

“A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.”

-Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

# **Education Abroad**

## **Orientation 1**

No Fear, Less Gear: How to Travel the World

# Today's Orientation

- Nuts and Bolts
- Travel
- Academics
- Money Abroad
- Staying in Touch
- Housing



# What's studying abroad really like?

Etymology of "Travel":

trav·el

Origin: ENGLISH

travail > travel

Middle English: variant of travail and originally in the same sense



# COVID-19 Considerations

- Review the CDC Pandemic International Travel Site:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/international-travel-during-covid19.html>
- What do you need to enter your host country: Negative test? Proof of vaccination? Booster? Covid passports? Forms? Apps?
- Check your airline's COVID entry/layover/exit requirements resource page as well as the US Embassy COVID page for your host country:  
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/COVID-19-Country-Specific-Information.html>
- Your CDC vaccination card is difficult to replace (only full-page printouts, which may not be accepted abroad). Protect it!!!

## **COVID-19 Considerations**

- Do you have to quarantine/isolate? Conditions and duration? Think of ways occupy your time and promote your physical, emotional, and intellectual wellbeing: download movies/shows onto your device, audiobooks, books, puzzle books, download exercise routines, journals, etc.
- Observe public health measures to protect yourself, your group, and the host community. Isolation could cause you to miss a chunk of your program abroad.
- Traveling with a group after two years of isolation: deescalate conflict

# Passports

“Life is never going to be the same after your passport has been stamped.” ~Graham Greene

- A passport identifies your country of citizenship.
  - Apply for your passport
  - Check when your passport expires
  - <http://passport.state.gov>



# Visas

## “Do I need a Visa if I have a MasterCard.” ~Former Student(s)

- Visas: U.S. citizens may need to apply for a visa prior to departure; non-U.S. citizens may have to do so even if U.S. citizens don't.
- Resources
  - Program provider (e.g., CIEE, USAC, CEA, API, etc.)
  - Host country embassy in the U.S.
  - Host university
  - Visa couriers (e.g., Travisa, My China Visas, etc.)
  - Education Abroad staff / faculty leader



# Flights: “I travel a lot. I hate being disrupted by routine.” ~Caskie Stinnett

Flights (try to get refundable because of potential COVID-19 related cancellations)

- Group Flights
- Flying independently
  - [www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com)
  - [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com)
  - [www.googleflights.com](http://www.googleflights.com)
- Bellair Airporter Shuttle to SeaTac
- For your carry-on
  - Change of clothes, some toiletries, valuable items, plus any arrival instructions.
  - Place luggage tags both inside *and* outside your bag.
- Reduce your carbon footprint: fly direct, purchase carbon offsets, and fly coach

**Preparation:** “Traveling—it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller.”  
~ Ibn Battuta

- **Guidebooks:**

- [www.ricksteves.com](http://www.ricksteves.com)  
(Europe only)
- [www.letsgo.com](http://www.letsgo.com)  
(students on a budget)
- [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)
- [www.fodors.com](http://www.fodors.com)
- [www.frommers.com](http://www.frommers.com)



**Packing:** “You will never return from a trip abroad and say: ‘next time, I’m taking more stuff’.” ~Rick Steves

- How to take less stuff:
  - Rule #1: Pack only what you can carry by yourself.
  - Rule #2: Wheels.
  - Rule #3: Pack for the weather.
  - Rule #4: Mix and match.
  - Rule #5: Check <http://www.tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips>.
  - Rule #6: Use a packing list.
  - Rule #7: Leave room for souvenirs.
    - Rick Steve’s Packing List or [www.onebag.com](http://www.onebag.com)
- Tricks
  - Air compression bags or packing cubes
  - Bundle wrap (roll instead of fold)
  - Easy on heavy stuff, like books and liquids

# Packing: Sustainable Packing

- Pack reusable items
  - Water bottle with filtration or purification (e.g., UV Steripen)
  - Use reusable cloth bags (for shopping, dirty clothes)
- Avoid
  - Disposable products (e.g., ziplock bags, one-time-use razors)
  - Harmful chemicals (e.g., sunscreen that kills choral reefs)
  - Plastic: [www.travelersagainstplastic.org](http://www.travelersagainstplastic.org)

**Packing:** “I travel light; as light, that is, as a man can travel who will still carry his body around because of its sentimental value.” ~Christopher Fry

- Ryan’s Packing List

- Clothes (weather?)
- Smart Phone
- Money Belt
- Charger cords
- Portable chargers
- Universal power adapter
- Reusable cloth bags
- Band aids & ointment
- Headlamp
- Kleenex or handkerchief/bandana
- Hand wipes (dual use as TP)
- Small day-pack
- Ear plugs
- 3-1-1 size toiletries
- Journal & pens
- Book/Tablet
- IDs/documents & copies
- Prescriptions & vitamins
- Addresses for postcards

# **Arriving:** "...life is short, and the world is wide." ~Simon Raven

- Arriving
  - Immigration, baggage, and customs
  - Being met or making your own way
- Jet Lag
  - Try to sleep on the plane (if you can).
  - On plane, drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids to avoid dehydration
  - Take time to walk aisles and stretch while flying.
  - Exercise and sunlight are jetlag's foes.

# Academics Abroad

- **Differences in educational systems.**
  - Attendance and participation expectations (and grade).
  - No make-up exams.
  - “Extra credit” uncommon outside US.
  - Privacy.
  - Professor may not want to hear your opinion.
  - Workload / expectations.
  - Read whole syllabi at start of term
- **Intensive Language Track System**
  - Multiple days per week of language.
  - In class with second-language learners (not native speakers).
  - Consider a language minor.



# Transferring Credits

- Faculty-led Global Learning Programs
  - Students register themselves in WWU credit courses
  - Letter grade
  - Impacts WWU GPA
- Wildland Studies
  - EdAbroad registers students in WWU credit courses
  - WWU Credit
  - Letter grade
  - Impacts WWU GPA
- All Other Programs
  - EdAbroad registers students in INTL placeholder, which is modified upon receipt of international transcript (5 to 6 weeks after program ends)
  - S/U grades (C- or better = S)
  - Does not impact WWU GPA



# Applying Credits toward Major/Minor Requirements

- Not guaranteed, just like if you were transferring credits from Whatcom Community College and you wanted it to count toward your major/minor/GUR requirements
- Request course descriptions or syllabi from host university/study abroad provider of courses you think you need plus alternates
- Have your academic advisor or faculty advisor complete the EdAbroad Departmental Academic Advising Form or have a paper trail of your discussions
- Save all assignments, coursework, and syllabi and share with your advisor upon your return

# Consider the International Studies Minor

An interdisciplinary academic program with courses that have a transnational, global, and comparative focus (25 credits)

- Requires 4 – 8 credits of study abroad
- 4 –5 credits of a modern language at 202 level or above (or at 103 level or above for less commonly taught languages)
- INTL 201
- Three upper division courses with a transnational/global focus

**Engaging Abroad:** "Americans who travel abroad for the first time are often shocked to discover that despite all the progress that has been made in the last 30 years, many foreign people still speak in foreign languages." ~Dave Berry

- What you put into your study abroad experience is what you'll get out of it.
  - Get to know locals
  - Eat local cuisine
  - Learn the customs
  - Join student clubs and organizations
  - Join an intramural team
  - Participate in university/program activities and excursions

# Engaging Abroad: “A traveler without observation is a bird without wings.” ~Muslih Eddin Saadi

- Languages
  - Make an effort.
  - Learn 20 common words/phrases (please, thank you, where’s the bathroom, numbers 1 – 20).
  - Don’t yell or speak really loud.
  - Don’t be afraid of locals.
  - Guide books.



# **Money Abroad:** “Travel is almost like talking with men of other centuries.” ~Descartes

- Accessing Money Abroad
  - Have at least 3 ways to access your money.
    - ATM/Debit card
    - Credit Cards
    - Cash in landing money
      - Traveler’s Checks difficult to cash
  - Notify your banks/credit card companies that you will use your cards abroad, or they will freeze your account suspecting fraud.
    - Ask banks amount of surcharge for using ATM abroad.
    - Partner banks abroad?
- Power of Attorney

# **Staying in Touch:** “Tourists don’t know where they’ve been, travelers don’t know where they’re going.” ~Paul Theroux

- Phones
  - Call US cell phone carrier
  - Change SIM card abroad
  - Pay-as-you go phones
  - Calling cards
  - Phone banks
  - Skype / FaceTime
  - Texting apps
- Travel Writing / Blogs
  - <https://wp.wvu.edu/westernabroadblogs/>
- FB groups for your program



# Conduct

“My humanity is strengthened by your humanity.” ~Ubuntu

- WWU student conduct policies
- Host university and/or provider regulations
- Laws of the host country
  - Illegal activity abroad may result in arrest, incarceration, deportation, or worse
  - US Embassy/Consulate cannot rescue you
- Accepted social customs
- Misconduct abroad will have consequences for you upon your return to WWU.
- Note: A student conduct violation at WWU before you depart could result in a revocation of your program acceptance.

**Housing:** “The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.” ~Marcel Proust

- Housing
  - Options depend on program:
    - Homestay
    - Dorms
    - Apartments
    - Camping
  - What is best for you? Know yourself. What fits your personality best?
  - Sustainable Housing
    - Room with others, live near and use public transit, and try for locally owned



**Housing:** “The gladdest moment in human life, me thinks, is a departure into unknown lands.” – Sir Richard Francis Burton



- Homestays

- You are renting a room (not like a high school exchange—ie, no curfew—they know you are an adult).
- Best way to learn the local language.
- Best way to try local cuisine.
- Sharing meals (how many depends on location).
- Common courtesy.

**Housing:** “Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore.” – Andre Gide

- Residence Halls
  - On campus in single or double room depending on location.
  - Great way to meet local students.
  - Sometimes just for international students
  - Sometimes off campus



# **Housing:** “A journey is best measured in friends, rather than miles.” – Tim Cahill

- Apartments/Flats
  - Shared with US students and sometimes international students
  - Shared or private room, depending on program; furnished.
  - Deposit required; rent often paid to landlord directly.
  - May look cheaper, but not necessarily



**Housing:** “Once a year, go someplace you’ve never been before.” – Dalai Lama

- Cultural differences.
- Common courtesy.
- Careful with overnight guests.
- Changing housing upon arrival not possible, unless there is an urgent problem.
- What is best for you?

# Questions

