

# Family Handbook



## Guide to Study Abroad

Center for Global Education  
Chapman University

Revised Fall 2009

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## **Introduction**

Chapman University applauds you on your son or daughter's decision to study abroad. We are certain it will offer an excellent opportunity for your child to grow personally, culturally, and academically – study abroad improves motivation, enhances independence, and builds self-confidence. In fact, many students find it to be one of the most enriching and influential experiences of their Chapman years. We believe that your support and interest will contribute immensely to their success.

This handbook is meant to help you understand and prepare for what your student will be going through prior to, during, and after their study abroad experience. Please use it as a reference book throughout this time, as you will find it outlines Chapman policies regarding study abroad, contains useful contact information, as well as provides informative articles and other reference materials pertaining to various aspects of overseas study.

## **Administration**

### **Release of Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records, including the right to inspect their education records, request an amendment of the records that the student believes are inaccurate, and the right to control disclosures of their records except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

**In most instances, student educational record information may not be released without written consent of the student.**

## **Chapman University Contact Information**

### **Center for Global Education**

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Orange, CA 92866

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## Business Office Contact Information

Below is some information your son or daughter will want to keep in case any problems occur while he/she is out of the country. If your child has questions regarding the study abroad program, including classes, he/she should contact the Center for Global Education. However, if he/she has questions regarding his/her account, it will be better for he/she to contact the specific offices listed below directly.

If he/she has problems with his/her Chapman account, he/she will have to contact the correct person in the **Business Office**. The following is a list of names and e-mails he/she will need to contact them. Included are the e-mail addresses for quick communication (all e-mails are "@chapman.edu").

The Business Office fax number is 714-744-7995.

<u>Students' Last Name</u>	<u>Account Representative</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
A-C	Max Sidler	sidler
D-Ho	Kathie Borunda	borunda
Hp-Me	Sandra Fagan	sfagan
Mf-Sc	Kim Talley	ktalley
Sd-Z	Virginia Nowakowski	virginia

## Registrar Contact Information

The Registrar's Office number is 714-997-6701. The Registrar fax number is 714-997-6986.

IMPORTANT! Your son or daughter should not forget to obtain his/her academic advisor's e-mail address, phone number and fax number before leaving the country.

## Program Options

Chapman students have a wide array of program choices through which they may pursue their overseas objectives. Program options fall into two categories:

### *Chapman University Partner/Exchange Programs*

Chapman Partner Programs are developed through links between Chapman University and overseas institutions and operate in 40 different countries. Partner/Exchange Programs allow Chapman students to utilize all of their financial aid package, including federal, state and institutional funding and pay their regular Chapman University comprehensive fees. A \$500 study abroad fee applies. Fee waived for Fall applicants only!

### *Chapman University Affiliate Programs*

Chapman Affiliate Programs are developed through linkages between Chapman University and overseas institutions and operate in 54 different countries. Affiliate Programs allow students to apply federal and state financial aid to the programs and continue to pay their regular Chapman University comprehensive fee. A \$500 study abroad fee applies. Fee waived for Fall applicants only!

## **Program Contact Information**

**AIFS** 1-800-727-2437  
Emergency Service 202-625-8426

**Arcadia** 866-927-2234  
Emergency Service 215-572-2900 (After hours only)

**Asia Pacific University** 011-81-905-0819-601

**Athena Study Abroad** 1-866-922-7623  
Emergency Service 614-735-5032

**AustraLearn** 1-800-980-0033  
Australia Resident Directors: 011-61-7-4926-3555  
New Zealand Resident Directors: 011-64-21-455-503

**Beijing Program(China Studies Institute)**011-86-1391-121-7570

**The Center for Cross-Cultural Study** 413-256-0011

**FU-Best**  
Emergency Service 011-49-30-796-3793

**ICADS** 011-506-225-0508  
Emergency Service 011-88-26-7078

**ISEP** Contact the Chapman University Study Abroad Office

**SIT** 888-272-7881

**Semester at Sea** 1-800-854-0195  
Emergency Service 412-571-5809

**Suffolk University Madrid** 011-34-91-533-5935

**University of Limerick** 011-353-61-202338

**University of Stirling** 011-44-1786-467040

**University of Glasgow** 011-44-141-330-6516

**Chapman University Public Safety: 714-997-6763**

## Student Billing

Students studying abroad through Chapman (meaning applied through and selected by the Chapman Center for Global Education) pay Chapman tuition fees, including housing and meals (depending on program), and receive Chapman credit for the semester(s) they are abroad.

It is important to realize that all program charges are billed to Chapman, and therefore **any fees noted in individual program catalogs are not relevant to CU students.** The benefit is that by remaining enrolled at Chapman while abroad, students can continue to utilize Chapman institutional aid as well as Cal grants and federal financial aid (where applicable).

Since students will be billed by Chapman for their semester abroad, they should NOT pay any enrollment deposit fees directly to their study program (e.g. AIFS, Arcadia, Athena, etc.), even if their acceptance letter mentions a required deposit to hold their place in the program. Such letters are generic to students accepted from many universities and do not necessarily reflect Chapman's agreement with the program. If you or your student has questions regarding these letters, please contact the appropriate Coordinator in the Center for Global Education.

However, students on particular programs WILL incur a refundable housing deposit fee, course fees, program specific fees, and/or airline fees (including but not limited to fuel taxes, port fees, internet usage charges, etc.) which they are required to pay directly to the program provider prior to their departure. This applies to all AIFS programs as well as certain institutions through AustraLearn. Students with questions regarding the housing deposit, or whether they need to pay one, should consult the Center for Global Education Staff.

## What Fees Cover

In addition to tuition, housing, and meals, Chapman fees include many services provided by the host program or institution, such as comprehensive health insurance, an in-country orientation, cultural activities, field trips, etc. However, each program varies somewhat and students should refer to the Study Abroad Expense Sheet provided in their pre-departure materials (distributed at the mandatory Chapman Pre-Departure Orientation) for information on what their program in particular covers.

Please note that the Expense Sheet represents our best estimate of what a student will be charged, based on their preferences stated on the program application and on our past experience with students on the same program.

Meal plans, however, can change depending on availability or due to a change in student choice upon arrival. If a student is charged for a meal plan and does not receive one once abroad, we will reverse the Chapman meal plan fee to their account. Conversely, if a student ends up with a meal plan abroad (and was not charged for one by Chapman) they will be expected to cover the meal plan by remitting payment to the Business Office. Students are asked to email us with changes so we have a paper trail to forward to the Business Office.

Students should also note that housing fees for study abroad students are based on a double room dormitory rate at Chapman for that semester. Therefore, for those programs that have a range of choice in housing, students opting for more expensive accommodation (i.e. a single room) will be expected to cover the difference between the standard and higher cost option.

Be aware that students pursuing an Independent Study, Reading and Conference or Internship while abroad *in conjunction with a Chapman University faculty member through the Orange campus* will be assessed an extra per credit hour fee. Additionally, if more than 18 credits (US) are transferred to Chapman for one semester, the student will be billed per credit over the 18-credit limit.

### **Chapman University Payment Arrangements**

Below is an itemized list of what needs to be completed prior to your son or daughter's departure:

1. Remove all holds on account.
2. Payment and the Tuition and Fee Payment Agreement are due to the Business Office. Be sure to include on the "Person Responsible" section the names of all parties with whom the Business Office can discuss your account. Failure to return the completed Tuition and Fee Payment Agreement and any payment due will result in the cancellation of the Study Abroad classes.
3. Chapman Interest Free loan and Perkins loan promissory notes (if applicable) are due to the Business Office prior to departure.
4. Be aware that students pursuing an Independent Study, Reading and Conference or Internship while abroad *in conjunction with a Chapman University faculty member through the Orange campus* that forces enrollment beyond 18 US credits will be assessed an extra per credit hour fee.
5. Power of Attorney
  - a. Form can be obtained from the Financial Aid Office. This form is required if you act as the designee on your son or daughter's behalf.
  - b. Form will need to be notarized.
  - c. Your son or daughter should turn in a copy of the form to the Business Office if you want to have access to his/her account and financial information.
6. Sickness Plan Waiver is due in the Wellness Center no later than the second week of September (for fall) or the second week of February (for spring).
7. Parking Permit fee waiver is due in the Public Safety Office no later than the second week of September (for fall) or the second week of February (for spring).
8. DEWARS Tuition Insurance: covers tuition, fees and Chapman housing costs for medical withdrawals. Must be purchased prior to the first day of the semester if you did not purchase it in the fall.
9. Housing Assignment Release (if applicable) with Residence Life
  - a. If you do not request a release from your on-campus housing assignment, you will not only be billed for your study abroad room and board (if applicable), but you will also be billed for your on-campus assignment.

## Refund Policies

Should a student decide to cancel enrollment in any Study Abroad/Exchange Program For which he/she has applied and been accepted to, the student must **immediately notify the Center for Global Education Staff in writing.**

**THE STUDENT UNDERSTANDS THAT HE/SHE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY PAYMENTS MADE ON HIS/HER BEHALF RELATING TO STUDY ABROAD/EXCHANGE INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE CONFIRMATION DEPOSIT.**

The date of withdrawal for purposes of tuition credit shall be the date on which the class was dropped through WebAdvisor or at the Registrar's Office (done by the Registrar's Office—A STUDENT CANNOT GO INTO WEBADVISOR AND DROP THE SA COURSE!!).

Students who register, but do not attend classes, will not receive a tuition credit unless they officially withdraw by the posted deadlines. Tuition deposits are not refundable. Students who receive federal financial aid are subject to a pro-rata return of federal funds through the 60% period of each semester.

### **Tuition Refund Schedule for Undergraduate Students**

Withdrawal prior to the first day of classes	100%
Withdrawal within the first week of classes	70%
Withdrawal within the second week of classes	50%
Withdrawal within the third or fourth week of classes	10%
Withdrawal after the fourth week of classes	none

**Please note that refund policies can change without notice. These are outlined as a courtesy but students/parents should check with programs to see the most updated versions.**

### **AIFS**

For non-medical withdrawals...

If a student withdraws:

- After final payment deadline and more than 60 days before departure = All payments minus the non-refundable deposit and application fee of \$845, insurance/assistance package fee of \$475 and \$1000
- After final payment deadline and 30-60 days before departure = All payments, minus the non-refundable deposit and application fee of \$845, insurance/assistance package fee of \$475 and 50% of the program fee
- After final payment deadline and less than 30 days before departure = NO REFUND

Refunds once a program has started...

- Students choosing to leave the program early for personal or other reasons are not entitled to any refund. Completion of academic credit will be determined on a case by case basis. Students dismissed for disciplinary reasons receive no refunds of any kind and forfeit all academic credit.

- There are no refunds for meals, accommodation, cultural activities/excursions, tuition or transportation missed by students for any other reasons that those listed above once the program has started.

### **Alliance for Global Education**

Students who withdraw after confirming their intent to enroll, but prior to the payment due date, will be charged \$500 plus any non-refundable deposits or fees paid on their behalf by the Alliance for Global Education. Students who withdraw after the payment due date, but prior to the scheduled overseas arrival date for their program, will be charged \$1,500 plus any non-refundable deposits or fees paid on their behalf by the Alliance for Global Education. Students who withdraw on or after their scheduled overseas arrival date for their program will be charged \$2,000 plus any non-refundable deposits or fees paid on their behalf by the Alliance for Global Education. Refunds are approved only after all relevant accounts are cleared. Upon approval, a refund will be issued within 20 working days. In the event that a student's charges exceed the amount paid, the student will be invoiced for the difference.

#### ***Full-Year Students Withdrawing after One Term***

If you are participating in a full-year program and notify us in writing at least one month before the end of the first term that you will not be returning for the second term, you will be charged the published fee for the completed term. If you are participating in a full-year program and notify us in writing during the month before the end of the first term that you will not be returning for the second term, you will be charged the published fee for the completed term, plus \$500.

#### ***Suspension or Expulsion***

There is no credit or refund for a student who is suspended or expelled from the program for any reason.

### **Asia Pacific University**

Same as Chapman University Tuition Refund Policy

### **Athena**

Within two weeks of acceptance to a Athena Study Abroad, Inc. study abroad program, a **non-refundable \$600** deposit must be submitted to Athena (Paid by Chapman University Center for Global Education) If a student elects to withdraw from the program, a portion of the program cost will be refunded and credited to the student's account based upon the schedule below. However, the student will not be returned the above-referenced \$600.00 non-refundable deposit. In order for the student to receive the maximum refund, the decision to withdraw must be indicated in a letter postmarked no later than 45 days prior to the official arrival date for the program as stated in Athena materials. Students must notify Athena Study Abroad **IN WRITING** of their decision to withdraw for all refund policy options to be initiated. Please note:

- The "official arrival date" is the date students are required to arrive at the program site as indicated by the Athena Study Abroad program.
- "Special Charges" are any and non-refundable tuition, housing, or other fees committed by Athena Study Abroad to secure the student's place in the program.
- You are encouraged to explore trip cancellation insurance which will cover you if you unexpectedly have to cancel your trip. Refunds of all or part of the program fee will be considered in accordance with the following schedule (Please note that the \$600.00 non-refundable deposit will not be returned under any circumstances.)

#### **WITHDRAWAL DATE AMOUNT OF REFUND**

- 45 or more **calendar days** prior to the official arrival date of the program **100%** of the program fee except the nonrefundable deposit, and any and all special charges assessed by Athena Study Abroad

- Less than 45 but more than 20 **calendar days** prior to the official arrival date of the program. **50%** of program fee except non-refundable deposit, and any and all special charges assessed by Athena Study Abroad
- Less than **20 but more than 10 calendar days** before the official arrival date of the program. **25%** of program fee except non-refundable deposit, and any and all special charges assessed by Athena Study Abroad
- **Ten (10) days** prior to official arrival date. **NO REFUND**

## **Arcadia/CEA**

After July 1 (fall), Dec. 1 (spring) = \$1,500 charged + any lost Arcadia/CEA fees

After program departs = \$2,000 charged + any lost Arcadia/CEA fees

## **AustraLearn/AsiaLearn/GlobaLinks**

More than 90 days before GlobaLinks Program Introduction start date = \$150 Cancellation Penalty

61-90 days before GlobaLinks Program Introduction start date = \$300 Cancellation Penalty

31-60 days before GlobaLinks Program Introduction start date = \$800 Cancellation Penalty + health coverage fees; Tuition, Room & Board fees subject to Host University and Housing Authority refund/cancellation policies.

1-30 days before GlobaLinks Program Introduction start date = \$1,700 Cancellation Penalty + health coverage fees; Tuition, Room & Board fees subject to Host University and Housing Authority refund/cancellation policies.

Upon Arrival at GlobaLinks Program Introduction = \$1,950 Cancellation Penalty + health coverage fees; Tuition, Room & Board fees subject to Host University and Housing Authority refund/cancellation policies.

Deferment = If you choose to defer your enrollment to another term after confirming your participation in the program after Chapman University submits your initial payment of \$300 then a \$150 deferment fee will be assessed. All payments that have been received will be transferred to the next semester fee.

Cancellation after a deferment = If you choose to cancel your program after you have been allowed to defer, your cancellation fees will be based on either the cancellation fees associated with the date of deferral or the actual cancellation date; whichever fee is greater.

## **Beijing Program**

Same as Chapman University Tuition Refund Policy

## **Cantabria University**

Same as Chapman University Tuition Refund Policy

## **CC-CS**

Between July 15/Dec. 15 & > 30 days = \$500 penalty

< 30 days = pay 25% room & board fees, 100% tuition, tours, orientation, enrollment, account fee

After departure = **NO REFUNDS**

Emergency/Illness withdrawal = unused tuition portion credited toward future program fees

## **FU-BEST (Freie Universität Berlin)**

The registration fee (as well as any late registration fee that may have been paid) and the 500 Euro deposit cannot be refunded at any point after they have been paid; they are subtracted from any refunds as described below, along with any bank fees applicable to the reimbursement of monies paid.

In case of cancellation before July 15 (prior to the Fall semester) or November 15 (prior to the Spring semester), the participant in question receives a refund of tuition and program fees paid.

In case of cancellation between July 15 and August 15 (in case of the Fall program) or November 15 and December 15 (in case of the Spring program), the participant receives a Program Fee refund only (that is, no refund of the tuition portion of the fees).

In case of cancellation after August 15 (in case of the Fall program) or December 15 (in case of the Spring program), no refund of any kind is provided. *All participants are strongly recommended to consider taking out their own cancellation insurance when applying and registering for FU-BEST.*

FU-BEST reserves the right to cancel courses that contain less than 6 participants four or more weeks prior to the start of a given semester. Should such cancellation be necessary, the affected participants will be notified and transferred to the next available course, based on their ranking of choices on their registrations forms. If no solution along these lines is possible for an applicant, he/she may cancel his/her participation in the FU-BEST program free-of-charge and receive a full refund of all fees paid up until that point.

## **ICADS**

Prior to start of program = \$500 deposit is non-refundable

After program departs = NO REFUND

## **ISEP**

If student withdraws from the program anytime after accepting the placement listed on the PPAF, or if the exchange placement is terminated after the student takes placement at the host institution, the following applies:

- a. Student will be obligated to pay the ISEP participation fee
- b. Student may still be obligated to pay the full program fee at the discretion of the home institution in collaboration and agreement with ISEP and the host institution
- c. Student will be obligated to pay any non-recoverable costs incurred by the host institution based on acceptance
- d. Student forfeits right to receive benefits as an ISEP participant and must reimburse the host institution for any money advanced to cover the benefits (such as housing and meals) after the date of withdrawal or termination
- e. Student understands that he/she may lose financial aid or scholarship due to the loss of full-time student status.
- f. The Orange Campus Tuition Refund Policy (see above) is not applicable to the ISEP semester overseas program.

## **SIT**

Before July 1/Dec. 1 = \$400 deposit refundable

Up until departure = pay \$100 administrative fee + \$400 deposit

While abroad = graduated amounts throughout semester (NO REFUNDS after 50% of semester)

## **Semester at Sea**

**Prior to fall and spring departures**, all funds received on a participant's account are refundable until the 90-day payment due date for the voyage. Cancellations following the 90-day payment due date will automatically result in a charge of \$1000 regardless of name change or cabin resale, and the following fees will apply:

- Cancellation up to and including 90 days prior to the voyage - full refund to participant
- If cancelled 89-60 days prior to voyage - 25% of program fee
- If cancelled 59-45 days prior to voyage - 50% of program fee
- If cancelled 44-31 days prior to voyage - 75% of program fee
- If cancelled 30 days prior to the voyage and after - 100% of program fee

**After departure**, refunds are not made to passengers who must withdraw from the program due to any violation of the Code of Conduct. No refund of any kind is made if a participant must interrupt the voyage due to the reoccurrence of a medical or psychological illness that was diagnosed prior to sailing.

If the participant leaves the voyage for documented medical reasons arising after embarkation and during the first 25 days of the semester, he/she may be entitled to a pro-rata refund of the program fee. No refund of any kind is made after the first 25 days of the semester.

If a participant's departure or dismissal from the program requires a return or reduction of applicable federal or institutional aid or loans, he/she is responsible for the program fees that were covered by these funds.

## **University of Stirling**

Prior to start of program = no penalty

During 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> week of semester = billed for housing used (pro-rated)

After 2<sup>nd</sup> week of program = NO REFUND

## **University of Limerick**

Prior to start of program = 90% refund of tuition fees paid

Within 3 weeks from start of program = 50% of tuition fees may be refunded \*

After 3 weeks from start of program = No tuition fee refund will be issued \*

\* Refund of accommodation payment is possible only if the room can be rented to another student.

## **University of Glasgow**

Terms set by Chapman University: "Tuition credits will only be granted for students who officially drop or withdraw in writing. Students who register, but do not attend classes, will not receive a tuition credit unless they officially withdraw by the posted deadlines. Tuition deposits are not refundable. Students who receive federal financial aid are subject to a pro-rated return of federal funds through the 60% period of each semester."

### **Tuition Refund Schedule for Undergraduate Students**

Withdrawal prior to the first day of classes	100%
Withdrawal within the first week of classes	70%
Withdrawal within the second week of classes	50%
Withdrawal within the third or fourth week of classes	10%
Withdrawal after the fourth week of classes	none

## Non-Chapman Scholarships

Several of our programs offer merit and need based scholarships that students may apply for at the time of application or after acceptance (depending on the program).

Such scholarships are typically small in nature, ranging from \$500-\$2,000, and are issued differently than Chapman scholarships. No coordination with Chapman's Financial Aid Office is required, the Study Abroad Program Office will inform the student of any scholarships received.

If a student receives a program-specific scholarship, they should realize it is NOT a deduction from their Chapman fees. Rather, the funding comes from the program offering the scholarship and a check will be sent directly to the students' home of record as soon as their invoice is fully paid by Chapman – typically 2-3 months into their semester abroad. Thus, it is recommended that students make sure there is someone at home to handle the check on their behalf. Some students find appointing a family member Power of Attorney privileges or having another name on their bank account is a good way to remedy this situation. Once received, the scholarship funds may be used at the students' discretion.

## Academic Credit

As part of the application process, all students are required to have anticipated courses taken abroad reviewed by the Academic Advising Center on campus, approved by their department chair (for major/minor courses) and The Registrar's Office (for general education requirements). Through this process, students should understand exactly what Chapman requirements will be satisfied for each course selected to take abroad.

As a Chapman University study abroad student, your child is required to register for a full-time academic course-load. **Courses may not be taken on a pass-fail basis.** It is expected that your child registers for classes that have been pre-approved on the Academic Planning Form. If your child registers for a class that was not pre-approved, your child will need to contact the academic advisor and/or Registrar's Office to obtain electronic approval via e-mail. The Study Abroad Coordinator at [roller@chapman.edu](mailto:roller@chapman.edu) or the Exchange Coordinator at [kbeavers@chapman.edu](mailto:kbeavers@chapman.edu) should be carbon copied on all approval correspondence. (This process is outlined in the Student Pre-Departure Handbook and discussed at Pre-Departure Orientation.) The correspondence will be submitted to the Registrar's Office upon receipt of your child's transcript.

Students will receive Chapman credit for all courses taken abroad with a grade of "D" or better. Failing grades will also be recorded. Students MUST take all courses abroad for a letter grade, which will appear on their Chapman transcript and be calculated into their Chapman GPA. Pass/No Pass is NOT an option while studying abroad, with the exception of internships (which *must* be taken Pass/No Pass). Courses taken abroad will be indicated as such on the Chapman transcript.

**All courses taken abroad will be transferred back to Chapman University.  
Students may not withhold a transcript or the transfer of a course.**

PLEASE NOTE: If a course is accepted as a substitute for a Chapman University course, it does not automatically serve as equivalent for pre-requisite purposes for other courses. If the course is considered equivalent as determined by the department, it is then coded as such and will serve as a pre-requisite. There are differences between a substitution and an equivalency and faculty vary as to whether or not substitutions work as far as pre-requisites are concerned.

While abroad, students must maintain a minimum of 12 credit hours (U.S. equivalent) and a maximum of 18 credits for each semester. This allows them to have full-time status and remain eligible for their financial aid.

Any credits taken beyond 18 will result in additional per credit fees, as on the Orange campus. Students are encouraged to consult their onsite academic advisor if they are uncertain as to how credits taken at their host institution will translate into U.S. credits or the Chapman University Study Abroad Coordinator.

Falling below full time status (the equivalent of 12 US units) has SERIOUS consequences. Students may negatively impact their student visa status and their state, federal and Chapman University financial aid. Students may be required to repay a portion of their financial aid back to the government or Chapman University for the aid packages are assessed based on full time status.

### **Academic Life Abroad--Expectations**

Chapman University expects all students to assume full responsibility for behavior and conduct, and to obey laws of the host country. Students will be subject to the standard institutional regulations governing academic and residential life. Chapman University reserves the right to terminate participation in the program without refund if the student violates local laws or institutional regulations.

A student may drop a class only in accordance with the rules governing add/drop at the host institution. Typically, a class dropped within two weeks of its start will not be recorded on the transcript. If the student drops a class after the first two weeks, but more than four weeks before the final exam, or conclusion of the class, it will be reported as a W (withdraw) on the transcript. If a class is dropped without approval, or within four weeks of the final exam or scheduled conclusion of the class, it will be reported as an F (fail) on the transcript.

☆☆ *Students are required to produce all required papers, projects, etc. and take all regularly scheduled examinations in each course for which they are registered. All work must be complete prior to leaving the host institution. Late work will not be accepted! Incomplete work will be reported as a failure. Participation in an internship in conjunction with the study abroad semester does not excuse the student from these requirements! Failure to produce said papers, projects, etc. or take the required exam for a course will result in failing the course.*

The student is required to remain at the host institution until the scheduled conclusion of the program. In most cases, the student will be free to leave at the conclusion of the assessment period fixed for the term during which he/she is enrolled.

Students should retain course syllabi, reading lists and copies of written work at least until the courses and grades are posted to the Chapman University transcript. It is the student's responsibility to save course documentation.

Many differences exist when one compares higher education in the United States to higher education abroad. Often, foreign universities have tougher grading standards than their American counterparts. Students should be aware that grading standards, assessment standards, and course requirements might vary drastically from what is expected at Chapman University. It is the student's responsibility to understand the standards and contact the faculty at the host institution should there be concerns. Your student may be asked to be a more proactive and independent learner. Weekly tests or "pop quizzes" may not be conducted—students may have one or two exams throughout the semester making up the majority of the grade. Chances are your child will not be closely monitored by the instructors. It will be your child's responsibility to stay on task, keep up with the readings and be prepared to engage in discussions in the lectures or tutorials.

Grades will be translated into American equivalents when the student returns. For information about grade conversions, please ask your student to review the program website or have him/her ask the Study Abroad or Exchange Coordinator for a chart.

## Transcripts

Upon completion of the program, the Center for Global Education will receive the foreign transcript<sup>1</sup> and coordinate the posting of grades with the CU Registrar's Office. We help to mediate any questions or problems related to credit transfer and grading equivalencies. Please note that the final determination of grade and credit equivalencies, while taking into consideration the recommendations of the host institution and/or sponsoring program, rests with Chapman. Students should contact us with any concerns about transcripts.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that some overseas institutions can take up to 2-3 months to issue a transcript following a student's completion of the program. If this occurs when financial aid is being packaged for a new academic year, the Chapman Business Office can adjust the student's billing based on their prior year's financial aid package so the new semester's billing can proceed. Any necessary adjustments will then be made once the transcript is received and financial aid can be packaged.

## Student Code of Conduct

Students are expected to observe rules and exhibit behavior appropriate to the local community they visit. In addition, Chapman students who participate in Chapman sponsored study abroad semesters will be held responsible for all rules of conduct for Chapman University students, as outlined in the Chapman Student Conduct Code.

Chapman University reserves the right to require the withdrawal of any student for the following reasons:

1. Inappropriate behavior according to local norms--Violent behavior results in automatic dismissal. Sexual behavior disruptive to the program or offensive to the host culture similarly merits dismissal.
2. Poor academic standing--Students must meet all academic requirements for the semester overseas.
3. Alcohol Violations
  - A. The sale, possession, use, consumption, production, purchase or provision of alcoholic beverages to or by any person under the age of 21.
  - B. Public intoxication, displaying intoxicated behavior, requiring assistance due to intoxication and/or causing University officials to respond due to the consumption of alcohol, even if the subject is over the age of 21.
  - C. Possessing open containers or consuming alcoholic beverages in any outside location or in public areas inside University buildings including the residence halls...
  - D. Consuming alcohol in a private University residence when an individual under the age of 21 is present. Students over the age of 21 may only consume alcoholic beverages in a private University residence when the doors to that residence are closed and no one under the age of 21 is present. No persons under the age of 21 may be in a University residence while alcohol is present regardless of the amount of time an individual has spent in that residence.
  - E. Possessing kegs, beer balls and other common source containers as well as devices designated for the rapid consumption of alcohol (e.g., beer bong, funnels, etc.)
  - F. Possessing or displaying empty alcohol containers by residence students who are under the age of 21. Residents over the age of 21 may not display empty alcohol containers in windows nor keep more than 6 empty alcoholic containers displayed in their room/apartment/house. This includes empty alcoholic boxes, bottle caps and labels used for decoration, etc.
  - G. Providing alcohol with the intent of taking advantage of another.

4. Use of illegal drugs in any form--Drugs are not tolerated and students using them will not be permitted to participate/continue to participate on a study abroad program. Laws usually state that possession of any drug is illegal and punishable by fine, imprisonment, and/or deportation. Students found to be using drugs in any form are subject to immediate expulsion from any Chapman University sponsored study abroad program, even if use of the drug is legal in the host country. (This applies for the abuse of prescription drugs as well.)
5. Breaches of the local law of the host community or country will be referred to the requisite local law enforcement authority. This provision is applicable to all countries visited by study abroad participants.

## **Know Before They Go**

### **Money**

The old adage says, “pack half as many clothes and twice as much money as you think you’ll need.” In fact, the important thing is for students to be able to budget wisely, and to know their resources in case of an emergency. Each program provides students with information and suggestions for using money at particular sites abroad. Chapman provides students with much of this same information in their pre-departure materials (including the previously mentioned Expense Sheet). Guidebooks like Fodor’s and Lonely Planet can provide useful information as well (and are even included with some programs, such as AustraLearn). On request, we also put students in touch with others who have returned from the same program. This can be an excellent source of information on the financial realities of life abroad, as well as a variety of other topics.

In general, we recommend students arrive with at least the equivalent of \$100 in the currency of the host country – obtainable ahead of time from most banks or immediately upon arrival at the airport of entry via Exchange Houses or ATMs. A credit card can be a tremendous security blanket (if used prudently!). Most students who have traveled abroad have found that ATM cards (as well as credit cards) offer the best exchange rates and are convenient to use. However, keep in mind that in some countries, ATMs are prevalent while in others students can really find themselves stranded. Also, note that in most foreign countries ATMs only accept a four-digit pin code. If the current PIN does not adhere to this the student can request a new one from their bank. The important thing is for students to have a good idea of what the situation is in their country of study.

It is recommended that the student call ahead and tell the credit card company/bank that they are planning on traveling abroad to avoid deactivation of the card for irregular use. International use is the first sign of theft!

The Visa Gift card is a prepaid card that can be used everywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. It looks like any Visa credit or check card, but because it is a prepaid card, spending is limited to the amount of money placed on the card by the purchaser. The Visa Gift card is an ideal choice for travelers. The recipient can use the Visa Gift card to buy what they want, when they want. It offers all the protection and security features you have come to expect from Visa - the Visa Gift card can be replaced if lost or stolen. The Visa Gift card works at millions of places that accept Visa debit cards—including retail stores and online merchants—and for mail and phone orders. Get your Visa Gift card at <http://usa.visa.com/>

For currency conversion tables, consult the Universal Currency Converter at: <http://www.xe.com>

Above all, make sure your son or daughter is clear about what Chapman is paying for, what is arranged by him/her and the family and the hosting institution or program. It is always a good idea to sit down and talk about expenditures with your student. A careful and realistic budget can significantly help them to manage financially throughout their semester(s) abroad.

## **Communications**

It is advised that parents check out options with the phone company about adding an international long distance plan to their phone service. Once abroad, students will typically have the option of buying local phone cards to call home which are prepaid yet typically quite inexpensive.

Many students choose to rent or buy cell phones while abroad. If students are planning to take their US cell phone abroad (iPhone, etc.) remind them to contact their cell phone provider for information regarding it's compatibility with the foreign country and the rates that will be charged to use that device abroad.

In home stay situations, students are discouraged to call from the host family's phone. The family is usually charged for each minute, even if it is a local call. However, if the family gives their permission, students can receive calls at the home number (keeping in mind they should not monopolize the family's phone for long periods of time or receive calls at odd hours). E-mail is always another convenient and inexpensive option for keeping in touch. Many Internet phone options are now available—check out Skype for further information.

Do not expect a call immediately upon arrival, students are frequently tired and distracted and you will end up worrying needlessly. While tempting, it is usually not a good idea to encourage your son or daughter to call home every day. A good suggestion is to call at regular intervals, planned in advanced to avoid missed phone calls and confusion. Calling home too often can slow down the adjustment process (as well as being expensive). Furthermore, sometimes a situation can arise which is called "destructive dialing": a student gets upset about something and calls home; the parent gets upset, and calls back later, making the student more upset – and so on until the situation can reach crisis point. Regular, limited calling can help avoid such a situation.

Once abroad we ask that all students confirm with us their mailing address as soon as possible, as well as provide a more direct phone number where we can reach them (such as a cell phone). Three times each semester we will send them Chapman Study Abroad newsletters, a copy of *The Panther* (the Chapman University student newspaper), as well as information on cultural adjustment and about returning home. Although snail mail is rapidly giving way to electronic communication, we find students really appreciate receiving tangible mail while they are abroad. Of course, we do contact students by e-mail as needed for updates on issues ranging from safety to registration information.

### **Safety and Security Abroad**

This is a primary concern for everyone involved with study abroad. Travel to another country in itself is not inherently dangerous, especially to those countries in which our students typically study. However, it is important to realize that no matter where one goes they could potentially be a target of a local crime or other dangerous activity. In terms of personal safety, Chapman covers many common issues with students in their pre-departure orientation materials and most programs raise these same issues in their on-site orientations in a way more specific to each location. Additionally, students are expected to read country-specific pre-departure information given to them prior to going abroad and should make themselves familiar with the customs and culture of the country to be visited.

While it is impossible to guarantee the absolute safety of students while they are away, Chapman Study Abroad does our best to remain informed and to keep you informed. On-site program organizers generally know more about the situation in any country and, in case of unrest, we regularly keep in touch with those on-site personnel. We encourage you as parents, however, to keep yourselves informed. The Internet is an excellent source of information about most countries, and the U.S. Department of State offers particularly relevant updates at <<http://travel.state.gov>>.

Parents and family members also can play a particularly important role in the health and safety of participants in the study abroad setting by encouraging them to make informed decisions. Engage your child in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues related to studying abroad, reiterating that it is their responsibility to use common sense and stay alert to help avoid possible dangerous situations. Furthermore, we highly recommend you urge your student to leave a travel itinerary with contact information for you and for host university personnel when they travel outside of their program site, just in case. Most programs require this. It is imperative that your (no doubt very excited) son or daughter is reminded about the importance of thinking carefully about safety issues.

### **Health**

Most common health issues can be easily met by medical facilities and staff abroad. However, we do rely on students' self-reporting of any necessary information to help their program best meet their medical needs. If your son or daughter has received treatment for psychological problems, such as depression or an eating disorder, we urge you to discuss this issue within your family – study abroad can be stressful and exacerbate such problems. If there are any medical issues that concern you, or if your son or daughter has any chronic or recurring problems, it is important that program staff know about these issues before the student leaves home.

## Medications

Your son or daughter will need to take enough medication or necessary prescriptions with him/her to last the ENTIRE duration of the term abroad. Often, medications sent by mail from the United States will be confiscated by the host country's Customs Service. It is especially important for him/her to take copies of his/her prescriptions in case refills or replacements are needed. Many times brand name medications are not available but the pharmacist/chemist will be able to dispense a generic equivalent. Your son or daughter should keep all his/her prescriptions or medications in their original containers/packaging or orange pill bottles as loose pills cause suspicion!

Encourage your son/daughter to pack a few days worth of his/her prescriptions in a piece of carry-on luggage. If the checked luggage is lost or delayed, he/she will have enough to get through until the checked luggage is recovered.

## Insurance

All students studying abroad through Chapman receive comprehensive medical insurance as part of their program fees. Each Chapman University study abroad/exchange student will be covered by *two international* health insurance policies. One international policy will be taken out on your student's behalf as part of the program fees. The other international policy is assumed by Chapman University and the student needs to register for it.

Additionally, Chapman students are required to maintain a domestic policy while abroad, either their own independent insurance, coverage under their parents or the Chapman University Wellness Plan. Unless otherwise indicated, the Chapman University Wellness Plan will be your student's domestic policy by default. If your student chooses to waive that insurance, he/she will need to submit an "Application for Health Insurance Waiver" directly to the Wellness Center prior to departure. If your student fails to do so, your student will be automatically billed for the policy on the tuition bill. If continuing or obtaining the Chapman health plan, this will appear on the Chapman billing statement and will need to be paid by him/her and/or the parents. If using their own plan or a parent plan to fulfill the domestic health plan requirement, students need to provide us with a copy of their insurance card.

Chapman University provides International Medical Insurance and Assistance Services to all members of the Chapman University community.

The program provides (a) medical benefits, (b) emergency medical evacuation services, (c) an accidental death & dismemberment benefit, and (d) miscellaneous assistance services associated with foreign travel. A summary of benefits is provided with your enrollment.

In order to take advantage of this insurance, purchased by the University for the benefit of students, faculty and staff, all individuals who are traveling internationally in connection with their work or academic program at Chapman University are asked to complete a convenient, online enrollment form that can be found at: <https://web.chapman.edu/ace/>. There is a link to this site on the Chapman University Risk Management website: <http://www.chapman.edu/RiskMgmt/resources.asp>

Note that following the online registration, each enrolled traveler will automatically receive via email a pdf document that contains the insurance ID card as well as a summary of the benefit structure.

We also strongly recommend that students purchase the International Student Identity Card (ISIC), which gives some health coverage as well as important medical evacuation and repatriation coverage. It is available for purchase in the Chapman Study Abroad Office for \$22 or \$68 for the Premium Card, and offers discounts on travel services as well as insurance. The Premium Card now carries some coverage for laptops and luggage. Please check with the Chapman University Study Abroad Office for more information or visit [www.STAtravel.com](http://www.STAtravel.com)

## Security

Parents are naturally concerned about their child's safety overseas. The international political arena is constantly in flux and the relationship of the United States to other nations is likewise constantly changing. As your student is about to leave the U.S., you may have some concerns about how the current international tensions might affect him/her while traveling and living abroad.

To date, all students abroad through Chapman affiliated programs have been safe and the Study Abroad Office and the host country study abroad program is monitoring the world situation as it changes. All Department of State Public Announcements and U.S. Embassy Advisory Messages are immediately communicated to the Resident Directors of each program and passed on to the students. Do not doubt that your son or daughter's program abroad is prepared to take whatever action necessary to guarantee his/her well-being. You will be notified as soon as possible if an emergency arises.

## Register with U.S. Embassy or Consulate

Before departure or after arriving, your son or daughter should register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's travel registration website: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/home.asp> Registration will make your son or daughter's presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact him/her in an emergency.

## Role of the U.S. Consulate

(Information provided by the Department of State website)

Consular officers in Embassies do two things:

1. They issue visas to foreigners;
2. They help U.S. Citizens abroad

Consular officers provide a range of services—some emergency, some non-emergency. *Replace a Passport:* If your son or daughter loses his/her passport, a consul can issue a replacement, often within 24-hours.

*Help Find Medical Assistance:* If your son or daughter gets sick it is first recommended that they inform their resident director and seek their assistance. If they become seriously ill or injured, a consul can help him/her find medical assistance and at his/her request, notify family or friends.

*Help get funds:* Firstly, your son or daughter should contact their financial institution to report to the loss or theft. Most times the financial institution can assist them with

replacing the funds and/or debit or credit cards. Additionally, consular officers can help make arrangements for funds to be wired to him/her through the Department of State.

*Visit in Jail:* If your son or daughter is arrested, he/she should immediately ask the authorities to notify a U.S. consul. Consuls cannot get your son or daughter out of jail (when he/she is in a foreign country he/she is subject to its laws). However, the consul can work to protect his/her legitimate interests and ensure he/she is not discriminated against. The consul can provide a list of attorneys, visit your son or daughter, generally inform him/her about local laws and inform you or his/her friends. Consular officers can transfer money, food and clothing to the prison authorities. They can try to get relief if your son or daughter is held under inhumane or unhealthful conditions.

*Make Arrangements after the death of an American:* When an American dies abroad, a consular officer notifies the family and informs them about options and costs for disposition of remains. A consul prepares a Report of Death based on the local death certificate and forwards this document to the next of kin.

*Help in a disaster/evacuation:* If your son or daughter is caught in a natural disaster or civil disturbance, the resident director will first take action. Secondly, you will be contacted to inform you of his/her safety. In extreme circumstances, the consul will pass messages on to family members.

Consular officers CANNOT act as travel agents, banks, lawyers, investigators, or law enforcement officers. Please do not expect them to act as interpreters, search for missing luggage, or settle disputes with local businesses.

### **Advice for Parents: Frequently Asked Questions** by William Hoffa, Academic Consultants International

*Why is study abroad so popular these days?*

At the beginning of the 21st century, in a world becoming every year more interdependent, the ultimate educational value to students of pursuing at least some portion of their undergraduate years living and learning in another country is no longer really debatable. Not only is the global competence and alertness gained by such an experience crucial to American national and international interests, but students who leave college without having had a significant 'globalizing' experience as part of their undergraduate education, many educators now believe, will increasingly be thought of as not fully educated for the world they will enter. Your son or daughter understands this.

Indeed, the proverbially well-rounded education in preparation for living and working successfully in the 21st Century needs not only to be 'higher,' but also deeper, broader, and less nationalistic and monocultural than that which has served past generations. As stated by national report after national report, we now live in a global society in which knowledge, resources, and authority transcend national and regional boundaries. The knowledge, skills, and attitudes it takes to understand and prevail in such a society can be best achieved by living and learning through direct experience in a culture beyond one's own.

*But why does one need to go far away to learn these lessons? Don't nearly a half million students from other countries come each year to study here?*

It is important to learn about the 'foreignness' of other lands, cultures, and people, but it is also important to learn invaluable lessons about what it means to be an 'American.' Students studying abroad learn how to distinguish those parts of themselves which are products of their time and place in American society from those parts which are universal to all of humankind. This degree of personal and national self-knowledge simply cannot be gained at 'home.' Whatever the resources of their college or university and however high their motivation, students' perspectives remain limited by the blinders of being only in their own culture.

*What would a summary of all the reasons for studying abroad look like?*

- First, study abroad enriches and diversifies undergraduate education by offering courses, programs, and academic learning of a sort not possible on the home campus
- Second, study abroad provides U.S. students with a global outlook, which emphasizes the contemporary inter-relatedness of nations and cultures, the universality of human values, and the necessity for working together
- Third, study abroad enhances career preparation by teaching cross-cultural and work-place skills of value to today's employers, often through internships and other hands-on experiences
- Finally, study abroad deepens intellectual and personal maturity, fosters independent thinking, and builds self-confidence.

*What are our roles as parents in helping select the right program? There seem to be hundreds to choose from!*

Following are important considerations that must be factored into your daughter's or son's choice of a particular program. In order to be able to provide the requisite confirmation and support, which she or he might need, it is important for you to have a basic grasp of the following:

- How study abroad resembles and differs from domestic study
- How it is structured, and its many varieties in duration, location, and program type
- How credit is earned and used toward degree studies
- What the full costs will be
- What financial aid resources are available
- How safety can be maximized
- How the admissions process works

*What are the primary causes of health and safety problems that students might face overseas?*

Many of the health and safety problems that students find abroad are similar to those that they find on US college and university campuses. Anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that individual student behavior (sometimes misbehavior) is the cause of most illnesses, injuries, and fatalities. When students don't prepare themselves properly, ignore the advice and counsel of campus and overseas personnel, or act naively or as if they are invulnerable, they can get into a lot of trouble. This is especially true when they travel excessively on their own or engage in dangerous social behavior, such as binge drinking or hanging out in unsavory local nightspots. Your daughter or son is considerably less likely to be the victim of a natural catastrophe, of social violence, of disease, or of program negligence than of being victimized by her or his own poor judgment, exercised in unfamiliar surroundings.

However, there are health and safety problems that are not the direct responsibility of students themselves, but which can victimize them. These involve modes of travel (airplane, bus, van, taxi, car, etc.); criminal behavior directed against them (theft, sexual assault); and permanent or evolving health and safety conditions in the local environment (disease, natural catastrophes, political upheaval). In order to be prepared to meet the challenges specific to particular programs and locations, it is important that you and your daughter or son learn from information provided by the program sponsors, as well as, if possible, from the experiences of students who have participated in all programs being considered. Make sure to cover not just what's what during the 'program' of the program, but what can happen on excursions, as well as during independent travel. Obviously, there are many variations between countries, regions, and programs.

*Are there any program types or locations, which should be avoided or at least looked at extra carefully?*

Many people believe that, more critical than the location of the program per se (apart from countries about which the State Department provides absolute prohibitions or unequivocal warnings), is the program itself. Many programs with excellent health and safety records occur in places which some observers would say present more than average risks, because they are well-planned and overseen. Conversely, accidents and injuries can certainly occur in 'safe' countries, if program activities are themselves risky or badly designed and managed. Your questions should, of course, cover where a program takes place, how it is run, and what, if any, potential dangers exist. You should also use extra scrutiny to investigate brand new programs and those run by colleges or agencies without much history of overseas programming. Finally, it is important to note that established on-going programs, a semester or more in duration, with permanent staff "on the ground" might be inherently safer than short-term, one-time, traveling programs led by an accompanying faculty or staff member not thoroughly familiar with the program site(s), especially if there is little or no on-site coordination.

*How do we know that study abroad will be safe for our child? Recent newspapers and TV accounts suggest that overseas risks may be great. Is this true?*

Established overseas study programs fully recognize their responsibility to provide a secure and unthreatening environment in which your daughter or son can live and learn safely. Responsible campuses and programs consult regularly with colleagues around the country who are involved in the administration of study abroad programs, with resident program directors, with responsible officials of foreign host universities, with contacts in the U.S. Department of State, governmental and non-governmental agencies, and with other experts, including faculty who are well-informed on issues and events. It is in no one's interest to risk student safety or well-being. If a program is brand new or seems to be hosted by a campus which has not been involved in study abroad programming in the past, you might want to be cautious and ask the questions that need to be asked.

*But how do we identify a 'responsible' program? How do campuses here know what is going on over there?*

You should also know what communications exist to assist program sponsors not only in planning programs, but in their operations. The ability to communicate almost instantaneously worldwide via fax machines and electronic mail enables campuses, third-party program sponsors, and parents to obtain and share information quickly and accurately in planning programs. Modern telecommunications also allows for the monitoring of evolving events. In the event of an overseas emergency that may have repercussions for study abroad programs and students, it is possible to take immediate action. Most campuses and programs have an effective system of consultation in place for these purposes. They are thus able to make proactive and reactive decisions concerning the safe operation of their programs. Finding out about the level and quality of all communication systems between 'here' and 'there' is something every parent should pursue before the program begins, and all reputable programs should assist you in.

*The programs look a lot alike from the materials we have seen. No hint of danger is evident in the fliers.*

You are right that few promotional materials give mention of potential health or safety risks. While most programs are run by responsible sponsors and do not consciously send students into harm's way, their promotional materials necessarily accentuate the positive, especially initially. But most programs send follow-up materials to clarify many potential risks to health and safety that come with program participation. If they don't, you should feel free to ask sponsors at any point about anything that concerns you. Make sure that this information is current. If you do not get thorough and forthright answers, you and your child should discuss whether this is the program to choose.

*Aren't most countries just inherently dangerous to Americans? What do US embassies do to guarantee safety of US citizens?*

America has a long history of isolationism, and most Americans know what they know, not from direct experience in other countries, but from the confines of our culture and from the mass media, which tends to sensationalize world events. Few countries, for instance, have as much street crime and the potential for stranger-upon-stranger violence as the United States. In this sense U.S. students may be statistically "safer" in foreign cities and towns than they are at home or on their own campus. Many U.S. students report when they return from a period abroad that they had never felt safer in their lives. This does not mean that there is no crime elsewhere, or that a daughter's or son's personal safety is ever completely assured. Minor street crime (especially pick-pocketing) is a fact of life in many countries, especially in crowded cities that receive regular influxes of foreign visitors. Further, students living or traveling in countries that are internally unstable or at odds with their neighbors of course need to be made aware of this by their campus and program. Usually risks are knowable well in advance and precautions are taken. When a situation gets truly dangerous - that is, when visiting students could in fact be in danger, which can be quite different than the perceptions given in the media - departing programs are cancelled, and groups are brought home. This is standard operating procedure.

*Aren't Americans often the target of terrorists and others unfriendly to our nation's values or foreign policy?*

There are very few documented instances in the history of study abroad when it has been apparent that American students have been the specific targets of political violence. However, carrying a U.S. passport, in and of itself, is no guarantee of safety or absolute security. In certain places and at certain times, it is very possible to get caught in the midst of forms of political strife that may or may not be directed at foreigners generally or Americans in particular, but nevertheless can be very dangerous.

*Who can help my daughter or son if trouble erupts?*

In those few locations where even remote danger might occasionally exist, program directors work with local police, U.S. consular personnel, and local university officials in setting up whatever practical security measures are deemed prudent. In such places, students will be briefed during orientation programs and reminded at times of heightened political tension about being security-conscious in their daily activities. Terrorism is a twentieth-century reality and is not likely to diminish (or increase) significantly. To succumb to the threat by reacting in fear may well be the objective that terrorists seek to achieve. On the other hand, no one wants to make this point at the expense of the health and safety of your daughter or son. It is important to ensure that your son or daughter has sufficient insurance, which would include major medical, evacuation, repatriation, and 24 hour emergency assistance.

*How can I tell in advance which countries might be dangerous? Is watching the nightly news and reading the newspaper enough?*

The U.S. government monitors the political conditions in every country of the world daily. Parents with concerns about crime and security threats in a given country are urged to take advantage of U.S. State Department Travel Advisories, which are available to the public free of charge. Travel Warnings are issued when the State Department decides, based on all relevant information, to recommend that Americans avoid travel to a certain country. Consular Information Sheets are available for every country of the world, and include such information as location of the US Embassy or Consulate, unusual immigration practices, health conditions, minor political disturbances, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security information, and drug penalties. If an unstable situation exists which is not severe enough to warrant a travel warning, this is duly noted. Public announcements contain information about terrorist threats and other relatively short-term and transnational conditions posing significant risks to the security of American travelers. For current information, advisories, or warnings, you can contact the State Department in Washington DC (tel: 202.647.4000), or get access to this same information via the World Wide Web, at <http://www.state.gov> The US Department of State Consular Affairs Website includes "Tips for Students", a good background on how the US government can help, and issues that students should consider before going abroad.

*If our child is abroad when something dangerous develops, how can we make contact? Or what if something happens here, and we want to communicate this immediately?*

Don't let your child leave home without having as many reliable means of contact as possible in place - a mailing address, an e-mail address, and phone and fax numbers. These should be furnished in advance by the program sponsor (or campus study abroad office, or both). As noted, overseas programs and home campuses are likely to have set up regular and reliable means of communication, so it may be best to utilize these systems as a first resort, rather than trying to make direct contact with your daughter or son overseas. Nevertheless, you should develop a family communication plan for regular telephone or e-mail contact, with contingencies for emergency situations. With this in place, in times of heightened political tension, natural disaster, or other difficulty, you should be able to communicate with each other directly about safety and well-being. On the other hand, responsible programs may even anticipate your concerns, and make contact with you immediately. Instant international communication in emergency situations continues to improve with easy access to international e-mail access and cell phones around the world.

*Can anyone absolutely guarantee our child's safety?*

No. Nor can her or his home college or university guarantee safety on-campus in the US. But as long as you have asked all the questions of the campus, of the program sponsor, of your son or daughter, and of anyone else with information that is reliable, and have got the answers you conclude you need to have concerning potential health and safety risks, you have done all you can do. If the risks are unacceptable, you have every right to find another alternative or decide not to support study abroad in any form. If they are acceptable, then only fate can interfere with what should be a great journey and return.

*William Hoffa is the Principal Consultant of Academic Consultants International, where he works with colleges and universities to globalize their campuses. He is an active member of NAFSA and is well-known as an expert in education abroad with numerous publications, such as "NAFSA'S Guide to Education Abroad: For Advisers and Administrators," "Study Abroad: A Guide for Parents," and the forthcoming "Crisis Management in a Cross Cultural Setting." He is currently working on the "History of American Study Abroad." Dr. Hoffa also teaches in the International and Intercultural Management Masters Program at the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont. He has held positions as Professor of English and American Studies at Vanderbilt University, Kirkland College, and Hamilton College, was Senior Fulbright Lecturer to the University of Jyväskylä, Finland (1974-75), and was National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, University of New Mexico (1978-79). He has served as Executive Director of Scandinavian Seminar (Inc.) and Field Director of Academic Programs for the Council on International Educational Exchange. Dr. Hoffa holds academic degrees from Michigan, Harvard, and Wisconsin. He can be contacted via email at: bhoffa@external.umass.edu or bhoffa@valinet.com.*

## **Culture Shock & Re-Entry**

### **Adjusting to the Host Country**

**Most students experience culture shock to some degree.** Culture shock does not affect everyone the same – some students have it longer than others, some not at all. Upon arrival abroad most students are a little disoriented or experience discomfort in trying to adjust to the new culture. However, this difficult time will be temporary; the reward of studying abroad will soon outweigh the initial discomfort that the student might feel. If your son or daughter experiences irritation and depression after a few weeks, it is part of this pattern and will probably go away (all the faster if you remain cheerful in response!).

**If you get a tearful call 24 hours after departure, the best thing to do is to remain calm and positive. Your support and confidence are vital for the well-being of your child, as doubtful parents result in doubtful travelers.** Detailed information on culture shock is provided in the Chapman pre-departure orientation materials each student receives.

### **Re-Entry to the U.S.**

**For some students, re-entry to the U.S. is not difficult; however, some students describe experiencing some degree of stress upon their return. Reverse culture shock can be a real problem for some – especially for those who have really integrated themselves into the local culture and lifestyle during their time abroad.** It may surprise you to know that many students have an easier time adjusting to being abroad than they do coming home.

Students might be bored to be back home or feel a lack of direction. During the period of re-adjustment they will try to get back into their normal routine but may find it difficult due to experiences and things they have learned. When they want to talk about all about the amazing experiences they had, do not expect a brief sentence to describe their entire journey. It is important to remember that studying abroad has changed them in many ways. Real emotional, intellectual, and personal growth has likely taken place. They have matured, in many ways, and have changed as an individual.

Though we may not always understand what the student is going through, your understanding of the student's needs will be of great assistance during this time of confusion and disorientation. To aid in the re-entry process, we will be writing to your son or daughter before their return home with advice on adapting to life back home. Additionally, we give returnees an opportunity to work through the experience by participating in alumni activities here on campus.

### **Surviving Re-Entry** By Leonore Cavallero, SIT Study Abroad Academic Director- Ecuador: Culture and Development

"You can't go home again," wrote author Thomas Wolfe. Could he have been thinking about SIT students? For some young men and women, the transition back to life in the United States seems to be even harder than adjusting to the country they have just left. Readjustment also takes its toll on parents, families, and friends who often do not understand why their loved one is having problems. The goal of this handbook is to look at why return culture shock occurs, look at some of the typical concerns of students going through re-entry, and finally, discuss what parents can do to assist their children during this process. Student quotes have been included in italics to help parents understand re-entry from a student's perspective.

*"The hardest part of re-entry was people seemingly not caring how my life had been transformed."*

*"For me, the hardest part was finding myself in the lives of others who have been without me for so long."*

#### Introduction:

As an Academic Director in Ecuador with SIT Study Abroad, I see students making the adjustment to life in a new country and a new culture. I am also a parent and recently my own daughter participated in an SIT Study Abroad program. When she returned home, I had the opportunity for the first time to see a student adjust back to life in her home country and culture.

It was an eye-opening experience:

*Driving back home from the airport, I glanced over at my daughter. I was so happy to see her. Somehow she seemed a little disoriented, though I knew she must be excited to be back, after spending four months in France on an SIT program. "Exhaustion and jet lag," I thought to myself.*

After a few days, the situation at home was becoming difficult. She wanted wine with every meal. She requested cloth napkins. She wanted to listen only to French music and look through her photographs. She kept describing the wonderful places she had been and the food they had eaten. She complained about the quality of our cheese. She didn't want to call her old friends. She didn't really seem to be happy to be home. Frankly, I was a little concerned and frustrated, as well. How long was it going to take her to readjust to normal life?

Time went by. After three weeks, I was ready to have a fit. She still continually criticized everything. She moped around the house. She didn't seem to want to get out and find a job for the summer. I could feel myself running out of patience. I was tired of hearing about her life abroad, and I wanted her to be glad to be home! Even though I knew it was normal to have some difficulties adjusting to being back, it seemed to me that this had been going on long enough. It was time for her to get over it. I wanted my sunny, positive, energetic daughter back again.

My own experience got me thinking and, while on sabbatical for a semester, I researched and wrote this handbook as a resource for other parents. For guidance, I enlisted the assistance of many of my former students from here in Ecuador and other SIT Study Abroad alumni. I am grateful for their assistance. This handbook would not have been possible without them.

What happens to young college students when they go overseas? Why do they come back feeling out of place in the environment in which they were raised?

They know their children will be living [in student accommodations or] with host families, interacting with the local culture and learning the language and the customs. They are aware of the strong academic focus that provides students with specific requirements to fulfill, including writing papers, participating in discussion groups, and taking exams. They are confident that both intellectually and interculturally, students are being challenged and guided by their Academic Directors.

What parents may not be aware of, however, is the emotional impact of living and studying abroad. When they arrive in their host country most students, on some level, temporarily regress to a more dependent stage of life. They know themselves to be independent young adults with control over their lives. Yet, they find themselves dependent on the graciousness of their hosts. Their language ability is not fluent; their environment is full of unknowns; they are fed unusual foods at family meals; and most of all, they no longer understand the nonverbal cues that are going on around them. This experience can be both disconcerting and stimulating as well as exhausting, exhilarating, and even occasionally frightening!

So what does the student do?

Typically, shortly after arrival, the student begins a process that is essential to his or her psychological survival: to absorb and learn as much as possible about this new world. Since knowledge equals power in this situation, the student focuses on unraveling how the society is structured, understanding cultural priorities, and discovering what is considered appropriate behavior in any given situation. This experience continually

requires students to grow. Their dramatic learning curve consists of daily emotional ups and downs. Their senses are heightened, and they find their life is full of challenges and unexpected surprises. Their overall comprehension steadily increases. Eventually, if they are successful in their adaptation process, they feel the thrill of realizing they finally fit in, simultaneously accepting and being accepted by the locals.

Why is there a problem when they come home? Surely they have not forgotten who they really are and how they were raised. Have they really become different people than who they were when they left?

In a way, yes, they have. Culture, after all, is a learned process. People around the world face the same problems. However, they develop very different mechanisms for dealing with them. To genuinely feel a part of the culture, the students have to sincerely be able to accept, believe and participate in the practices of the new culture. What at first appeared strange – whether eating with their hands, or greeting perfect strangers with a kiss on the cheek – has to become normal everyday behavior.

Interestingly enough, this process occurs regardless of which country the student has chosen for his or her study abroad experience. Eventually, in many cases, the new customs become automatic. When the students finally board the plane to come home, these learned responses to social situations and different ways of perceiving their environment come right along with them. Although this newly acquired worldview is no longer necessary back home, it is virtually impossible to drop it overnight. Many students are also not quite sure they want to lose what they have acquired through so much effort and struggle. They do not want to return to being exactly who they were before they left. They feel this would invalidate their experience, and the care and love they received from all the people who helped and supported them through their learning process.

“I definitely felt I had become part Ecuadorian, and had no way to express that new part of myself.”

“It’s so tough to return to your own ‘reality’ (or what it was before leaving) and realize that you don’t necessarily agree with your life or your culture or the values underlying it”.

Superficial changes fade with time, of course. The key word here is time, since the process of readjustment is different for each person. Some students go through months of feeling alienated from their home environment. For others, it may take longer. Some lucky souls seem to slip back into their previous life with little or no difficulties. These individuals often experience a delayed return culture shock that catches them unawares months later.

“I stayed inside for three days before going out.”

“For three weeks after I got home I ended up just trying to recuperate, rarely going out.”

“I was a good wreck for a couple of months.”

“In total, return culture shock lasted about a year.”

Is there a way to tell how long the process of adapting to return culture shock is going to take?

Unfortunately, probably not. Students can also go through different cycles in their readjustment. The first few days of being home can be euphoric. During the subsequent weeks, when the shock of re-entry hits, the student might feel depressed or unsure of him/herself and uncertain about previously made plans. Mood swings are frequent, as are long conversations about goals and priorities. The problem is compounded by the feeling that no one around them can relate to what is happening to them, except perhaps other newly returned [study abroad] students.

Students who have traveled extensively before enrolling in [a study abroad] program often suffer in the same way as their companions who had never previously left the U.S. Perhaps the only difference is that they remember having gone through the experience before and realize that it will indeed pass. While students are struggling with this process, it is not uncommon for some of them to try desperately to find a way to go back overseas.

There are students who feel out of place from the moment they walk through the door. For them, the readjustment to home actually feels harder than the original culture shock they felt when they left to go abroad. They may take weeks to integrate the new person they have become into the reality they left behind. Usually, the more successful the student was in integrating into the host culture, the more difficult he or she will find the challenge of slipping back into the American way of life. Conversely, students who were less affected by the time they spent abroad will typically have an easier time returning home.

“Re-entry is an emotional roller coaster that no one in the home community is likely to fully understand.”

“I’d say that there isn’t one formula to make your kid’s re-entry smooth. In fact, there may not be, and that’s probably just part of the whole process. It is not easy to go away so it makes sense that it should not be easy to come back.”

What are some of the main difficulties faced by students returning home?

#### Pace of Life

Although many of us know that other cultures have a far more flexible attitude towards time, it comes as a shock when we realize how well our children have adapted to “Jamaican time” or “Spanish time” or “Indian time.” This particular cultural idiosyncrasy is often treated lightly, even jokingly. However, it actually is indicative of a deeper issue. Much of the rest of the world is amazed at how Americans allow their lives to be ruled by the clock, ignoring mitigating factors and circumstances beyond one’s control. Although students can re-learn to check the watch, it might be hard for them to give time the same importance it once had. They often continue to feel that people and situations should take priority over schedules and deadlines.

“People in the US are far too tense, selfish and in a hurry.”

“It was difficult to adjust to the pace of life back home -- the dependence upon time and scheduling.”

### Consumerism

[Some] students choose to study in countries that are not as wealthy as the United States. They often are amazed at the quality of life of people abroad who lack what the US culture has taught them to consider as basic possessions. They are taken by surprise at the closeness of the families, the warmth and friendliness, the willingness to share. Coming home, it is not unusual for students to feel vaguely guilty for all they and their real families own.

Christmas is frequently mentioned as a particularly difficult time of year. The commercialization of the holidays in the United States, and the emphasis on buying presents contrasts painfully with their memories of the generosity of the people who had so little and yet gave them so much.

“The hardest part of re-entry for me was Christmas and the extraordinary amounts of money that Americans spend at Christmas time and in general”.

“Then Christmas hit. The extravagance was overwhelming and depressing to me – the waste, the excess.”

“I found myself many times completely unable to cope with the fact that I live in a society that glorifies material wealth and in a country that dominates the world economy.”

### Personal Communication

How can one describe the adventures, learning experiences, growth, expansion, realizations that one has had during the months overseas? Is it possible to share the importance of the relationships made, the poignancy of leaving, the joys and sadness made even more intense by the awareness that the stay abroad was temporary? Most students are bursting with stories to tell, yet also apprehensive that they will not be able to adequately communicate their feelings. They then realize, though it comes as a shock, that life has gone on for everyone at home as well, and that their friends have also experienced changes in their worlds.

When the student is returning to a boyfriend or girlfriend, there is often an additional strain since the person who left may be quite different from the person who has returned. Although some couples do remain together, for others the added pressure can lead to separation. The frustration with personal communication frequently leaves students with a sense of alienation both within the family circle and among their broader group of friends. This, in turn, can lead to withdrawal and depression. Often it is easier for returning students to relate to new friends who are also home from study abroad programs and experiencing the same difficulties in readjusting.

“The hardest part for me was reconciling how much I had experienced and therefore changed with people and things that had remained the same at home.”

“I felt like I was unable to really communicate to people what my semester abroad meant. Few people want to take the time to hear about what really touched your heart and changed your perspective.”

“My biggest desire was just to be around people who understand, who would listen to me, validate my feelings and not expect me to ‘get over’ my depression or confusion or anger or frustration too quickly.”

### Returning to School

They have just completed four months of experiential learning where their education reached beyond the four walls of the classroom into the sphere of everyday life. They were able to observe, almost on a daily basis, their progress in language ability, interpersonal skills, cross-cultural awareness, and self-confidence. Every moment held the potential to learn and grow. As an added benefit, each program provided a built-in support group, with other students going through similar experiences. The friendships formed during an SIT semester abroad are often very deep and profound. No wonder students feel anxious about returning to a traditional learning system, with regular classes that seem to have little or no relevance to their lives, and classmates who will have no way of relating to their overseas experience.

“School was really hard to get back into. I just didn’t want to be there... didn’t want to be reading about other people doing things, I wanted to be doing them.”

“When I went back to school I was hit with the reality that the lives of my friends had changed and I was no longer a part of the close knit circle I had had before.”

“It is crazy to think it was two years ago and is still so important and the source of most of my best friendships.”

### World View

Many students also feel their world view has expanded immeasurably. They have a deeper awareness of global issues and a broader perspective regarding globalization, IMF policies, ecological challenges, health concerns, international income disparity, and so on. They feel the richness, the weight, and the responsibility of first-hand experience. They are understandably frustrated with the seemingly superficial priorities and the general lack of international awareness in the lives of their friends and family. Some returning students realize that they themselves were as unaware as their friends before they left to study overseas. Most, however, conveniently forget this fact. If they are not careful, their attitude of moral superiority alienates the very individuals they are trying to reach. The challenge here is for them to not forget what they have learned, and at the same time, not allow their indignation and self-righteousness to get in the way of productive dialogue with others.

“My views were so changed, my eyes awakened, and I could not continue as I had before leaving.”

“I was listening to my two closest friends talk during my first week back, and I was shocked and appalled. I assumed that they had grown and matured as much as I had. Boy, was I wrong.”

“One hard thing for me was finding myself among peers who don’t share the same global consciousness that I had acquired while I was away. I wanted to smack a lot of people and tell them to wake up and look around them, even though I could easily have been one of them four months before.”

### Self Image

One of the final issues faced by returning students is confronting their self image. Many students go to countries where they look different from most of the local population. Both men and women often find themselves receiving far more attention from the opposite sex than they were accustomed to, simply because of their American appearance. Although this constant fishbowl effect is exhausting, it is also flattering. Plump women are frequently considered desirable in other countries. Occasionally, female students are actively encouraged by their host families to gain weight and thus be even more attractive. This can be quite a pleasant surprise for some US college women accustomed to the American obsession with weight loss and physical fitness. It is a powerful experience to be considered “special” and beautiful, simply because you are different: a foreigner, an American. Understandably, to return home and once again become “just one of the crowd” is often quite a let down and, indirectly, a blow to one’s self esteem.

“I definitely felt the shock of ‘being normal.’”

“White girls are viewed as being beautiful overseas simply because of their blue eyes and pale skin – but when they come home, they are back to being average looking with about 10 unwanted pounds.”

“Don’t say ‘you’ve gained weight’ – we feel bad enough about it without someone having to remind us”

What can we do, as parents? What do our children need from us to help them through this unexpectedly difficult time?

### Patience

Readjustment is a very individual process, and no one pattern holds true for everyone. Your child might not feel ready to meet lots of family members or friends – even a visit to the supermarket can seem overwhelming. For the first few days, a light schedule is probably better than a heavily packed one. Even though physically they are there with you, emotionally and psychologically they have not completely arrived home yet. They need time to reacquaint themselves with what they previously accepted as “normal” life.

It is not uncommon for children to go through a stage of being critical of what is around them, including what they see at home. Complaints range from wasting food, producing too much garbage, driving instead of walking or taking the bus, overspending, unawareness of what is going on overseas, and so on. Patience. Their indignation will settle down and hopefully transform itself into the willingness to work towards productive goals. Some students feel the need to make specific -- occasionally radical -- changes in their lives. Some have sold or given away their possessions, found fellowships to go back overseas, switched majors, chosen new careers, even changed schools. Although this can be quite upsetting for parents, patience and dialogue can go

a long way in allowing a deeper understanding of just what changes each son or daughter has experienced. Students sincerely appreciate the effort their parents make in trying to comprehend how the world of their children has broadened. This attention allows them to feel that the results of their study abroad experience are both valued and respected.

“My parents realized that I was going to be changed by my experience and they saw that as positive.”

“Be proud of me and all that I’ve accomplished in a few months!”

“Accept that I have changed, don’t put pressure on me to act the same as I had before. Be accommodating in my changes in habits and help me incorporate this amazing experience into my life.”

### Listen

The other request most often heard from students going through the process of readjustment is for their parents to be open and willing to listen to them. Since most parents are already curious and eager to hear what their children have to tell them, why is this an issue? The problem seems to be that each situation is different. Some returning students want to talk non-stop from the moment they arrive, others need a little time before they can share their stories. Some find it difficult to put their experience into words. They need to process within themselves before they can talk to others. In these cases, parents can give their children an empty photo album or a scrapbook. This can serve as an excellent tool to open the way for communication, while allowing the student to create a visual display of their semester. Occasionally, students will find it easier to talk about activities or experiences later, as events trigger memories during the course of days and weeks instead of immediately sitting down and answering questions from curious family members. (A balance of interest and, again, of patience). Many students know they are going through a difficult time. They need to hear about what has been happening in the lives of those at home to help them relate to the fact that life has not stood still while they were gone. If parents have had occasion to travel and have themselves also experienced return culture shock after living or working overseas, they can share their own stories with their children. Not only will this help create a mutual bond of experience, it will also serve to reassure the disoriented student that this condition is temporary and will indeed pass.

“Ask questions! Show an interest and let me talk when I need to, ask to see my pictures, be positive and sympathize with me, ask who or what I miss the most!”

“Be supportive but not smothering – give your child space and be patient with him/her but be sure you are available and always ready and willing to listen and offer support.”

“Be genuinely interested in the story behind every picture – don’t rush me, let me talk in my own time. Ask specific questions, listen and be excited! Remember the names of my friends from SIT, and ask about them from time to time.”

### Support

A final request from students is for their parents to support them in finding ways to keep their experience real and vital in their lives. Although students have concerns about

their ability to adequately communicate the impact their SIT semester had on their lives, they are even more apprehensive that they will forget what they have learned, that they will allow themselves to fall back into complacency and unawareness.

Unfortunately, if students do not focus on this issue, there is indeed a very real possibility of having the learning and changes of the previous four months fade into a somewhat hazy dream. Current reality can easily become more important than the past. Although this is necessary at some level, it is also important for the student to not lose the many benefits acquired abroad including language skills, cultural awareness, global understanding. This would be a waste of time and money and a true disservice to the people who accepted the student into their lives. It would also greatly diminish the validity and importance of the overseas experience.

Academic Directors regularly conduct sessions on re-entry before the end of the program, and discuss with their students different ways they can keep their experience alive once they have returned home. To help in this, parents can help their children investigate areas in their communities where they can get involved in working with immigrants and their families. They can arrange for their children to give talks and presentations to local schools or groups of interested individuals. They can provide information on local radio and TV stations that might cater to the language or cultural needs of the people of the student's host country. They can encourage their children to take classes relevant to their overseas experience and to get involved in campus activities that are important to them, such as tutoring foreign students, living in an International House, volunteering on ecological projects, presenting a radio program with host country music, increasing political awareness, organizing fundraisers. Simply encouraging your child to cook a meal for the family using the ingredients of their host country can provide an enjoyable and positive experience for all involved.

“The toughest part for me was sinking back into the lifestyle – the bubble – and not feeling that I was abandoning something.”

“I needed to find connections to my former host country in my home community, even just a restaurant. This would have helped me relax, given me a taste of the culture that had become so familiar to me.”

“Be educated about your child's surroundings, in terms of what s/he could be involved in – like different non-profit organizations or ways to organize groups on campus.”

## Conclusion

Have patience, be ready to listen, and be willing to support them. It sounds simple, once you know. Looking back, as a parent, I realize that I simply did not have any idea what my daughter really needed from me. I tried to do my best. I ran out of patience. I got tired of listening. I didn't know how to be supportive. At the same time, I was genuinely delighted my daughter was home, and I did what I could to show her, by surrounding her with love and affection. I realize now, in retrospect, that I never expected her readjustment process to last so long, nor that it would be so hard on all of us. A few days, maybe. Not weeks and weeks. However, we did survive! Her SIT semester abroad truly had a major impact, a positive and long-lasting impact on her and on all of our family.

“It is difficult to describe how my semester abroad totally transformed my life.”

“The worse thing my parents could have done was to fail to realize the importance of that time in my life and how hard/sad it was for me to return.”

“My parents were incredible during this process. Even though they didn’t understand me, they accepted that I had changed. It is such an individual process that one must own and struggle with in order to make the improvements.”

Adapted in part from Wesleyan University’s Office of International Studies Parent Guide and the University of Northern Iowa’s “A Parent Guide to Study Abroad.”