both the DRC and UNLV International Programs Office of any accommodations that may be necessary to support your participation in a UNLV sponsored program at least 60 days prior to departure.

Recommended Items

FOREIGN CURRENCY— It is useful to have some local currency with you upon arrival overseas. Foreign currency can be purchased at major U.S. banks, some airports, and through currency exchange brokers prior to departure.

PASSPORT REPLACEMENT KIT— 2 Passport-sized photos, a certified copy of your birth certificate, photocopy of the information page of your passport, Application for a Passport (http://travel.state.gov/passport/forms/ds11/ds11_842.html), Statement Regarding Lost or Stolen Passport (http://travel.state.gov/passport/forms/ds64/ds64_845.html), all to be kept together and separate from your other documents.

EXTRA PHOTOGRAPHS— For use in obtaining visas, bus passes, identity cards, etc.

GUIDEBOOKS AND MAPS -Visit International Programs' resource library, your home campus library or a bookstore.

LANGUAGE PREPARATION - If you are going to a non-English speaking country buy a dictionary , phrase book, and language tapes. Practice your language skills before departure. Take your phrase book and dictionary with you.

INTERNATIONAL ID CARD—Available for students, faculty and youth (non-students under age 26); proves eligibility for a broad network of discounts and benefits, including limited insurance.

YOUTH HOSTEL CARD—Used to stay in a vast network of low-cost accommodations around the world; sleeping bags are usually required.

SECRET POCKET— Also called a TRAVEL POUCH OR MONEY BELT— Used to carry and conceal passport, traveler's checks, etc.

RAIL PASSES— Eurail, Britrail, and various other rail passes. Contact the UNLV International Programs Office for more information

ADDITIONAL INSURANCE— Baggage, and Trip Cancellation/Interruption Insurance.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK—Read as many books as you can about the country/countries you are planning to visit. Your local library is a good source of general information. Students participating in programs are required to read and understand all program materials, including the UNLV study abroad handbook, program updates, and other orientation materials.

Useful Items

Small address book, journal (keep a record of your travels)
clothes that don't wrinkle or show dirt and that can be layered for warmth
one or two nice outfits for theater or dressy occasions
extra underwear and socks, fewer clothes
T-shirts (to make a pillow, stuff clean laundry into one)
comfortable shoes
waterproof shoes
rain jacket, umbrella
credit cards, ATM card, traveler's checks
luggage locks and tags
decongestant, deodorant, feminine products, dental floss
hand disinfectant
insect repellent, sunscreen/sunblock,
birth control, latex condoms
Swiss army-style knife, watch, iPod, pocket calculator (for calculating exchange rates)
extra eyeglasses, prescriptions and contact lenses, contact lens care products, sunglasses
extra passport-sized photos for passes and visas
pictures of family and friends
sleep sack (sewn-up sheet which can be used at hostels) or compact sleeping bag,
toilet paper (small packs of Kleenex are handy when traveling)
washcloth, towel, shower shoes
youth hostel directory, youth hostel card
ziplock plastic bags (pack liquid items, to prevent spills or messes in luggage)
trash bags (separate dirty laundry from other clothes inside your suitcase)
backpack (for weekend trips and carrying books to and from classes),
battery operated travel alarm clock,
camera
batteries
adaptors/converters for electrical appliances

Travel Planning

- Contact UNLV International Programs if you have any questions. Many of the Internet sites listed here can be accessed from the UNLV International Programs website, including the CDC, State Department, and many UNLV departments. Visit our site for more information: <http://internationalprograms.unlv.edu>.
- Students must verify their address with the UNLV Student Enrollment Services Office (702) 895-3443, prior to departure. All mail from UNLV, including grade reports, financial aid information, and refund checks will be mailed to the address on file with the Registrar's Office.
- Contact the U.S. State Department for the most recent travel information and advisories for each country you plan to visit. The U.S. State Department can be reached at (202) 647-5225 or information is available from their Consular Information website http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html/
- There is an important new service from the State Department for all US Citizens traveling abroad. **All students should register prior to their departure.** Those students that are already abroad may still register. It is very important that the Embassy or Consulate nearest your study abroad location be aware of all the US citizens in their area. The process is easy. Simply go to the following web site and follow the instructions. <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/home.asp>
- Check with the Health Department for immunization requirements. The Atlanta Center for Disease Control (CDC) provides information to travelers on international health risks and taped messages about specific regions of the world that can assist you in planning for your immunization needs. If you plan to get any immunizations, do so before you leave the U.S. The Center's information number is (404) 332-4559. The CDC is also on the World Wide Web at the following address: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>.
- Obtain pamphlets from the U.S. Customs Service regarding your duty free allowance and things that you can and cannot bring back with you. The U.S. Customs Service is on the World Wide Web at the following address: <http://www.customs.ustreas.gov>.
- Allow at least six months for the passport application process. If you are traveling to a country that requires a visa in addition to your passport, you will need sufficient time after your passport is received to obtain your visa. In some countries you may need to apply for a visa more than three months prior to departure. Visas are stamped or stapled into your passport. Passport offices, embassies and consulates are busier in spring and summer months and may require additional time for processing.
- Give a copy of your passport and itinerary to a responsible family member or friend and to the UNLV Office of International Programs before you leave.
- Label your luggage both inside and out with your name, address and phone number. Never pack valuable items, your passport, or required medications in your checked luggage. Consult airline for current list of items that cannot be packed in carry-on luggage.

- Check your flight schedule at least 72 hours in advance and reconfirm your reservations. Arrive at the airport 3 or more hours before departure for international flights.
- To avoid jet lag, don't consume alcohol on long flights. Juice and water are good choices. Walk around the aisle of the plane and stretch to help avoid jet lag.
- When you reach your new hotel or other living accommodation, write down the address and phone number where you are staying (or take a book of hotel matches or business card with the name, address and phone number on them). If you get lost you can show the address to a cab driver, policeman, or shopkeeper to help you find your way back.
- If you are required to check in with the local police department, obtain a residence permit, etc., do so as soon as possible. In locations where this is required, program staff will assist you in the process.
- Keep your valuables, especially your passport, in a secure place. Many items are available, such as "secret pockets", money belts, and bags designed to wear under your clothing to provide added security while you are traveling.
- Traveler's checks are one of the safest ways to carry money. Keep the check numbers in a separate place. You should also record the numbers of any credit cards you carry with you. You must keep a record of checks you have cashed in order to have the remaining checks reimbursed in the event of their loss or theft.
- Be flexible, understanding and considerate of cultural differences. Let the world be your teacher. Travel is an educational experience.

Preparation

Orientations

Several orientation sessions are held on the UNLV campus each semester. Local students should attend all of the orientation meetings. If you live outside of Las Vegas, information from the orientations, program Updates, and planning materials will be mailed to the current address listed on your application. Please notify our office should you change your mailing or permanent address prior to departure for your international program. All students enrolled in USAC programs will be receiving information from both the USAC program main office (located at the University of Nevada, Reno) and UNLV. It is very important that all students return all information requested by UNLV (and USAC). If you are in doubt of where to return your documentation, please bring or send it to UNLV International Programs. Most USAC information is currently provided online. It is important that USAC students monitor their student Gateway account and read all information provided.

Resources for Education Abroad

The time you invest in improving language skills and learning about the places you will visit will enhance your experience abroad. The Office of International Programs maintains a selection of general references and travel books in the office resource library for your use. Some students traveling to Europe find the LET'S GO series especially helpful, while THE LONELY PLANET and INSIGHT GUIDE series will prove useful to travelers to any continent. Most guides published in the U.S. are available abroad, but often at higher prices. You may wish to explore the various types of publications in the Office of International Programs, your home campus library, or local bookstore before purchasing a book.

Program Information

Read all program information given to you. Research your destination. When possible, contact students who have previously studied abroad at your chosen program site. The UNLV Office of International Programs has resources to help you. Information can be found in our office or on our website <http://internationalprograms.unlv.edu>.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you will need to contact the UNLV Disability Resources Center (DRC) for the coordination of your academic accommodations. The DRC is located in the Reynolds Student Services Complex room 137. The phone number is (702) 895-0866, TDD (702)895-0652. Students should notify the Office of International Programs in writing no less than 60 days prior to departure if accommodation may be necessary. Accommodations, facilities and services vary from country to country. UNLV does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, and status with regard to public assistance, or disability.

Students with physical disabilities must be aware that the facilities in many countries are much less accessible than what is typically found in the U.S. The UNLV International Programs Office can assist you in obtaining information on the countries you plan to visit. Students may also contact Mobility International, USA (tel. & TDD 514-343-1284, fax 514-343-6812) for more information

on accessibility issues.

Non-UNLV Students/Admission To UNLV

If you are not currently an admitted UNLV student and you will not be needing financial aid from UNLV, you may attend UNLV as a non-admitted student. For non-admitted status, simply notify the UNLV Office of International Programs of your plans. If you are not currently an admitted UNLV student and would like to apply for financial aid, you **MUST COMPLETE THE ADMISSION PROCESS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE**. If you do not complete the admission process you will be enrolled as a "non-admitted student." As a non-admitted student, you will not be eligible for financial aid through UNLV.

If you would like to apply for admission, the UNLV application fee is included in your USAC program fees. You can download the application <http://www.unlv.edu/main/applications.html>. Please send the application and all supporting documentation to the UNLV Office of International Programs. USAC will pay the admission fee on your behalf.

UNLV International Programs
4505 Maryland Pkwy
Las Vegas NV 89154-6012
702-895-3896, Fax 702-895-4147
international.programs@unlv.edu

It is important that you request official transcripts for all colleges and universities that you have attended to be sent directly to the UNLV Office of International Programs. If you have less than 24 transferable college or university credits, you will also be required to submit your high school transcripts. If you fail to provide ALL of your transcripts, your admission will be denied. You must complete the admission process in order to be eligible to receive financial aid through UNLV. The UNLV Student Financial Services office cannot process your request for financial aid until your admission is complete. Submitting all of your information in a timely manner will increase your chances of receiving your financial aid prior to departure.

Advising

The Office of International Programs strongly recommends that all students planning to study abroad see their advisor before applying for a study abroad program and again before departure. If you have not declared a major or been assigned an advisor, please complete these tasks before your departure. Your advisor should be able to assist you in determining which courses are transferable to your school (non-UNLV students) and which courses may be used to satisfy requirements for graduation (UNLV and non-UNLV students). If you are not a UNLV student, please consult your advisor at your home school.

For students enrolled in transfer credit programs, class schedules, grade slips, and transcripts generated will have a marker flag that will be similar to: "IPG 100R.750, USAC: Reading (or the appropriate program information), 12 credits, Grade NR (Not Reported)." This does not indicate credit already earned; it is simply a placeholder showing that you are enrolled as a full-time study abroad student. Actual credits earned will be determined after the UNLV Student Enrollment Services Office evaluates your transcripts from the host institution. Applicability of your credits to your degree program are determined by your academic advisor. You must bring back all of your work for each course: essays, research papers, course bibliographies, syllabi, lec-

ture notes, books, etc. If there is any question as to whether your courses satisfy graduation requirements, you will need to provide this information to your academic department. Non-UNLV students should also be prepared to provide detailed course information to their home university. **It is your responsibility to retain all relevant course materials. Materials may not be available from the program site after the conclusion of the program.**

Registration for Your Program

All students must be aware that enrollment in specific courses is not guaranteed. Students in programs where courses are offered for credit through UNLV (Semesters: Spain, France, Germany, Italy, China, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico; Summer: all previously listed programs plus England, Ireland, Czech Republic, India, Ghana) are subject to the same prerequisites as students enrolling in equivalent courses at UNLV. Programs in which students receive transcripts from the host institution (Malta, Czech Republic, England, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Ghana, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Korea, India, Japan) are subject to the pre-requisites and course availability at the host campus. Although UNLV and USAC endeavor to offer a variety of courses, courses may be canceled if they do not generate sufficient enrollment. If you have questions about your enrollment, please contact our office.

Graduate Credits & Internships/Independent Studies

Internships, independent studies and courses taken for graduate credits must be approved prior to departure or you will not receive credit for the course(s).

UNLV Resident Credit Requirement

Transfer credit programs are an interruption of the resident credit requirement. You will need to consult your advisor if you will be nearing or entering your senior year during or at the end of your study abroad program. Additional information on the resident credit requirement can be found in the UNLV Undergraduate Catalog. Home-enrolled credits are not considered an interruption of the resident credit requirement. If you are unsure of the type of program you will be attending, please contact the Office of International Programs. If you are not a UNLV student, please consult your academic advisor at your home school for help in selecting your courses.

The UNLV resident credit requirement states: "A candidate for the bachelor's degree must complete the last 30 semester credits in uninterrupted resident credit." Resident credit "means any course which is satisfactorily completed at UNLV." A student who has earned a minimum of three-fourths of total degree credits at UNLV may earn a maximum of eight transfer credits during their senior year or fifteen credits as part of a UNLV sponsored study abroad program. Please consult the UNLV undergraduate catalog, the UNLV International Programs Office and your advisor for more information.

Graduation

If you are planning to graduate soon after returning from studying abroad you will need to apply for graduation prior to departure. The UNLV undergraduate catalog recommends applying for graduation at least two semesters prior to the proposed date of graduation. If you think you are nearing graduation, please see your advisor.

Necessary Documents

Please consult with the Office of International Programs prior to your departure. All required documentation must be submitted to the Office of International Programs no later than 30 days prior to departure in order for you to be officially enrolled in the study abroad program.

In addition to documents required by UNLV (& USAC), students are responsible for obtaining all necessary travel documents. The costs of such documents, as well as related fees for photographs, medical examinations, vaccinations, etc., are the student's responsibility. Students should make sure that the name on all of their documents is their full legal name and that the name on all documents is exactly the same. The name on your passport is the legal name under which you will travel and it should be used in exactly the same way on all visas and airline bookings.

Passports

A PASSPORT IS REQUIRED FOR PARTICIPANTS ON UNLV SPONSORED PROGRAMS. A passport is an official government document that provides proof of citizenship. Passports should be obtained as soon as possible. Passport applications may take eight weeks or more to be processed. Instructions and requirements for obtaining a U.S. passport may be found at the U.S. Department of State at http://travel.state.gov/passport_easy.html. You can obtain an application online or search for locations near you where you may apply for your passport: http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/get_840.html. If you are not a U.S. citizen, contact the nearest embassy or consulate of the country from which you have citizenship. Many countries require that your passport be valid for at least six months beyond the date you plan to complete your stay within that country. *As soon as you receive your passport, sign it and fill in the information on the inside cover. Your passport is not valid without your signature. Do not allow anyone else to use your passport or alter it in any way. Your passport is a valuable document for which you are responsible.*

The loss of your passport could cause you considerable delay and expense. If your passport is lost or stolen, notify the local authorities and the U.S. Embassy at once. After an investigation determining identification, the Embassy will issue you a temporary replacement document. This process can generally be expedited if you make a photocopy of the first two pages of your passport and travel with them in a safe place apart from your passport. This will aid in determining identification. It is advisable to make at least three copies of important documents, including passports, visas, traveler's checks, etc. Leave one set of the documents with a reliable person in the U.S., one set in your file in the International Programs Office, and take the other set with you. Pack your personal copies separately from the original papers. This is an invaluable aid in case of theft or loss of your personal documents. Many students choose to carry at least two extra passport photos with them. Passport photos may be very expensive in some locations. Passport photos may also be required to obtain visas and some I.D. cards.

Never pack your passport in your luggage. When traveling from country to country keep your passport with you at all times. If you plan to travel over a long weekend or break, remember to take your passport and carry it with you in a secure place. Items such as passports, traveler's check, currency and plane tickets should be carried on your body, preferably in a "secret pocket" under your clothing.

Visas and Tourist Cards

Depending upon the country you will be visiting, the length of your stay, and your citizenship, you may need to obtain a visa. Valid passports are also necessary to acquire travel or student visas. Visas are placed into your passport, either as a stamp or paper voucher. A visa is permission from the government of the country you will be visiting to reside in that country for a specific purpose (study) and for a specific length of time (the duration of your program). If you are participating in a USAC program and a visa is required, U.S. citizens will automatically be sent appropriate information from the main USAC office. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please contact the main USAC office at (775) 784-6569 or 1-866-404-USAC. If you are not participating in a USAC program, please contact the UNLV Office of International Programs for more information. While the UNLV Office of International Programs and USAC will assist you and provide the necessary school documentation required for visas, obtaining visas is the responsibility of the student. All students are responsible for contacting the Consulate or Embassy of the country in which they will be studying and each country they intend to visit for information on current visa requirements. Some consulates may keep passports for several weeks or more while processing your visa. Please allow sufficient time to receive your visa prior to your departure. For countries you will be visiting as a tourist, you may obtain information on entry requirements from the U.S. State Department's website: <http://travel.state.gov/foreignentryreqs.html>. *Please inform the Office of International Programs if you are not a U.S. citizen. Your citizenship directly affects your visa requirements.*

Register with the U.S. Department of State

There is an important new service from the State Department for all US Citizens traveling abroad. All students should register prior to their departure. Those students that are already abroad may still register. It is very important that the Embassy or Consulate nearest your study abroad location be aware of all the US citizens in their area. The process is easy. Simply go to the following web site and follow the instructions. <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/home.asp>

Health Issues

Several months before you travel abroad, you should check with the Health Department for immunization requirements. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) provides information to travelers on international health risks and has taped messages about specific regions of the world that may assist you in planning for your immunization needs. The CDC's phone number is (404) 332-4559. You should also see your personal physician, inform him/her of the country in which you will be studying and of the countries in which you plan to be traveling. You & your physician should determine if vaccinations will be necessary. For students who do not have a personal physician, vaccinations may be available from your local health department. Obtain necessary immunizations and vaccines before departure. The CDC is also on the World Wide Web at the following address: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>.

Some resources available to you:

Health Information for International Travel, is available from: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Public Health Service, Center for Disease Control & Prevention, National Center for Infectious Diseases, Division of Quarantine, Atlanta, GA 30333.

The International Travel Health Guide is available from: Travel Medicine, Inc., 351 Pleasant

Street, Suite 312, Northampton, MA 01060, phone (413) 584-0381.

Staying Healthy in Asia, Africa, and Latin America is available from: Moon Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 3040, Chico, CA 95927-3040, ISBN: 1-56691-026-9, ISSN: 1082-4871.

Other resources may be available from larger bookstores.

Documentation for Medications

If you have a medical condition that requires you to carry needles, syringes and/or controlled substances, you will need a letter from your doctor describing your medical condition and the need for these items. Carrying needles, syringes and some medications without a prescription may be illegal in some countries. Your letter should list the brand name and generic name of each medication you intend to carry. Please leave medicines in their original, labeled containers. These precautions make it easier to get through security and customs in the U.S. and in foreign countries. However, a doctor's certificate may not suffice as authorization to transport all prescription drugs to all foreign countries. To ensure that you do not violate the drug laws of the countries that you visit, you must consult the embassy or consulate of any country you plan to visit for precise information.

If you purchase any medications in a foreign country you should be aware that drug products that are not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration may not be imported into the U.S. The U.S. FDA warns that such drugs are often of unknown quality and discourages buying drugs sold in foreign countries. For more information, visit the FDA website http://www.fda.gov/ora/import/purchasing_medications.htm.

Insurance

International Medical Insurance is required for all UNLV sponsored programs. Information is available from UNLV International Programs. Mandatory International Medical Insurance is provided by USAC for participants in USAC programs and is included in USAC program fees. Participants in all other programs must purchase the UNLV Mandatory International Medical Insurance and provide proof of insurance to the UNLV Office of International Programs no less than 30 days prior to departure. It is strongly recommended that you carry the contact information for your insurance company with you while you are abroad. You will need to keep all names, phone numbers, and policy numbers with you in a safe place. It is important to take insurance claim forms and contact information with you and to save all of your receipts.

Travel Arrangements

Students are responsible for making their own travel arrangements. Students participating in USAC programs will be provided information on group flights (if available) or other travel arrangements and instructions for booking flights. Students participating in USAC programs are not required to participate in group flights, however, students making their own arrangements must plan to arrive at the program site prior to orientation and return flights must be booked for dates after the program ends. Students are required to be at the program site for the duration of the program to receive credit for the program. Students not participating in USAC sponsored programs should contact the UNLV Office of International Programs if they would like assistance in planning their itinerary. UNLV International Programs does not endorse any particular travel agency. It is recommended that students check rates offered by several travel agencies and different airlines before purchasing a ticket. All students should keep a copy of their ticket, a list of the ticket num-

bers, and the name and address of the issuing agency. This information should be kept separate from your ticket and may be necessary if you lose your ticket.

Students are advised to purchase round-trip tickets. While a one-way ticket from the U.S. may be inexpensive, return flights can be very expensive. Students generally will be traveling during peak travel times (the beginning or end of summer, before or after the Christmas break or New Years). It is highly recommended that students have a scheduled return prior to departure. Also, many countries require an onward or return ticket before they will issue a visa.

Airline seat assignments and special meal requests

If seat assignment or food preferences are important to you, specify these arrangements in advance. Seating assignments should be made when you book the flight or several weeks before departure. Window seats allow you to lean and sleep, while aisle seats allow for more mobility. Meal preferences should be requested at least 72 hours in advance. Many major airlines offer many different menu options such as vegetarian, Kosher, Hindu, high protein, low calorie, low cholesterol and no salt.

Packing

Leave valuables, jewelry, and sentimental items at home. UNLV cannot be responsible for the loss, theft or damage of any personal items. If you do choose to take any valuable items with you, you may want to consider purchasing insurance that will cover loss or theft while you are traveling. Do not pack items you cannot live without in your checked baggage. Items such as contact lenses, glasses, and medication should be packed in your carry-on luggage.

Start setting aside items you will need to take abroad as early as possible. Choose sturdy luggage that has no attachments that may be caught in baggage handling equipment. A backpack is extremely useful if you are planning to travel before or after the program, and is also easier to carry than most suitcases. Do not count on having assistance or luggage carts. Many airports, bus, train and subway stations have stairs rather than escalators. After you have packed everything you feel you should have, carry all your bags, including carry-on items, to evaluate your ability to handle all of your luggage. If you have difficulty carrying everything, eliminate as many items as necessary to make your baggage reasonably portable. Many personal items will be available in the country you will be visiting but you may find it helpful to bring a supply of your favorite headache, diarrhea, and cold remedies. Brand names and product strength may be different from medicines found in the U.S. Again, most personal items will be available in foreign countries, but not necessarily the brand names you are familiar with. Items such as shampoo, soap, etc. will be readily available. Many students choose to carry "travel" sizes and purchase many items upon arrival. You should plan on carrying your luggage for long distances. For carry-on luggage, choose a small bag suitable for use on short weekend trips.

Baggage Limits

International flights are stricter about baggage limits than U.S. domestic flights. Review the baggage allowance stated by the air carrier(s) you will be using. Excess baggage costs can be very high. Most air carriers also have a combined weight allowance for baggage. Check the weight limits for your airline(s) and try to weigh your baggage before going to the airport. This will help you to avoid unexpected charges, usually at a high rate per pound over the weight limit. If

your baggage exceeds the weight limit when returning home from abroad, you may wish to compare the cost of an extra bag with the charges for luggage that is too heavy. Excess baggage charges levied by the airline or the airline's refusal to accept overweight baggage at the airport are your responsibility. All luggage must be identified inside and out. If you intend to bring large items such as skis, bicycles, frame backpacks, or musical instruments, contact your airline in advance to determine the charge for bringing oversized items. In reality, you must be able to manage all of your baggage yourself. Most airlines limit travelers to one piece of carry-on baggage plus one personal item. Personal items generally include a purse, briefcase, laptop computer, camera bag or backpack. Cutting instruments of any size or material including carpet knives, box cutters, and other retractable blades (regardless of blade length or composition), ice picks, straight razors, elongated scissors, knitting needles, corkscrews, baseball/softball bats, golf clubs, pool cues, ski poles, hockey sticks and many liquid items are currently prohibited in carry-on baggage. These items may be included in checked baggage. It is forbidden to carry matches and lighters in baggage. Plan to purchase those items when you reach your destination. Do not carry weapons or anything that could be considered a weapon.

If you cannot carry all of your luggage, all at the same time, you need to reduce the amount of baggage you plan to take.

What to Take

It is wise to have some of the local currency with you when you first arrive abroad. If you arrive on a weekend or at night, banks and other exchange sources may be closed. Remember that exchange sources may have lengthy lunch breaks or unexpected closing hours. You may obtain foreign currency in the U.S. at money exchange houses, currency exchange booths in international airports, or by requesting currency from major banks. You should plan on requesting the currency a minimum of three weeks prior to your departure. There is no guarantee that the currency you want will be available unless you give the bank or exchange house sufficient time to order it. Talking to students who have been abroad and reading the evaluations from past participants in the Office of International Programs will help you plan and pack for your time abroad. The UNLV Office of International Programs maintains a list of students who have given their permission for their contact information to be released to other students. A list of the names email addresses can be found on our web site: <http://internationalprograms.unlv.edu/>.

Some students have recommended rolling your clothing in your suitcase to maximize space. If you are careful, rolling your clothing can minimize wrinkles. Some students have also found it helpful to carry a plastic trash bag to separate dirty or damp clothing from the rest of the clothing in their luggage. Students should consider the weather conditions and cultural norms in the host country when deciding what to pack. For clothing, layering seems to be the generally recommended approach to cold climates. Indoor temperatures may be lower than in the U.S., especially in bedrooms. In general, warm extremities help to counteract low temperatures. In many countries students will need to be prepared for wet, windy weather. Gloves, warm socks, and waterproof shoes are well worth the space they take in your suitcase. Rain gear is also recommended. Previous participants' recommendations will alert you to the degree of formality appropriate to your program site. In most cases, students reported that they rarely wore very formal clothes, however, dressy outfits are appropriate for some events. It is recommended that students take at least one dressy outfit. In many places, you must be appropriately dressed to enter some churches, thea-

ters, clubs, etc. Be aware that shorts and short skirts are often not appropriate attire when traveling abroad. All travelers should be aware of what is considered “appropriate dress” in the countries where they plan to travel. Clothing that is considered appropriate in the U.S. may bring unwanted attention in other countries. You are likely to have limited storage space while you are abroad. Laundry facilities are usually more expensive. Pack versatile garments that are useful for more than one type of situation. You are likely to walk much more while you are abroad, so choose shoes carefully.

Most programs provide blankets and pillows. Consult your specific program updates for a list of what you will need to supply. If you do need to supply bedding, please note that U.S. standard fit sheets generally do not fit beds made for use in other countries. You are likely to accumulate clothing, gifts and souvenirs while you are abroad. Students have reported that it is helpful to pack an extra, empty bag to use for their return home.

Electricity & Electrical Appliances

You should only bring essential electrical appliances overseas. Realize that the voltage, current and electrical outlets are different in most countries. Even with a voltage converter, some appliances will not work or may be destroyed. You may want to plan on purchasing appliances locally. Electrical appliances are generally more expensive abroad, but small items such as curling irons and blow dryers are readily available in most locations. If you purchase a voltage converter and plan to use U.S. purchased appliances, it is important to note that there are two types of converters. One type of converter is designed for small appliances (1-50 watts) such as electric razors, and a second type is designed for larger appliances (50-1600 watts) such as hair dryers. Adapters do not convert voltage and do not work with Direct Current (DC), which is found in some countries. Some foreign hotels have outlets marked “For Shavers Only.” These outlets are designed only for appliances requiring 15-20 watts. If your appliance exceeds the wattage, DO NOT use the outlet.

Computers

If you are considering taking a laptop computer, you should review the following information:

- You must know how to set up and use your computer. Computer support services are generally not available.
- You must be aware of the differences in the electrical currents in many other countries. These differences can destroy your computer. You may want to purchase a high quality converter and adapter.
- Register the laptop with customs before you leave the U.S. Computers are commonly stolen in airports, many times at security metal detectors and conveyor belts. If your computer is valuable, you may want to purchase appropriate theft and/or damage insurance prior to your departure. UNLV and the USAC program cannot be responsible for the loss, theft or damage of personal computers.
- You will need to check with the consulate of the country you will be visiting to determine if you will be assessed a duty charge for importing a computer for personal use.

What Not to Take

Animals or animal products, pets, artifacts, biological materials, agricultural products, plants, foods or food products, weapons and illegal drugs are examples of what not to take. If you are considering taking anything that might be considered unusual, you should check far in advance regarding

any legal issues that might arise from attempting to import or export items. These same items should not be brought into the U.S. from foreign countries. If you have questions or need more information, please contact the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Department. Please refer to the section on "Traveler Information."

Customs and Duty

The consulate or embassy of the country to which you are traveling will answer specific questions about customs regulations. Usually visitors may bring personal effects that are obviously used, including clothing, cameras, cassette players, radios, sports equipment, etc., without paying duty. If you ship any dutiable items ahead, you should declare them when you enter the country or you may have to apply for an import permit and pay import duties when you try to claim your package from the post office or customs depot. For further information, call the U.S. Customs Office in Los Angeles, CA (310) 215-2414 or visit their web site at: <http://www.customs.ustreas.gov>

When you re-enter the U.S., you will have to declare everything you have purchased abroad. Keep all receipts. The pamphlet "KNOW BEFORE YOU GO," published by U.S. Customs, gives more details on customs regulations.

Protecting Baggage

It is not uncommon for luggage to be separated from its owner. It is essential that you place clear labels inside and outside your bags, showing your full name, as well as addresses both in the U.S. and abroad. Choose a bright, easily recognizable sticker for your bag so it will be immediately identifiable to you at a distance. Choose your luggage carefully. Thieves may target new or expensive luggage. Overseas flights often include minimal insurance coverage for passengers' belongings. You may wish check with your travel agent to determine if insurance is included and/or consider purchasing additional insurance coverage for loss or damage. Do not carry all of your belongings in one bag. Never pack essential items such as required documents or medications in your checked luggage. Never leave your luggage unattended while you are traveling.

Trip Cancellation & Baggage Insurance

Trip cancellation and baggage insurance is optional. Some students choose to purchase insurance to cover their personal belongings while they are abroad. Some homeowner's insurance policies may cover loss of personal property while abroad. If you have homeowner's insurance in your own name or are considered a dependent of your parents and they have homeowner's insurance, check with your insurance carrier to determine if this coverage is available to you. Most insurance companies will require a copy of the police report filed at the time of loss or theft before they will consider a claim. It is in your best interest to pack light, and do not take expensive items. If you must take any expensive items with you, you should consider insuring those items prior to your departure.

"Secret Pocket"

"Secret Pockets" or "travel pouches" are known by many names. They are generally a small pocket made of fabric, sometimes waterproof, that you wear under your clothing. There are different types of "secret pockets" including ones designed to go around your waist or ankle or hang from your neck. In selecting one or more of the types of "secret pockets" you should consider the

ease of access to your items verses the ease of concealing your valuables. Generally, a waist pouch is more secure and harder to steal or "pickpocket" than the neck variety. Important items such as your passport, traveler's checks and credit cards should be kept in your "secret pocket." "Secret pockets" are available from most department and luggage stores. Purses and waist pouches are easily stolen and not recommended for truly valuable documents.

Shipping Items Ahead

It is safer and easier to take your belongings with you, but some students, especially if they wish to travel before their program begins, may wish to ship some of their belongings ahead. Consult your program staff to see if this is possible or advisable. Mailing is one of the cheapest shipping methods. If you decide to mail packages from the U.S., you should time their arrival after your own. Before you send a parcel, contact the postal service for information on specifications concerning size, weight, and packing materials. Keep a list of everything you pack for your own use as well as for the customs declaration. Packages marked "Used Personal Effects" with a low declared value should not be dutiable, but postal services in many foreign countries charge for delivery to your home. Books can be shipped at a lower rate, so pack them separately and mark the package "Book Post." Since books are heavy, they must be packed in smaller boxes. Information on shipping companies can be found in the yellow pages of your local telephone book or on the internet. It is important to realize that shipping prices and speed of arrival vary greatly. Again, packing light is always recommended.

Jet Lag

When you make a large time change, it is normal to feel disorientated and to have trouble sleeping during the first few nights. You can minimize the impact of jet lag by drinking liquids to avoid dehydration. Alcohol will further dehydrate you during your flight. The effects of alcohol can be much greater on an airplane. Alcohol can cause joint swelling and make it harder to adjust to time changes. It is also good to try to stretch and walk around a little if possible during your flight.

Taxes

If you will be studying abroad during the spring term, it is important to remember that your U.S. tax return will be due while you are out of the country. You should make arrangements to complete this process before you depart. Those living abroad may request an extension on the deadline for filing federal income tax. If you do not request an extension or will be out of the country beyond the extension deadline, you will need to contact the U.S. Consulate or Embassy in your host country for information on your tax obligations. It is your responsibility to contact the IRS to assure compliance with all U.S. tax laws.

Absentee Voting

If you are U.S. citizen, registered voter, and eligible to vote, you may vote from abroad. You will need to check with your local city or town hall to obtain information on receiving and submitting an Absentee Ballot.

Dual Citizenship

Different countries have varying laws concerning dual citizenship. Some countries may consider you a citizen of that country if you were born there, one of your parents are from that country, if you are married to a citizen of that country, or if you are a naturalized citizen of the U.S. If any of

these circumstances apply to you, you will need to clarify your status with that country's embassy or consulate before you leave. Some countries have compulsory military service or other requirements for their citizens. If you do not wish to be subject to those requirements, you will need to determine your status before you leave the U.S.

Finances

Budgeting

In addition to fluctuating exchange rates and differing costs of living abroad, individuals typically have different spending patterns. A good way to calculate how much money you may need is to talk to students who have recently returned from the program or country where you plan to study. An estimate of the cost of each program is available from the Office of International Programs. Cost estimates generally include program fees, airfare, living expenses, personal expenses and other costs normally associated with participating in the programs.

One of the hardest questions we are asked is, "How much spending money do I need for my program abroad?" It is not true that the more money you have the more you will enjoy your trip. Rather, ask how to take advantage of the opportunities the program offers you and how to allocate the funds you have at your disposal. Keep these variables in mind as you build your personal budget:

1. The dollar can fluctuate sharply.
2. Keep a short record of your expenses here to help prepare a budget. How much do you spend on entertainment? How much on personal items? (i.e., shampoo, soap, laundry)
3. What are some of the expenses that are unique to study and travel abroad?
 - ___A. SOUVENIRS
 - ___B. WEEKEND TRIPS (those not scheduled as group outings)
 - ___C. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION Taxis, buses, subways, etc. In some cities, mass transportation is a bargain.
 - ___D. RECREATION
 - ___E. POSTAGE

Students typically spend more in the first few weeks abroad as they learn their way around and buy what they need to get settled. It takes a few days to adjust to a new currency and understand its value. You will quickly learn the best inexpensive restaurants, shops and how to obtain student discounts for concerts, movies and other activities. Program staff and other students can be a valuable source of information on how to obtain the best deals on necessary items.

Accessing Your Money Overseas

The UNLV International Programs Office recommends that you have at least three options to access money, such as an ATM card, a credit card, and traveler's checks. A 'backup' or 'emergency' credit card that you store in a safe place is also advisable. It is not recommended that you carry more cash than you think you will need, or more than you can afford to lose.

Traveler's Checks

Traveler's checks are one of the safest ways to keep a cash reserve. Most major traveler's checks are widely used abroad and may be refunded if they are lost or stolen. Students can also obtain traveler's checks in foreign currency if they feel that the current exchange rate makes it worthwhile to do so. Most banks, post offices, airport currency exchanges, large hotel and tourist stores will accept or exchange traveler's checks, but exchange rates vary considerably. It is worth doing a little research to find the most favorable rate. When you buy traveler's checks, give some thought to the denominations that will be most useful. While traveling, you may prefer smaller amounts—perhaps \$50 checks. For regular living expenses, once you are established at your program location, larger amounts might be more useful. Always keep a record of transactions. Replacing traveler's checks is a complex process but it is possible if you keep a record of the numbers on your traveler's checks and a list of the checks you have already used. Be careful how you carry these and other important documents. A thief in possession of your passport might be able to cash your checks. Never countersign your traveler's checks until you are cashing them. You will need to have your passport or other acceptable form of identification to cash your traveler's checks. American Express is now offering a Travel Funds card as an alternative to traveler's checks. Travel Funds cards are similar to pre-paid credit cards. You can find more information at www.americanexpress.com.

Currency Exchange

Each time you cash a traveler's check or exchange money from one currency to another, whether dollars to euros or dollars to bahts, you will be charged a fee. Try not to cash more money into a particular currency than you think you will use. Banks usually give the best rate of exchange and have lower service charges. Currency exchange services can also be found in most railway stations and airports but often at slightly poorer rates. Generally, hotels and restaurants offer less favorable exchange rates and may have high service charges. Many exchange houses have a set fee for exchanging up to a certain amount of money. If, for example, you are charged a \$5 fee to exchange \$20 or \$200, you should consider the fee structure as part of deciding how much money you will exchange each time. It is wise to have some of the local currency with you when you first arrive abroad. If you arrive on a weekend or at night, banks and other exchange sources may be closed. Remember that exchange sources may have lengthy lunch breaks or unexpected closing hours.

Cash

Do not travel with large sums of cash. Do not carry any amount of cash that you cannot afford to lose.

Credit Cards

Major credit cards, such as Visa, MasterCard, and American Express are accepted in most countries. Low-budget stores and hotels are unlikely to accept credit cards, but it is very useful to carry one for emergency use. Check with your credit card company to assure that you can draw cash in local currency from banks that honor the card. Also, purchases and other transactions using a charge card may obtain an advantageous exchange rate or involve additional fees. You should contact your credit card company to determine exchange rates and fees. Further information on the Visa card may be found in the INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL GUIDE, from Chase Visa, P.O. Box 511, 1400 Union Turnpike, New Hyde Park, N.Y. 11042. Information on American Express services, including the TRAVELER'S COMPANION, which lists all full-service offices around

the world, is available from American Express Travel Service offices (1-800-528-4000). American Express also has GLOBAL ASSIST, a 24-hr emergency medical and legal referral worldwide hotline (1-800-333-2639; from outside the U.S., 0101-2022-554-2639). You may need to notify your credit card company of your plans to study abroad in order to avoid having your credit card canceled. Credit card companies may cancel credit cards when there is a significant change in your spending pattern in order to limit credit fraud in the event your card is lost or stolen. Notifying your credit card company of your plans in advance should prevent this from happening.

Keep records of credit card numbers and customer service numbers. You should keep a copy of this information with you but separate from your credit cards. You may wish to leave a second copy of this information with a trusted friend or family member in the U.S. In the event that you lose your credit cards, you will need to call and cancel them. You may wish to contact your credit card company ahead of time to find out what information you would need to cancel your credit cards and obtain new ones if necessary. Pre-paid credit cards are also becoming more common. If you are interested in obtaining a pre-paid credit card, contact any major credit card company. As with any card, make sure you understand the terms of the card and the process of canceling and/or replacing the card in the event it is lost or stolen. Do not carry credit cards you will not be using on your trip. U.S. gas cards and department store credit cards should be left at home.

ATM Cards/Debit Cards

In many countries it is possible to obtain money directly from a U.S. bank account by using overseas ATM machines. Ask your bank for a listing of cash machine locations. Personal "PIN" numbers may vary by region. If necessary, your bank can issue you a PIN number for international use. Some ATM machines and banks may charge to use their services.

Most banks are now offering "debit cards" in place of ATM cards. You should discuss your ability to use your debit card abroad with your bank as well as procedures for canceling your card should you lose it. It is our understanding that debit cards are not subject to the same consumer fraud protection laws as regular credit cards. In some cases you can be held liable for any account transactions that take place between the time that you lose your card and you report it stolen. You should discuss your rights with your bank prior to taking your card abroad with you. If you would prefer to have a regular ATM card, you will need to request it well before your scheduled departure. You should contact your bank prior to departure to find out what information you would need to cancel your ATM or Debit card and obtain a new one if you should lose your card. You will need to check with your bank to determine if the card is cleared for international use. Also, check with your U.S. bank to determine there will be any fees assessed for using your ATM or Debit card in a foreign country.

Bank Accounts

It is not possible or feasible for most students to open a bank account in most countries. It may take several weeks for checks in U.S. currency to clear and there may be substantial service charges. Your on-site director can offer advice on your local banking options.

China

Debit/ATM cards are becoming more useful in China. Students have found you can get money easily from many ATM machines. Credit cards are not as widely used and there may be an ex-

tra charge for using a credit card. Cash advances from credit or debit cards may be obtained from some large banks but fees are generally high. Students have also indicated that some Chinese owned businesses (airlines, trains, hotels) may do not accept U.S. credit cards. Read your USAC program updates or consult with the UNLV International Programs staff for the most current information.

Working Abroad

In most countries, you may not work while on a student visa. The CIEE handbook on work abroad and other information is available from the UNLV International Programs resource library.

Work Permits

Students are not advised to work while studying abroad. Students cannot participate fully in the program and work as well. Full-time students who plan to stay in some countries after the end of their programs may obtain a work permit from the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE). For more information consult the International Programs Office library for the work abroad program pamphlet, or refer to the Work-Study Travel Abroad Whole World Handbook in the International Programs Office library. It is illegal for a U.S. citizen to work in a foreign country without a work permit. Violators may be deported. Work permits are difficult to obtain for most countries.

Financial Aid

To contact Student Financial Services:

Gina Eastman

UNLV Student Financial Services

Student Services Complex Room 232

4505 Maryland Pkwy Box 452016

Las Vegas, NV 89154-2016

(702)895-3424, fax (702)895-1353

gina.eastman@unlv.edu

Most of our students receive some sort of assistance through the Student Financial Services Office. Student Financial Services considers your expected expenses in determining your eligibility for aid. You may be eligible for more aid or different types of aid to study abroad than you would be eligible to receive if you were to stay at UNLV or your home school. Many non-UNLV students studying abroad and enrolling through UNLV apply for financial aid through UNLV. Students must be aware that their financial aid may be revoked if they withdraw from the study abroad program. If your financial aid has already disbursed for the term and you withdraw from the program, you may be responsible for repaying any aid received. It is your responsibility to know and meet all financial aid deadlines and requirements.

If you are a financial aid student:

1. Check with financial aid prior to departure. Complete all required documentation prior to

your departure. The UNLV Office of International Programs cannot accept responsibility for your financial aid application. You must complete all required documentation for financial aid prior to departure. If you do not understand the financial aid process, are having problems, or are not sure if you have provided all documentation, please contact Gina Eastman, Financial Aid Coordinator, UNLV Student Financial Services. Your financial aid is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

2. The three most important elements of financial aid are – the Award Activation Letter (login, view and accept your awards), the Promissory notes (activate online), and the Loan Orientation (also online). If you are not sure if you are subject to this requirement or if you are not a regular UNLV student, please contact the financial aid office.

3. If you will be leaving a limited power of attorney document with a trusted friend or family member, please provide a copy of the limited power of attorney form and the name, address and phone number of your limited power of attorney to the Office of International Programs and to the study abroad contact in Student Financial Services.

4. If you have questions regarding the legal implications of assigning someone limited or general power of attorney, please consult an attorney.

5. Change your address with the UNLV Registrar's Office to the address where you would like any checks and other important documents to be mailed. UNLV will also deposit your refund directly into your bank account. The form and directions can be found at http://cashiering.unlv.edu/documents/direct_deposit_refund.pdf

6. If you think there is any problem with your financial aid after you depart, email, call or fax the UNLV International Programs Office immediately.

7. Check with the Student Financial Services Office to determine what you will need to do to continue receiving aid after your return. If you will be studying abroad during the spring semester, you may need to make arrangements to submit your financial aid documents early or while you are away. The primary period for applying for financial aid is December to February for the following academic year. If you will be attending a study abroad program for the academic year, you should plan to complete the FAFSA on-line while you are away. The address for accessing the FAFSA and other financial aid documents on-line is <http://financialaid.unlv.edu/>. If you will be studying abroad during the spring and plan to study abroad or attend courses at UNLV during the summer, you should notify financial aid early in the spring semester.

Financial Aid For Study Abroad Students

- Students participating in UNLV sponsored study abroad programs may qualify for financial aid if they are admitted to UNLV.
- Deadline and priority dates required by UNLV Student Financial Services must be followed and every attempt should be made to proceed well in advance of those dates in order to allow ample time to process your financial aid. In many cases, your aid will disburse after you have left the country. Please discuss this possibility with Gina Eastman and the Office of International Programs to determine the best method to access your financial aid if it may disburse after you leave. It is possible to apply after the priority deadline for financial aid. Please contact Gina Eastman if you will be applying for financial aid after the published deadlines.
- You must enroll in a minimum of six credits to receive financial aid during the summer. Twelve credits is considered full-time enrollment during the summer and during the regular semesters.
- Study abroad costs may be higher than UNLV costs. Your financial aid eligibility is based upon

your class standing and financial need. Full program costs are rarely met by financial aid. The majority of your financial assistance may be loans and you should be cautious as to the obligations you assume. At the time of this publication the maximum allowable academic year amounts for the Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan are \$2625 for freshmen, \$3500 for sophomores, and \$5500 for juniors and seniors. In addition, if you are an independent student, you may be eligible to borrow \$4000 as a freshman or sophomore, and \$5000 if you are a junior or senior, under the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan program. An additional source of funding for dependent students may be the Direct PLUS (parent loan) program. Parents may borrow the cost of attendance minus any financial aid you may receive.

- All students must meet satisfactory progress requirements in order to continue receiving financial aid--including loans and scholarships.

Deadline Dates And Requirements

February:

Meet with a counselor to discuss funding options. UNLV International Program Scholarship applications are due in February for summer programs.

UNLV Scholarship/Grant-in-aid applications and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be received by February 1 to receive priority consideration.

Apply for your study abroad program if you have not already done so. Student Financial Services will not re-evaluate your financial aid eligibility until you have formally enrolled in a UNLV sponsored study abroad program.

March:

UNLV International Programs Scholarship applications are due in March for fall programs.

July:

July 15 is the approximate date you should have completed the financial aid process for a fall study abroad departure.

September:

Meet with a counselor to discuss funding options. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) if you have not already done so. Apply for your study abroad program if you have not already done so. Student Financial Services will not re-evaluate your financial aid eligibility until you have formally enrolled in a UNLV sponsored study abroad program.

December:

December 15 is the approximate date you should have completed the financial aid process for a spring study abroad departure.

Summer:

March:

Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) if you have not already done so.

April:

Meet with a counselor to discuss funding options. Complete the Summer Supplement Application for Financial Aid. Apply for your study abroad program if you have not already done so. Student Financial Services will not re-evaluate your financial aid eligibility until you have formally enrolled in a UNLV sponsored study abroad program.

May:

May 15 is the approximate date you should have completed the financial aid process for a spring study abroad departure.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available to qualified students from the Office of International Programs for UNLV sponsored study abroad programs (including USAC programs). Applicants must have a minimum GPA of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale. The UNLV International Programs & USAC Scholarships are based on academic merit, an essay, and participation in a UNLV sponsored study abroad program. Scholarship applications are due in February for summer or in March for fall scholarships and in October for spring scholarships. The exact application deadlines vary and are printed on the scholarship application form. Scholarships awards are based on the estimated cost of the study abroad program and how your application is "ranked" by the scholarship committee. Please submit a scholarship application for each term you intend to study abroad. Applications are available from the Office of International Programs or online: <http://internationalprograms.unlv.edu/subdocs/schl.htm>. Applications must be received in the UNLV Office of International Programs no later than 5 p.m. P.S.T. on the deadline day. Late applications will not be accepted. UNLV International Programs Scholarships are contingent upon successful completion of the study abroad program and continued eligibility for scholarships. Students who do not attend study abroad programs, withdraw from the program prior to the end of the term, fail to complete enough credits to be considered "full-time" for the enrollment period or change their enrollment to "audit" may be required to reimburse the amount of their scholarship to the UNLV International Programs Scholarship Fund. Students must also be aware that there is a maximum amount of aid each student can receive each academic term. If you are awarded a scholarship and your "awards" exceed the maximum amount allowed, your other financial aid may be reduced accordingly. If you think this policy may apply to you, please consult the UNLV Student Financial Services Office for more information.

It is also recommended that you speak to Student Financial Services staff, 702-895-3424 for more information about receiving financial aid through UNLV. Other UNLV administered scholarships applicability to study abroad programs is determined by policies established by the Student Financial Services Scholarship Office and the funding source of the scholarship. Please contact UNLV Student Financial Services for more information.

Satisfactory Progress

Full-time students must complete a minimum of 24 credits each academic year to remain eligible for financial aid for the following year. If you receive a failing grade, an incomplete, audit or withdraw from a class, these credits cannot be counted toward your credit requirement. Students attending transfer credit programs or programs that are on the Southern Hemisphere schedule should contact Student Financial Services to determine how this requirement will affect their aid eligibility and financial aid awards. **Students in these programs must be aware that their transcripts may arrive after the deadlines to prove satisfactory progress for the year.** Aid can be reinstated after the deadlines but students must discuss with financial aid how this will affect the timing of their financial aid for the following terms.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals

Students are required by federal regulations to complete their degree within a certain time frame and a certain number of credits. Undergraduate students who have completed 144 or more credits (60 credits for graduate students) must have a Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal approved by Student Financial Services in order to continue receiving financial aid. If you have already received an approved appeal but will be continuing beyond the credits approved, you will need to update your appeal and have it approved. Students admitted for a

second Bachelor's or Master's degree are required to have a Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress appeal approved by the student Financial Services Office in order to receive financial aid.

Work-Study

Work-study positions are generally not available abroad. Work-study aid is usually converted to loans. You should consult with Student Financial Services to convert your work-study to loans and to retain your eligibility for work-study when you return from study abroad.

Power Of Attorney

Some students who will be receiving financial aid or who will be having someone here in the U.S. manage their finances while they are abroad may choose to obtain a general or limited power of attorney. A general power of attorney authorizes a specific person to act on your behalf in most legal capacities. A limited power of attorney gives legal authorization to a specific person to handle specified legal matters on your behalf. A person with this authorization may perform specified duties on your behalf such as cash an income tax refund check or assist in financial aid matters. Standard forms are available at most banks or office supply stores. Some banks require their own power of attorney form rather than a general form. If you choose to authorize someone to perform banking transactions on your behalf, you may need to sign the form and later cancel the document in the presence of a bank official. If you have questions regarding the legal implications of assigning limited or general power of attorney to someone, it is advised that you consult an attorney.

Planning Ahead

Students should be prepared to pay for their plane ticket with funds other than those being awarded by financial aid for the study abroad program. In addition, it is recommended that students have enough money to pay for the first month of housing and living expenses in case their financial aid disburses after the start of the program. If you are applying for financial aid after the priority deadlines, you must have enough money in addition to your aid to pay your housing and living expenses at the program site until your financial aid disburses. Financial aid has lengthy processing requirements. It is in your best interest to plan ahead. When your financial aid disburses, it will be applied to your UNLV Student Information System (SIS) account. As a service to you, if you have an outstanding balance with UNLV or USAC, your fees may be automatically be deducted from your financial aid. Any financial aid you receive in excess of the amount you owe may be issued to you as a refund. If you do not owe any fees, the entire amount of your financial aid will be refunded to you. Your refund check will automatically be mailed to you at the address on file with the Registrar's Office. Ultimately, fee payment is your responsibility. It is up to you to make sure your fees are paid in full and according to published deadlines.

USAC Fee Payment

In USAC programs, a \$300 deposit is due at the time of application and an \$800 payment is due at the times listed in the USAC catalog. If you supply proof that you will be receiving sufficient financial aid, USAC will waive the remainder of your program fees until your financial aid disburses. Occasionally the USAC office may adjust a student's bill after your financial aid has disbursed. It is your responsibility at the end of your study abroad program to determine if your fees have been paid in full. Although UNLV offers the service of posting your fees on the UNLV system and paying USAC on your behalf, it is your responsibility to make sure that your fees, bal-

ance, and payments are correct. Students attending USAC programs for the academic year may request to be billed by semester. If you would like your fees to be billed each semester, please contact the UNLV Office of International Programs and the USAC office in advance of the payment deadlines or the disbursement of financial aid. If you need to make any special payment arrangements, contact USAC directly. If you are not on financial aid, your program fees are due prior to your departure unless you have made other arrangements with USAC.

While You Are Abroad

On Arrival

Don't be afraid or embarrassed to seek help. Tourist and information centers can be found in most airports, train stations, and in large cities. Check in with your on-site program director as scheduled. You should also have a pre-planned time to contact your family to confirm your arrival.

Orientations

Orientations are provided at each program site. If you are not traveling with the group, you must arrive at the program site prior to the start of the orientation. Orientations are required.

Host Campus & Countries

Some of the standard services provided at U.S. universities are not available in other countries. Most host campuses do not have shuttle services for evening transportation or other support programs. Please read the USAC program updates and attend all program orientations for more details regarding your specific program site. If you or your family has specific needs or questions regarding services at your program site, please contact the UNLV Office of International Programs.

Culture Shock

Many researchers believe that culture shock is marked by four basic phases.

- 1) The first phase is sometimes referred to as "Euphoria." This is the tourist phase. You are excited to be living in a new place. At first glance, the people and way of life may not seem significantly different from your home environment.
- 2) After the initial excitement, you may start noticing more and more dissimilarities between your new life and life at home. Initial curiosity and enthusiasm may turn to irritation, frustration, anger, or depression. Symptoms of this phase can include homesickness, boredom, and withdrawal. You may want to associate exclusively with others from the U.S., experience a tendency to stereotype local people, and avoid contact with them. Fortunately, most people experience only a few of these symptoms, and usually to a mild degree.
- 3) The next stage is marked by gradual adjustment. Your perspective changes over time and you begin to adapt. Once you identify some of the cultural clues and cues, you will feel more at ease. Your self-confidence increases, and you realize you have some control over your situation.
- 4) The final phase is adaptation or biculturalism. Full adaptation has taken place when you are able to function in two cultures with confidence. You realize that you enjoy some of the customs and cultural features that may have bothered you at one time. You may not realize just how well you have adapted until you return to the U.S., only to find that you experience "return culture

shock" related to your new world view.

Appropriate Dress

In many locations it is wise to be aware of culturally appropriate dress. Many type of attire acceptable in the U.S. (piercings, bare midriff, short skirts, etc...) will bring unwanted attention in some countries. In some locations, certain types of attire may be not allowed on campus. It is important to read all program materials sent to you for your particular location and to be attentive at the on-site orientations provided by USAC programs.

Housing

It is important for students to realize that the standard of living differs by country. Most buildings and facilities do not meet U.S. standards. The quality of housing, including home stays, apartments, and dormitories varies greatly. Housing comfort, safety, and health codes do not meet U.S. standards in many countries.

Family Life

- Accept differences between your host family and your family at home with an open mind. There will be a period of adjustment, but offering to help with washing dishes or other family chores indicates your desire to enter into family life.
- A small gift for your family is a good way to begin your homestay. Some suggestions: U.S. calendars, books on the U.S., chocolate, etc.
- Do not use the host family's telephone unless your family agrees to let you do so. It is very expensive to use the telephone in many countries since there may be a charge even for local calls. In addition, phone bills may not be itemized, and there may be no way to determine the cost of your calls. To keep in touch with your family in the U.S., you may want to arrange a specific time to have them call you regularly.
- Use electricity and hot water conservatively. Utility costs are very high. Be guided by the habits of the family members. In some cases, if the hot water supply is depleted, there will be no hot water available for the rest of the day.
- If your family offers to do your laundry, do not expect them to wash every day and be reasonable with the amount of laundry you give them. Also keep in mind that many homes do not have a dryer. If you give them clothes to wash, you cannot expect to wear those clothes the next day.
- If you are given permission to wash your clothes, ask for information on how to best use their machine and laundry products.
- If you smoke, check with the family regarding rules for smoking in the house. Non-smokers should be aware that, in general, more people smoke in foreign countries than in the United States.
- Talk to your family about their preferences for your entering and leaving their household, especially late at night. They may prefer you to knock to be let in, or they may allow you to have a key.
- Always inform the family of your plans and of any changes in your plans.
- Leave an itinerary of your travel plans with your on-site program director and host family.
- Check with your host family before giving out their phone number, address, or inviting guests over.

- Do not have overnight guests without checking with your roommates or host family.
- Be considerate. Speak to your family when misunderstandings occur. You are just as foreign to your family as they are to you.
- Be cautious of wiring in showers and do not touch any surface that may conduct electricity when your hands or body are wet.
- If you do not understand how to use appliances found in the home, ask for instructions.
- Be aware of the need to maintain adequate ventilation in enclosed rooms, and be especially cautious when using gas appliances or heaters. Battery operated carbon monoxide detectors are readily available at hardware and home improvement stores in the U.S.
- If you have any concerns regarding your host family, please inform your on-site program director and the UNLV Office of International Programs.

Residence Hall and Apartment Life

- If you will be living in an apartment or residence hall, you will need to take sheets, pillowcases, bath towels, and washcloths. Accommodations normally have a limited supply of cooking utensils, cutlery, and dishes. USAC students should read the "Update" materials for specific program site information.
- Accept differences between your roommates and yourself with an open mind. There will be a period of adjustment, but being friendly and courteous will aid in the process. Roommates are normally a mix of local students, program participants, and/or other international students.
- If there is a phone in your apartment or room, it is important to remember that it is very expensive to use the telephone in many countries since there may be a charge even for local calls. In addition, phone bills may not be itemized, and there may be no way to determine the cost of your calls. For long-distance calls you can make calls from a phone booth by using a phone card or credit card, in many locations students can purchase prepaid cell phones with long distance and international access. To keep in touch with your family in the U.S., you may want to arrange a specific time to have them call you regularly. You should discuss phone use and payment arrangements with your roommates prior to using the phone.
- Use electricity and hot water conservatively. Utility costs are very high and most people from other countries are generally more cautious about the use of water and power than people from the U.S. Be considerate of your roommates. In some cases, if the hot water supply is depleted, there will be no hot water available for the rest of the day.
- If you smoke, negotiate rules for smoking with your roommates. Non-smokers should be aware that, in general, many more people smoke in some foreign countries than in the United States.
- Leave an itinerary of your travel plans with your on-site program director.
- It is wise to negotiate rules for giving out your phone number, address, and inviting guests over before it becomes an issue. Do not have overnight guests without checking with your roommates and consulting with your resident director's staff.
- Be respectful of your roommates' privacy and cultural differences.
- Be considerate. Speak to your roommates when misunderstandings occur. You are just as foreign to them as they are to you.
- Some dorms have coed bathrooms and shower areas. Although toilet and shower stalls are private, the bathrooms may be coed.
- Be cautious of wiring in showers and do not touch any surface that may conduct electricity when your hands or body are wet.
- Be aware of the need to maintain adequate ventilation in enclosed rooms, and be especially cau-

tious when using gas appliances or heaters. Battery operated carbon monoxide detectors are readily available at hardware and home improvement stores in the U.S.

- If you do not understand how to use appliances found in the apartment or dorms, ask for instructions.
- If you have any concerns regarding your living arrangements, please inform your on-site program director and the UNLV Office of International Programs.

Non-Program-Sponsored Housing

Students participating in UNLV sponsored study abroad programs are not required to live in program-sponsored housing. However, if you choose to make your own housing arrangements, any consequences for doing so are your responsibility. Laws vary in different countries. You should make sure that you understand any documents you sign, such as rental agreements.

Health & Safety

You should take some time to understand the health conditions in your host country before you leave. Regardless of where you go, it will take some time for your body to adjust to changes in food, water, altitude, weather conditions, etc. The availability of medications and health care in your host country may differ greatly from the U.S. You can minimize your risk of illness or injury by being aware of the health issues in the countries you will visit. Travelers need to be careful to avoid excessive exposure to heat or cold, drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration. Avoid alcoholic beverages, coffee, tea, or caffeinated sodas. Get plenty of sleep. You will most likely be walking considerably more than you normally would at home. Wear comfortable shoes that support your feet.

Register with the U.S. Embassy

If you have not already done so, register with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate through the State Department's travel registration website <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>. Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact you in an emergency.

Personal Safety

Nothing is more important than your safety! Use care and caution. The following suggestions are offered to help you have a safe trip. Protect your valuables from pickpockets and purse-snatchers by remaining alert and cautious. Conceal your valuables in a money belt or satchel under your clothing. Do not carry your wallet in back or coat pockets and avoid carrying a purse or shoulder bag. Avoid offers of "bargain" accommodations, rides or baggage handling. Official taxi stands are generally located outside airports and stations.

Please take the following precautions, even if you will be in an area where no terrorist or anti-American activities seem likely to occur. Before you leave, inform yourself of any potential conflicts and trouble spots in the countries you plan to visit, be aware of current events while you are abroad, and heed special instructions provided by your program staff.

When planning your trip abroad, take steps to protect yourself from crime or theft. Crimes against travelers are a growing problem worldwide. Tourists are particularly targeted by criminals because they are usually carrying cash and are often easy to distract. Any traveler can become a victim of crimes such as pick pocketing, robberies, sexual assaults, and muggings.

- Remain friendly but be cautious about discussing personal matters, your itinerary or program. Be careful about divulging information about yourself, your fellow students and your study program to strangers.

- Find a place to stay before dark.

- Do not leave personal or business papers in your hotel room when traveling.

- Watch for people following you or "loiterers" observing your comings and goings.

- Inform your program administrator of your travel plans. Keep them informed if you change your plans.

- Avoid predictable times and routes of travel and report any suspicious activity to local police, and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

- Select your own taxi cabs at random. Don't take a vehicle that is not clearly identified as a taxi or that does not have a license plate. Compare the face of the driver with the one posted on his or her license.

- Travel in small groups with other program participants.

- Be sure of the identity of visitors before opening the door of your hotel room or residence.

Refuse unexpected packages.

- It is important to realize that most cultures are very different from ours. Memorize the emergency numbers in the countries you visit and keep change for the phone and cab money with you at all times. Keep a mental note of safe havens, such as police stations, hotels, hospitals.

- Be especially careful in helping to maintain security at your residence and other program buildings. Keep your residence area locked.

- Speak the local language whenever possible.

- Keep a low profile in demeanor and dress. College or fraternity shirts or sweaters, baseball caps and U.S. athletic shoes identify you readily as a U.S. citizen. In many locations, shorts or short dresses are not considered appropriate dress for adults.

- Dressing in a revealing or unusual manner may draw unwanted attention to you. Do not dress expensively, wear expensive looking jewelry, or carry expensive cameras or other electronic equipment. Do not attract attention to yourself through careless behavior.

- Be discreet and polite, heeding signs and regulations in public places. Do not take pictures of police or military institutions.

- Do not impair your judgment by consuming excessive amounts of alcohol or by using drugs.

- Do not agree to meet a person whom you do not know in a non-public place. Do not leave a public place with anyone you do not know.

- When traveling, do not leave your luggage unattended. Do not agree to carry on or check any luggage or other items for anyone. If you see unattended luggage or packages, report it to airport, train or bus station authorities immediately.

- Know local laws. Laws and systems of justice are not the same in each country. You are subject to the laws of the countries you visit. Do not assume that something legal in the U.S. will be legal while you are in another country.

- As is wise anywhere, do not walk alone at night or in remote and unfamiliar areas. Stay near busy and well-lit areas. Do not try to cross through parks, parking lots, or other deserted areas, especially after dark.

- Always be aware of the location of your closest exit.
- Be especially careful when crossing streets or waiting to cross. Pedestrians do not have the right of way in most parts of the world.
- Do not hitchhike.
- Do not travel alone.
- Leave word with the program director, host family and friends of your travel plans, detailing your companions, itinerary, mode of travel, and dates of departure and return.
- Be cautious when entering public restrooms or any isolated area.
- Don't get involved in controversial discussions/situations. Avoid street gatherings or demonstrations, and public events characterized by crowd excitement. If a crowd is gathering or you feel uncomfortable, leave the area.
- Be wary of beggars. Many times the beggars, even the children, are expert pickpockets or thieves. Giving money is a personal decision. Use common sense and leave immediately if you feel uncomfortable.
- Do not put money in a wallet in your back pocket. Do not carry anything in a purse or "fanny pack" that you cannot afford to lose. Never count your money in public. Carry as little cash as possible.
- Always be alert for distractions that may be staged by pickpockets, luggage thieves, or purse-snatchers.
- Keep briefcases and purses in view or in hand when using telephones, if you are using a credit card, block the view of the keypad when entering the number.
- Use discretion and common sense when using ATM machines. Many ATMs are located outdoors or in isolated areas. Use ATM machines during daylight hours. Guard your pin number and do not let anyone distract you while you are using an ATM machine.
- Consider traveling with an extra credit card to use for emergencies only. Keep this credit card or other access to money separate from your other finances.
- If you must verbally give your credit card or calling card numbers, do so quietly. Use your cards discreetly and guard your account numbers and pin numbers.
- Avoid traveling in large groups. Groups of two or three draw less attention.
- Have a rendezvous point. If someone gets separated from the group, decide in advance where to go to meet.
- Take special care around tourist sites and possible terrorist targets, such as police stations, churches, synagogues, and airports. Unless it is an emergency, avoid identifiable U.S. institutions, such as embassies and other places where U.S. citizens and tourists typically gather.
- Inspect any gifts received in a foreign country before packing.
- Read the entire section on "Personal Safety" in this Handbook. Consult program directors for information on concerns specific to your program location.
- If you fall victim to crime, the U.S. Embassy is there to help you. Every embassy and consulate has a duty officer on-call around the clock to assist in an emergency. If you need emergency medical care, the duty officer will try to help you get in touch with a doctor or clinic. If you lose your passport, report the loss to the local police and to the nearest U.S. Embassy or consulate on the next business day to apply for a new one. If you have a police report, photos and proof of identification (or are accompanied by someone who can identify you), a new passport can often be issued the same day.
- For the most current information on international travel, call the State Department: (202) 647-5225 or visit their web site at: http://travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html. More information on

international travel can be found on the UNLV International Programs website: <http://internationalprograms.unlv.edu>.

- When traveling, check in with your airline as soon as possible and immediately progress through security clearance. Respond immediately to all questions asked by security personnel honestly and seriously. Do not joke about terrorism or hijacking, you may find yourself the object of much unwanted attention. NEVER carry packages, luggage, or any items for anyone you do not know well. Do not leave your luggage unattended, even for a moment. If you see any unattended luggage, leave the area and notify security personnel. Report anything suspicious to authorities.

How to Handle Money Safely

To avoid carrying large amounts of cash, exchange your travelers' checks only as you need currency. Countersign travelers' checks only in front of the person who will cash them. Do not flash large amounts of money when paying a bill. Make sure your credit card is returned to you after each transaction. Deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money, buy airline tickets or purchase souvenirs. Do not change money on the black market. If your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the local police. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance claims and as an explanation of your plight. After reporting missing items to the police, report the loss or theft of: travelers' checks to the nearest agent of the issuing company, credit cards to the issuing company, airline tickets to the airline or travel agent, passport to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Sanitation, Water & Disease

If you will be living in a rural area or visiting a country where sanitation systems are less developed there are precautions you can take to minimize your chances of becoming ill. The Atlanta Center for Disease Control (CDC) Traveler's Health website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> has current information on health issues. Of particular interest to travelers is the "Geographic Health Recommendations" and "Food & Water Precautions: Traveler's Diarrhea." Information can also be obtained by calling the CDC: (404) 332-4565.

Personal Health Conditions

You should take care of all foreseeable medical, dental, or optical needs before you go abroad. If you have allergies, reactions to certain medicines, or other unique medical problems, you may consider wearing a medical alert bracelet or carrying a similar warning. It is also in your best interest to notify the on-site director at your program site and your travel companions so that they can be prepared in case of emergency. If you have a medical condition that could be aggravated by conditions in your host country, consider carefully how you will deal with the problem overseas and discuss it with your doctor.

Physicians and Hospitals Abroad

Several private organizations provide listings of physicians abroad to international travelers. Membership in these organizations is generally free, although a donation may be requested. Membership entitles you to a number of traveler's medical aids, including a directory of physicians with their overseas locations, telephone numbers and doctors' fee schedules. The physicians are generally English-speaking and provide medical assistance 24 hours a day. The addresses of these medical organizations are in travel magazines or may be available from your travel agent. U.S. embassies and consulates abroad usually keep lists of physicians and hospitals in their

area. Major credit card companies may also provide the names of local doctors and hospitals abroad. For detailed information about physicians abroad, the authoritative reference is *the Directory of Medical Specialists*, published for the American Board of Medical Specialists and its 22 certifying member boards. The publication should be available in your local library. More medical information may be found in the Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs' brochure, [*Medical Information for Americans Traveling Abroad*](#), available by autofax service at 202-647-3000.

Relationships

For many students, participation in study abroad will be the first time they have been out of the United States. In general, it is encouraged that students attempt to make friends with other foreign students and locals at your program site. Many students report that these types of friendships are one of the most rewarding parts of studying abroad and that the friendships endure for many years after studying abroad. As a word of caution, it is important to remember that not everyone you meet will have your best interests in mind. Be wary of anyone wanting to make your acquaintance very quickly. Meet with people during the day, preferably with a friend or two of yours. Be wary of traveling or staying with people you have just met. Do not give out your address, phone number or program information to strangers. Do not ignore your instincts. If a situation or a person makes you feel uncomfortable, excuse yourself and leave.

Entering into intimate relationships should be approached with the same caution that you would use at home, and possibly more caution. The idea of a foreign romance may be very tempting but you should realize that cultural values and rules regarding dating and relationships may be very different than those you are accustomed to at home. Proceed with caution and realize that you will only be in your host country for a short amount of time. It is highly recommended that you take your time in getting familiar with your host country and anyone you consider dating before you enter into an intimate relationship. If you consider entering into this type of relationship, please read the sections below on Safe Sex & Condom Use, and HIV, AIDS & STDs or consult the CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>. It is important to remember that being in a foreign country will not protect you from the consequences of irresponsible behavior.

Safe Sex & Condom Use

Although UNLV is not advocating or condoning pre-marital sexual activity, we realize that some students may be sexually active. If you choose to be sexually active, ALWAYS use a LATEX condom. Except for abstinence, proper use of a latex condom with spermicide is believed to be the most effective prevention of the transmission of STDs. If you use condoms, you should follow the package directions carefully. If you have any questions about proper condom storage or use, please consult your health care provider. Students planning on using condoms should take an adequate supply with them. The condition, manufacturing and storage of condoms in some countries may be below U.S. standards.

HIV, AIDS & STDs

In general, it is recommended that you avoid injections, and blood transfusions. Diabetics are encouraged to bring a sufficient supply of needles and syringes with a prescription and doctor's authorization. Avoid acupuncture, dental work, ear piercing, body piercing, and tattooing if you are uncertain of sanitary conditions. If you choose to be sexually active, use good quality latex con-

doms. HIV exists in both heterosexual and homosexual populations around the world. According to the World Health Organization, well over 90% of adults newly infected with the HIV virus acquired the virus through heterosexual sex. Women represent 50% of all new HIV infections. For more information on AIDS, the CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> has a page on HIV/AIDS Prevention for travelers. Information can also be obtained by calling the CDC: (404) 332-4565. Other sexually transmitted diseases such as hepatitis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, herpes, and genital warts are much more easily transmitted than HIV. While condoms can reduce the chances of contracting an STD, you cannot be sexually active and totally eliminate the risk. It is in your best interest to use common sense and protect yourself from possible exposure to sexually transmitted diseases. If you think you may have been exposed to an STD, you should see a doctor as soon as possible.

Knowing your HIV Status

Living overseas in certain areas may present greater risks to those who have tested positive for the HIV virus. Some locations have limited medical facilities that may be unable to monitor the progress of infections. Knowing your HIV status will help you in planning your trip. If you decide to be tested, do so at a center that offers pre- and post-test counseling. The UNLV Student Health Center and the Clark County Health District offer HIV screening. You need to allow yourself two weeks to obtain your test results. Some countries require travelers to have had an HIV test in order to obtain certain types of visas. You will need to check to determine if the country you will be visiting requires an HIV test.

Mental Health Issues

The majority of students find study abroad to be a very positive experience. Very few experience serious adjustment problems beyond the typical mild culture shock and homesickness. Students who experience serious adjustment problems generally have brought ongoing emotional or mental health issues with them. If you are currently accessing professional help for emotional or mental health problems, you should consult your doctor or counselor before making the final decision to participate in education abroad. The combination of a new environment along with the loss of familiar support systems can be overwhelming. In leaving the country, you will not leave your problems behind. Above all, if you think you might need assistance, consult your counselor before departure. Contact your on-site director and the UNLV Office of International Programs if you wish to arrange counseling or need assistance while you are abroad. Please note that in some locations mental health services will not be available.

Racial & Ethnic Concerns

Students of every ethnic or racial background may encounter many different attitudes depending on where they travel. In general, students from the U.S. are easily recognizable. As a population of travelers, we tend to dress differently than the locals of most countries where we travel, we may speak loudly in groups, we carry backpacks, wear tennis shoes, and have that "American" accent. U.S. students from some racial and ethnic backgrounds, depending on the countries they visit, may be more or less visible than their fellow students. In general, all travelers should be prepared to deal with reduced anonymity and realize that in areas where there is not much of an ethnic mix or that does not see much tourism, you may be the object of attention that ranges from harmless curiosity to harassment. If you have any problems or concerns, please consult with your on-site program director. UNLV International Programs and USAC maintain lists of previous program par-

ticipants who have given their permission to have other students contact them regarding their study abroad experience. If you would like a list of students who have attended the program you have selected, please contact us.

Being Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgendered Abroad

Laws, as well as general attitudes, toward homosexuality, bisexuality and "alternative" lifestyles vary in other countries. Places you visit may be more or less liberal than what you have become accustomed to at home. For example, in some of the Arabic countries it is considered a capital crime to be gay, whereas in the Netherlands, gay marriage is legal. It is highly recommended that you fully research your destination prior to departure.

UNLV appreciates that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students considering studying abroad may want information or advice regarding their sexuality in relation to living abroad. Gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered students may want to consider the receptivity of a potential host country to LGBT students. As a prospective study abroad student you may also want to consider whether certain programs or universities will meet your needs or properly address your concerns. The following resources may be especially useful in the information gathering process. Students are also welcome to discuss their concerns with the UNLV International Programs staff. We are located in CBC B325. Below are some tips to help you prepare for your time abroad and your transition home when you return. Preparing for what to expect can make the difference between a wonderful experience and unpleasant or dangerous one. Before you go, it is important to be aware of culturally based definitions and ideas of sexual identity. Your identity as a GLBT person may effect your relationship with people in the country you intend to visit, your cultural adjustment and your overall study abroad experience. Part of your preparations to go abroad should include considering the larger context of acting on your GLBT identity while abroad.

- Cultures vary in terms of what is considered appropriate behavior. Sexual identities may be defined much differently than in the U.S. Learn as much as possible before you leave about the culture-specific norms of friendship and dating, sexual codes, styles of behavior and general attitudes. Does your GLBT identity conflict with your host country's religious or cultural values? If so, how will you reconcile your human rights with the cultural values of the host country? Behavioral signals (such as eye contact, a smile, touching, and physical proximity) may mean very different things in a foreign culture. For example, in some Middle Eastern countries hand-holding among males is an accepted way of demonstrating friendship and respect and does not necessarily imply homosexuality. Physical harassment, assault, and rape are issues that both women and men have to consider when interacting across cultures because of the chance of misinterpretations of behavior. Furthermore, the legal system in the country may not offer protection for the victim when issues of sexual orientation or other behavior is involved. Familiarize yourself with the laws of your host country. In some countries, where sexual orientation can be a basis for persecution under the law, you may need to hide your sexual identity for your own safety. Inform yourself about country-specific laws on age of consent, traveling with print or other materials on sexual orientation, etc. If necessary, are you willing to hide your sexual orientation? If the laws of the foreign country are not amiable to you, would you need to reconsider your options?
- Before you leave the US, we encourage you to learn as much as possible about the culture-

specific norms of friendship and dating between people of any sexual orientation. Inform yourself of important safe sex practices. See the [health](#) section of the UNLV Study Abroad Handbook for further information.

- Obtain country specific information on the support systems (meeting places, organizations, etc.) available in your host country. Are these appropriate for you? Do you visit similar places in your home community? If you are unable to locate or identify local organized support systems are will you be able to create your own support system?
- If you are out in the U.S., reflect on what it means to leave behind a support system of friends and family. Being GLBT abroad has been described by some as a second coming out.

Homestays/Housing Housing arrangements vary by program. Some programs offer homestays (live with a local family), shared apartments with local students or other program participants, or dormitories. Some housing situations may immerse student in the local host culture. It is important that all students are aware of and consider the implications of being identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender in the host-culture and how coming out might affect the host-family or roommate relationship.

Program Specific Information

While the study abroad office in the U.S. is inclusive of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered perspectives, the in-country staff and faculty may represent another office and culture that will present a different climate. Depending on this climate, you may need to look outside of the in-country study abroad office for support related to sexual identity issues or GLBT community information. Please see the resources section to locate resources in the city, country or region where you plan to study.

Coming Home

Study abroad is a time of personal growth and discovery. Many transformations in personal development and self-awareness can occur. Returning home can be as much or more of a time of transition than going abroad. Consider the following:

- If you choose to come out while abroad, how will this effect your return to friends and family? Will you be able to re-integrate these relationships upon your return or will you need to find a different supportive community?
- Be aware before you come back home of the ways in which you may have changed both independent of and as a result of your coming out.
- Consider the implications of coming out when back home. Often family and friends may want to dismiss your sexual orientation as temporary due to the experience abroad, rather than acknowledge a lifelong identity.

Additional resources can be found on our website:

<http://internationalprograms.unlv.edu/subdocs/glb.html>.

Advice to Women Travelers

Women traveling may encounter more difficulties than men. Never travel alone, and try to understand the role of the sexes in the culture in which you are traveling. Observe how the host coun-

try's women dress and act. What may be appropriate and friendly behavior in the U.S. may bring you unwanted attention in another culture. Remember to speak clearly and emphatically if you want to be left alone. Do not wear expensive clothing or jewelry. In many countries it is advisable to avoid wearing clothing that could be considered provocative. In some parts of the world, mere eye contact from a woman is considered flirtation. When you check into a hotel, notice who gets into the elevator with you. If you are uncomfortable, get off the elevator. Have your room key in hand so you won't have to fumble for it in a dark hallway. ALWAYS lock your door.

Public Transportation

Many of you will need to take public transportation within the city where your program is located in order to get to class or other program related activities. You may see other students who don't appear to be paying for buses or other public transportation. Be careful about copying them. Many people that you think don't pay have passes that they only show when asked by an inspector. This is especially true in Italy. If you get caught without a bus ticket or a pass, you can be taken off the bus or tram and taken to the police station. Consider a monthly pass if you choose to take the bus or subway every day. In the long run it is much cheaper than the fines, which can be 50 times the cost of a ticket. Plan to return home while public transportation is available or take a taxi. Only take official taxis.

Trains and Buses

Research your travel plans on the internet or through current travel guides. Many countries offer discounts to students and travel passes. As with any form of transportation be aware of your surroundings and guard your personal possessions. Be cautious when entering or exiting any public transportation. Trains and bus stations may have higher rates of crime than in the overall local community. Consult with your on-site program staff and other students about their travel experiences. Research and become informed about the regions you would like to see. The U.S. Department of State website has background information on travel safety.

Walking

Most students walk much more while living abroad than they do while in the U.S. Housing in many locations is within walking distance of the program sites. Traffic patterns, and respect for pedestrians vary widely by locale. Be extremely cautious when walking and avoid walking alone at night.

Safety on the Street

Use the same common sense traveling overseas that you would at home. Be especially cautious in or avoid areas where you are likely to be victimized. These include crowded subways, train stations, elevators, tourist sites, market places, festivals and marginal areas of cities. Don't use short cuts, narrow alleys or poorly-lit streets. Try not to travel alone at night. Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances. Keep a low profile and avoid loud conversations or arguments. Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers. Know how to use a pay telephone and have the proper change, card or token on hand. Learn a few phrases in the local language so you can signal your need for help, the police, or a doctor. Make a note of emergency telephone numbers you may need: police, fire, your hotel, and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Avoid scam artists. Beware of strangers who approach you, offering bargains or to be your guide. Beware of pickpockets. They often have an accomplice who will jostle you, ask you for directions or the time, point to something spilled on your clothing, or distract you by creating a disturbance. A child or even a woman carrying a baby can be a pickpocket. Beware of groups of vagrant children who create a distraction while picking your pocket. Wear the shoulder strap of your bag across your chest and walk with the bag away from the curb to avoid drive-by purse-snatchers. Try to seem purposeful when you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going. When possible, ask directions only from individuals in authority. If you are confronted, don't fight back. Give up your valuables. Your money and passport can be replaced, but you cannot.

Bicycles

In some program sites, students find bicycles to be the preferred method of transportation. UNLV and USAC do not recommend taking your bicycle with you. It is difficult and expensive. In locations where bicycles are common transportation, on-site program directors may be able to assist you in purchasing a used bicycle.

Safety in Your Hotel or Hostel

Keep your hotel door locked at all times. Meet visitors in the lobby or another location. Do not leave money and other valuables in your room while you are out. Use the hotel/hostel safe when possible. Let someone know when you expect to return if you are out late at night. If you are alone, do not get on an elevator if there is a suspicious-looking person inside. Read the fire safety instructions in your hotel room. Know how to report a fire. Be sure you know where the nearest fire exit and alternate exits are located. Count the doors between your room and the nearest exit. This could be a life saver if you have to crawl through a smoke-filled corridor.

Rail Passes

Eurail & Britrail passes ordinarily cannot be purchased abroad. You may buy them at travel agencies in the U.S. To obtain a Eurail pass, you will need to list your name as it appears on your passport and the date you are leaving the U.S. If you wish to wait until you are in Europe before deciding whether to buy a Eurail pass, a family member can make the purchase and send you the pass. Please review the types of Eurail & other travel passes carefully prior to making any purchases. Information books on Rail passes are available in the International Programs Resource Library.

Rental Cars

Some rental companies refuse to rent cars to people under 25. Age restrictions may vary by company or by country. Read your credit card company's car rental policy. Some credit card companies provide insurance if you charge the price of the rental car on your credit card. Your credit card company may provide the same insurance for free that the car rental company will also have available to purchase. If you plan to rent a car abroad, it may be in your best interest to reserve a car before you leave, and to find out what documentation will be necessary in the country you will be using the car (i.e. if you need proof of insurance, obtain it before you leave).

Safety When You Drive

If you rent a car, do not go for the exotic. Choose a type of vehicle commonly available locally. Where possible, ask that markings that identify it as a rental car be removed. Make certain the car

is in good repair. If available, choose a car with universal door locks and power windows, features that give the driver better control of access to the car. An air conditioner, when available, is also a safety feature, allowing you to drive with windows closed. Thieves can and do snatch purses through open windows of moving cars. Keep car doors locked at all times. Wear seat belts. Avoid driving at night. Do not leave valuables in the car. If you must carry things with you, keep them out of sight locked in the trunk. Do not park your car on the street overnight. If the hotel or municipality does not have a parking garage or other secure area, select a well-lit area. Never pick up hitchhikers. Don't get out of the car if there are suspicious looking individuals nearby. Drive away. Carjackers and thieves operate at gas stations, parking lots, in city traffic and along the highway. Be suspicious of anyone who hails you or tries to get your attention when you are in or near your car. Thieves particularly target rental cars and cars with out-of-town or foreign license plates.

Traffic

The UNLV Office of International Programs does not recommend that you attempt driving in a foreign country. Traffic and residential patterns in foreign cities often present challenges to visitors from the U.S. The location of business, cultural, and entertainment activities is often much more centralized. You should expect to contend with more congestion on public transportation, in restaurants, town centers and virtually everywhere you go. Vehicular traffic does not necessarily respect the pedestrian as it does here in the U.S. Be aware of your own traffic habits. Where traffic patterns are designed in the opposite direction from the U.S., be especially aware. Familiarize yourself with parking and traffic regulations in the countries where you will be traveling. In some cases, you will be expected to pay traffic violations on the spot.

International Driver's License

Some countries do not recognize U.S. driver's licenses. If you are planning on operating any motorized vehicle, including a motor scooter, you may find that an international driver's license is necessary. Any branch of the American Automobile Association (AAA) will issue an International Driver's License, valid for one year, on presentation of a valid U.S. license, a passport-size photo, and a fee.

Travel Safety

To keep yourself safe while traveling, follow the same common-sense precautions you would at home.

- Wrapping rubber bands around your wallet makes it more difficult for a pickpocket to remove.
- Find out which parts of town local inhabitants consider risky.
- Be especially alert in crowds. The most common sites for purse, bag, or camera snatching are the central train stations, crowded shopping areas, and places heavily frequented by tourists such as on public buses, trams, and subways. Do not walk alone at night and stay in well-lit, populated areas.
- Thieves often strike when travelers are distracted. A bag casually left at one's feet or on a cart while checking a train schedule or using a telephone is an easy target. Pouches worn on the outside of clothing or loosely hung around the neck are easily cut or ripped off. Wear-

ing them on the outside highlights where you keep all of your valuables.

Consular Information Sheets are available for every country of the world. They include such information as location of the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in the subject country, unusual immigration practices, health conditions, minor political disturbances, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security information, and drug penalties. If an unstable condition exists in a country that is not severe enough to warrant a Travel Warning, a description of the condition(s) may be included under an optional section entitled "Safety/Security." Consular Information Sheets generally do not include advice, but present information in a factual manner so the traveler can make his or her own decisions concerning travel to a particular country. All travelers should consult with the U.S. State Department prior to departure for the most current information before traveling to any country.

Travel Warnings are issued when the U.S. government determines it is unsafe to travel to a particular country, generally when political or civil unrest or other dangerous situations exist. In many of these countries, consulates and embassies may be able to offer only limited or no consular services to U.S. citizens. U.S. citizens are subject to the laws and legal practices of the country in which they travel.

Public Announcements are issued by the U.S. State Department to disseminate information quickly about terrorist threats and other relatively short-term conditions that pose significant risks or disruptions to Americans.

Cuba: The U.S. does not maintain an embassy or provide consular services in Cuba. It is illegal for U.S. citizens to travel to Cuba without a license from the U.S. Treasury Department. Licenses cannot be obtained for traveling as a tourist. Traveling to Cuba may result in civil penalties and criminal prosecution by the U.S. government upon return to the U.S. Although it is not illegal to travel to all countries where the U.S. government does not maintain diplomatic relations, it is not advised. Embassy and consular services are not available where diplomatic relations do not exist. Please read the U.S. State Department travel advisories for each country you intend to visit.

Tips for Students

From the U.S. Department of State
<http://travel.state.gov/studentinfo.html>

is an official U.S. Government source. Inclusion of non-U.S. Government links does not imply endorsement of contents.

ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO LEARN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ABOUT THE COUNTRIES IN WHICH THEY PLAN TO TRAVEL OR STUDY

- Students should read the State Department's [Consular Information Sheet](#) for the country in which they plan to study or visit, and check any [Public Announcements](#) or [Travel Warnings](#) that may pertain to that particular country.
- A Consular Information Sheet is available for every country in the world and provides an overview of conditions pertaining to travel in each country.
- Encourage students to learn about the history, culture, politics and customs of the country/countries in which they travel and study, and to respect the country's customs, manners, rules and laws. For instance, various countries and cultures respect certain manners and dress codes. American students should also abide by these manners and dress codes as much

as possible.

- It is a good idea for students to learn as much as they can of the language of the country in which they plan to travel or study. Learning basic phrases of the language can be helpful, and it indicates a willingness on the part of students to make an effort to communicate in the language of the country.
- The Department of State publishes *Background Notes* on countries worldwide http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/index.html. These are brief, factual pamphlets with information on each country's culture, history, geography, economy, government and current political situation. *Background Notes* are available for approximately 170 countries. They often include a reading list, travel notes and maps.
- It is important that students learn about the local laws abroad and obey them. **Remember, while in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws!** This year, the State Department has issued two press releases: [a press release for college newspapers on travel safety abroad for students](#) <http://travel.state.gov/college.html> and [a press release on spring break in Cancun](#), reminding students about drug laws and drunk and disorderly conduct during spring and summer breaks.

WHAT STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OBTAINING PASSPORTS AND VISAS TO TRAVEL, STUDY AND OR WORK ABROAD

- Students must have a signed, valid passport and visas, if required. Students studying abroad must be sure that they have the proper visa to study there. A visitor visa or entry without a visa may not allow one to study. Refer to our [Foreign Entry Requirements](#) brochure for information on foreign visas and to [Your Trip Abroad](#) for U.S. passport information.
- Students should remember to fill in the emergency information page of their passport.
- It is a good idea for relatives of students abroad to obtain and maintain a valid passport as well, in case of an emergency requiring them to travel.
- Students who wish to work part-time in conjunction with their studies or when their studies are finished, should make sure that they understand the laws that apply and comply with them.
- The United States requires student visas for study in the United States.
- Students should make copies of their passport's data page and any visas. They should keep a copy separately from the originals while traveling and leave one at home with their family and with their student advisor. This will help to obtain a replacement passport in the event that a passport is lost or stolen. Refer to our brochure [Your Trip Abroad](#) for more information on U.S. passports.
- Students are encouraged to travel with extra photos, in case they need to get a new passport quickly. Refer to our brochures [Passports-Applying for Them the Easy Way](#) and [Your Trip Abroad](#) for more information.

STUDENTS SHOULD LEARN ABOUT MEDICAL INSURANCE AND EVACUATION INSURANCE IN CASE OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY ABROAD

Every year, hundreds of students become ill or suffer injuries overseas. It is essential that students have medical insurance and medical evacuation insurance that would cover a medical emergency abroad. For further information, see our flyer on [Medical Information for Americans Traveling Abroad](#), [Your Trip Abroad](#) and visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's web site at <http://www.cdc.gov>.

STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO KNOW THE LOCATION OF THE NEAREST U.S. EMBASSY OR CONSULATE AND TO REGISTER

If students are going to be in a country for more than a couple of weeks, they should register at the American Embassy or Consulate. This is helpful to students and their families, if there is need to locate family members in the event of an emergency. See our [links to U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide](#).

WHAT U.S. CONSULAR OFFICERS CAN AND CAN NOT DO TO HELP U.S. CITIZENS ABROAD

- If students find themselves in trouble overseas, the Consular Officer at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate can provide certain assistance and advice. Consular Officers can also help in the event of illness, injury, natural catastrophe, evacuations, destitution, or death. See our brochures [Crisis Abroad](#), [U.S. Consuls Help Americans Abroad](#) and [Overseas Citizens Services](#) for more information.
- In the United States, the Office of Overseas Citizens Services can also assist American students abroad and their families in the USA in emergency cases. There is a 24 hour number to call (202) 647-5225.
- There are certain things that consular officers at American embassies **CANNOT** do for American citizens abroad. For example, they can not cash checks, lend money or serve as your attorney. See our brochure [U.S. Consuls Help Americans Abroad](#)

GENERAL PRECAUTIONS THAT STUDENTS SHOULD TAKE WHILE TRAVELING OR STUDYING ABROAD

- Remember not to leave luggage unattended and not to carry packages for anyone. The packages could contain drugs or other illegal items. Refer to our brochure [Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad](#).
- Do not become a target for thieves by wearing conspicuous clothing and expensive looking jewelry.
- There are restrictions on photography in certain countries. Students should check the Consular Information Sheet for the countries where they plan to visit or travel.
- Students should avoid demonstrations or civil disturbances, which could turn violent. Demonstrations could also turn anti-American.
- The Department of State is engaged in outreach efforts to education-related organizations to publicize [road safety risks](#) in other countries. Students, who may chose less expensive, often less reliable methods of local travel while in foreign countries, should be aware of the potential danger.

U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs Travel Safety Information For Students

As the time approaches for spring or summer breaks, many college students are getting ready for that much anticipated trip abroad. Most will have a safe and enjoyable adventure, but for some, the trip will become a nightmare. A number of ruined vacations are caused by one or more of the following: drugs, alcohol and disorderly behavior. Each year, more than 2,500 American citizens are arrested abroad--about half on narcotics charges, including possession of

very small amounts of illegal substances. A drug that may be legal in one country may not be legal in a neighboring nation. Some young people are victimized because they may be unaware of the laws, customs, or standards of the country they are visiting. Besides drugs, alcohol can also get U.S. citizens in trouble abroad. Students have been arrested for being intoxicated in public areas, for underage drinking, and for drunk driving. Some young Americans go abroad assuming that local authorities will overlook such conduct. Many believe that they are immune from prosecution in foreign countries because they are American citizens. The truth is that Americans are expected to obey all of the laws of the countries they visit, and those who break these laws sometimes face severe penalties, including prison sentences. Disorderly or reckless behavior is also to be avoided. In many countries, conduct that would not result in an arrest here in the U.S. constitutes a violation of local law. It is crucial that young Americans be aware of this risk as they are enjoying their time abroad. Being arrested is not the only thing that can happen on a foreign vacation. Young Americans have suffered injury or even death from automobile accidents, drowning, and falls, in addition to other mishaps. While these accidents are sometimes chance occurrences, many are caused by alcohol or drug abuse. Sadly, other Americans have been raped or robbed because they have found themselves in unfamiliar locales or are incapable of exercising prudent judgment while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Remember: Reckless behavior while in another country can do more than ruin your vacation; it can land you in a foreign jail or worse! To have a safe trip, avoid risky behavior and become familiar with the basic laws and customs of the country you plan to visit before you travel. To obtain more information about traveling abroad, check [the Department of State's website](http://travel.state.gov) at <http://travel.state.gov>. For further information contact:

Bureau of Consular Affairs

Office of American Citizens Services

(202) 647-5225

Terrorism

Terrorist acts occur at random and unpredictably, making it impossible to protect yourself absolutely. The first and best protection is to avoid travel to unsafe areas where there has been a persistent record of terrorist attacks or kidnapping. The vast majority of foreign states have good records of maintaining public order and protecting residents and visitors within their borders from terrorism. Most terrorist attacks are the result of long and careful planning. Just as a car thief will first be attracted to an unlocked car with the key in the ignition, terrorists are looking for defenseless, easily accessible targets who follow predictable patterns. The chances that a tourist, traveling with an unpublished program or itinerary, would be the victim of terrorism are slight. In addition, many terrorist groups, seeking publicity for political causes within their own country or region, may not be looking for American targets. Nevertheless, the following pointers may help you avoid becoming a target of opportunity. They should be considered as adjuncts to the tips listed in the previous sections on how to protect yourself against the far greater likelihood of being a victim of crime. These precautions may provide some degree of protection, and can serve as practical and psychological deterrents to would-be terrorists.

Emergency Procedures

Students Abroad

- Follow the procedures provided by the on-site director for your specific program location.
- USAC students should use the contact numbers provided by USAC and on-site staff. If you are unable to contact the on-site director or other local program staff, contact the offices whose numbers are listed on the emergency contact cards that were provided for your reference by UNLV. Be sure to carry your emergency contact card with you at all times. UNLV offices are open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (PST), Monday to Friday. Phone (702) 895-3896 to reach UNLV International Programs. After hours the contact number is in the Office of Public Safety on the UNLV campus (702) 895-3668. The staff at the Public Safety office will make every attempt to contact the appropriate UNLV staff member. It is essential that you provide detailed information to assist us in responding to your call. If you contact Public Safety, be sure to identify yourself as a student on a UNLV sponsored study abroad program.
- If the situation does not require immediate attention, please leave a voice mail message (after hours) at (702) 895-3896. Calls on weekends and holidays will be returned within 24 hours. Calls on evenings during the week will be returned the following morning. Please also note that time differences abroad may create difficulties in contacting student participants.
- When contacting your program staff, or the emergency contact numbers, you must provide the following information: your full name, the nature of the emergency, a number where you can be contacted, and how long you will remain at that location (provide the city and country information).
- PLEASE NOTE: Due to time differences between your location and program offices in the U.S. it may require several hours before someone is able to respond to you. We make every attempt to respond as quickly as possible. Your first contact should always be your on-site staff.
- If you are unable to contact the on-site director or other program offices personally, attempt to have someone contact your on-site program personnel or UNLV for you.

Emergency Evacuation: Natural, Political, Or Other Crisis Situations

- Follow the procedures provided by the on-site director for your specific program location.
- If you are unable to contact the on-site director or other program staff, contact the UNLV office or the other offices whose numbers are listed on the emergency contact cards that are provided for your use by the local program staff and UNLV.
- Follow on-site instructions given during orientation. You should provide your contact information to the program's staff whenever you travel away from the program site. On-site program staff will attempt to contact you as soon as possible. If you are unable to speak to your local program staff, or UNLV contact numbers, attempt to contact the closest U.S. Consulate or Embassy office for further instructions. Local radio and television stations may also broadcast emergency information.
- Stay calm, and stay with other program students, your host family, or host campus representatives if possible. It is important that you attempt to contact UNLV staff, however, it is

more important that you remain in a safe environment and follow the instructions provided by the local government authorities.

Instructions for families (parents or legal guardians):

Emergency contact information was provided to each student prior to departure for the program abroad. Students are asked to share this information with their families. UNLV is aware of your need to keep in contact with your family members, especially in emergency situations. If you need to contact your family member while they are abroad due to a family emergency you may use the contact information that was provided by UNLV. Please limit the use of the contact numbers to emergency situations. UNLV offices are open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (PST) Monday to Friday. Phone (702) 895-3896 to reach UNLV International Programs. After hours the contact number is in the Office of Public Safety on the UNLV campus (702) 895-3668. The staff at the Public Safety office will make every attempt to contact the appropriate UNLV staff member. It is essential that you provide detailed information to assist us in responding to your call. If you contact Public Safety be sure to identify yourself as a family member of a student on a UNLV sponsored study abroad program.

If the situation does not require immediate attention, please leave a voice mail message (after hours) at (702) 895-3896. Calls on weekends and holidays will be returned within 24 hours. Calls on evenings during the week will be returned the following morning. Please also note that time differences abroad may create difficulties in contacting student participants.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prevents staff members from providing certain information to persons other than the student participant. It is often necessary for us to balance your needs as a family with the needs of the students to be treated as adults and to follow the laws of the U.S. Our goal is to help to provide open lines of communication between you and your family members. Please be assured that we will do as much as possible to help you in any emergency situation.

University Studies Abroad Program (USAC) participants, International Student Teaching participants, students in programs sponsored by the College of Hotel Administration, and students on research programs or grants working with individual faculty advisors receive information from their programs regarding additional emergency contact procedures.

Student Conduct

As a study abroad student, and therefore as a guest in a foreign country, it is inappropriate for a student to interfere with the domestic affairs of the host university or host country. In many countries it is illegal for non-citizens to engage in any sort of protests or demonstrations. As a student, you must be prepared to conform to the standards of conduct consistent with the maintenance of the reputation of the host university, the study abroad program and UNLV. Students are expected to conform to all applicable rules, regulations, and policies of UNLV and the host

institution as well as the laws of the host country. Misconduct is defined as any action by a student or students that in the judgment of the on-site director or staff could jeopardize his/her own welfare, the welfare of fellow students, program staff, the program, or the community. Such actions include but are not limited to: the use of physical violence, violating the laws of the host country, violating the rules of UNLV or the host university, openly abusing the customs of the community, unauthorized absences from program activities or classes, substance use/abuse, drunken behavior, destruction of program property, damage to housing facilities, any type of harassment, and hazing. Students may be withdrawn from UNLV sponsored programs and/or program sponsored housing for misconduct.

Students are responsible for their own actions. In the case of program sponsored housing, students are often held responsible for the actions of their roommates and/or visitors. Report any destruction of program property or housing to your program director immediately.

Legal Issues

You are subject to the laws of the countries you visit as well as the rules of your host school and UNLV. Students who violate laws may face legal proceedings in the local judicial system. For their own protection, students are cautioned to familiarize themselves with local laws.

UNLV International Programs reserves the right to check disciplinary records on students who apply to study abroad. If you have a disciplinary action against you or pending against you, you will need to discuss your eligibility to study abroad with the UNLV Office of International Programs.

How to Avoid Legal Difficulties

When you are in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws and are under its jurisdiction NOT the protection of the U.S. Constitution.

You can be arrested overseas for actions that may be either legal or considered minor infractions in the United States. Be aware of what is considered criminal in the country where you are. Some of the offenses for which U.S. citizens have been arrested abroad are:

Drug Violations. More than 1/3 of U.S. citizens incarcerated abroad are held on drug charges. Some countries do not distinguish between possession and trafficking. Many countries have mandatory sentences - even for possession of a small amount of marijuana or cocaine. A number of Americans have been arrested for possessing prescription drugs, particularly tranquilizers and amphetamines. Other U.S. citizens have been arrested for purchasing prescription drugs abroad in quantities that local authorities suspected were for commercial use. If in doubt about foreign drug laws, ask local authorities or the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Possession of Firearms. The places where U.S. citizens most often come into difficulties for illegal possession of firearms are nearby - Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean. Sentences for possession of firearms in Mexico can be up to 30 years. In general, firearms, even those legally registered in the U.S., cannot be brought into a country unless a permit is first obtained from the embassy or a consulate of that country and the firearm is registered with foreign authorities on arrival. (Note: If you take firearms or ammunition to another country, you cannot bring them back into the U.S. unless you register them with U.S. Customs before you leave the U.S.)

Photography. In many countries you can be harassed or detained for photographing such things as police and military installations, government buildings, border areas and transporta-

tion facilities. If you are in doubt, ask permission before taking photographs.

Purchasing Antiques. Americans have been arrested for purchasing souvenirs that were, or looked like antiques, and which local customs authorities believed were national treasures. This is especially true in Turkey, Egypt, and Mexico. In countries where antiques are important, document your purchases as reproductions if that is the case, or if they are authentic, secure the necessary export permit.

Alcohol

Students participating in UNLV programs abroad are subject to the rules and policies of UNLV. Drinking alcohol while socializing is common in many parts of the world. The attitude in some countries toward alcohol may be much different than in the United States. Drinking in some countries is part of the social experience, but not the focus of it. Excessive drinking or drunken behavior is not acceptable. Public drunkenness is illegal in most areas. If you are of legal age and you choose to drink, you should be responsible and DRINK IN MODERATION. Keep in mind that various factors can influence your level of intoxication such as altitude, dehydration, stress from being in an unfamiliar environment, and the actual alcohol content of the beverage. Be wary of homemade liquors. If not prepared correctly, homemade liquors can be toxic and, in some cases, fatal. The legal drinking age varies in different countries. Drinking excessively or illegally is grounds for immediate dismissal from any UNLV sponsored study abroad program. Any student who exhibits offensive, at risk, or inappropriate behavior while under the influence of alcohol or any other drug may be subject to disciplinary action and immediate dismissal from the study abroad program.

Drunk Driving

Never drink and drive. In addition to the dangers normally associated with drunk driving, penalties vary greatly and can include years in prison with hefty fines or sentences. Alcohol mixed with different driving laws and styles, and unfamiliar streets can be a deadly combination. UNLV does not recommend driving abroad. If you choose to drive while you are abroad, do not drink. If you are with friends and will be drinking, be sure to select a designated driver. Be aware that the legal definition of “drunk” may vary by location.

Illegal Drugs

DO NOT TAKE ANY ILLEGAL DRUGS, DO NOT TRAVEL WITH ILLEGAL DRUGS, AND DO NOT HAVE ILLEGAL DRUGS IN YOUR POSSESSION AT ANY TIME. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas can assume NO responsibility for any student violating laws and student conduct codes. Laws concerning drugs may be much more severe in other countries. Penalties for drug possession, use or sale can range from the death penalty to physical punishment to long jail terms. You are subject to the laws of the country you are visiting. If you are arrested on a drug charge, the U.S. Consular Officer cannot demand your release, get you out of jail or out of the country, cannot represent you at trial or give you legal counsel, and cannot pay your legal fees or fines.

Prescription/Legal Drugs

If you must take any types of drugs that are legal in the U.S. with you keep them in the original containers and carry a note from your doctor describing the drug and its use. See the section for “Documentation for Medications.”

Sexual Harassment

"It is the policy of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas to maintain the university community as a place of work and study for staff, faculty, and students, free of sexual harassment and all forms of sexual intimidation and exploitation. This stance is consistent with the university's efforts to maintain equal employment opportunity, equal educational opportunity, nondiscrimination in programs, services, and use of facilities, and the Affirmative Action program."

As in the United States, sexual harassment can arise anywhere. Attitudes toward sexual behavior vary widely and may be very different from what might be considered normal at home. The determination of what behaviors constitute sexual harassment varies with the particular circumstances. For example, comments, which would be considered offensive in the U.S., may be acceptable in other cultures, while many types of dress or behavior of the U.S. students that are completely innocent in the U.S. may send clear messages of sexual availability in other cultures. In general, sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual behavior, such as physical contact, verbal comments or suggestions, or other acts that adversely affect the learning environment. Be sure to contact the resident director of your study abroad program, and the UNLV Office of International Programs if you are experiencing difficulties.

Hazing

Hazing is defined as any method of initiation into or affiliation with the University community, a student organization, a sports team, an academic association, or other group engaged in by an individual that intentionally or recklessly endangers another individual or that destroys or removes public or private property. Hazing is strictly prohibited by UNLV and is grounds for immediate dismissal from the study abroad program. Please immediately report any hazing or attempted hazing to your on-site director and the UNLV Office of International Programs.

Harassment/Discrimination/Causing Physical Harm

The UNLV Student Contact Code states *"As members of the University community, students can reasonably expect all the guarantees and protections afforded students of public institutions by the United States and Nevada Constitutions, including: The right to freedom of discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, creed, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation."*

Any student engaging in behavior that could constitute discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment and hazing, or that could result in physical harm to another person may be subject to immediate withdrawal from the study abroad program. Any type of physical violence, fighting or harassment is strictly prohibited.

Academic Dishonesty

Students may be dismissed from study abroad programs for reasons involving academic dishonesty. Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are strictly prohibited on UNLV sponsored study abroad programs.

Holds

If you have a registration or financial hold with UNLV, you will need to clear the hold prior to

departure. UNLV holds prevent the UNLV International Programs Office from registering, adding or dropping courses from your academic record.

Communicating with those at Home

Email

At the time of this printing, students at most UNLV program sites have access to email. Internet cafes are common in most countries.

Telephones

Apart from the problems you may have comprehending the mechanics of using the telephones overseas, you may find telephoning quite expensive. Families and private establishments are sensitive about telephone use by outsiders, and you should never assume that you are welcome to use a private phone, either to place a call or to receive one. If you do have access to a phone, keep a careful record of your calls so that you can make accurate reimbursement. For the same reasons, avoid accepting collect calls. U.S. telephone rates are generally less expensive, so you may wish to have your family or friends call you, perhaps at a pre-appointed time during the lower-rate period. Be sure to note the time difference between your study abroad site and the person you are calling. Hotels usually add high surcharges for phone calls.

Calling Cards

If you need to call home you can contact a U.S. operator directly from abroad by using international phone credit cards such as AT&T, Sprint, or MCI. Generally, you will need to call the card issuer (AT&T, Sprint, etc.) for the international access code for each country you intend to visit. In order to use your card you will dial the access code to reach an English-speaking operator from the phone company who issued your card. Using regular calling cards tends to be a very expensive option. You should reserve calling card calls for emergencies.

You will also want to keep records of your phone card numbers and the customer service number for your phone card company. In the event that you lose your card, you will need to call the phone card company to cancel the card and to request a new one. You may wish to contact your phone card company for specific information on how to replace a card if necessary. Also, protect your phone card number. If possible, memorize the number and do not carry the card. Anyone can use your phone card number at your expense. If you will be traveling, it may be advisable to have phone cards from different companies. Not all phone cards will work from all locations.

Pre-Paid Phone Cards

You may purchase and use pre-paid phone cards in most countries. Consult with your program director or other students for information on how or where to purchase a card, and how to use it. Pre-paid phone cards can help you avoid the shock of high credit card or phone card bills. Pre-paid phone cards purchased in one country usually cannot be used in another country.

In our experience pre-paid phone cards from major phone services in the U.S. (AT&T, Sprint, etc.) do work from foreign countries. In order to use them you will need to call the toll free number on the card and ask for the access code for each country you will be visiting. In order to use your card you will dial the access code to reach an English-speaking operator from the phone company who issued your card. U.S. based calling cards are usually good for considerably less minutes than those listed on the card when you use them from a foreign country. For example a 60-minute AT&T pre-paid card may be good for only 6 minutes when calling from England. You will want to supplement any U.S. bought pre-paid cards with local calling cards as soon as possible.

Cell Phones

Pre-paid cell phones are becoming increasingly common. Cell phone service, availability and cost vary greatly from country to country. Consult on-site program staff and former program participants for more information. In our experience, U.S. based cell phones tend to be a very expensive option. Most students report waiting until they get to their program site to explore local options and decide if purchasing a cell phone locally is a viable option.

Returning Home

Grades

All study abroad course work must be completed by the end of the term at your program site. Incomplete work from study abroad generally results in failing grades.

Registration at your home campus

If you will be returning to an institution other than UNLV, please check with that school prior to departure for information on registering for the term following your study abroad program.

Registration & returning to UNLV

Students should also discuss their potential enrollment for the term(s) following their study abroad program with their advisor. It may be more difficult to contact your advisor easily after your departure. Students may register for courses at UNLV via the Internet. If you have difficulty accessing the information, contact the UNLV Office of International Programs. The Office of International Programs will assist you with your returning registration if necessary but cannot be responsible for any errors on your registration or for fee payment.

UNLV International Programs highly recommends that students bring all of their course materials and work for each of their courses to their home campus at the conclusion of the program. Copies of syllabi, course bibliographies, essays, research papers, lecture notes, etc. will facilitate the transfer of credits to your home school as well as help your department or advisor determine if the courses you have completed will satisfy requirements for graduation.

Housing:

You will need to make arrangements for housing upon your return to UNLV (or your home school) prior to departure. The UNLV Office of International Programs cannot assist you in finding housing upon your return. It is in your best interest to plan for your post-program housing before your departure. If you intend to live on campus at UNLV, contact UNLV Residential

Life (702) 895-3489 prior to your departure. Housing contracts and deposits MUST be made by the deadlines set by UNLV Residential Life.

UNLV Websites of Interest

Main: <http://www.unlv.edu>

Class schedule: http://www.unlv.edu/pubs/Class_Schedule

Registration: <http://registrar.unlv.edu/>

Campus Housing: <http://housing.unlv.edu/>

Student Financial Services: <http://financialaid.unlv.edu/>

Student Employment: <http://financialaid.unlv.edu/Empl/>

Reverse Culture Shock

Returning home can be equally as challenging as traveling abroad. UNLV has programs to assist students in adjusting to returning home and to UNLV.

Peer Counselor Program

UNLV has a peer counselor program. All study abroad students are encouraged to participate. Students are asked to give the Office of International Programs permission to release the student's name, phone number, and email address to students considering studying abroad. This program gives returning students the opportunity to discuss their experiences and potential students the opportunity to speak to students who have already completed a study abroad program.

Program Evaluation

At the end of each term, students are asked to evaluate their study abroad experience. The Office of International Programs is seeking ways to improve our study abroad programs and our service to students.

Transferring Credit to UNLV

Several UNLV sponsored study abroad opportunities are offered as transfer of credit programs. In these programs, transcripts will be issued from the Visiting or International Students Office of the foreign institution. Transfer credits will be evaluated by the UNLV Office of Admissions. Students participating in programs for transfer credit should meet with their academic advisors prior to departure. If you are participating in a transfer credit program, course schedules, grade slips and transcripts generated by UNLV will read: "Study Abroad, 12 credits." This does not indicate credit already earned; it is a "flag" that indicates you are enrolled as a full-time study abroad student. The applicability of credits to your degree program is determined by your advisor. You must bring back all of your work for each course: essays, research papers, course bibliographies, syllabi, lecture notes, books, etc. If there is any question as to whether your courses satisfy graduation requirements, you will need to provide this information to your academic department.

Transferring Credit to your Home School

If you are not a continuing UNLV student, you will need to transfer credits earned on UNLV sponsored programs to your home school. If you attend a program that is for UNLV credit, you will need to order regular UNLV transcripts from the UNLV Registrar's Office, 4505 Maryland Pkwy, Las Vegas, NV 89154. Letters requesting transcripts should contain the student's name, social security number, approximate dates of attendance, the address(es) of the destination of the transcripts and your signature. If you attended a program that is offered as a transfer credit program to UNLV,

you will need to request transcripts as described above, but you must specify "INCLUDE FOREIGN WORK" on your request. The applicability of credits to your degree program is determined by your home school. You must bring back all of your work for each course: essays, research papers, course bibliographies, syllabi, lecture notes, books, etc. If there is any question as to whether your courses satisfy graduation requirements, you will need to provide this information to your home school.

Ordering a UNLV Transcript

Try our online transcript request form at: <http://registrar.unlv.edu/transcriptform.asp> or send:

Your name and any other names under which you may have attended

Your birth date

Your Social Security Number

Approximate dates of attendance

Address to which you want the transcript mailed

Your signature indicating the release of your academic records

To:

Office of the Registrar
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
4505 Maryland Pkwy Box 451029
Las Vegas NV 89154-1029

All financial obligations to the University must be met before a transcript will be issued. Transcripts of work from other institutions will not be issued. Some schools and employers may not accept hand carried transcripts as official, even if sealed; therefore, we advise you to have UNLV send them directly to the third party.

Early Return/Withdrawal from Programs

If you are considering withdrawing from your study abroad program, please contact the UNLV Office of International Programs. In order to receive credit for your study abroad program, you are required to satisfactorily complete all course work and remain at the program site for the duration of the program. You must plan your departure based upon the official ending date of the term. Program fees are non-refundable after the start of the program. Students withdrawing from programs may be required to reimburse financial aid or scholarships to UNLV. All aid is based upon attendance and successful completion of the study abroad program. You should check with the Office of International Programs if you are considering withdrawing from your program.

Closing Comments

We hope you find the information in this handbook useful as you plan and participate in your program abroad. Please remember that the staff of the Office of International Programs is available to help you with any questions. We have a welcoming "open door" policy and invite you to come to the office or call as often as you wish to talk to our staff. We also have student workers in the Office of International Programs who have previously studied abroad who are

happy to talk to you about their experiences. The on-campus orientations are another good opportunity for sharing information and meeting other students who will be going abroad.

We look forward to working with you as you prepare for your program. Please contact us if we can be of any assistance.

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