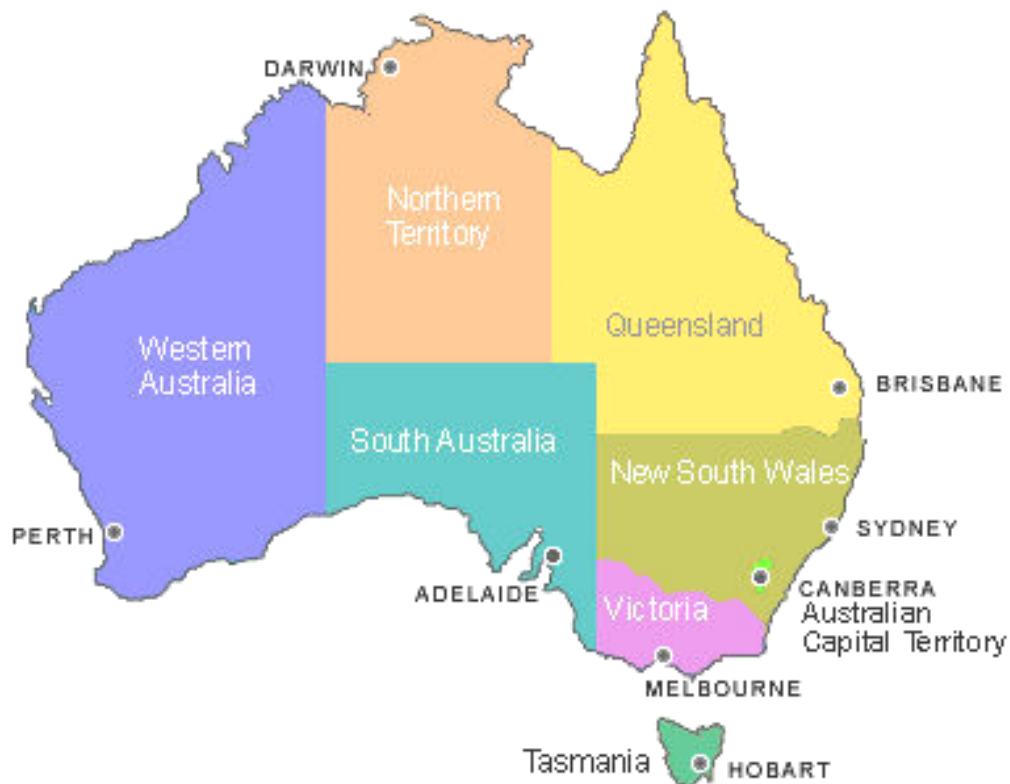


# STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK

# *Australia*



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**Section 1: General Study Abroad  
Info**

**Section 2: Country-Specific Info**

**Section 3: Program-Specific Info**

# **Section 1**

## **General Study Abroad Information**

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# **OFFICE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Office of Global Education and Partnerships promotes the internationalization of the university community so that Millersville may realize its mission to:

- Prepare its students to live in an increasingly diverse and multicultural society
- Offer a curriculum that is rich and multifaceted
- Serve as a model of a pluralistic community and by providing leadership in this regard to the greater community.

Global Education fulfills this mandate by:

- Championing borderless learning and exchange of ideas by promoting institutional development to achieve these ends;
- Encouraging MU students, faculty, administrators and staff to communally embrace a vision of a globally connected campus through dissemination of information, coordination and support.
- Welcoming international students and scholars and ensuring an enriching and successful stay at Millersville by providing consistently professional logistical support and counseling where appropriate.
- Developing, operating and maintaining a comprehensive, cost-effective education abroad program (study, interning and service-learning) that meets the highest levels of professional and academic integrity and adheres to recognized “best practices” in the field;
- Organizing globally focused programming of benefit to the MU campus as well as the public and private sectors in the wider community.

## **NOTES ABOUT THE OFFICE**

The Office of Global Education has been administering study abroad programs since 1989. It is a full time office dedicated to international mobility of students and faculty, including study abroad and is staffed by individuals with several decades of combined international education experience.

### ***ROLE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION***

- Support students through pre-departure, study abroad and re-entry stages in partnership with partner institution and MU offices related to:
  - MU paperwork processing
  - Partner institution paperwork processing
  - Legal matters (passports, visas)
  - Insurance issues
  - Travel information related to study abroad experience
  - Housing and board arrangements (program dependent)

- Academic course selection and equivalencies process
- Medical, counseling and academic support where needed
- Cost information related to Financial Aid
- Program billing (program dependent)
- Issues at study abroad destination that cannot be solved “locally”
- Dormitory housing upon return
- Transcript processing after return
- Resolution of other outstanding study abroad issues upon return (academically, financially, etc.)

### **LIMITS OF GLOBAL EDUCATION**

- Address academic issues between study abroad participants and their advisors
  - TAP #s
  - Course changes/course equivalents
- Directly make flight arrangements
- Advise on housing, travel or other arrangements outside of formal study abroad program
- Address questions related to specific financial aid issues
- Assist students with program issues when Global Ed is not “kept in the loop” through regular communication with student
- Provide instant responses on non-emergency questions or routine matters

## **GETTING READY TO GO – DOCUMENTS/PAPERWORK**

### **PASSPORT**



The passport is your official identification as a citizen of the United States. It will be checked upon entering or leaving the United States or any foreign country as well as upon various other occasions that require official identification. All students going abroad need to have a passport. After you obtain your passport, be sure to sign on the signature line, make a photocopy of the record page (with your picture on it) and put it somewhere safe. It is suggested to take a copy of it with you abroad and keep it in a safe place. You may also want to keep a photocopy of your birth certificate and social security card with each photocopy of your passport. This is very helpful should your passport get stolen or become lost as it is a hassle to get your passport replaced. Take good care of this document.

**For more information and to download forms please see**  
[http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

### **IF YOU LOSE YOUR PASSPORT**

Loss or theft of a valid passport should be reported immediately. You must contact your nearest US Embassy or Consulate. For locations and further instructions reference <http://www.usembassy.gov/>. This will provide country specific instructions on how to proceed.

## **SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP)**

The U.S. State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, or STEP, is an invaluable resource for American citizens abroad. The State Department developed this program to better aid American citizens in emergency situations. By registering with the STEP program, you will receive updates, information, and travel warnings via email from the U.S. Embassy regarding your host country while you are abroad. The contact information you provide through this registration process allows the State Department to better assist you should an emergency arise. All students going abroad for academic credit are required to enroll in this program as part of the pre-departure paperwork process.

## **DOCUMENTS YOU SHOULD TAKE**

### **GENERAL DOCUMENTS**

- Passport\*
- Visa (if applicable)\*
- Flight Itinerary/Confirmation\*
- International Student Identity Card (ISIC)\*
- Insurance Card(s) - detailed company and insurer information\*
- Photocopies of credit cards\*

### **MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY DOCUMENTS**

- Copy of your Study Abroad Resident Credits Form (course selection with MU equivalencies)
- Updated DARS (Degree Audit Report)
- General Ed/major/minor curriculum sheets for reference
- Academic advisor and department chair's names, addresses, emails, and phone numbers in case you need to contact them while abroad.
- This handbook\*



### **HOST INSTITUTION DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS**

- Acceptance letter\*
- Visa materials (if applicable)\*
- Relevant accommodation information and directions\*
- Host university's international student guides/handbooks (if available)\*

\* *Items to be taken in **carry-on** or on your person during travel, not in checked luggage.*

## **POWER OF ATTORNEY**



We suggest that you make arrangements with someone to give them power of attorney (POA) while you are gone. This enables the designated person



to have access to your accounts – deposit and withdrawal - and they are able to sign on your behalf. For MU, Power of Attorney may be necessary for the Financial Aid appeal process. Declaring a POA comes in handy as often applications, appeals and checks for financial aid must be signed and returned by a certain date which could be while you are abroad and your POA could sign on your behalf. (See “While Abroad – Financial Aid” for more information.)

The student seeking power of attorney can write up their own statement stating who is assuming the duties of power of attorney and have it notarized. This can be arranged through any lawyer or public notary. (Notary services are conveniently available at 2 locations on Millersville’s campus; the Purchasing Office and the Student Programs Office. Feel free to contact these offices for more information.)

The requirements to prove a person has power of attorney can vary by the organization or agency that is requesting the proof. It is best that you or your POA inquire directly with the agency as to what their policies are regarding this matter. It may be in your best interest to obtain several **original** copies of the notarized statement because your POA might be required to send originals with each POA signature.

Below is an example of the format for a power of attorney statement:

*I, (name of student), hereby grant power of attorney to my (state relationship), (name of person), for the following time span: (list dates of study abroad).*

(Student signature) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of person assuming power of attorney) \_\_\_\_\_

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

### **HEALTH PRECAUTIONS & IMMUNIZATIONS**

Information for travelers on health precautions, immunizations and areas with specific health issues can be obtained from local health departments, private doctors, travel clinics or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. More information on the CDC can found at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.

For local services in Lancaster, you may contact Passport Health. Passport Health is a national network of independently owned and operated Travel Health and Immunization Clinics. They provide information, immunizations and consultation for international travel.

<http://www.passporthealthusa.com/locations/pa/monroeville/154/>

Phone: 1-888-474-8907

In Lancaster:

150 Farmington Lane  
Suite 201  
Lancaster, PA 17601

Another web site that may be helpful is [www.travelersvaccines.com](http://www.travelersvaccines.com).

Consider all travel plans when researching health precautions, immunizations and areas with specific health issues so you can be fully prepared for your time abroad whether in or outside of your host city and country.

## MEDICATIONS

### **BEFORE YOU GO**

- Students should consider getting check-ups pre-departure for general wellness, vision, and dental.
- Prescription Considerations
  - Be aware that some commonly prescribed medications in the U.S., such as prescriptions for ADHD, may be considered illegal controlled substances in other countries. Check with the customs authority or local embassy of your host country, if this applies to you, to determine local laws.
  - Obtain a clearly written prescription as well as a letter from your physician fully explaining the use of your medication, including the generic name of the drug. Customs officials may want to see this, and should you require any additional prescriptions while abroad, the pharmacy there will require this information.
  - Plan how you will supply yourself the amount of your prescription(s) needed while abroad. You may want to pack enough for the entire period of time, especially if you have medication that has been specifically made for you, such as allergy serum; however getting prescriptions and carrying them in large amounts can be an issue with certain insurance companies and/or customs' officials.
  - If you wear glasses and/or contacts, take along your lens prescription and, if possible, an extra pair of glasses and/or an ample supply of contacts.

### **WHILE ABROAD**

- We do not recommend buying medications "over the counter", unless you are familiar with the product. Keep in mind, "over the counter" drugs abroad are not regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
- All medications should be carried in their original containers and clearly labeled, throughout your travels.

## INSURANCE



Health insurance coverage abroad is mandatory for MU study abroad participants and for Non-MU students participating in MU programs.

### **Important Notes About International Health Insurance:**

- Should medical attention be required while abroad, understand that you will often pay out of pocket for medical services and submit a claim to your insurance company to be reimbursed.
- It is important to have access to funds to pay for out of pocket medical costs as most insurance companies do not pay international medical providers. The cost

is on you to pay upfront. The Office of Global Education recommends having a credit card available to pay for an emergency medical situation.

- Before departing for your experience abroad, you should contact your primary insurance provider to determine if your insurance covers you internationally. If so, you want to know the details of your coverage while abroad and the claims process. It is much more helpful to have this information before a medical issue occurs.
- Your ISIC insurance through April Travel Protection is supplemental insurance to your primary provider in the U.S. If you do not have insurance here in the U.S., or your primary provider does not cover you while abroad, your ISIC insurance is your primary coverage when studying abroad.

### ***INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC)***

(This information is taken from STA Travel, the issuing agency of the ISIC and is therefore subject to change.)

Millersville University policy requires that you purchase a Basic International Student Identity Card (ISIC) valid for the duration of your program abroad. The card is required due to the coverage it provides in certain emergency situations and for the many benefits provided to ISIC/ITIC cardholders such as:

- Medical/Health Insurance
- Travel Insurance
- Discounts

Additionally, ISICs may also be recognized as an official form of student identification.

### ***ISIC INSURANCE***

The ISIC Basic provides the minimum health and travel insurance coverage recommended for traveling abroad. ISIC also offers Premium & Explorer options which provide a higher level of health and travel insurance coverage as well as other benefits. Health insurance for both the ISIC Basic and the ISIC Premium is administered by April Travel Protection. [www.AprilTravelProtection.com](http://www.AprilTravelProtection.com)

Should you decide that you require additional health insurance coverage beyond the ISIC Basic and do not wish to purchase the ISIC Premium or ISIC Explorer, other independent international health insurance providers are available to you. You will need to research these options on your own. Please note, however, that you will still be required to purchase the ISIC Basic for its other benefits.

***NOTE for NON-MU programs:*** Some Non-MU programs require or include health and travel insurance. If this is the case, this insurance must be approved by your program coordinator at the Office of Global Education to determine if it is or is not necessary for you to purchase the ISIC Basic plan. Non-MU program participants must provide your program coordinator with the details of your NON-MU insurance coverage, (meaning Global Education needs to see what the insurance covers you for and up to how much). Your program coordinator will review your program's coverage and make sure it is at least comparable to the ISIC Basic.

- If your coverage is not adequate, MU requires you to purchase at least the ISIC Basic plan by completing the registration form and submitting it with payment to the Office of Global Education.
- If your coverage is approved, you must submit proof of having the insurance coverage through your Non-MU program provider, such as a letter from the insurance company or a copy of your insurance card. Additionally, if you choose your Non-MU program's insurance provider, it is your responsibility to be familiar with the specifics of their coverage, emergency hotline numbers and the procedure to make a claim.

### **SEEKING IN-NETWORK PROVIDERS**

Before you depart, *it is **strongly recommended** that you contact April Travel Protection and/or your independent health insurance provider to determine a list of network providers within your study abroad destination area.* If you do any traveling for an extended amount of time, you may also want to consider obtaining a list of providers within your travel destinations. It is always best to contact April Travel Protection **prior** to seeking medical attention, if possible, to determine the closest in-network medical facility and so that they can arrange an appointment with the physician's office on your behalf.

### **COVERAGE DETAILS**

April Travel Protection provides a letter showing proof of ISIC-related health insurance coverage. This proof of coverage will be emailed to you from The Office of Global Education to keep for your records and/or for use with your student visa application.

**Review the chart below for a breakdown of ISIC coverage benefits:**

<b>Coverage</b>	<b>BASIC</b> (min. required)	<b>PREMIUM</b>	<b>EXPLORER</b>
ISIC Card Validity	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
Multi-Trip Insurance Validity	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
Trip Cancellation	NA	NA	\$3000
Trip Interruption	NA	\$1500	\$3000
Trip Delay/ Per Day	\$250/\$100	\$500/\$200	\$500/\$200
Emergency Medical Evacuation & Repatriation (included emergency reunion assistance)	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Repatriation of Remains	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Accident and Sickness Medical Expenses	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Emergency Dental/ Deductible	\$500/\$0	\$500/\$0	\$500/\$0
Accidental Death/Dismemberment – Entire Trip	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Accidental Death/Dismemberment – Entire Trip Common Carrier Air Only	\$5,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Baggage and Personal Effects (If lost or stolen)	NA	\$2,000	\$2,500
Baggage Delay (Minimum of 12 Hours)	\$100	\$200	\$200
Adventure Sports	NA	NA	Included
Mental Health	NA	Included	Included
24/7 Travel/Medical Assistance Services	Included	Included	Included
Non-Medical Emergency Evacuation due to Catastrophe	NA	\$50,000	\$50,000
Security and Political Evacuation	NA	\$50,000	\$50,000
<b>Price:</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$95</b>	<b>\$200</b>

**Additional Information about Coverage:  
24-Hour Emergency Assistance Services**

- Emergency travel assistance services are provided by April Travel Protection. If you need assistance, you can call toll free 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at one of these telephone numbers:
- Within the USA Toll Free: (855) 743-6739
- Outside the USA Collect: (305) 455-1571
- Assistance Email: [assistus@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:assistus@apriltravelprotection.com)

**Assistant Services:**

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL EVACUATION & REPATRIATION**

- Medical Transport
- Dispatch of a Physician or Specialist
- Transportation of a Family Member
- Escort Services
- Repatriation of Remains

**MEDICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES**

- Medical & Dental Referrals
- Medical Case Management & Monitoring
- Coordinate Hospital Admission & Discharge
- Vaccination Recommendations & Precautions
- Prescriptions Replacement

**TRAVEL ASSISTANCE**

- Telephone Interpretation Service
- General Travel Assistance & Information
- Pre-Trip & Cultural Information
- Emergency Cash & Bail Assistance
- International Claims Assistance
- Lost Luggage Assistance
- Lost Document Assistance
- Urgent Message Relay
- Legal Referrals

*There may be times when circumstances beyond April Travel Protection control hinder its endeavors to provide services. April Travel Protection will, however, make all reasonable efforts to provide such services and help you resolve the emergency situation.*

*April Travel Protection will not provide any services when the U.S. or other applicable trade or economic sanctions, laws or regulations prohibit April Travel Protection from providing such services, including, but not limited to, the payment of any claims. Accordingly, no services will be provided in connection with travel to Cuba and such services may be limited and/or delayed, or prohibited, in other countries.*

## ***PURCHASED A BASIC OR PREMIUM ISIC AND WANT TO UPGRADE TO A PREMIUM OR EXPLORER?***

You can upgrade to an ISIC Premium or Explorer by contacting The Office of Global Education via email or by coming into the office. In order to upgrade, you need to submit payment for the cost difference of what plan you purchased versus which plan you would like to upgrade to. This can be done in the form of cash, check, or money order payable to Millersville University.

**If you are considering upgrading your ISIC card, note that you may only upgrade PRIOR to departing the US.**

## ***SUBMITTING A CLAIM***

Follow the directions below to submit a claim to April Travel Protection (ISIC). If you have other primary insurance that covers you abroad, such as your parent's health insurance or insurance through your employer, April Travel Protection will require you to make a claim with your primary insurance first and then submit the remaining costs to April Travel Protection. Note that April Travel Protection must receive written communication within 90 days after a covered loss occurs:

### **1. Request an Insurance Claim Form**

Call or email using the contact information below to request an Insurance Claim Form & inquire about the required documentation given your coverage (Basic, Premium, and Explorer).

### **2. Provide the Required Documentation**

After you complete your claim form, provide the supporting documentation needed to complete the claim process.

-Trip Delay: Obtain specific dated documents which provide proof of the reason for delay (airline or cruise line forms, medical statements, etc. Submit this documentation along with your trip itinerary and all receipts for expenses incurred.)

-Medical Expenses: Obtain receipts from the providers of services, etc., stating the amount paid and listing the diagnosis and treatment; submit these first to other medical plans. Provide a copy of *their* final disposition of your claim.

-Baggage: Obtain statement from the common carrier that your baggage was delayed or a police report showing your baggage was stolen along with copies of the receipts for your purchases.

Report your claim to April Travel Protection at one of these telephone numbers:

Within the USA: Toll Free: (855)-743-6739

Outside the USA: Collect: (305) 455-1571

Email for claims: [Claims@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:Claims@apriltravelprotection.com)

Claims Address:  
**April Travel Protection**  
**11900 Biscayne Blvd**  
**Miami FL 33181, USA**

All benefits will be paid in United States Dollars.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOSE YOUR CARD**

You are still covered under the insurance benefits for the validity period of the card; however if you wish to use the card to receive discounts and/or as a form of international ID, you will need to locate an ISIC issuing office close to you to purchase a replacement card. Contact ISIC to assist you with locating an ISIC issuing office.

The insurance benefits that come with an ISIC are only offered on cards issued in the US; therefore, you will not have double insurance coverage by purchasing a replacement card.

Keep your receipt should you get a new card and you can submit a claim to get reimbursed for the lost/stolen card.

## **LUGGAGE/U.S. CUSTOMS**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

Airlines or travel agencies should be able to inform you of the latest policies affecting luggage limitations. Each airline has its own restrictions/requirements regarding checked luggage and carry on items. Excess luggage can be very expensive. Remember that luggage should be small enough to go up narrow stairways, go down train aisles, and fit on luggage racks. You may wish to use a backpack as your second piece of luggage for ease and flexibility while traveling. You should label your luggage on the outside, and it is recommended that you also include a name and address label inside your locked luggage as well.

### **TSA ACCEPTED AND RECOGNIZED LOCKS**



Company logos for *Travel Sentry* and *Safe Skies*

The vendors above, Travel Sentry and Safe Skies, have an arrangement with TSA to supply TSA “accepted and recognized” locks. TSA screeners have tools for opening



and re-locking luggage locks with either of these logos, thus avoiding damage to the lock or bag if a physical inspection is required.

Please check the web sites below for more information on TSA Accepted and Recognized Locks.

Travel Sentry: <http://www.travelsentry.org/>

Safe Skies: [www.safeskieslocks.com](http://www.safeskieslocks.com)

## CARRY-ON RESTRICTIONS

***Due to increased security at airports worldwide, the following restrictions have taken effect. Please read carefully.***

**3-1-1** for carry-ons = **3** ounce bottle or less; **1** quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; **1** bag per passenger placed in screening bin. A one-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. The 3 oz. container size restriction is a security measure.



Consolidate bottles into one bag and X-ray separately to speed screening. Be prepared. Each time TSA searches a carry-on it slows down the line. Practicing 3-1-1 will ensure a faster and easier checkpoint experience.

3-1-1 is for short trips. **If in doubt, put your liquids in checked luggage.**

Declare larger liquids. Prescription medications, baby formula and milk are allowed in quantities exceeding three ounces and are not required to be in the zip-top bag. Declare these items for inspection at the checkpoint.

Be aware, heavy travel volumes and the enhanced security process may mean longer lines at security checkpoints.

**Note:** These requirements are being strictly enforced. You must bring your own plastic bag as none are available in the airport. You will already have checked your other luggage so **anything that does not meet the requirements will be thrown away/confiscated.**

## U.S. CUSTOMS UPON RE-ENTRY



As you pass through the United States, or any other country, you will have to go through a customs inspection. United States residents are permitted to bring into the U.S. \$800 worth of foreign souvenirs and gifts provided that:

- The goods are for personal use or will be given as gifts
- They are in your possession (goods shipped are excluded from the \$800 exemption)



- They have been declared to U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- You have been abroad for at least 48 hours
- You have not utilized the \$800 exemption within a 30-day period preceding re-entry
- The articles are not prohibited by law

Examples of articles specifically prohibited by law are:

- Narcotics, dangerous drugs, or drug paraphernalia
- Obscene articles and publications
- Seditious and treasonable materials
- Hazardous materials- fireworks, toxic or poisonous substances
- Absinthe (a common European Wormwood and a green liqueur flavored with wormwood)
- Switchblade knives
- Endangered species and products made from them may not be brought into the United States. The penalty is confiscation and a possible fine.

You will be assessed an import duty based on 3% of the value for anything in the \$800 to \$1,800 range. Import duty varies according to the nature of the articles when you go over \$1,800.

### **Some Helpful Small Print about Customs**

Articles acquired abroad and in your possession at the time of your return to the United States must be declared to Customs officials in writing. Declaration forms will be distributed to you by the flight attendants on your flight and should be completed immediately to avoid the last-minute hassle at Immigration and Customs. Your declaration must include, in addition to the gifts and souvenirs you purchased while you were abroad, any items that you are bringing back to another person on their request, alterations or repair of articles taken abroad, and gifts given to you while you were abroad. Wearing or using an article acquired abroad does not exempt it from duties, and it must be declared at the price you paid for it, although Customs agents may make a reduction in value due to the use or wear of the article. To avoid misunderstandings, it would be wise for you to retain receipts for any purchases that you make while abroad. You must declare the price actually paid for an article. If you do not know the price, say so. If an article was not purchased (i.e. a gift), state its fair market price. Personal belongings of U.S. origin taken abroad may be sent back by mail duty-free if, on the outside packaging, it is stated that the articles were taken out of the U.S. as personal effects and are being returned without having been repaired or altered while abroad ("American Goods Returned").

If you expect to carry a foreign-made item (i.e., an expensive camera, a watch, etc.) with you out of the United States, you may be subject to duty on those items when you return to the U.S., unless you have acceptable proof of prior possession. Documents that fully describe the article, such as a bill of sale or an insurance policy, may be considered "as acceptable proof". Items, which may be readily identified by serial

number or permanently affixed markings, may be registered with the Customs officials prior to departure.

## **LAW AND SECURITY ISSUES ABROAD**

This section was obtained from the US State Department website at:  
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>

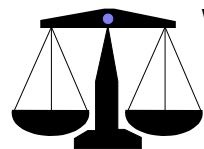
When you travel abroad, the odds are you will have a safe and incident-free trip. Travelers can, however, become victims of crime and violence, or experience unexpected difficulties. No one is better able to tell you this than the U.S. consular officers who work in more than 250 U.S. embassies and consulates around the globe. Every day of the year, U.S. embassies and consulates receive calls from American citizens in distress.

Happily, most problems can be solved over the phone or with a visit to the Consular Section of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. There are other occasions, however, when U.S. consular officers are called upon to help U.S. citizens who are in foreign hospitals or prisons, or to assist the families of U.S. citizens who have passed away overseas.

We have prepared the following travel tips to help you avoid serious difficulties during your time abroad.

### **THE LAW ABROAD**

#### **LOCAL LAWS AND CUSTOMS**



When you leave the United States, you are subject to the laws of the country you are visiting. Therefore, before you go, learn as much as you can about the local laws and customs of the places you plan to visit. Good resources are your library, your travel agent, and the embassies, consulates or tourist bureaus of the countries you will visit. In addition, keep track of what is being reported in the media about recent developments in those countries.

Familiarize yourself with legal expectations in the countries you will visit. The [Country Specific Information](#) (This link guides you to another portion of the US State Department Webpage) pages include information on unusual patterns of arrests in particular countries, as appropriate. Again, keep in mind that while you are visiting a foreign country, you are subject to the laws of that country. Legal protection and personal rights that we take for granted in the United States are left behind when you depart. American Embassies and Consulates are limited in the assistance they can provide. They cannot provide you with any financial assistance in paying for legal or medical services, nor can they intervene on your behalf in the administration of justice as seen from the point of view of the host country.

Bail provisions, as we know them in the U.S., are rare in foreign countries. Pretrial detention, without bail, is quite common. Prison conditions are often deplorable in comparison with conditions in the U.S. The principle “innocent until proven guilty” is not necessarily a tenet of the legal system abroad. It should also be stressed that students are subject to the statutes, ordinances and regulations of the host institution.

### ***DRUG VIOLATIONS***

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

### ***POSSESSION OF FIREARMS***

The places where U.S. citizens most often experience difficulties for illegal possession of firearms are nearby – Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean. Sentences for possession of firearms in Mexico can be up to 30 years. In general, firearms, even those legally registered in the U.S., cannot be brought into a country unless a permit is obtained in advance from the embassy or a consulate of that country and the firearm is registered with foreign authorities on arrival. (NOTE: There are also strict rules about bringing firearms or ammunition into the U.S; check with [U.S. Customs](#) before your trip.

### ***PHOTOGRAPHY***

Be cautious when taking pictures. Local authorities in many countries consider all airports, police stations, military locations, oil installations, harbors, mines and bridges to be security-related. Photography of demonstrations or civil disturbances is also usually prohibited. Tourists have had their cameras confiscated and have been detained for trying to take these types of pictures. When in doubt about whether you can take a picture, ask first.

## **SECURITY ISSUES**

### ***PACKING***

Safety begins when you pack. To help avoid becoming a target, do not dress in a way that could mark you as an affluent tourist. Expensive-looking jewelry, for instance, can draw the wrong attention.

Always try to travel light. You can move more quickly and will be more likely to have a free hand. You will also be less tired and less likely to set your luggage down, leaving it unattended.

Generally, it is suggested to carry the minimum number of valuables, and plan places to conceal them. Your passport, cash and credit cards are most secure when locked in a hotel/hostel safe. When you have to carry them on your person, you may wish to put them each in a different place rather than all in one wallet or pouch. Avoid handbags, fanny packs and outside pockets that are easy targets for thieves. Inside pockets and a sturdy shoulder bag with the strap worn across your chest are somewhat safer. One of the safest places to carry valuables is in a pouch or money belt worn under your clothing.

### ***SAFETY ON THE STREET***

Use the same common sense traveling overseas that you would at home. Be especially cautious in (or avoid) areas where you may be more easily victimized. These include crowded subways, train stations, elevators, tourist sites, market places, festivals and crime-ridden neighborhoods.

- Don't use short cuts, narrow alleys or poorly lit streets.
- Try not to travel alone at night.
- Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances.
- Keep a low profile and avoid loud conversations or arguments.
- Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers.
- Avoid scam artists by being wary of strangers who approach you and offer to be your guide or sell you something at bargain prices.
- Beware of pickpockets. They often have an accomplice who will:
  - jostle you
  - ask you for directions or the time
  - point to something spilled on your clothing
  - distract you by creating a disturbance.
- Beware of groups of vagrant children who could create a distraction to pick your pocket.
- Wear the shoulder strap of your bag across your chest and walk with the bag away from the curb to avoid drive-by purse-snatchers.
- Try to seem purposeful when you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going. Try to ask for directions only from individuals in authority.
- Know how to use a pay telephone and have the proper change or token on hand.
- Learn a few phrases in the local language or have them handy in written form so that you can signal your need for police or medical help.
- Make a note of emergency telephone numbers you may need: police, fire, your hotel/hostel, and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.
- If you are confronted, don't fight back -- give up your valuables.

### ***SAFETY IN YOUR HOTEL/HOSTEL***

- Keep your hotel/hostel door locked at all times. Meet visitors in the lobby.
- Do not leave money and other valuables in your hotel/hostel room while you are out. Use the hotel/hostel safe.
- If you are out late at night, let someone know when you expect to return.

- If you are alone, do not get on an elevator if there is a suspicious-looking person inside.
- Read the fire safety instructions in your hotel/hostel room. Know how to report a fire, and be sure you know where the nearest fire exits and alternate exits are located. (Count the doors between your room and the nearest exit; this could be a lifesaver if you have to crawl through a smoke-filled corridor.)

### ***SAFETY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION***

If a country has a pattern of tourists being targeted by criminals on public transport, that information is mentioned in each country's [Country Specific Information](#) in the section about safety and security.

### ***TAXIS***

Only take taxis clearly identified with official markings. Beware of unmarked cabs.

### ***TRAINS***

Well-organized, systematic robbery of passengers on trains along popular tourist routes is a problem. It is more common at night and especially on overnight trains.

If you see your way being blocked by a stranger and another person is very close to you from behind, move away. This can happen in the corridor of the train or on the platform or station.

Do not accept food or drink from strangers. Criminals have been known to drug food or drink offered to passengers. Criminals may also spray sleeping gas in train compartments. Where possible, lock your compartment. If it cannot be locked securely, take turns sleeping in shifts with your traveling companions. If that is not possible, stay awake. If you must sleep unprotected, tie down your luggage and secure your valuables to the extent possible.

Do not be afraid to alert authorities if you feel threatened in any way. Extra police are often assigned to ride trains on routes where crime is a serious problem.

### ***BUSES***

The same type of criminal activity found on trains can be found on public buses on popular tourist routes. For example, tourists have been drugged and robbed while sleeping on buses or in bus stations. In some countries, whole busloads of passengers have been held up and robbed by gangs of bandits.

### ***HOW TO HANDLE MONEY SAFELY***

- Do not flash large amounts of money when paying a bill. Make sure your credit card is returned to you after each transaction.
- Deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money, buy airline tickets or purchase souvenirs. Do not change money on the black market.

If your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the local police. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance claims and as an explanation of what happened.

After reporting missing items to the police, report the loss or theft of:

- Credit cards to the issuing company
- Airline tickets to the airline or travel agent
- Passport to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate

## **JET LAG**



Management of the phenomenon known as "jet lag" or "travel fatigue" begins when you board the plane. You may wish to grab a pillow and blanket from the overhead storage space in order to relax and save your energy on your long flight.

You probably have heard of "jet lag," which is as much a physical phenomenon as much as a psychological one. Your body, through long years of habit, has become acclimated to functioning in accordance with its own physiological clock based on a particular daily cycle.

When you arrive at your study abroad destination, that clock is going to be automatically out of sync with the local cycle because of the time difference. It will take your body a few days to adjust (some bodies take longer than others), during which time you can expect to feel quite tired and run down. This fatigue, in conjunction with the unfamiliar surroundings, customs and language, may produce a temporary sense of depression and "homesickness." It is a perfectly normal reaction and it may not even affect you; however, if it should happen, remember that it will soon pass.

**Although it's difficult to avoid jet lag, a few precautions are worth taking:**

- "Reset" your sleep patterns by going to bed early a few nights before you leave.
- On the plane, sleep as much as you can, and walk and stretch when awake.
- Avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages, and drink plenty of water in flight.
- On arrival in a new time zone, take a short nap, have a light meal at the appropriate local hour, and perhaps a brief stroll afterward.
- Eat lightly for two or three days.
- Keep the first day's itinerary relaxed.
- Allow at least 24 hours to adjust

## **CULTURE SHOCK**

### **HOW TO COPE WITH CULTURE SHOCK**



With Permission from the Council on International Educational Exchange, we are reprinting the following advice on preparing for successful cultural adaptation. Although you may not encounter difficulties with culture shock, you will certainly have some cultural adjustments to make which will require you to be prepared. Please read this material carefully.

## **PREPARING FOR SUCCESSFUL CULTURAL ADAPTATION**

The concept of culture shock may be very familiar to you, and any travel, which you have done abroad and perhaps even within your own country will have exposed you to it. However, if it has been quite a while since you have lived abroad, or if you have never lived abroad for a length of time, you will want to do some thinking about both what culture shock is and how you can develop personal strategies for overcoming it. Most people eventually develop their own ways of coping, but since the duration of your stay abroad will be relatively brief and the academic pressures considerable, preparing for adaptation ahead may save you a lot of time and anguish.

## **UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK**

Culture shock has been defined as "...the loss of emotional equilibrium that a person suffers when he moves from a familiar environment where he has learned to function easily and successfully, to one where he has not."<sup>1</sup> The effects of culture shock range from mild uneasiness, homesickness, and unhappiness to panic, severe irritability, and loss of perspective. The basic cause of this syndrome is believed to be the abrupt loss of the familiar, which produces feelings of isolation and diminished self-importance as you find yourself unable to fully interact with the rest of society. It is important that you understand that culture shock is a personal experience, affecting each individual differently.

Since all people undergo psychological as well as physical and social adjustments to new cultures, some knowledge of acculturation may be helpful.

### Stage I

This may be called the "tourist stage," "the honeymoon phase," or the "stage of euphoria." The student is fascinated and thrilled with all that is new and tends to see similarities between the host and the home country. Even difficulties are viewed as novel and interesting.

### Stage II

During this stage, the student will be taking a more active role in his/her setting. This will produce frustration, because of the difficulty in coping with even the most elementary aspects of everyday life. There may be a tendency to overreact to minor frustrations, delays, or inconveniences with irritation or anger out of proportion to the cause. Accomplishing small tasks, such as shopping and making telephone calls, become a major nuisance. The student's focus will turn to the differences between the host and home cultures, and these differences can be troubling. These sometimes-insignificant difficulties can be blown into major catastrophes. Hence, this stage is referred to as "culture shock."

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon, Arthur. "How to Cope with Culture Shock," Re-entry Preparation and Integration for Study Abroad. Center for International Education. Cal. State U., Long Beach (1986), pp. 1-6.

### Stage III

The student slowly recovers. Interest in and sensitivity to the new culture and other people emerge. A sense of humor and an ability to joke about new experiences and difficulties return. One is able to accomplish everyday tasks without undue amounts of stress.

### Stage IV

A meaningful understanding of the new environment develops. The student stops assessing the new culture by using his/her own culture as a model and accepts the culture and people for who and what they are—not better or worse, just different. Ideally, the student is able to make the transition between the cultures' value systems and behaviors without internal conflict. The student develops the ability to operate comfortably and effectively between cultures.

### Stage V

The last stage is the re-entry phase, when the student returns home. For some, this is the most painful phase of all! The student will be excited about sharing his/her experiences, he/she will realize that he/she has changed, but he/she will not be able to explain how or why. The student will have acquired different ways of behaving, feeling, and responding to others. One set of values has already been instilled in him/her, another he/she will have acquired in the host country. Both may seem equally valid.

## ***SYMPTOMS OF CULTURE SHOCK***

Health care providers, exchange program coordinators, academic advisors, and all staff involved in international educational exchange need to understand the phenomenon of culture shock and the impact it can have on a student's personal life and educational experience. A person passing through of acculturation may experience some of the following symptoms:

- feelings of helplessness and a dependence on compatriots
- homesickness
- greater irritation than appropriate when things go wrong
- a fear of being cheated, injured, or robbed
- excessive concern about physical pains or skin eruptions
- a strong desire to be home with one's own people who understand them
- reluctance or refusal to learn the language of the country
- insomnia or fatigue
- excessive concern for cleanliness
- loss of appetite
- loneliness
- poor concentration
- headaches
- stomach problems
- withdrawal from the host culture
- depression



## **OVERCOMING CULTURE SHOCK**

Just as your experience of culture shock will be individual and personal, you will need to deal with it in an individualized personal way. In adopting the following suggestions and developing your own strategies, an important thing to keep in mind is that while you should only expect yourself to tackle the symptoms and cause of culture shock in stages, confronting rather than avoiding them will help you to adapt much faster and more effectively. The following ideas are drawn from the experience of past participants (and the sources listed under *Recommended Reading* below):

- *Resolve any personal and family problems before you leave.*  
While you may think that by going abroad you will be escaping pre-existing problems, they will only follow you and be exacerbated by the especially stressful time of adapting to a new culture. Resolving personal problems before you leave home will make you more emotionally free to deal with the stresses of your new environment.
- *Learn as much about your new culture as possible.*  
The more you can learn about the culture which you are traveling to, and its customs, the easier it will be to figure out the “cultural cues” necessary to communicate with new friends and to feel at home in the new society. As mentioned in the introduction to this book, don't stop when you're through at the library. Seek out nationals of the country you'll be visiting through international student associations, international student centers, any local Embassies or Consulates, or community cultural organizations. Make friends with other students who have studied in the country you're heading to and keep on top of the news.
- *Develop cross-cultural communication skills.*  
Chances are you count on this strategy as one you have already developed if you've had friends from other countries or have lived abroad. If not, it would be worth taking advantage of any cross-cultural communication workshops arranged on your campus, participating in activities with international students studying at Millersville, and actively seeking out students from the country which you will be studying in.

One of the most important skills in cross-cultural communication, which you will need is the basic skill of learning to open-mindedly inquire and listen without being judgmental. You may be surprised to run into negative stereotypes. Americans, for example, are often assumed to be rude, always in a hurry, promiscuous, disrespectful of authority, and ignorant of other cultures. When trying to show that you are different, be tactful and try to understand the reasons for these stereotypes.

Likewise, you may find that you have brought along your own preconceived ideas about the people of your host country, and the ethnocentric attitude that the way

things are done at home is "better." Remember that you have chosen to study abroad to learn from your host country. Reserve judgment and try to understand and appreciate the new customs and ways of thinking you encounter, remembering that although different from what you are used to, they are equally valid.

- *Learn to indulge yourself in positive ways.*  
If you are feeling anxious, frustrated, lonely and/or confused, a first step, which will help you to adapt more easily, is to make yourself feel better and stronger by reducing these feelings. Spending 24 hours a day trying to communicate in a new language with new people in very new surroundings is extremely exhausting. This means that you will benefit from paying a little more attention to your physical and emotional health.

Obvious as it may seem, many students forget that added stress means needing more, not less sleep; and better, not worse eating habits. Exhaustion and eventually illness makes coping all the more difficult. A good sleep can sometimes put a previous day's crisis into perspective.

Feeling emotionally better may mean easing back a little on any campaign to become one of the natives in a few short weeks. Let yourself write letters home to friends and family who understand you, listen to any familiar music which you've brought along and try to incorporate familiar routines (such as running or making a favorite food, etc.), into your new life-style. While we certainly do not advocate hanging out only with other program students, we do not encourage you to alienate yourself from them. Avoiding students who seem bent on reacting against the host culture and making friends with other students who share both your country of origin and your desire to get to know the new one will make adaptation much easier and much more fun.

- *Form new friendships with host nationals as much as possible.*  
Students who have ultimately made friends among the students of the host institution and other host nationals are almost always those who have gotten to know the host country, its language and people the best and who have enjoyed themselves the most in the process. While spending some time with your own nationals will help ease culture shock, keep in mind that your purpose is to get better acquainted with the people, language, and culture of your host country. Making friends as early as possible with the nationals from your host country will speed the process of adaptation and allow you to get the most out of the experience.

## **CHARACTERISTICS FOR SUCCESS WHILE ABROAD**



What personal characteristics are needed, not just to survive, but to enjoy the experience abroad?

Key traits are:

- An attitude for learning.
- Flexibility, a sense of humor, and the ability to laugh at yourself.
- Communication skills, especially the ability to communicate your feelings.
- The ability to tolerate ambiguity.
- The acceptance of different cultural demands.

## **COPING STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT**

### **PAY ATTENTION TO SELF-CARE**

- Eat healthy foods
- Rest/Relaxation
- Exercise
- Avoid overuse of alcohol

### **KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE**

- Suspend judgment and keep an open mind
- Be curious
- Stay flexible
- Maintain your sense of humor – laughter relieves stress
- Read humorous books
- Rent a funny movie

### **THINK**

- Identify your expectations so you can minimize disappointment if they are not met- or turn them into realistic goals
- Try to identify situations that upset you the most
- Think about what you have control over and what you don't – let it go
- Take life one day at a time

### **GET INVOLVED**

- Ask questions
- Try new activities/foods
- Practice the language
- Set small goals for yourself
- It's okay to take risks and make mistakes

### **DO FAMILIAR THINGS – something you did at home to make you feel good**

- Familiar physical activities such as walking or sports
- Listen to music
- Share your culture
- Meditate

## EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS

- Talk with others about what you're experiencing – they might feel the same way!
- Write – journals, letters, poetry
- Drawing, painting or other creative expression

## UTILIZE RESOURCES

- There are people who can help!

## **WHILE ABROAD – THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND**

### **LOCAL/EMERGENCY STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

You will be contacted by the Office of Global Education to provide your local contact information for while you are studying abroad. You will be emailed shortly after your arrival for your physical address (written in proper format), local phone number, and SKYPE name (if you have one). This information will be issued to a limited number of campus officials such as Millersville University Police and is extremely important in the event of an emergency. Throughout your stay the Office of Global Education may need to contact you and without reliable contact information this will not be possible.

You will also be provided with a Trip Notification form which we strongly suggest you complete and submit to the Office of Global Education if you are traveling away from your host city overnight. It requests information of where you are going, dates of travel, accommodation details, mode(s) of transportation itinerary, availability of email access, etc. Should an issue or emergency occur while you are traveling, Global Education will have resources to assist you. If you do not inform Global Education of your whereabouts, we will have no information to go by in the event of an emergency.

### **CONFIRMATION OF CLASSES REGISTERED (AT HOST INSTITUTION)**

In order to facilitate both you and the Registrar's Office with processing your transcript from your study abroad institution, Global Education will request a list of the classes that you are actually taking soon after you have been abroad. This is for the purpose of cross checking that list with your Transfer of Credits Form that you completed pre-departure with your academic advisors. We encourage you to do this on your own as well. If the Transfer of Credits Form does not match the courses that you are currently taking, then you will need to work with your academic advisor to make the appropriate changes so that the Registrar's Office may process your host institution transcript. Not ensuring that the Transfer of Credits Form matches the list of classes you take seriously delays processing the transcript once it is received at MU.

### **MU CLASS REGISTRATION/GRADUATION APPLICATION REMINDER**

A reminder of Millersville class registration will be sent to you while abroad. You will need to communicate with your academic advisor(s) for advising and to obtain your TAP number.

If you are studying abroad during your last semester prior to graduation, you will need to complete and submit a Graduation Application to the Registrar Office prior to departure and ensure that you are registered for graduation.

## FINANCIAL AID ISSUES TO ADDRESS

The release of financial aid for the following academic year may be delayed while Millersville awaits the receipt of your academic transcript from the international institution. Transcripts from Spring semester study abroad will not arrive until early September. Because Millersville University cannot confirm that you have made “Successful Academic Progress” (SAP) in May, for the previous academic year without the transcript, your financial aid may be placed on hold until the transcript is received. The definition of SAP differs between state and federal aid:

- *Federal:* SAP is defined as earning 75% of ALL credits attempted at MU. (Example: A student completed 30 credits but earned 24 credits, therefore he/she earned 80%, calculated  $24 \div 30$ , meaning he/she made successful academic progress and will not have issues with financial aid for the following academic year.)
- *State:* SAP is defined as successfully completing, at minimum, 24 credits for the academic year.

We strongly encourage you to check your **MAX account** mid/late May to determine if you are identified as not making SAP. If you did not make SAP, you will receive an email from the Office of Financial Aid and it will be stated on your MAX account.

### **What If You Do Not Make SAP?** – Release Your Aid:

- *Federal Aid:* To ensure that your federal aid is released without your study abroad transcript being received, we suggest you complete the Financial Aid Appeal Form by indicating that you are studying abroad. The official appeal form is accessible from the Office of Financial Aid website and it is due in mid-June.

This process will release your *federal* aid even if the transcript has not yet arrived. Power of Attorney, processed prior to departure, may be required if you will need someone else to complete this form for you in your absence. This form can also be submitted as a scanned document via email with required signature(s).

Note: If your transcript is received, and you did not meet the minimum required Satisfactory Academic Progress, you will be required to immediately reimburse the Office of Financial Aid for any money already received. Failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on your account at Millersville University which will affect registration/graduation.

- *State Aid:* Your PA State Aid cannot be appealed because of study abroad yet it will be retroactively released upon receipt of your study abroad transcript confirming Satisfactory Academic Progress.

# Section 2

## Country-Specific Information

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## **COUNTRY BACKGROUND**

Before you leave for your study abroad experience, it is important that you are aware of the social, cultural, political, and economic history of your host country. It is recommended that you research these topics to better understand your new environment and to help with your assimilation into the country.

## **ONLINE RESOURCES**

### **Students Abroad Resource- U.S. Department of State**

<http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>

The Students Abroad website managed by the State Department gives information about almost every aspect of studying abroad in any country. In this website you can find information about how to travel safely as a United States citizen. The website provides information varying from Emergency Contacts, to Voting, Packing Lists, and much more.

### **U.S. Department of State – Australia**

<http://www.state.gov/p/eap/ci/as/>

The State Department website on Australia gives in-depth information about almost every aspect of Australia, from history to culture to travel and business information.

### **U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Australia**

<http://australia.usembassy.gov/>

This is the website of the U.S. presence in Australia. Information about U.S. citizen services and current U.S. issues in Australia can be easily found on this website.

### **Frommer's Travel Guide – Australia**

<http://www.frommers.com/destinations/australia/>

### **LonelyPlanet – Australia**

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/australia>

Frommer's and LonelyPlanet are two of the most highly respected guidebooks for any travel needs. The guidebooks and their online counterparts contain detailed information about travel spots, safety precautions, and visitor information.

*\*Fodor's, Let's Go, and Insight Guides are among other travel guidebooks that students may choose to take advantage of. More information on these guides can be found online and in bookstores.*

### **Australia's Official Tourism Website**

<http://www.australia.com/index.aspx>

This website gives information about Australia's history, culture, and travel hot-spots.

## Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook – Australia

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/as.html>

The CIA World Factbook is a great resource for a short, mostly statistical analysis of Australia as a whole.

### **CULTURAL AWARENESS**

#### **SMOKING**

In Australia, smoking is banned in all government buildings, public transport, and international as well as domestic airports. Each Australian state has also instituted its own individual bans on smoking. Currently, each state and territory, except for Northern Territory, has banned smoking in all public places, including workplaces and restaurants.

#### **HOST COUNTRY'S HOLIDAYS**

(as taken from <http://www.asiatraveltips.com/AustraliaHolidays.shtml>)

**1 January** New Year's Day

**26 January** Australia Day

#### **Easter Week**

**26 April** Anzac Day

**14 June** Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday

**25 December** Christmas

**26 December** Boxing Day

### **VISAS**

A visa is an official permission to visit a country and is granted by the government of that country. The format varies considerably, from a simple stamp imprinted upon one of the pages in your passport at the time you enter the country, to an official document with your photograph attached. Many countries require advanced processing of visas, while other countries require no advanced processing whatsoever for brief visits.

Whether or not you will be required to obtain a visa depends on several factors, including:

- the country you will be travelling to
- the length of your stay
- the purpose for your visit
- your country of citizenship

If you are required to obtain a visa in order to enter the country, the consulate or embassy that will process your visa depends on where you reside within the United States.

Please see this website for more information about visa and entry requirements for your host country: [www.usa.embassy.gov.au](http://www.usa.embassy.gov.au)

**Note:** You may also need to acquire a visa in order to travel outside of your host country. Please visit the websites of the embassies of the countries that you wish to travel to in order to determine what the visa and entry requirements are for those countries.

Obtaining a visa may require you to fill out the appropriate forms, have passport photos taken, send or take your passport to the respective embassy or consulate, etc.; the requirements can vary by country, consulate, and citizenship of the applicant. Because the process can be very involved and time-consuming, we recommend that you start planning or preparing several weeks or months prior to your departure for any trips that you intend to take while studying abroad that may require you to obtain a visa.

## **EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES**

### **HOST EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES**

An embassy is a permanent diplomatic mission that is usually located in a nation's capital. Its main responsibility is to represent its home country abroad and to help handle major diplomatic issues.

A consulate is generally described as a smaller version of an embassy. Consulates can usually be found in large tourist cities. They are responsible for handling minor diplomatic issues, such as issuing visas and taking care of migrants, tourists, and expatriates.

Most sovereign states have embassies and consulates within the United States that are responsible for issuing visas to U.S. citizens who wish to travel to their countries. The location of your official residence will determine which foreign embassy or consulate will be the point of contact for visa application.

#### **For residents of PA:**

##### **Embassy of Australia in the U.S.:**



1601 Massachusetts Avenue Northwest  
Washington, DC 20036  
**Tel:** (202) 797-3000  
**Fax:** (202) 797-3168  
**Website:** [www.usa.embassy.gov.au](http://www.usa.embassy.gov.au)

If you reside outside of Pennsylvania, please determine through research the consulate that you should consult with based upon your area of residency.

### **U.S. EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES**



Should you encounter serious problems, the American Embassies and/or Consulates can offer limited assistance. They can, for example, provide

you with a list of local attorneys and physicians; they can contact next of kin in the event of an emergency or serious illness; they can contact friends or relatives on your behalf to request funds or guidance and they can replace a lost or stolen passport. They cannot, however, provide the services of a travel agency, give or lend money, cash personal checks, arrange free medical service or legal advice, provide bail or get you out of jail, act as couriers or interpreters, search for missing luggage, or settle disputes with local authorities. Remember that their primary responsibility abroad is to help fulfill the diplomatic mission of the United States Government, not to act as nursemaids to American travelers.

**Note:** As a citizen of the United States, you are able to visit any U.S. embassy or consulate within your host country in order to seek assistance. Your location within your host country does not determine which embassy or consulate you will be able to visit as it does in the United States.

### **U.S. Embassy in Canberra**

Moonah Place

Yarralumla, ACT 2600

Australia

**Tel:** 6214-5600

**Fax:** 6214-5970

**Website:** <http://canberra.usembassy.gov/>

**Facebook Page:** <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Canberra-Australia/US-Embassy-Canberra/66357326382>

### **U.S. Consulate General in Sydney**

MLC Centre

Level 10

19-29 Martin Place

Sydney, NSW 2000

**Tel:** (02)9373-9200

**Fax:** (02)9373-9184

### **U.S. Consulate General in Melbourne**

553 St. Kilda Road

Melbourne, VIC 3004

**Tel:** (03)9526 -5900

**Fax:** (03)9510-4646

**Facebook Page:** <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Melbourne-Australia/US-Consulate-General-Melbourne/105399191715>

### **U.S. Consulate General in Perth**

4<sup>th</sup> Floor

16 St. George's Terrace

Perth, WA 6000

**Tel:** (08)9202-1224

Fax: (08)9325-5914

## **WHAT TO PACK**



When planning what to take with you, remember that the first rule is to take a minimum of clothes. You will tend to accumulate things as time passes, so, if in doubt, leave it at home. Choose clothes that can be mixed and matched and layered to serve several different seasons and temperatures. Dark conservative colors are fashionable and they will wear longer without laundering, and will often help to make you less conspicuously American. Try to take "heavy-duty" practical clothes that can stand lots of wear especially if you plan to do any traveling. Clothes that wrinkle and show dirt easily are not ideal. Above all, pack light. You should be able to get all your gear into two suitcases and a carry-on bag. You will be buying some gifts and souvenirs to bring back, and you will have to lug and handle everything there and back!



Clothes are pretty expensive in Australia compared to the US, so it is best to try to bring enough clothes that you won't have to buy too much there. Australian's are also very trendy and proper dress is required when going out to social events.

## **CLIMATE AND WEATHER**

Australia has two climate zones: a temperate zone and a tropical zone, the latter of which is located in the north. The temperate zone has four seasons while the tropical zone has two.

The tropical zone has two seasons: a wet summer and a dry winter.

The temperate zone has four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. You will find the winter months warmer than the winter months in the United States. However, it will get chilly during the Australian winter (June to August), especially at night. In some locations, you can expect temperatures to hover around 65 degrees Fahrenheit and could possibly dip into the mid 50s. Winter months tend to be dry with minimum rainfall while the summer tends to be hot and humid. Temperatures during the summer normally range between 70 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

Be sure to consider the climate and weather when you pack in order to ensure that you pack appropriately. \*Remember that the Australian seasons are opposite ours because they are in the Southern Hemisphere!

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR PACKING**

We have compiled a list of items that some of our previous study abroad participants thought were useful while they were abroad.

- Extra Batteries
- Extra Phone Chargers
- Money Belt (to discreetly carry passport)
- Country Travel Guides
- Towel (Take 1 to start)
- Contact Solution (Could be available in host country, however it may be expensive)
- Sunglasses (multiple pair because it is always sunny)
- Toiletries (Take travel-sized and then you can purchase more in your host country – you will want to shower right after the long flight)
- Photos (In order to personalize your room)
- Bathing Suit (there is a pool in the apartment complex)
- Hoodie/Rain Jacket. (it does not rain often)
- Sandals/Flip Flops (or as Aussies say, 'thongs')

Keep in mind that you will need a converter/adaptor for all of your electrical appliances (razors, hair dryers, etc.). Some students choose to purchase converters/adapters before they depart for their host country. Other students, though, purchase converters/adapters once they are in their host country. Please note that many times the converters/adapters that are purchased in the host country work better than those that are purchased in the United States. You can buy a converter from the Unicentral office when you arrive, or buy them a lot cheaper on Amazon before you go.

Every student will need to adjust the list above to fit his/her personal needs and tastes. You may find that you will choose to take somewhat different items, but you should remember that you can purchase similar products abroad. Also, take into consideration the season that you will be in your host country (or countries that you may be traveling to) and pack accordingly.

**NOTE:** Remember to leave room in your luggage for souvenirs and gifts. Previous study abroad participants have packed a rolled-up duffle bag in their suitcases. They were then able to use this for travelling while they were abroad and for bringing souvenirs and other items back to the States.

It has been recommended by some experienced travelers that after you pack your bags you should carry them around the block for at least 15 minutes. You'll probably repack!

## MONEY

### CURRENCY EXCHANGE



Upon arrival, you may wish to exchange some of your American currency into the currency of your host country. This can be done at most major international airports, major banks, and railroad stations abroad. **Note:** It would be wise to exchange a small amount of your money *prior* to your

departure in order to have some cash on hand upon arrival at your study abroad location. You can also go to AAA before you leave if you are a member and they do not charge a service fee.

While you are living in your host country, you may wish to exchange large amounts of money. Previous study abroad participants have found that banks are generally the best place to exchange large amounts of money while abroad. The airport is usually not the best place to exchange large amounts of currency, as airports do not offer the best exchange rates. It is also recommended that you do not exchange money at hotels, restaurants, or retail shops; the exchange rate at these locations is less favorable.



While I was abroad, I only actually exchanged currency 3 times - I exchanged a little bit of money at the airport when I arrived in my host country, I exchanged a large amount at a bank when I was about to go to a rural town that I knew did not have any ATMs, and I exchanged my host country's currency back into U.S. dollars at the airport when I left my host country. Most students do not exchange a lot of money. It's much more convenient to use your debit card and get your money, in your host country's currency, from an ATM machine. The only time I would recommend going to a bank or an airport to exchange money is when you want to exchange a very large amount (for instance, if you're going to a place where you know there aren't any ATMs, or you won't be able to use your debit or credit card, like a market). Even then, depending on how large an amount of money you want to exchange, you could just withdraw that money from an ATM machine, which is a lot easier, faster, practical, and more convenient than seeking out a bank or going to the airport to exchange money. I also opened a free account at an Australian bank called ANZ. I paid a one-time wire transfer fee and had all of my money sent to that account.

You can expect to pay a commission (which varies from one country to another) every time you exchange currency. Sometimes, this commission is a flat fee regardless of the amount of the transaction. If the commission is a flat fee, it is to your advantage to exchange larger amounts of money to avoid repeated visits to the bank window. This means that you will be carrying more cash than might be advisable. You will need to find a happy medium between the risks of carrying large amounts of cash and paying repeated bank commissions for exchange transactions.



**Note:** A few exchange services offer commission-free exchanges to students (just ask and be ready to show your ISIC) or they may even give you free exchange back to your original currency if you retain your original transaction receipt.



When you get to the airport, only exchange enough money for the first few days of your trip. Currency exchange in the airport is not the best deal for your money, as there are additional fees charged and the exchange rate is poor. It may be better to visit an ATM once you arrive to withdraw a larger sum of money and only exchange a little in the airport.

**EXCHANGE RATE**

As with all currency, the exchange rate for U.S. dollars to Australian dollars is constantly changing. Please see this site to find the most up-to-date exchange rates: <http://www.oanda.com/converter/travel>.

Before your departure, you should also begin thinking about exchange rates in the foreign currency which you will be using when you make purchases here in the U.S. This will help you become a little more comfortable converting money in your head before your arrival in your host country.

This is an **EXAMPLE** of a currency exchange chart. Please note that currency exchange rates change every day. Check out <http://www.oanda.com/converter/travel> for the most up-to-date exchange rates.

USD	AUD	USD	AUD	USD	AUD
1 =	1.33	10 =	13.30	100 =	133
2 =	2.66	15 =	19.95	200 =	266
3 =	3.99	20 =	26.60	300 =	399
4 =	5.32	25 =	33.25	400 =	532
5 =	6.65	30 =	39.91	500 =	665
6 =	7.98	35 =	46.56	600 =	798
7 =	9.31	40 =	53.21	700 =	931
8 =	10.64	45 =	59.86	800 =	1064
9 =	11.97	50 =	66.51	900 =	1197
OANDA FX Cheat Sheet for Travelers © 1997-2016 by OANDA, Corp. <a href="https://www.oanda.com">https://www.oanda.com</a>		60 =	79.81	Interbank rate	
		70 =	93.11	US Dollar (USD)	
		80 =	106.42	Australian Dollar (AUD)	
		90 =	119.72	November 17, 2016	



## **ACCESSING MONEY**

### **TRAVEL MONEY CARDS/TRAVELERS CHECKS**

It is not recommended that you carry large amounts of cash with you. Travel money cards or travelers checks can be safer ways of carrying your money.

#### **Travel Money Cards**

**Visa TravelMoney Card** – The Visa TravelMoney Card is prepaid card; therefore, you can spend up to the card value anywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. You can also use the TravelMoney Card to withdraw cash at any Visa/PLUS ATMs worldwide. Cards can be reloaded where they were purchased, online, or by phone. Use cash, funds from your bank account, credit or debit card to reload your card. If your card is lost or stolen, you can have the money refunded generally within 24 hours. Visa has a Zero Liability policy, which means you would not be responsible for any fraudulent purchases. It also offers emergency and emergency assistance services.

There are a number of fees associated with Visa TravelMoney cards which can add up easily. If interested in using a Visa TravelMoney card you will want to research into any additional costs associated with purchasing, reloading, and general use of the card.

For more information about the Visa TravelMoney Card, visit <https://usa.visa.com/pay-with-visa/cards/prepaid-cards/travel-money-card.html>

#### **Travelers Checks**

**American Express Travelers Checks** – While TravelMoney Cards have become more common, travelers checks from American Express also have many benefits. For example, they can usually be refunded within 24 hours if lost or stolen, they come with 24/7 customer support, and they never expire. A drawback is that these must still be exchanged for local currency before making a purchase and exchange locations may be limited.

For more information about American Express Travelers Checks, visit <http://www212.americanexpress.com/dsmlive/dsm/dom/us/en/personal/cardmember/additionalproductsandservices/giftcardsandtravelerscheques/travelerschequesandforeigncurrency.do?vgnextoid=6d17fc671492a110VgnVCM100000defaad94RCRD>

## **AAA**

AAA offers both Visa TravelMoney cards and travelers checks to members. For more detailed information about these options, go to [AAA.com](http://AAA.com) or contact your local AAA office.

## ***BANK TRANSFERS***

For certain host universities and programs abroad, students must make payments directly into a bank account. Programs that offer this payment option will provide the detailed account information needed to do so. You will need to check with your bank to see if they are able to conduct an international bank transfer. Most banks charge a fee, which is determined by each individual bank. We recommend that you contact your bank in order to determine what their transfer policies and fees are.

## ***AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES (ATMs)***



ATM cards issued by U.S. banks should work in other countries. There are two ATM systems worldwide: CIRRUS and PLUS. If you have a CIRRUS card, you need to use a CIRRUS machine; the same applies to PLUS. The PLUS or CIRRUS logo is located on the back of your card and on the front of each ATM. The machines work in the same way as they do in the U.S. and many machines have instructions in a variety of languages, including English.

You will receive your cash in the currency of the country you are in and the equivalent amount will be deducted from your account at home. The exchange rate on these transactions is usually the best available; however your bank or the local bank may charge additional transaction fees.

## ***WESTERN UNION***

Western Union is one of the largest companies that offers wire transfer. Western Union allows individuals to transfer or receive money even if they do not have an account with Western Union or any other financial institution. Western Union has a number of divisions, with products such as person-to-person money transfer, money orders, and commercial services. The company has approximately 350,000 Western Union agent locations in over 240 countries and territories.

For more information about Western Union, its locations, and the services it offers, please visit its website at [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com).

## ***MONEYGRAM INTERNATIONAL***

MoneyGram International is a financial services company that provides money transfer services, money orders, and bill payment services to consumers. MoneyGram has offices in 190 countries around the world. Similar to Western Union,

MoneyGram offers highly secure and reliable person-to-person money transfers virtually to any place around the world, only minutes to transfer.

For more information about MoneyGram International, its locations, and the services it offers, please visit its website at [www.moneygram.com](http://www.moneygram.com).

### **FOREIGN BANK ACCOUNT**

Opening a bank account in your host country may be required or recommended. By opening a foreign bank account, you will receive a debit card for that account. Using your debit card to withdraw money from your foreign account, as opposed to using your American account, may save you a significant amount of money by cutting down on the number of international transaction fees. If you transfer a large sum of money from your American account into your foreign account, you can then rely primarily on your foreign account and debit card for day-to-day transactions.



I recommend opening a bank account (ANZ has great rates for students and no usage or ATM fees) and transferring funds. You'll start to see the foreign finance fees and charges rack up on your credit cards, upwards of \$50/month for transaction fees alone!

### **CREDIT CARDS**



Credit cards are helpful to have while abroad, especially to use for any emergency situations that may potentially arise. Visa is the most commonly accepted in the world among major credit cards.

Keep in mind, however, that not all merchants abroad accept credit cards. The amount on your credit card statement will be based on the exchange rate on the day that your bank or credit card company processes the transaction. If the merchant with whom you charge your purchase is slow in submitting your charge slip, the statement could be a bit different from what you might have expected.

We recommend that you make copies of the front and back of your credit card(s) and leave some of these copies at home. If your card(s) were to get lost or stolen while you are abroad, you and your family would have the information for the cards on hand. We also recommend that you take the phone number of your credit card company(s) abroad with you. Previous study abroad participants have found it useful to put the phone number(s) of the company(s) on a small sheet of paper, which the students then kept with their passports.

Please pay attention to your credit limits. Make sure that you know what the credit limit is for each of your credit cards. Please note that newly acquired credit cards generally have low credit limits.

**\*\*\*We recommend that you advise your credit card company(s) and/or bank(s) that you will be studying abroad so that they will expect foreign transactions to appear on your monthly statements. This will avoid the possibility of the credit card company and/or bank freezing your accounts because they are suspicious of foreign spending. You should notify them each time you travel out of your host country as well.**

### ***INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTION FEES***

All credit card companies charge international transaction fees, usually in the form of a percentage of the total amount of the purchase, when their company's credit card is used abroad. We recommend that you contact your credit card company before your departure in order to find out what the international transaction fee is for your particular card. To help you remember that fee, we recommend that you write the percentage on the back of your credit card. This will remind you of the additional fees that you will incur with each purchase while you are abroad.

### **TIPPING**



There are no mandatory gratuities or built-in service charges in Australia (although a 10% Goods and Services Tax will be included in your bill). Although tipping is not expected and certainly not mandatory, it seems to be becoming more common. So Australians have begun leaving tips for good service, but typically only in expensive restaurants. The common tipping amount is 10%, but sometimes Australians give more for exceptional service.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

Before you depart, the Office of Global Education will provide you with an orange, wallet-sized emergency card. This card contains important information, including:

- The numbers that you must dial in order to call to the U.S. from your host country out of the U.S.
- The numbers that you must dial in order to call out of the U.S.
- The telephone numbers of the U.S. embassy and/or consulates that are located in your host country
- Your host country's emergency contact numbers (e.g., for fire and police)
- Emergency contact numbers for the Office of Global Education during office hours
- Outside of the Office of Global Education's office hours, emergency contact numbers for the Millersville University Police Department.

While you are abroad, please keep this orange card in your wallet at all times. You never know when you may need to reference it. Also, in case your wallet gets lost or stolen, we recommend that you place a copy of the card with any important documents that you may keep in your room.

### ***WITHIN HOST COUNTRY***

Dial: 000

From Mobile: 112

### ***CALLING MILLERSVILLE***

**Office of Global Education:** *(within office hours: M-F 8:30am-4:30pm)* 717-871-7506

**Millersville Emergency Number:** *(outside Global Education office hours)* 717-871-5506

The *Millersville Emergency Number* should only be used in the case of a true study abroad emergency. Should you call the emergency number outside of our regular business hours, you will be connected with an Office of Global Education team member. If your call goes to voicemail, leave a very clear and detailed message with your first and last name, your study abroad location and a number to reach you. A member of our office will return your call promptly.

## **INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE CALLS**

### ***FROM U.S. TO ABROAD***



Most areas in the U.S. are now able to directly dial internationally. Should you or your parents wish to make a direct-dial international call from the U.S., the procedure is:

1. Dial the international access code: 011
2. Dial the country code (Australia: **61**)
3. Dial the area code without the first zero (normally a 1 to 5 digit number)
4. Dial the local number abroad

### ***FROM ABROAD TO U.S.***

Should you wish to make a direct-dial international call from your host country to the U.S., the procedure is:

1. Dial the international access code: 0011
2. Dial the U.S. country code: 1
3. Dial the U.S. area code
4. Dial the local U.S number

## Calling Home Upon Arrival

Some students wish to call home immediately upon their arrival in their host country to inform their families that they have arrived safely. Because students usually do not have a cell phone, phone card, or internet access upon their arrival, they may choose to make a collect call.

A collect call is when the calling party places a call, and the party receiving the call pays the expense. The simplest way to do this is to dial an operator from a payphone in your host country and tell the operator that you want to make a collect call to the United States. The operator will call the number you give them and ask the recipient if they will accept the fees for the call. If they accept, the operator will connect you.

If you are using an iPhone, and the person you are trying to reach also has an iPhone, then iMessage and FaceTime is free wherever there is Wi-Fi. There is free Wi-Fi in Brisbane and Sydney airports, so you will be able to call when you land. If you or the person you are contacting does not have an iPhone, you can still use Facebook Messenger for free to text or even video call other Facebook users.



My mom and dad do not have an iPhone, so in order to talk to them, which I did at least once a week, I used Facebook. They made an account to keep up with all of my photos that I uploaded, and Facebook now offers free calls, video calls, and chatting through the messenger app. The quality was not always the best because of the spotty Wi-Fi, but it was great to be able to hear their voices or to see my pets when they video chatted me. It works on your phone and laptop, so anywhere that I had Wi-Fi, I could stay in touch with them.

## SKYPE



The Skype communications system is notable for its broad range of features, including free voice and video conferencing, and its ability to use peer to peer (decentralized) technology.

Skype users essentially make telephone calls and/or video calls through their computer using Skype software and the Internet. The basis of the system is free communication between users of Skype software; however, the product also allows Skype users to communicate with users of regular landline and mobile telephones and charges a reasonable per minute rate. This software is currently available free of charge and can be downloaded from the company website: <http://www.skype.com>.



Practically all of the international students used Skype. It's cheap and VERY easy to use. When you call people who also have Skype, the calls are free; when you call people who do not have Skype, the calls are very

inexpensive compared to the price of phone calls with phone cards or cell phones. If you have a webcam, you can also video chat with other people who have Skype for free.



There are multiple apps, like GroupMe, Whatsapp, and more which allow you to call or text anybody, anywhere around the world for free as long as both people are using the application. So, it may be a good idea to tell friends and family to download the app on their smartphones and use that to communicate with people back home.

## **MOBILE TELEPHONE**

Depending upon the length of time you will be abroad, you may want to consider options for using a cell phone to make local calls from within your host country. Described below are two options for using a cell phone abroad. Either option is an additional expense and it is up to you to decide if this is necessary.

- 1) Most Millersville students decide to purchase cell phones with a pay-as-you-go plan. The prices of both the cell phone itself and the plans vary greatly from country to country. Upon your arrival, it is important to research the local cell phone providers in your host country to see which provider is best for you.
- 2) Another option is to replace your current cell phone's SIM card (if your phone has a SIM card) with an alternative SIM card. This process requires some research before departure and sometimes does not work with certain providers. A SIM card is a small card that lets the phone work on a particular mobile network. It can easily be swapped around in some phones. SIM cards for foreign networks can be purchased abroad at many locations including international airports. Before departing for your host country, you should contact your cell phone provider and ask them if your phone will work in your host country. If it does, you should also ask whether they have locked your phone against use with a different SIM card, and what, if anything, they will charge to unlock the phone. When purchasing a SIM card in your host country, make sure to ask if the alternative SIM card will expire after a fixed time. Often, you will pay a flat rate for the SIM card and instead of signing a contract; you can choose a pay-as-you-go plan.
- 3) You can rely solely on Wi-Fi to use iMessage or the Facebook Messenger app to communicate with people back at home that also have iMessage or Facebook. The only issue with this was if you do not have Wi-Fi (free Wi-Fi in public areas is not common) then you could not contact anyone.



## CALLING CARDS

We recommend if you plan to purchase calling cards, that you do so upon your arrival in your host country. Oftentimes, calling cards purchased in the United States do not work abroad. International calling cards can be purchased in many locations and can be a cheaper way to call home compared to using a cell phone. You can use these international calling cards from public phones, from your cell phone or from landlines. The prices vary greatly and some cards have very cheap per minute rates so you should research these prices before purchasing.

Caution: If using an international calling card from a cell phone, you may have to pay for the minutes used on your cell phone as well as the minutes used on the international calling card. This varies by country and cell provider.

## PAY PHONES

(as taken from [Beyond the Outback](#))

Australia has an extensive network of public phones. They are easily recognized by the orange and blue Telstra emblem. The cost of local calls is AUD50c, with most accepting coins and prepaid telephone cards. Long distance call charges vary depending on time of day and distance.

## ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRONICS



The standard electric current in Australia is 240/250 volts (AC 50 Hz). You may need to purchase a converter in order to run and operate any American appliances.

More information about converters and adapters can be found under the heading **Suggestions for Packing**.

## DVDS

It is important to note as well that DVDs are formatted differently around the world. Most DVDs have a regional code, which generally restricts them from being played on American DVD players. You can purchase a universal or region-free DVD player which will allow you to play DVDs from every region. Many laptops will also play DVDs from different regions. Please note though that laptops generally only allow users to switch regions a limited number of times. Please research the number of times that the DVD player on your laptop will allow you to switch regions.

The DVD regional code for the United States, U.S. territories, Canada, and Bermuda is **1**. The DVD regional code for Australia is **4**.

## CAMERA/PHOTO SUGGESTIONS





If there is one piece of advice I would give anyone studying abroad it would be this: As soon as I came back from a weekend getaway or had a lot of pictures on my camera, I immediately uploaded them to the hard drive on my lap top. After that I uploaded those pictures onto walmart.com (or any other store that develops photographs - riteaid.com, walgreens.com, snapfish.com, shutterfly.com, etc.). Once they were uploaded, I had the option of getting them developed, which I did. When you are not using one hour photo, digital pictures can be relatively cheap. I chose the longest time period for them to develop (which is the least expensive) and had them shipped directly to my house. Every time I came back from a trip, I ordered my pictures, had them delivered to my home in the U.S., and my entire four months abroad was printed out and ready for me when I got home. I printed pictures out little by little, so I never had one big bill to pay. Waiting until you get home to develop all your photos will be very expensive. More than likely you will not have extra money to spend when you return home from your host country. Not only were my pictures ready when I came back but it saved me the trouble of printing them out. People have the tendency to never get their digital photos printed. I am guilty of leaving the pictures sit on my camera for months. This is one experience you are not going to want to forget. Develop your pictures immediately and know that they are ready and paid for you when you come home. Also, make a Facebook album and make sure to regularly upload photos to it. This way you have all of your pictures, plus your family can keep up with all of your adventures while you are away.

## **PRESS**

Two of the most popular and well-respected newspapers in Australia are *The Australian* and *The Daily Telegraph*. *The Australian* can be found online at [www.theaustralian.com.au/](http://www.theaustralian.com.au/). *The Daily Telegraph* can be found online at [www.dailytelegraph.com.au/](http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/).

## **TRAVELING IN HOST COUNTRY**

### **CARS**

(as taken from [Beyond the Outback](#))



Students may drive cars while abroad, but Millersville University will accept no responsibility in case of an accident or insurance problems. An International Driver's License might be required and can be purchased through the American Automobile Association (AAA).

Also, please remember that Australians drive on the left-hand side of the road. It might be helpful to have a companion drive with you so you both take note of traffic conditions and signs until you are more familiar with driving on the left side of the road.

### **CAR RENTALS**

Please note that, if you decide to use a rental car, most rental agencies will require the main driver to be over 25 years-old. If you are under 25, you will be charged a higher rate.

### **LICENSE REQUIREMENTS**

In most states/territories of Australia, if you hold a current driver's license from another country, you are allowed to drive on your overseas license as long as:

- You remain a temporary overseas visitor
- Your overseas license remains current
- You have not been disqualified from driving in that state or elsewhere
- You have not had your license suspended or cancelled or your visiting driver privileges withdrawn

Most overseas visitors are not required to obtain an Australian license if you comply with these conditions and can continue to prove your genuine visitor status to state police if required.

When driving in New South Wales, you must carry your overseas driver's license. Your license must be written in English or, if it is not in English, you must either carry an English translation or an international driving permit.

If you're a temporary overseas visitor and you wish to obtain an Australian license, seek advice from your local police station.

### **CELL PHONES AND DRIVING**

The use of cell phones while driving is against the law in Australia, unless you use hands-free technology. Fines are considerable and demerit point penalties do apply.

### **TAXIS**



Taxis are a convenient way to travel in many Australian cities. To book a local taxi, all you have to do is dial 131 008. By calling this number, you

can book a taxi anywhere in Australia for the cost of a local call, although rates for calls from mobile phones may be higher. For more information, please visit [www.131008.com/](http://www.131008.com/).

## **BUSES**

There are plenty of bus routes serviced by dozens of independent companies and the bus network in Australia is more extensive than the train system. For more information on Australian bus routes, please visit [www.buslines.com.au/](http://www.buslines.com.au/). There is a great bus system that regularly runs throughout the day from Uni to places all over the sunshine coast. Get a GoCard and you can travel on the busses for a lot cheaper at a student discounted rate.

## **TRAINS**



If you choose to do so, you can travel throughout Australia by train. For more information on train travel in Australia, you can visit [www.seat61.com/Australia.htm](http://www.seat61.com/Australia.htm).

## **FLIGHTS**



There are many international airports located in Australia, including those located in Adelaide, Brisbane, Broome, Cairns, Darwin, Melbourne, Perth, Port Hedland, and Sydney. There are even more domestic airports throughout the country, making it easy to travel from one corner of Australia to another. For more information on flights within Australia visit <http://www.airportguide.com.au/>.

## **NOTES**

### ***DO NOT HITCHHIKE!***



Hitchhiking is illegal in Queensland and Victoria. Elsewhere in Australia it is illegal to hitchhike on motorways (where pedestrians are prohibited and cars are not allowed to stop). Some travel companies promote hitchhiking as an inexpensive means of travelling around Australia. However, many crimes have been committed against innocent hitchhikers—including violent personal crimes and abductions. You do not know anything about the person whose car you get into. The best advice: don't hitchhike. It's not worth the risk.

Be careful when traveling, and review the travel tips in this handbook before you go. For other traveling details and guidelines, you can look on the State Department Travel Advisory website:

<http://www.state.gov/travel/>

Around your university, you will be using your feet constantly! So take care of your feet by making sure you have comfortable shoes at all times.

## **MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL INFORMATION ACCOMODATIONS**



Hotels in Australia are classified in various categories and classes that, simplified, would be as follows: hotels of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 star(s). For students and thrifty travelers, there are a variety of 2 and 1 star hotels, motels, youth hostels and motor inns.

## **YOUTH HOSTELS**



The Youth Hostel Association of Australia (*YHA*) is part of Hostelling International (formerly known as the International Youth Hostel Federation) that includes youth hostel organizations worldwide. Youth hostels are open to all persons holding a member's card, issued by any Youth Hostel Association in Hostelling International. Usually there is no age limit, although young persons under 26 have priority; families and groups should be holders of a special member's card issued for them.



There was a *YHA* in practically every location that we traveled to and we almost always chose to stay in these hostels. They are always nice, relatively cheap, safe, and you can meet other students from all over the world who are also traveling!

For directory information on youth hostels in Australia you may browse the *YHA* website: <http://www.yha.com.au/> or visit Hostelling International's website: <http://www.hihostels.com/>.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY IN HOST COUNTRY**

(as taken from [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_954.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_954.html))

Australia has instituted an alert system for possible terrorist attacks. The threat levels range from "low" to "high". The U.S. State Department encourages American citizens to remain observant and vigilant in order to increase their own security.

## **SAFETY TIPS – CRIME**

While most of Australia has a low rate of violent crime, the principal tourist areas are experiencing increasing crime directed against tourists. Crimes such as pick-pocketing, robbery, and theft from cars are frequent, especially in Australia's larger cities. Increasingly, weapons are used in such crimes. There have also been numerous reports of drink spiking so be careful when drinking with unfamiliar people or travelers.

## **LAW IN HOST COUNTRY**

(as taken from [Beyond the Outback](#))

### **OBEYING THE LAW**

It's important to remember that when you're traveling in Australia you need to be a good guest; that means following local laws and rules. When you are granted your

student visa, you sign a document called the Australian Values Statement, where you agree to respect the values and to obey the laws of Australia during your stay. Failure to comply with Australian laws (including state and territory laws) could result in a fine or the cancellation of your visa and possible deportation. If you are convicted of a serious crime it could result in imprisonment.

### ***PERSONAL SAFETY***

Australia is a safe and secure study destination with a very low crime rate. However, as with anywhere you travel, you should take steps to stay safe. When you are out and about it's important to be alert and aware of your personal safety.

#### **If you are going at night, remember:**

- Think ahead – consider how you are going to get home. What about pre-booking a taxi or arranging transport with a friend or family member?
- Make sure you stay with your friends/group and someone knows where you are at all times.
- Make sure you have enough money to get home or to use a phone.

#### **If you are out and about, remember:**

- Whenever possible, travel with a friend, or as part of a group
- Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible
- Always keep your purse or bag in view and close to your body
- Be discreet with your cash or mobile phone
- When going to your car or home, have your keys in your hand and easily accessible
- If you do not have a mobile phone, make sure you have a phone card or change to make a phone call, but remember, emergency 000 calls are free

### ***DRINKING AND DRIVING***

If you are going to drink alcohol, do not drive. The blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the amount of alcohol in the bloodstream. In Australia, the legal BAC limit if you are driving is 0.05. Driving with a blood-alcohol content above the legal limit is both dangerous and illegal, and severe legal penalties apply. As the level of alcohol in your body increases, so does the severity of your fine or jail term. Don't take a chance. Make other arrangements if you're going to be out drinking.

### ***RANDOM BREATH TESTING (RBT)***

Random breath testing of drivers for blood alcohol levels and drug use is common at any time of the day or night in Australia. Police officers have the right to stop any vehicle at any time and require the driver to supply samples for screening. Any person driving a motor vehicle is required by law to have less than .05% of alcohol in their blood. If you exceed this level, you have committed an offense and you will be punished.

# INTERNATIONAL CONVERSIONS

## TIME ZONES



There are different time zones around the world. Please keep this in mind when calling home. Be sure to remind friends and relatives of this time difference.

Australia uses three standard time zones:

- Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST), which includes Queensland, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, and Tasmania, is GMT+10
- Australian Central Standard Time (ACST), which includes South Australia and Northern Territory, is GMT + 9.5
- Australian Western Time (ASWT), which includes Western Australia, is GMT +8.

All states and territories in Australia, except Queensland and Northern Territory, observe Daylight Savings Time. Daylight Savings Time turns clocks one hour forward in the spring or one hour back in the fall.

For more information about time zones, please visit [www.timezoneconverter.com](http://www.timezoneconverter.com).

## METRIC SYSTEM



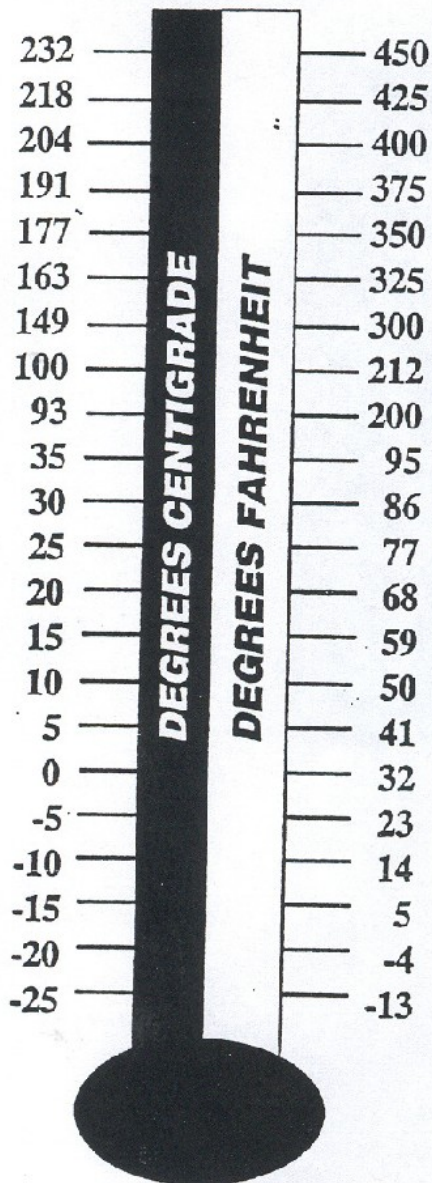
The metric system has been the standard in most countries for years; it is only the U.S. that has been out of step. If you are accustomed to thinking in terms of quarts, miles and pounds, it may take some time to get used to the metric system. Conversions that might be helpful:

1 gram	=	.04 ounces
1 kilogram	=	2.20 pounds
1 liter	=	1.06 quarts
1 meter	=	1.09 yards
1 kilometer	=	.62 miles



# CONVERSION CHART

## Temperature Conversion\*



### Length

	U.S.
1 centimeter (cm) ( <i>zentimeter</i> )	0.4 in.
2.54 cm.	1 in.
15.24 cm.	6 in.
30.4 cm.	12 in.
91.4 cm.	36 in.
1 meter	39 in.
1 kilometer	0.62 mile
1,609.3 meters	1 mile

### Liquids

	U.S.
.94 liter	1 quart
1 liter	1.06 qt.
3.79 liters	1 gallon

### Weight

	U.S.
1 gram	0.04 oz.
28.35 grams	1 oz.
0.45 kilos	1 lb.
1 kilo (1000 grams)	2.21 lbs.

### Speeds

	U.S.
30 kph	19 mph
50 "	31 "
70 "	44 "
100 "	62 "
120 "	75 "
130 "	81 "

\* To convert Centigrade to Fahrenheit, multiply the Centigrade temperature by 1.8, and then add 32 to that number. To convert Fahrenheit to Centigrade, take degrees Fahrenheit, then subtract 32 and divide by 1.8.

## SIZE CONVERSION CHART

(as taken from [http://www.coastshop.com.au/tourist/clothes\\_sizes.htm](http://www.coastshop.com.au/tourist/clothes_sizes.htm))

### Clothes

#### Women's Dresses

<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Australia</b>
2	6
4	8
6	10
8	12
10	14
12	16
14	18

#### Men's Suits/Jackets

<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Australia</b>
46	36
48	38
50	39.5
52	41
54	42.5
56	44
58	45.5
60	47
62	49

#### Men's Shirts

<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Australia</b>
14.5	37
15	38
15.5	39
16	41
16.5	42
17	43
17.5	44
18	45
18.5	46



# Section 3

## Program-Specific Information

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## **PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **UNIVERSITY INFORMATION**

The Sunshine Coast University College was founded in 1994. In 1998, it was granted full university status, and thus became the University of the Sunshine Coast.

The university was originally established to serve the needs of one of Australia's fastest growing regions, the Sunshine Coast community. Continual campus developments ensure that the university's buildings and facilities grow with increasing student and staff numbers.

### ***PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM INFORMATION***

Millersville's official partnership began in the spring semester of 2010. We have a strong working relationship with the USC International Office. The campus and the region of the Sunshine Coast have been site visited various times by members of MU's Office of Global Education and Partnerships. Because of this, we are able to provide active "hands-on" support to students as they embark on their study abroad experience.

### ***MU RELATIONSHIP/INTERNATIONAL OFFICE SUPPORT***

The University of the Sunshine Coast has a fully staffed International Office available to provide assistance to exchange students at USC. The international office also coordinates social events for international students. Students will receive much more information about the university at an orientation provided by the International Office when they arrive.

### ***BILLING PROCESS***

When you study abroad, you will still be billed according to the MU billing cycle. In other words, the fact that you are studying abroad does not affect the time at which you will receive your semester bill.

### ***HOUSING***

MU students will reside in UniCentral, a privately-owned and fully furnished student complex that is located next to the university. It is just a 5 minute walk from USC's campus and a 10 minute drive or a 20 minute bus ride from the beach. It is also conveniently located close to a local shopping center.

UniCentral is a gated complex with on-site managers and night security. Each apartment has a self contained kitchen and laundry area, a shared living room and four private, single bedrooms. The bedrooms in UniCentral all have a telephone (with associated costs), a desk and chair, an Internet connection facility (with associated costs), a free intranet to the university, a double bed, private bathroom with shower, and an intercom system.

The apartment complex has a pool, a tennis court, a basketball court, an outdoor recreational area with barbecues, and a recreational pavilion that contains a pool table, a ping-pong table, a television, a DVD player, and a stereo.

While staying at UniCentral, students have a number of services available to them.

- Students have the option to use bedding provided by UniCentral for a cost. New bedding and used bedding packages are available for purchase/rent for separate fees.
- A much cheaper alternative is to buy sheets from K-Mart when you arrive. They are soft and durable and for only a fraction of the price.



These bedding options are a bit pricey. You may want to buy your own stuff at Sam's Warehouse or the Sunshine Plaza. It may take a day or so to get there after arriving, but it is very possible to take the bus or walk on the first day, no worries.



If you know a MU student who is attending USC the semester before you, I suggest contacting them while they are in Australia to buy their supplies from them, instead of from the store or UniCentral. I purchased all my bedding, an alarm clock, school supplies, a heated blanket, and camping equipment ahead of time from a current participant at a cheaper price than UniCentral's bedding alone. Before the current participant returned to the USA, she left everything with an Aussie who was staying in UniCentral over the holiday, so when I arrived, all I had to do was pick everything up from the Aussie's apartment and I had everything I needed right there, without having to worry about finding the store or navigating the bus routes

- UniCentral is very dedicated to keeping apartments as clean and well kept as possible. For this reason, professional cleaning of the common areas, not private bedrooms, of ALL UniCentral apartments takes place on a biweekly basis. UniCentral asks that students make the cleaning process as easy as possible by keeping common rooms and kitchens tidy and all personal items in private bedrooms during scheduled cleaning periods. Also, UniCentral asks that garbage is removed from the kitchen EVERY DAY. *\*Units that are considered too untidy to be cleaned will be reported to UniCentral managers. Residents will be given one warning in the form of a "yellow card." Subsequent infractions will result in a "red card" penalty and residents will be fined.*
- Quarterly Unit Inspections will take on a regular basis. Residents will be given notice before each inspection and on the day of inspection units are expected to be tidy and clean. Unacceptable unit conditions will be charged additional cleaning fees.
- Smoking is not permitted inside any building.
- All UniCentral residents are required to purchase a UniCentral photo I.D. for a cost determined by UniCentral. This I.D. is needed to enter the apartment complex.



It is easiest to keep your room and unit tidy all throughout the semester. The rooms need to be practically spotless at the end of the semester if you want to get any of your security deposit back. This deposit was used as money for me to return home to, by the time it was processed, and I was glad that nothing more than the mandatory cleaning fee was taken from it. At the end of the semester, it was hard to find time to clean among last minute travels, finals, and packing. I was glad that I kept up with my cleaning all semester.

### **Financial Matters:**

- Prior to departure, students pay a deposit of 2 weeks rent which will be applied upon arrival so that already 2 weeks is paid for.
- Upon arrival, students are required to pay a “bond” which is similar in concept to a security deposit here in the US. The bond amount is equivalent to 4 weeks accommodation fees and is kept by an Australia government agency in the event a student causes damages to the room. Upon checking in to UniCentral, students receive an entry condition report to complete that details the condition of the room and the common areas of the unit in which they live.

At the end of their stay UniCentral does an exit inspection and compares the conditions report to the condition of the room. If there are no damages then UniCentral completes the paperwork with the student. The student then goes to the Post Office in Australia whereby they will return the student’s bond the same day in cash.

This first option to receive the bond back depends on students travel times and if they remember to book an exit inspection.

The second option that students can do is to get the bond paid to their bank account. UniCentral completes the paperwork and then the government agency, The Residential Tenancy’s Authority, will send the bond to nominated bank account. The Residential Tenancy’s Authority applies a charge for funds transfer of \$20 AUD and will take approximately 2 weeks to process.

- UniCentral encourages all residents to provide a Direct Debit Authority or Credit Card Deduction Authority for payment of rent. Payments will be automatically deducted from an Australian Bank Account (if you chose to open one) or a Credit Card every second Thursday. This automatic payment is not required; it is also possible to pay rent in advance in amounts larger than the 2 week charge, if desired.
- Also, before you leave, UniCentral deducts approximately \$140.00 AUD from your security deposit for carpet and room cleaning.

More information on UniCentral can be found at:

<http://www.unicentral.net.au/>

### **FOOD OPTIONS**

Students usually choose to purchase food at the local supermarkets and cook for themselves. There are several eateries and cafes on USC’s campus, which also often

double as social hangouts. Regularly eating at campus eateries, fast food places and restaurants, however, is more expensive than in Millersville and can easily add up. Students have found that a variety of foods are available in the supermarkets, including plenty of vegetarian options.



Grocery shopping is an adventure. It's a little over a mile walk to the large grocery store, Woolworths, commonly known as "Woolies." I looked forward to this walk. It's an easy walk and you can bring backpacks into the store to carry groceries back or even take carts back to unicentral with you because they have someone that collects the carts from outside unicentral. There is also a bus that takes students to woolies every Tuesday.



If students do go out to eat, it is a good idea to look for daily or weekly specials. For example, Eagle Boys Pizza in Chancellor Park has great deals every week. A few friends and I would go almost every Tuesday for half price pizzas.

The Student Guild is an on-campus organization that provides food. To become a Student Guild member and get the food, you just pay a one-time fee of \$5. They have cereal, sandwiches, and noodles. They also have weekly cookouts where they will make sausages or burgers (usually on Wednesdays). I highly recommend becoming a member.

## COMMUNICATION IN YOUR UNIVERSITY

### COMPUTERS

Students have access to comprehensive Information and Communication Technology (ICT) services including:

- a University account providing access to most online services
- [USC Central](#) – online enrolment for courses and tutorial classes
- [USC Portal](#) – access to online study materials for lectures and tutorials
- an email account for communicating with staff, other students and internet users
- desktop productivity software (eg Microsoft Office), applications and services
- access to the internet—subject to an internet quota
- personal network storage
- printing, copying and scanning resources—in conjunction with [Mail and Print Services](#) (MaPS)
- access to the [USC portal](#) that delivers web-based access to email, information resources, discussion boards, timetables, the Library catalogue and databases and the University's online learning system ([Blackboard](#))

- an IT Services Student Guide and other online information and documentation
- technical and service enquiries via the [Student IT Help Desk](#)

In most cases these services can be accessed on campus or remotely from:

- student computer laboratories, most of which are accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- the Information Commons located within the Library
- your own laptop using [wireless](#) access or wired network connections
- any computer connected to the internet through a Web browser—via the [USC Portal](#)

To access services remotely, students are required to have their own Internet Service Provider. Limits exist on some systems, including network storage, internet download, email storage and age of email messages.



I would recommend going to the IT information sessions during orientation week to get your wireless internet connection set up for when you are on campus. It is quite a tedious process and it's very helpful to have the IT people there to help you if you have any problems.

## INTERNET

UniCentral provides a high speed broadband Internet connection to all bedrooms. This means you have 24-hour access to the Internet and e-mail from your room. However, you have to pay for the Internet that you use. Costs depend on the amount of information downloaded. Every time you open a webpage, post a picture, or Skype a friend, you will use part of what is called your “download block.” Students have a variety of package options depending on how much they plan to use the Internet. Students may choose download blocks of approximately:

- 100 GB usage a month for \$40.00 per month
- 200 GB usage a month for \$50.00 per month
- Unlimited usage a month for \$70.00 per month

Extra download blocks are available at an additional cost.

In addition, UniCentral charges students a connection fee at the approximate cost of \$40.00 AUD.



You can check your internet usage at any time, and can add more GB at any time. However, the internet will shut off if you go over your amount and stop working all together. I would not recommend streaming videos (Netflix) or surfing internet. The internet is also slow and only works in your room, not so much in the common area. You will be so busy traveling and enjoying outdoor adventures that you won't have time to surf the web or watch Netflix anyway.



I bought the \$250 package and it was great, I never ran out of internet and I always Skyped. And when I went to the library, I always rented out a laptop and used the wireless internet there.



I never needed more than 15 GB and I usually never came close to using all of that. I didn't skype too often, which probably helped. I also didn't get on social media sites too much (maybe once or twice a day), because the pictures tend to eat up your data quickly.

### **THE INTRANET**

An intranet is a private internal communication system, similar to the Internet, where you can access internal organizational information. As a student of the University of the Sunshine Coast, you will be able to access information including the university library through the intranet, which is not available to outsiders. UniCentral provides free intranet connection between your room and the University of the Sunshine Coast.

### **LANDLINES/CELL PHONES**

UniCentral provides private telephones for each unit. Calls within the UniCentral network (i.e. other apartments and the manager's desk) are free of charge. Upon arrival, residents must activate their room phone with a minimum payment, which then counts towards phone calls outside of the UniCentral network. Residents can "reload" phone credit in the Manager's Office.



Cheap, pre-paid cell phones are the best way to communicate while in Australia. In the shopping center that includes Woolworths, there is an electronics store called Joyce Mayne. I picked up a cheap phone for \$25 there. Then all you have to do is get a SIM card that matches and reload that as needed for the rest of the semester. SIM cards can be purchased at Joyce Mayne, but also at other locations for convenience, such as Woolworths, which are all over Australia.



I also wish I had bought a cheap pre-paid cell phone as soon as I got there. For the first two months I spent almost \$100 on the phone in my room at UniCentral (calling local landlines and cells only). The charges are outrageously expensive when using landlines. For those students who plan on calling home a lot or want people from home to be able to call them cheaply, 'Vonage' phones are a good idea to look into. It's a phone that



travels with you and allows people from home to call you on a number you choose.



I bought a cell phone from a cell phone company called, Optus. The Optus store I went to was located in the Sunshine Plaza. I got the phone for \$100, which was relatively expensive compared to what others were paying. My phone had unlimited social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) access though (which other people generally did not have), which meant I could get on those sites, without having to use my Internet data at UniCentral. I just went to Woolworths every month to reload my phone (\$30/month) and I got unlimited calls and texts to other Optus users.

## **ARRIVAL**

### **GETTING TO YOUR HOST DESTINATION**

When you arrive to Australia, you can elect to pay a little extra to have the UniCentral shuttle service pick you up at the airport and take you directly to your apartment at UniCentral.

If you elect not to use the UniCentral shuttle service you can use the AirTrain service that links passengers from Brisbane's Domestic and International Airports to Queensland Rail service. Then, take the Queensland Rail service to USC via Landsborough station. When you arrive at Landsborough, you will need to take a bus from the station to the USC bus stop, which will drop you off at the University, and you can then walk 5 minutes to UniCentral.



After such a long and exhausting flight, I would highly recommend getting the UniCentral shuttle service. It is very easy and they take you directly to your accommodation. It is also a great time to meet other students while on the shuttle bus.

### **ORIENTATION PROCESS**

Orientation is a very important part of your study abroad experience as it is a full week long and covers everything from campus life, academics, and specific information for international students. The USC International Office works hard planning orientation and it is compulsory for all new students, so make arrangements to arrive to the Sunshine Coast before Orientation is due to start and make sure to attend the entire orientation.



I thought orientation was fun because I got to meet other Americans that I am still friends with today, as well as international students from all over the world. It is relieving to know that you are not alone in how overwhelmed it can be at times. Plus, organizations on campus give out tons of free stuff during orientation, like reusable water bottles, school supplies, and student discount cards.

## **OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT**

You will have the option to open a bank account when you arrive to Australia. The USC International Office will be able to assist you with this process as you get settled in.

## **ACADEMICS**

### **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

Every school operates according to a different academic calendar. The academic calendar marks the first day of the semester, the last day of the semester, holidays, breaks, and the beginning and end of finals.

The academic calendar for USC can be found at:

<http://www.usc.edu.au/learn/calendars-and-timetables/academic-calendars>

### **CLASSES/SCHEDULING**

Most classes at USC have a slightly different structure than those at Millersville. It is not uncommon for each class to have two separate parts: a lecture and a workshop/tutorial session. **Lectures** usually last between 1-3 hours and tend to be very large. Material tends to be presented in PowerPoint presentations and gone over in a very general sense. All lectures are recorded and put online in case you are absent. The **workshops/tutorials**, on the other hand, usually last between 1-2 hours and are very small in size and much more intensive and detailed in subject material. It is not uncommon for workshops/tutorials to be taught by a different professor than the professor that teaches the lectures, though professors work together closely to ensure they are teaching the same material and using the same grading scale.

Former study abroad participants have reported scheduling classes to be fairly simple. You can pre-register your course selections so you know what you will be studying before you arrive. Registration is offered online via USCCentral. Once you log onto USCCentral, there is a handbook available outlining course registration for international students. If you plan to take any classes that require pre-requisites, USC will be in touch with you directly before this pre-registration time to resolve any issues.

### **EXAMS**

The assessment structure is significantly different than in the U.S. Many classes will only assign one large test or project due at the end of the semester. The professor assumes that it is up to the students to keep up on their reading and research

throughout course of the semester, often without giving tests, quizzes or projects along the way. It can be tempting to wait to “cram” at the end of the semester, but you will most likely struggle if you make this decision because it is a significant amount of information to learn in this format.



Most of my classes consisted of one or two reports and then a final exam. The professors emphasize the importance of using academic sources and they are very strict about that. I found that the more sources you use to support your reports, the better grade you will most likely get. It's tough to cram for these reports since the professors have high expectations since there are so few assignments throughout the semester, so give yourself a sufficient amount of time to complete your work and avoid all-nighters.

### ACADEMIC GRADE CONVERSION

(taken from the Australian Education Office, Australian Embassy, Washington D.C.)

Grade Description	U.S. Grade Equiv.
High Distinction	A+
Distinction	A
Credit	B+
Pass	C+
Conceded, Conditional or Compensatory Pass	D
Failure	F

### EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

There are many extracurricular opportunities at USC, both offered through the International Office for exchange students and the university itself to all students (including exchange students). The International Office organizes activities and events both on and off campus, some of which are free and others have an additional cost. You will learn much more about these opportunities at your orientation at USC. There are clubs like Adventure Dudes, the Student Guild and Activate that keep students in the know of all of the fun student activities to participate in!

# LIFE IN YOUR HOST CITY

## OVERVIEW OF HOST CITY

(as taken from [www.usc.edu.au](http://www.usc.edu.au))

The Sunshine Coast is a coastal region located in the Australian state of Queensland. The Pacific Ocean borders the entirety of the Sunshine Coast on the east. The Sunshine Coast is characterized by gorgeous beaches and incredible views of the coast. Many world renowned beaches and popular surfing areas are located in the region.

The Sunshine Coast has become a prime destination for tourists. It boasts many popular attractions, such as Steve Irwin's Australia Zoo, Underwater World Marine Park, and the Majestic Theatre. In addition, the Sunshine Coast possesses more national parks than any other region in Queensland. Its biodiversity is protected by five separate parks in both coastal and inland regions.

## CLIMATE AND WEATHER

(as taken from <http://www.sunshinecoast-australia.com/sunshine-coast-general-overview.html>)

With one of the highest sunshine readings in the world it's easy to see why they call it the Sunshine Coast. The temperature fluctuations between the summer and winter months is mild with temperatures being generally comfortable all year round. The temperature of the ocean can range from 26°C in summer to 19°C in the winter. Temperatures in the Blackall ranges (the Hinterland) can be several degrees cooler.

**Average Summer Temperatures:** In January (Summer), the temperatures average around 28°C (82°F).

**Average Winter Temperatures:** In July (Winter), the temperatures averages around 20°C (68°F).



It is very hot in their summers and early months (January-March) and remains relatively warm during the days all year around. It's mostly always sunny, which helps keep things warm in the winter months. During the winter (May-August) it was still pretty warm during the day, but would get chilly at night. I made sure to pack a few pairs of jeans/leggings and a hoodie and light jacket, and I was fine in that for the entirety of my stay during the Australian 'winter.' During the cooler months, the beach water tends to get pretty chilly, but it is still always nice to lay on the beach and enjoy the sun.



I studied at USC during Semester 2, from July-November. I wish I had brought more warm-weather clothing with me. Early in the semester in July the nights were cool and I purchased a heated blanket once I got there, but the cool weather disappeared quickly. I ended up purchasing a lot of warm-weather clothing throughout the semester. I rarely wore my cool-weather clothing at all, and it just sat in my closet and took up space.

## LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

### **BUS**

The most common form of local transportation is the local bus line, Sunbus. The bus runs on a regular schedule to various locations throughout the Sunshine Coast and USC's campus giving access to local beaches, shopping centers, and other attractions. The USC campus is one of the Sunbus hubs, offering maximum accessibility to students.

You can find information on Sunbus routes and timetables (schedules) on the Translink website at <http://www.translink.com.au/>.

Sunbus (Bus, Train, & Charter Bus for the Sunshine Coast): (07) 5450-7888

Additionally, students can purchase a Translink Concession **Go Card** at various locations, including on the USC campus. The card can be used throughout South East Queensland on buses, trains, and ferries. You are able to put credit on the card and use it every time you get on a bus instead of constantly having to carry cash. Transportation fare is automatically deducted and you can recharge online or over the phone. There are additional discount benefits for frequent users. Refer to [www.translink.com.au/go.php](http://www.translink.com.au/go.php) for more information.



Student *Go Cards* come in very handy. The more you use the card, the cheaper your rates are. For instance, it costs me \$6 to take the train to and from Brisbane, as opposed to the normal \$9 fee.



It is worth it to go to the on-campus events during orientation, because they were giving each international student a *Go Card* with \$65 on it, which lasted me about 3 months.

## **TRAIN**

Bus services connect USC's Campus to the Queensland Rail CityTrain via Landsborough stations. Students can find schedules and fares for this route at the Translink website <http://www.translink.com.au/>.

Queensland Rail (QR): 13 12 30

Additionally, there is an AirTrain service that links passengers from Brisbane's Domestic and International Airports to Queensland Rail services. For more information check out their website at [www.airtrain.com.au](http://www.airtrain.com.au)

## **TAXI**

Taxis are another option for traveling students. There are a variety of different taxi operators in the Sunshine Coast that provide transportation to and from USC's campus. There is a designated taxi pick/drop off point at the University. Note that taxis tend to be one of the more expensive alternatives in public transportation.



Taxis can be very expensive in a regular car-sized taxi, but if you have a large group of people who need a ride (around 10 people), consider getting a Maxi Taxi. Commonly referred to as a "Maxi," this can be a cheaper way to get around because you're splitting the fare with many more people.

131 008 is the Australian-wide number to call a taxi, no matter which location, city, or state you are in.

## **BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN**

A bicycle and pedestrian track links the University with a variety of locations around the University. There are also a number of designated bicycle racks throughout the University marked on the campus map.

PLEASE NOTE: If you plan to ride a bicycle at all during your stay, Queensland law requires you to wear a helmet. If you are caught riding without one, the fine is \$100.

For more public transport information, including timetables and maps, visit the TransLink website: <http://translink.com.au/>.

## **COMMUNICATION IN YOUR HOST CITY**

### **INTERNET**

(as taken from <http://www.sunshinecoast-australia.com/sunshine-coast-phones-internet.html>)

There are several internet cafes near the university, with newer facilities and decent connection speeds. It costs approximately \$2.50 AUD per 10 minutes.

**Email Central Internet Lounge**

19 The Esplanade  
Cotton Tree, Maroochydore 4558  
Hours: 9am - 8pm 7 Days  
Tel/Fax: 07 5443 4440  
E-mail: [emailcentralinternetlounge@yahoo.com.au](mailto:emailcentralinternetlounge@yahoo.com.au)

**Infoconnect**

11-13 Ocean Street  
Maroochydore 4558  
Hours: 10am -4.30  
Tel: 07 5475 8555  
Fax: 07 54758565  
E-mail: [infoconnect@future.net.au](mailto:infoconnect@future.net.au)

**Now Atomic Gaming**

44 Aerodrome Road, Maroochydore  
Phone: 07 5479 0499



There are plenty of cafes and places to eat along the Esplanade in Mooloolaba. A lot of these places also offer student discounts with a student WOW card.

**POST OFFICES**

There are several post offices in Maroochydore. The two that students will likely use the most are:

Sunshine Plaza Post Shop  
304 Horton Parade  
Maroochydore QLD

Maroochydore Post Shop  
1/17 Duporth Ave.  
Maroochydore QLD

**RESTAURANTS/FOOD**

(as taken from: <http://www.sunshinecoast-australia.com/sunshine-coast-restaurants.html>)

The Sunshine Coast offers a wide variety of restaurants and eateries. For a list of many options within this region, see: <http://www.sunshinecoast-australia.com/sunshine-coast-restaurants.html>.

**SHOPPING**

As stated earlier, UniCentral is in a prime location. Not only is it within a five minute walk to the USC campus but there are a variety of other resources also within walking



distance. Within a ten minute walk, there is a small shopping center with a grocery store, chemist (pharmacy), and pizza place.

A 15 minute walk (or very short bus ride) from UniCentral, there is a larger shopping center called Chancellor Park. There you can find grocery stores, banks, chemists (pharmacies), newsstands, a post office, gas station, computer store, restaurants, etc.

A 20-30 minute bus ride from UniCentral is the Sunshine Plaza in Maroochydore. The Sunshine Plaza is a mall very similar to one you would find in the States. Here you can find department stores, grocery stores, small shops, and a large food court.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

There is a medical centre just a 5-10 minute walk from the campus and UniCentral accommodations. This centre is well accustomed to dealing with international students and charges just \$5 for a consultation and can claim directly to OSHC. You should always call and make an appointment before visiting a medical centre.

Chancellor Park Medical Centre

Ph: 5476 5999

Cnr University Way and Scholars Dr.

(near the IGA supermarket)



**Here is one student's account of a doctor's visit for a bad sunburn:** I went to the doctor right by Woolworth's which is a 15 minute walk away or a short bus ride. They were super nice and helpful. There's also a pharmacy in the same complex so it is easy to get medication. It was extremely easy to get an appointment. I was nervous about going to a doctor overseas, but it was very similar to those in America and I felt very comfortable. With the billing, I paid \$60 up front and then I will meet with a representative at Uni (USC) to get back money from insurance. The OSHC rep is on campus 2 times per week and it's an easy process to get your money back. There is actually another doctor's office even closer, a 5 minute walk away from UniCentral that only charges \$5 total but I didn't know about that one in advance. It's OK though because I thought the doctor I saw was really nice! With the sunscreen, I used a lot and reapplied throughout the day but still got very badly burned in places. If students have sensitive skin they should try to choose a beach that provides a bit of shade (Alex Beach which is adjacent to Mooloolaba provides more shady areas). I did not get burnt after an afternoon there sitting under the trees toward the back fence.



## **HOSPITALS**

Nambour General Hospital

Ph: 5470 6600

Hospital Road, Nambour

Caloundra Hospital

Ph: 5436 8500

West Terrace, Caloundra