
Safety and Study Abroad

1. Read carefully the U.S. State Department's Worldwide Caution. Note the webpage for state department travel warnings and check the status of the country to which you are traveling well before you depart. http://travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html

Key things to do:

- Register at embassy/consulate abroad
- Keep an emergency card with contact information (yellow or green card example)
- Discuss emergency plans with your resident director or on-site staff

2. Discuss your feelings and perspective about traveling and studying overseas at this time with your family and close friends. *Remember to remain in close communication with family while you are overseas.* Most fears and worries are relieved by direct communication with you. We received many phone calls after 9/11 from parents wanting to be in touch with their children.

3. *Educate yourself about the country to which you are traveling.* What are the safety concerns specific to that country and neighboring countries? What is the political climate of the country? How do people of that country perceive Americans? How do they perceive the current issues regarding Iraq? If confronted with anti-American sentiment, try to react non-defensively and see if you can learn to appreciate other points of view about the U.S.

4. Now more than ever it is important for you to *take responsibility for your behavior and how it can affect your safety.* Please note the following basic principles (see your Overseas Study Student Handbook pp. 23-25).

- Seek the advice of the authorities in charge when needed.
- Maintain a low profile, avoid American clothing/fashion styles (such as American university sweatshirts), avoid American hangouts (McDonald's, etc.), avoid speaking English loudly in public. This does not mean you should hide away, but should exercise common sense in public places and not draw undue attention to yourself. Remember to drink responsibly!
- Avoid political demonstrations, large crowds and gatherings.
- Report suspicious events and do not carry baggage or parcels for another person.
- Let Resident Director and/or on-site staff know if you are traveling during, before or after the program.
- Integrate into the host culture as much as possible—clothing, mannerisms, language.
- Be careful to not give out information about your group to strangers (i.e., don't

carelessly discard information about your classmates' addresses & telephone numbers).

- Be aware of what is going on.

5. Incidences of either verbal or physical attacks toward Americans are fairly rare, yet they do occur. You can protect yourself by using your common sense and the points noted above. Keep in mind that comments directed at you are rarely personal. Try not to take them personally.

6. Be assured that we have taken precautions and routinely monitor the issues and conditions involving our overseas study sites.