



Study Abroad Pre-Departure Guide

D'Youville
COLLEGE

The Center for Global Initiatives



Congratulations!

Study abroad is one of the most challenging, exciting, and rewarding experiences a student can have during their time in college. By choosing to study abroad, you are demonstrating that you are willing to leave your comfort zone and embark on new adventures. We hope that you'll continue to challenge yourself and take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves to you while abroad.

A successful international experience requires much planning and preparation. The staff of The Center for Global Initiatives is available to assist you to make the most of your study abroad experience and have prepared this guide to give some general information that may be of assistance as you prepare. Your program sponsor will also provide you with information specific to your study abroad site. Safe travels and have a wonderful trip!

Table of Contents

I.	Passport and Visa Information.....	p.3
II.	D'Youville Forms and Mandatory Health Insurance.....	p.4
III.	Academics (Policies, Grades, Credits, Registering).....	p.4
IV.	Tuition and Financial Aid.....	p.5
V.	Managing your money abroad.....	p.5
VI.	Booking your flight.....	p.7
VII.	Packing and Luggage.....	p.7
VIII.	Housing.....	p.9
IX.	Meals.....	p.10
X.	Travel while Abroad.....	p.10
XI.	Health and Safety.....	p.11
XII.	US Embassy/Consulate Contact Information.....	p.12
XIII.	Crime Prevention.....	p.13
XIV.	Staying in touch.....	p.16
XV.	Miscellaneous.....	p.17
XVI.	D'Youville Important Contact Information.....	p.18

I. PASSPORT AND VISA INFORMATION

Passports: By pre-departure orientation, all students should have obtained a passport and initiated the visa process, if applicable. If you have not applied for your passport, please do so immediately! It can take as little as 4 weeks or as long as a few months to receive. Expedited service can still take up to 2 weeks and adds additional costs. New applicants must submit their materials in person to a passport acceptance agency. There are several in the Buffalo area.

If you already own a passport from previous trips abroad, make sure it is valid for at least **6 months** after your return. Detailed passport application instructions, materials, current processing times, and acceptance agency locations can be found at the U.S. State Department: <http://travel.state.gov/passport/>

Once you receive your passport:

- Sign it in ink.
- Make several color copies of the official data page, this makes replacing it easier if lost or stolen.
- Keep a copy at your home address and one at the Center for Global Initiatives.
- While abroad, keep a copy on you at all times and keep the original in a safe place.

If your passport is lost or stolen while abroad:

- Don't panic! It is possible to obtain a replacement passport abroad.
- Report loss or theft immediately to the local police and the US Embassy or Consulate in your host country.
- Once a passport is reported lost or stolen, it cannot be re-validated and can no longer be used for travel, even if you recover it.
- Contact your local CAPA staff (or host university) if you need assistance.

Visas: Many countries will require you to have a visa to stay or study in the country for an extended length of time. If you are going abroad on a CAPA program, CAPA will provide you with important links and information about the visa process, but **neither CAPA nor The Center for Global Initiatives will obtain the visa for you!** It is your responsibility to plan ahead and apply for the appropriate visa.

- The Consulate of your host country can inform you of the visa requirements, if any, along with the application process. See <http://www.projectvisa.com> for list of consulates.
- Note that every country has different visa requirements and may require lengthy documentation, so it is critical to find out this information as soon as possible and follow requirements closely. Embassies can refuse to review incomplete applications.
- Processing time for visas will differ, and your passport may have to be mailed out.

II. FORMS AND MANDATORY HEALTH INSURANCE

In your study abroad acceptance packet you received a checklist of forms that needed to be submitted to the International Student Office, along with deadline dates for submission. Before leaving, make sure you have doubled checked this list and have returned all required documents. *These include:*

- Course Approval Form
- Medical Report Form
- Release and Indemnification Form
- Code of Conduct Form
- Health Insurance Registration*
- Emergency Contact Information
- Financial Liability Form
- Anything else documented on the Study Abroad Document Checklist!

***Health Insurance:** It is mandatory for all DYC Study Abroad students to have coverage through HTH Worldwide www.hthstudents.com. Once you have submitted your registration, The Center for Global Initiatives will enroll you in the health insurance program and will e-mail each student when their ID card and insurance packets are available for pick up. In addition to health care, this insurance will cover you for political evacuation as well as repatriation.

III. ACADEMIC POLICIES

You will remain a matriculated student at D'Youville College even while you are abroad. If you have not already, you must meet with Dr. John Abbarno, the Study Abroad Academic Coordinator, to get your courses approved before leaving, and have the course approval form signed by your academic advisor. You will register for your classes during your regular class registration time. *Please note:*

- If abroad for a semester, you must remain a full time student with a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester and up to 15 credits.
- For summer programs, students must register for 6-9 credits.
- All students will be registered for a zero credit special topics course that indicates their study abroad location.
- You may not take pass/fail for any study abroad class.

Things to keep in mind while you are abroad:

- **Don't forget to register for classes for the semester you return to D'Youville!** Even though you will be abroad, you will still need to register for your following semester courses as usual. Be in contact with your academic advisor for assistance.
- **Grades received for your courses abroad will count towards your overall GPA**, so have fun, but don't forget to keep on top of your school work!
- If you are enrolled in a direct exchange with a university that does not give letter grades, your grades will be converted and will still count to your GPA.

- Save all course materials. This will facilitate the transfer of credit should there be any questions.
- **Make sure to check your D’Youville email regularly.** Your department, advisor, financial aid, housing or The Center for Global Initiatives may contact you with important information or questions that require a timely response.

IV. TUITION AND FINANCIAL AID

If you are going abroad through the D’Youville affiliation agreement with CAPA, the Student Accounts office at D’Youville will bill you for tuition, fees, mandatory study abroad health insurance, room deposit (which will be returned if there are no damages) and the study abroad fee.

Scholarships and waivers will be deducted according to the DYC Financial Policy for Study Abroad. For fall and spring semester programs, all financial aid will typically be applicable to your program, but please make an appointment with James Nowak, Assistant Director of Financial Aid, to ensure the applicability of your loans/grants and to clarify any questions:

James Nowak, Associate Director, Financial Aid
716-829-7500, nowakj@dyc.edu
Koessler Administration Building, Room 201

- Please note that if you are receiving an employee waiver, it will *not* be applied.
- Your financial aid package will be recalculated based on the study abroad program costs. It is possible that your aid may dramatically increase or there may be no change at all. If you have been a commuter, your aid will be calculated as a resident while you are abroad, so you may be eligible for more.
- It is possible that you may need to turn to private or parent plus loans in order to cover the program and provide you with the necessary spending money. You may apply for additional loans through our financial aid office or through a private provider.
- A list of independent scholarships for students studying abroad can be found on the DYC study abroad website: <https://www.dyc.edu/academics/study-abroad/>
- If you need to withdraw from study abroad for any reason, make sure to notify The Center for Global Initiatives and refer to the program contract for refund information.
- ***Summer programs:*** Financial aid is usually divided up among fall and spring semesters. If you are going abroad over the summer, you will have to apply for additional aid and need to be enrolled in at least 6 credits. Please note that aid for summer programs can be very difficult to obtain.

V. MANAGING YOUR MONEY ABROAD

Managing your finances abroad can initially seem a bit daunting, but, after a few days of navigating the system in your host country, you will feel a lot more comfortable. There are some important things to do and to keep in mind before you leave and while you are abroad that will help ease the transition from U.S. to foreign currency. We have listed them, along with some general tips in this section.

To do before you leave:

- Contact your bank and Credit Card Company and let them know that you will be abroad for an extended amount of time. If this is not done, the bank may think the international uses are fraudulent and lock your account!
- Ensure that your ATM card and pin will work abroad, and request an additional ATM card, if desired.
- It is a good idea to go to your host country with a small amount of local currency. Depending on the time you arrive, local banks may be closed. Although major airports have currency exchanges, they usually offer poor exchange rates. AAA and some banks distribute foreign currency, so make sure to check there before you leave.
- Check with your bank to see what kind of charges, if any, may apply when using your ATM card abroad. If there is a charge, check to see if your bank is partnered with any overseas bank that does not have one.
- Strongly consider bringing a major credit card with you in case of emergencies. If not planning on using it daily, keep it in a separate safe place from your ATM/check card.
- Check with your credit card company to see if you will be charged a fee for converting to US dollars (Usually 1%-3% of your purchase price).
- If bringing a credit card, know how you will access your statement and pay your monthly bill before your departure.
- Keep the contact phone numbers and card numbers for your banks and leave with your parents/guardians. If your cards are stolen or lost, this information will be important.

While you are abroad:

- When exchanging American currency, you will be charged a percent commission. Once in your host country, research the commission rates at banks and “Change Bureaus” to ensure the best rate.
- Sites such as <http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/> and <http://www.x-rates.com/calculator.html> can help you understand the most recent U.S. dollar to foreign currency exchange rates.
- In most countries, you cannot exchange money without showing your passport as identification.
- ATMs typically offer the best exchange rate, but your bank may have extra fees.
- If your bank charges an extra ATM fee for taking out money abroad, remember to keep that in mind and minimize your number of visits per week.
- ATMs often have a daily limit of \$200-300, so plan accordingly.

Tips on budgeting your money:

- Make a weekly/daily budget based on your time abroad and stick to it. This will save you from being low on cash during your last month or two abroad.

- Set aside money in the beginning if you are planning on taking a bunch of side trips or one big trip.
- Remember all the little things add up quickly: taxis, eating out, personal items, groceries, etc.
- Try to make a habit of cooking for yourself instead of eating out every day. Sharing cooking responsibilities with other students in your apartment can also save money.
- Take advantage of free local or school-sponsored events.
- Shop around and compare prices at street markets as well as small and large chain stores.

VI. BOOKING YOUR FLIGHT

Depending on your program there may be a group flight, but in most cases it is your responsibility to get yourself to your host country. CAPA students are responsible for booking their own flights. Once you have confirmed your arrival/departure dates and are committed to going, start researching ticket prices to ensure the cheapest option.

- For those travelling on CAPA programs, CAPA and The Center for Global Initiatives at D'Youville will e-mail you with the exact date on which you need to arrive. You will not be able to get into CAPA housing early. If you plan to arrive early or leave later, you will need to make other housing arrangements on your own.
- There are many deals for students for tickets, and it is advised that you search a few different sites before purchasing your ticket. No site is extremely cheaper than another, but you should still shop around for the best price. Some useful sites are:
 - STA Travel – www.statravel.com
 - Student Universe – www.studentuniverse.com
 - Travel Cuts – <https://www.travelcuts.com/>
 - Booking Buddy – www.bookingbuddy.com
- Consider coordinating your flight with other D'Youville students on the same program, if leaving from the same location. You will meet these individuals at the Pre-departure Orientation and can exchange information. Traveling with another student can sometimes help the trip go faster and more smoothly.

VII. PACKING AND LUGGAGE

When packing for your trip, there are two important guidelines to remember: Don't over-pack and don't bring anything that you would hate to lose – leave expensive jewelry and other valuables at home! Other recommendations include:

- **Make sure you pack no more than you can carry yourself!** You will be carrying your luggage around airports, in taxis, metros, up and down stairs, etc.. Try to limit yourself to one suitcase that is under the weight limit for your airline, one carry on, and one personal item.
- Think about where you will be studying when packing and what kind of situations you will be in. (What will the weather be? Will you have an internship? What is local dress like and

how well do you want to fit in? Many countries dress more formally or conservatively than the U.S.)

- Make sure you have all the basics, but don't worry about bringing enough toiletries for your entire trip. They take up weight in your suitcase and can be purchased overseas.
- Some important items not to forget:
 - A few photos of family, friends, and where you live - many of the people you will meet have never been to the US and would enjoy seeing pictures of your daily life.
 - Backpack or large tote for day/weekend trips - can double as your carry-on
 - Comfortable walking shoes
 - Small item to bring as gift if staying with a host family (regional gifts are customary)
 - Flip flops for showering in dorms/hostels
 - Practical and comfortable clothing that has multiple uses (i.e. items you can layer)
 - Small sewing kit
 - Journal
 - Small First Aid kit
 - Waterproof jacket/umbrella
 - Small phrase book/dictionary if travelling in a country where English is not the primary language
 - Letter of admission to host university/program
 - Stash of feminine products, over-the-counter medicine (pain-reliever, upset stomach)
 - sunscreen, sunglasses
 - A lock (this will come in handy if staying in hostels)
 - A list of important contact information for both D'Youville and your host program
 - Driver's License and other picture IDs (to prove your identity if passport is lost)
 - Check with your Dr. to see if he/she will give you a prescription to cover the duration of your stay. For custom's reasons, keep all medicine in its original labeled container and bring the prescription) with you. Check with the consulate of your host country to ensure your prescription is legal to bring into the country.
 - Contact lenses/glasses and a copy of your eye glass prescription.

For international flights, airlines will typically allow you to check one piece of luggage weighing up to 50lbs and no bigger than 62" in size free of charge. Contact your airline to see what your allowance is. You will typically be allowed an additional personal item and carry-on item – on most flights your carry-on luggage can weigh up to 40lbs and not exceed 45" in size.

Items recommended for your carry-on include:

- Passport
- Cash/Bank Cards/Travelers' Checks
- Program acceptance letter, itinerary, insurance cards and other important travel documents.
- All medication (please see above for how to properly travel with medication.)
- One extra set of clothing

- A few small toiletries (Check with your airline to see how to properly travel with these items)

Note that any extra luggage or luggage weighing more than your limit will be **very expensive** to put on the plane or to ship home, so make sure to weigh and measure your luggage before you leave for the airport.

If you are planning on bringing larger electrical appliances (i.e. camera charger, hair iron, laptop, blow dryer, etc) you will most likely need a voltage converter in order to operate them abroad.

- Know what kind of voltage you will need to convert to and obtain proper transformers, adapters or converters. If you attempt to operate an appliance without the appropriate converter, you could blow a fuse, or even ruin your appliance!
- Be aware that many converters do not work well with hair appliances. Sometimes it is easier to buy items (blow dryer, curling iron) in your host country. It's an additional expense, but you will not have to worry about blowing a fuse.
- Electricity is often expensive in other countries and people are more conscious of their energy usage. When you leave a room, make sure you turn the lights off. If you do need to use an electrical appliance, unplug them when you are done, especially if using a laptop.

IMPORTANT TIPS for International travel with luggage:

- If you do not have a direct flight to your host country, you may need to pick up your luggage in your layover city at the baggage claim and ensure that it moves through customs and/or gets to your next flight. Ask airline representatives if you are unsure if this is your case.
- Custom declaration forms are distributed on planes and should be prepared in advance of your arrival for presentation to the immigration custom inspectors. Whether or not you have anything to declare, you must fill out at least the identification section of the form.
- Upon entry you must show your passport, turn in your customs declaration form, and pass through the baggage check. Entry procedures will vary by country.
- Clearly label your luggage both inside and out with your name, address, and phone number.
- If your luggage is a neutral color such as black or navy, using colorful luggage tags or a strip of colored tape/ribbon will help you identify it among similar baggage.
- Before you leave, make an inventory of all of the items in your checked luggage in case it is lost and you need to make a claim.

VIII. HOUSING

By now, you should know if you have signed up for a home stay or shared student housing. Depending on your location, shared student housing may be in a dorm on campus or in apartments within commuting distance of your academic center. Each option has its pros and cons and it is up to you to decide which the best is for you.

Before you leave:

- Once you have it, leave your international address and phone number with the Center for Global Initiatives.
- Learn what the policy is for visitors where you are staying. It may be against your program's regulations to have visitors in your home or apartment. Most CAPA programs do **not** allow overnight guests in homestays, dormitories or apartments.

After you move in:

- You may or may not have internet access in your home. If not, internet cafés are typically readily available. Your university/program center will have internet as well.
- Be aware that depending on where you live in relation to your school, you may have a lengthy commute to class. This is normal for individuals in other countries or large cities and you may be surprised at how quickly you adjust.
- If you have any problems with your housing arrangement, please contact your local Resident Director first, they can help you resolve roommate conflicts. If you feel at all unsafe in your housing, leave immediately for a secure location. Notify your local Resident Director immediately.
- Be flexible and patient, it takes time to get used to new settings, customs, schedules, etc.
- Talk openly with your host family or roommates if there is a problem.

IX. MEALS

- Your housing arrangement will determine how you receive your meals.
- Most universities abroad have fewer dining options than U.S. universities.
- If you are living on campus, you may have a kitchen in your dorm to cook meals. There may also be a dining hall/cafeteria, so make sure to make use of those spaces.
- Homestays will provide you with two meals a day (usually breakfast and dinner).
- If you live in an apartment with other students you will be expected to provide meals for yourself.
- Ask your program staff for recommendations on where to get the best local cuisine, and don't be afraid to try something new!

X. TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD

Students who study abroad regularly take the opportunity to explore not only their host city but also surrounding cities and even other nearby countries. There are many resources to help you do this in the cheapest, safest, and most efficient way. A few general rules include:

- Always leave your itinerary with your host family or a friend so they know where you will be and when you are expected to return. **Students are discouraged from traveling alone.**
- You've heard it before, but hitchhiking is **NEVER** recommended.
- If living in Europe, a Eurail Pass can be a good deal if you are planning on doing a lot of traveling. There are different packages and rates so do your research before purchasing! **Note:** A Eurail Pass can only be mailed to your home address in the U.S., so plan ahead!
- In many cases, the best way to travel, especially in Europe, is with budget airlines. Often you can fly cheaper than taking a train.

- The airfare with many of these sites is generally very cheap, but they do not always fly to the major airports; therefore, you might have to pay a small fee for a taxi or bus to get to the city center.
- Some budget airlines include:
 - Easy Jet – www.easyjet.com
 - Ryan Air – www.ryanair.com
 - BMI – www.flybmi.com
- When booking through the budget airlines, be flexible with dates and times of travel. It is normally more expensive to fly during the weekends and on holidays.
- Be organized and plan as much of your semester travel early to get the best deals.
- Hostels are generally the most inexpensive accommodation option for travel. Typically hostels involve a shared room/dormitory and bathroom with anywhere from 2-12 people. Rooms can be all male, all female, or they can be mixed. When checking for hostels during your stay, look for what kind of room will work for you and your budget.
 - Hostels can be a great place to meet other American as well as international students studying abroad.
 - Always lock up your belongings if a locker is provided. If a locker is not provided, sleep with your passport, money and other important materials on your body.
 - Book your hostel in advance to be sure you have a bed for the night.
 - Note if your hostel has a curfew- you don't want to get locked out and spend the night on the street!
 - Write down the phone number and location of your hostel before traveling.
 - www.hostelworld.com is a good place to start when researching options.
- There are many guidebooks for the international traveler. Depending on the book, they are geared towards the budget traveler, giving advice on food, travel, lodging, and tourist as well as non-tourist sites. Some of the most popular books are Lets Go!, Lonely Planet, and Rick Steves.

Students often get caught up in traveling every weekend. Remember to save some weekends for relaxing locally and exploring your host city!

XI. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Studying abroad is not inherently dangerous, and large metropolitan cities abroad often have crime rates comparable to or lower than those of U.S. major cities. Nevertheless, safety should be your **number one priority** when traveling abroad. A key to staying safe abroad is to **use common sense and good judgment** and **to be aware of your surroundings**. If you wouldn't do something in the United States, chances are you shouldn't be doing it abroad either. *Please take the time to read through these safety tips.*

- Register with The SMART Traveler Enrollment Program <https://step.state.gov/step/>
- Keep informed of current political situations.
- If you find yourself in the middle of a protest, leave the area immediately.
- State Department tips for travelers – www.travel.state.gov

- Consular Information Sheets and Travel Warnings – <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html>
- Check out HTH Worldwide's series on student health & safety for study abroad on YouTube

Crime Prevention

When out in public, especially alone, you can limit the likelihood of becoming a target for theft, harassment, or potential assault by appearing less like a tourist and more like a local.

- Tips to blend in:
 - Adapt your dress and mannerisms to the locals.
 - Avoid wearing anything that looks stereotypically American. Ex: baseball hats, university t-shirts, clothing with store logos on them (i.e. North Face jackets).
 - Speak the local language when possible.
 - Avoid hanging out at places that are known as “American hangouts”.
 - Avoid traveling in large “packs” of Americans; break into smaller groups to navigate public walkways.
 - Walk with purpose and confidence, even if you aren’t 100% sure where you are.
- If you get lost, conspicuously staring at a map or looking around confused may bring unwanted attention. Find a safe place such as a store or a bank and reevaluate your situation or ask for directions.
- Don’t walk alone at night.
- Be aware of pickpockets. Pick-pocketing is extremely common in foreign countries. Reported thefts most often occur at crowded tourist sites, on public buses or trains, or at major railway stations. Pickpockets may be well dressed or work with children, so do not be lulled into a sense of security just by appearances. Often they will work with an accomplice who will:
 - Jostle you.
 - Ask you for directions or the time.
 - Point to something on your clothes.
 - Distract you by creating a disturbance.
- Always keep your bags in sight and touching some part of your body, and don’t carry large amounts of cash. Do not put cash/wallets/valuables in your back pocket.
- Even though it isn’t always popular with students, wearing a money belt or neck pouch can really cut down the risk of theft. You can always keep a little bit of cash in your front pockets or purse for small expenses so you don’t have to access the pouch very often.
- If you are confronted, don’t fight back; give up your valuables, they can be replaced!
- In certain countries there may be stereotypes about American women and/or women may face extra unwanted attention. It’s best not to respond in any way to catcalls and to be firm, assertive, and direct in your words and actions so they are not misconstrued.

Local Law and Program Regulations

While you are abroad, you are subject to the local country's laws and regulations, your study abroad program's policies, as well as D'Youville's Community Standards. It's important to familiarize yourself with these policies and local laws prior to leaving the U.S. If you violate laws abroad, you may be expelled, arrested or even imprisoned. Each year 2,500 American students are arrested overseas. Once arrested the US Consulate/Embassy CANNOT get you out; however, they can provide suggestions for local attorneys and legal services and help ensure you are not discriminated against.

- It's important to be aware that many countries have laws regarding alcohol and other drug use that can be more severe than laws in the U.S. For example, in Spain, those caught with illegal drugs such as marijuana can be sentenced up to 12 years in prison. China also has very strict drugs laws. Government information on drugs abroad:
<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/go/drugs.html>
- If you are arrested abroad, US laws will not apply (i.e. you may not have option of bail, you may have a lengthy pre-trial detention, you might not receive a jury trial).
- If you do get in trouble, contact your program director immediately and the U.S. Consulate.
- Pay attention during your program's orientation session and abide by the rules, as well as to the regulations set forth in D'Youville's Community Standards.
- If you break these policies, you could risk various sanctions such as expulsion from the program without refund, as well as disciplinary measures back on D'Youville's campus.

U.S. Embassy/Consulate Contact Information for CAPA Locations.

Alcohol Consumption

Excessive alcohol consumption is the greatest risk factor for study abroad students. Drinking while socializing is the norm in many countries and it is your decision as an adult. However, if you choose to drink, we urge you to do so responsibly. Not only can you risk your physical wellbeing, you are much more vulnerable to violence, theft, or other alcohol related crimes. *Tips:*

- Do not go home alone or let friends go home by themselves. If you share a taxi with a friend, make sure you are all going to the same place so no one is alone.
- Know how you will get home (e.g. how does public transportation run at night?)
- Never take a drink from a stranger or leave your drink unattended. Watch the bartender pour your drink. The safest route is to only order bottled drinks that you see opened.
- Never drink and drive, even if you've only had one drink. Many countries have even stricter laws on drinking and driving than the US and you could end up in jail.
- Stay hydrated and do not drink on an empty stomach.
- Pace yourself and keep track of how much you are drinking.

Health and Well Being

If you become ill during your time abroad, your program staff can assist you in setting up a doctor's or pharmacy visit. If, for whatever reason, you require additional assistance in locating a physician, often the U.S. embassy or consulate can also make recommendations.

- The HTH Worldwide Insurance you were required to purchase will allow you to visit a doctor without paying any expenses out of pocket. Use this insurance first. CAPA also provides additional insurance for each student, but typically you will have to pay up front and get reimbursed. Save all receipts and medical documents you receive.
- Stay up-to-date on your country's current health situation at <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/go/health.html>

It is normal to experience some adjustment issues or culture shock. Culture shock refers to the mental, physical, and emotional adjustment to a new environment. It is completely natural and should be embraced rather than pushed away. There are four stages of culture shock:

- ***Initial Euphoria*** – During the first few weeks people are fascinated by their new culture. You love the food, the buildings, the people; everything around you is new and exciting. In a short visit to a new country visitors may never leave this stage.
- ***Cultural Confrontation*** – Your initial excitement diminishes and the process of cultural adjustment begins. Everything seems much more difficult and overwhelming. Even daily tasks such as going to class, doing laundry and buying food can be a challenge. You may feel depressed, homesick, lonely and frustrated.
- ***Cultural Adjustment*** – You will slowly learn ways to cope with the cultural differences. You learn to observe those around you and become more open minded. You make friends with locals and the daily tasks that were a challenge are becoming much easier.

- *Cultural Adaptation* – You finally feel comfortable in your host country and establish a routine. You appreciate the differences and integrate them into your daily life. While you look forward to seeing your friends and family at home, you know you will miss your time abroad.

Study abroad is fun and exciting, but it can also be challenging. If you feel uncomfortable, nervous, stressed, or homesick at any time, rest assured you are not the only one, even if it feels like it at the time! In the long run, good things can come out of facing these challenges such as personal growth and greater independence. A few tips to help yourself adjust more easily:

- **Research before you leave.** Read about your host city and country and take advantage of opportunities to talk to veteran travelers of the region or international students.
- **Talk to your friends and/or roommates** when you are feeling homesick. Chances are they are having or have had similar feelings at some point and talking about it will help you feel less isolated. Homesickness is nothing to be embarrassed about!
- **Give yourself some time.** If you arrive and feel completely overwhelmed or unhappy, try to commit to at least a month of keeping an open mind and giving your new home a chance. If you decide to leave early, note the program contract regarding refunds.
- **Be tolerant of other cultures and have a sense of humor.** It's healthy to acknowledge and think about the differences between cultures, but try to resist making value judgments or always comparing things to your home culture.
- **Get involved.** Take advantage of the many activities presented to you and try new things.
- **Seek information,** ask questions, and let go of your assumptions.

If you are currently dealing with depression, anxiety, or any other mental health issues or have previously struggled with these concerns, know that studying abroad sometimes adds stress and exacerbates these issues in students. Discuss your plans to study abroad with your doctor and/or counselor so you can create an individualized plan for continuing care or potential problems while you are abroad. If you are taking medication, be aware that some psychiatric medications are unavailable or illegal in other countries. Check before you go and arrange for suitable alternative if necessary. Bring the contact information for your counselor/doctor and know that you can also ask your CAPA program staff for assistance in getting the help you need if you are experiencing any mental health concerns abroad.

XII. STAYING IN TOUCH

We know that staying in touch with family and friends back home is important to you and we hope you will check in regularly with your family to update them on your adventures and assure them of your safety. Remember that you need time to adapt and calling and e-mailing home too often can make it impossible for you to get involved in your host country. *A few suggestions:*

- **Discuss how and when you will contact your parents upon arrival in your host country.**
- **Cell Phones** can either be bought or rented depending on your country.

- It is typically much cheaper to get a phone in your host country than use your phone from home.
- Even if you do not think you will use your phone often it is good to have in case of emergency and to get a hold of people you meet or others in your group.
- Investigate if a phone card can help make your calls home less expensive.
- Cell phone plans are different in each country; make sure you know what your rates are and all policies to avoid expensive charges.
- Texting is very widely used in many countries and often cheaper than calling.
- One of the cheapest ways to make calls to the US is with Skype.
 - Signing up is free at www.Skype.com.
 - Computer to computer calls are free. Computer to a US phone is \$.02.
 - Telephone like quality with video and voicemail also available.
- Telephones
 - If you will be using a local telephone make sure you know the long distance rates.
 - Buying a phone card can help with these costs.
 - Local calls to landlines and cell phones can be very expensive in your host country.
 - If you are in a home stay, make sure you know and abide by the house rules for telephone usage.
- E-mail, of course, can be the cheapest and most efficient option to keep in touch. Even if you do not have internet at home, it is usually easy enough to find access from internet cafes or your program center.
- Some students have also found blogging to be a great way to keep a large number of people updated on their life abroad, as well as a good outlet to document their trip

XIII. MISCELLANEOUS

Helpful links for women students, students of color, students with disabilities, and GLBT students on study abroad:

- http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/people/students_underrepresented.html
- <http://www.journeywoman.com>
- http://studyabroad.colorado.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Parent_ID=0&Link_ID=6E204190-009B-E1E0-D27FB8091127949E

International Student Identification Card (ISIC): It is recommended that every student purchase an ISIC card before going abroad. The price ranges depending on what country you are going to but generally is around \$22. With an ISIC Card you will receive basic supplemental emergency evacuation and repatriation insurance, discount airfare (in some cases), and numerous student discounts abroad.

www.isic.org

Power of Attorney: Before going abroad, you can designate a family member or trusted friend as your Power of Attorney. Your Power of Attorney is your representative who can handle legal and financial matters on your behalf. Power of Attorney forms can be downloaded from www.uslegalforms.com.

Taxes: If you are abroad during the spring semester, you will be abroad on tax day, April 15th. You have a couple options for filing your taxes:

- Ask your Power of Attorney to file your taxes for you. You must send a power of attorney form to the IRS.
- The U.S. Embassy can usually also help with tax questions/concerns.
- File for an extension. You must file your extension before the April 15th deadline. Visit the IRS website to learn more about filing an extension and general information about filing your taxes while you' re abroad. www.irs.gov

Voting: If you are abroad during an election year and want to vote, you can vote by absentee ballot. Most embassies have personnel who specialize in absentee voting for U.S. citizens.

XVI. IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION FOR D'YOUVILLE OFFICES

Take this sheet with you while you are abroad and you'll have some important contact information handy in case you ever need it.

Center For Global Initiatives

D'Youville College
320 Porter Ave., DAC Suite 219
Buffalo, New York
14201-9985
Fax: 1 (716) 829-7691

Laryssa Petryshyn, Associate VP, Global Education
Phone: 1 (716) 829-8119
Email: petryshl@dyc.edu

Ann Soares, International Student and Study Abroad
Advisor
Phone: 1 (716) 829-8114
Email: soaresa@dyc.edu

Registrar

D'Youville College
320 Porter Ave., KAB 221
Buffalo, New York
14201-9985
Phone: 1 (716) 829-8347
Fax: 1 (716) 829-7622
Email: registrar@dyc.edu

Course Schedules, Forms, and Online Registration:
<http://www.dyc.edu/academics/registrar/forms.aspx>

D'Youville Academic Calendar

<http://calendar.dyc.edu/>

Career Services Center

Christine Demcie, Director
ALT Building, Rm 315-316
Phone: 1 (716) 829-7688
Fax: 1 (716) 829-8367
Email: demciec@dyc.edu

<http://www.dyc.edu/academics/student-resources/career-services/>

Financial Aid Office

D'Youville College
320 Porter Ave., KAB 208
Buffalo, New York
14201-9985
Phone: (716) 829-7500 or (800) 777-3921
Fax: (716) 829-7779
Email: financialaid@dyc.edu

Financial Aid Online :

<http://www.dyc.edu/admissions/financial-aid-scholarships/resources/>

Fill in the Name and Contact Information for your academic adviser here:

Online Advisement: http://www.dyc.edu/offices/advisement/advising_form.asp

Personal Counseling Center

Phone: 1 (716) 829-7819
<http://www.dyc.edu/campus-life/support-services/personal-counseling.aspx>