

STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK
SOUTH AFRICA



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**Section 1: General Study Abroad
Info**

Section 2: Country-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

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.

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

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:

Coverage	BASIC (min. required)	PREMIUM	EXPLORER
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
Price:	\$25	\$95	\$200

**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

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

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

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."¹ 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."

¹ 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 – South Africa

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2898.htm>
travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/south-africa.html

The State Department website on South Africa gives in-depth information about almost every aspect of South Africa, from history to culture to travel and business information. The second link is to the State Department's Travel page, which has information about traveling to and within South Africa.

U.S. Diplomatic Mission to South Africa

<https://www.usembassy.gov/south-africa/>

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

South Africa's Official Gateway

<http://www.southafrica.info/>

South Africa's official site for prospective visitors contains detailed information about the country from the South African perspective.

Frommer's Travel Guide – South Africa

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

LonelyPlanet – South Africa

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/south-africa>

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.*

Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook – South Africa

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

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

CULTURAL AWARENESS

South Africa is composed of many different cultures and languages. The constitution of South Africa officially recognizes eleven official languages including English. South Africa is also very ethnically diverse. The majority of the South African population is of black African ancestry, divided among a variety of different ethnic groups. South Africa also contains the largest European, Indian, and racially-mixed communities in Africa.

APARTHEID (as taken from http://www.southafrica-travel.net/history/eh_apart1.htm)

Apartheid was a policy of systematic racial segregation that existed in South Africa from 1948 to 1994. Enforced by the government, which was then ruled by the National Party, apartheid not only segregated races in the economic sector, but also succeeded in regulating and controlling the private activities of all non-white individuals in South Africa. For example, romantic relationships, including marriage, between members of different racial groups were strictly forbidden. Also, all public institutions, offices, transport, and toilets were racially segregated.

One of the most detrimental aspects of apartheid, which has had the most long-term consequences, was "Bantu Education". Black children were given an extremely substandard education, especially when compared to the high quality education that white South African students received. Bantu Education sought to keep black students at the very lowest levels of the South African economy. For example, instead of being taught trigonometry, black students were taught how to properly wash dishes and weed flower beds. Under apartheid, the majority of black individuals residing in South Africa were systematically oppressed and disenfranchised as a matter of public policy, while the white population maintained control over the economy, the government, and the country.

Although apartheid no longer exists in South Africa, the affects of apartheid, especially in the education system, still do. Because apartheid was such a significant and distinctive part of South Africa's history, and because it still affects the way in which many South Africans view one another, their government, and their country today, we strongly recommend that you research South Africa's history under apartheid in order to have some background and knowledge about the system of racial segregation that still influences the country today. For more information, you can visit www.apartheidmuseum.org .

HOST COUNTRY'S HOLIDAYS

(as taken from <http://www.info.gov.za/aboutsa/holidays.htm>)

1 January New Year's Day
21 March Human Rights Day
22 March Public Holiday
Easter Week
Monday after Easter Sunday Family Day
27 April Freedom Day
1 May Workers Day
16 June Youth Day
9 August National Women's Day
24 September Heritage Day
16 December Day of Reconciliation
25 December Christmas
26 December Day of Goodwill
27 December Public Holiday

VISAS AND TEMPORARY RESIDENCE PERMITS

A visa and a temporary residence permit both grant official permission to visit a country and are 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 and temporary residence permit, while other countries require no advanced processing whatsoever for brief visits.

Whether or not you will be required to obtain a visa or a temporary residence permit 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 or a temporary residence permit 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: <http://www.saembassy.org> .

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.

For example, if you are studying in South Africa, but you decide to take a weekend trip to Mozambique, you may need to acquire a visa. 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 example, if you are citizen of Pennsylvania and you wish to travel to South Africa, you will need to visit the consulate in New York City in order to obtain a visa. If, as a citizen of Pennsylvania, you travel to Washington, D.C. in order to obtain your visa, the embassy there would not be able to help you. The South African Embassy in Washington, D.C. is responsible for issuing visas to the citizens of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Texas, Virginia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia, not to the citizens of Pennsylvania.

Embassy of South Africa in the U.S.:



3051 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20008
Telephone: (202) 232-4400
Fax (202) 265-1607
Web site: www.saembassy.org
Email: safrica@saembassy.org

For residents of PA, CT, DE, KY, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, NC, RI, SC, TN, VT, AND WV:

The South African Consulate General in New York City

333 East 38th Street, 9th Floor

New York NY 10016

Tel: (212) 213-4880

Fax: (212) 856-1575

Email: consulate.ny@foreign.gov.za

Website: www.southafrica-newyork.net

If you reside outside of the above stated states, please determine through research the consulate that you should visit 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 Pretoria

P.O. Box 9536

Pretoria 0001

877 Pretorius St.

Arcadia, Pretoria

Tel: (12) 431-4000

Fax: (12) 342-2299

U.S. Consulate in Durban

Old Mutual Building

303 West Street

Durban 4001

Tel: (31) 305-7600

Fax: (31) 305-7691

U.S. Consulate in Johannesburg

P.O. Box 787197
Sandton, 2146
1 Sandton Drive
Sandhurst (opposite Sandton City Mall)
Tel: (11) 290-3000
Fax: (11) (011) 884-0396

U.S. Consulate in Cape Town

PostNet Suite 50
Private Bag x26
Tokai 7966
2 Reddam Ave.
Westlake 7945
Tel: (21) 702-7300
Fax: (21) 702-7493

U.S. Mission in South Africa (composed of the U.S. Embassy and Consulates)

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/USEmbassySA>

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. 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!

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

(as taken from <http://www.worldtravelguide.net/country/255/climate/Africa/South-Africa.html>)

South Africa's climate is seasonal. It tends to be warm and sunny in spring and autumn. It usually becomes quite hot in the summer (November-March), with frequent heavy tropical rains and hailstorms. In the winter (May-August), the chill is nothing compared to European standards, with mild frost occasional, and snow a rarity. The rainiest months in Cape Town are May to August, and Johannesburg receives most of its rain in summer.

Be sure to consider the climate and weather when you pack in order to ensure that you pack appropriately.

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
- Travel Alarm Clock
- 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)
- Toilet Paper
- Bathing Suit
- Shower Shoes
- Toiletries (Take travel-sized and then you can purchase more in your host country)
- Photos (In order to personalize your room)
- Bug Repellent
- Hand Sanitizer
- Flashlight

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.

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!



Dresses and skirts are really popular among the girls. There is an abundance of inexpensive clothing at the markets. I would definitely recommend clothes that you can layer. Long sleeve tee under tee-shirts.

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.

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.

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 wait until an ATM machine is available to you once you arrive.

EXCHANGE RATE

The currency in South Africa is the rand. The rand, like the U.S. dollar, is divided into 100 cents. Coins come in denominations of 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, R1, R2 and R5, and notes in denominations of R10, R20, R50, R100, R200 and R500.

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

EXAMPLE OF CURRENCY CONVERTER CHART:

ZAR	USD	ZAR	USD	ZAR	USD
10 =	1.05	100 =	10.47	1000 =	105
20 =	2.09	150 =	15.71	2000 =	209
30 =	3.14	200 =	20.95	3000 =	314
40 =	4.19	250 =	26.19	4000 =	419
50 =	5.24	300 =	31.42	5000 =	524
60 =	6.28	350 =	36.66	6000 =	628
70 =	7.33	400 =	41.90	7000 =	733
80 =	8.38	450 =	47.14	8000 =	838
90 =	9.43	500 =	52.37	9000 =	943
		600 =	62.85		

OANDA.com

FXCheatSheet for Travelers © 1997-2009 by OANDA, Corp. http://www.oanda.com	700 =73.32	South African Rand (ZAR) US Dollar (USD) March 24, 2009
	800 =83.80	
	900 =94.27	

USD	ZAR	USD	ZAR	USD	ZAR
1 =	9.49	10 =	94.89	100 =	949
2 =	18.98	15 =	142.33	200 =	1898
3 =	28.47	20 =	189.78	300 =	2847
4 =	37.96	25 =	237.22	400 =	3796
5 =	47.44	30 =	284.67	500 =	4744
6 =	56.93	35 =	332.11	600 =	5693
7 =	66.42	40 =	379.56	700 =	6642
8 =	75.91	45 =	427.00	800 =	7591
9 =	85.40	50 =	474.45	900 =	8540
		60 =	569.34		
		70 =	664.23		
		80 =	759.12		
		90 =	854.01		

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<http://www.oanda.com>

US Dollar (USD)
South African Rand (ZAR)
March 24, 2009

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?vqnextoid=6d17fc671492a110VgnVCM10000defaad94RCRD>

AAA

AAA offers both Visa TravelMoney cards and travelers checks to members. For more detailed information about these options, go to 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.

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, taking 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.

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.

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.



In South Africa most cards are taken but if you travel outside the country Visa is your best bet. American Express is rarely accepted. When using a credit card overseas, a special international purchasing fee may apply for each transaction. Be sure to read the fine print on the contract you signed with your credit card company and contact them with any questions. Fees may vary from card to card, so it is important to know how much you will be charged ahead of time.

TIPPING



When tipping at a restaurant, you should tip 10% to 20% of your bill. At most restaurants, you can generally just leave the tip on the table, just as you would in the United States. The typical tip that taxi drivers receive is 10% of the bill. Porters get around R4 per bag. There are no self-serve gas stations; therefore, when filling up with fuel, it is common to tip the person around R2 to R5. It is also common to leave some money for the person cleaning your hotel room.

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
- and, 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

Police: 10111

Ambulance: 10177

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 (South Africa: **27**)
3. Dial the city code (normally a 1 to 5 digit number)
4. Dial the local number abroad

South Africa City Area Telephone Codes

+27 21 Cape Town, Alberton, Paarl
+27 43 East London
+27 11 Johannesburg
+27 53 Kimberley
+27 18 Klerksdorp
+27 12 Pretoria
+27 11 Soweto

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: 00
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.

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.

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.

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.

There are numerous mobile phone operators in South Africa, including Virgin Mobile South Africa, MTN, Vodacom, and Cell C. Vodacom and MTN are the two largest cell phone providers in South Africa, and most of the international students who study in South Africa purchase phones from these two providers. Mobile services offer international traveler services giving cheaper calls abroad in return for a monthly fee.

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.



Cell phones are cheap so it might cost less to buy one there as opposed to unlocking your American phone. A phone cost about \$30 and on average I spent \$8 every two weeks buying minutes.

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.

PAYPHONES

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.

ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRONICS



The electricity supply is 220/230 volts AC 50 HZ, with the exception of Pretoria (230 V) and Port Elizabeth (200/250 V). Most plugs are 3-pronged or 2-pronged. Adaptors can be purchased in South Africa, but may be in short supply.

Also note that U.S.-made appliances may need a transformer. A transformer is used for single volt appliances with electric circuitry (e.g., computer chips or integrated circuits) such as computers, televisions, fax machines, power tools, phones, cameras, answering machines, etc. Most hotel rooms have 110 volt outlets for electric shavers and appliances.

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

You may also experience load shedding, also referred to as rolling blackouts, while you are studying in South Africa. Load shedding is a term used to refer to scheduled blackouts. Previously, in South Africa, the national power system could not adequately supply enough electricity for all of the South Africans who were using it. This could have potentially resulted in a nationwide blackout. Currently, in order to decrease demand, Eskom, South Africa's electricity public utility, engaged in scheduled load shedding. Guided by a pre-determined schedule, Eskom can shut off electricity to different parts of the country for a few hours. By doing so, Eskom can temporarily lower the demand for electricity.

Although Eskom continues to release load shedding schedules, it has publicly stated that the electricity situation in the country is stable and that it has no further need, at the moment, for load shedding. This, however, may change in the future.

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 South Africa is **2**.

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 laptop. After that I uploaded those pictures onto walmart.com (or any other store that develops photographs - riteaid.com, walgreens.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.

PRESS

The main newspapers are in English and Afrikaans, and include Cape Argus, The Citizen, Daily Dispatch, Mercury, Sowetan and The Star, and Mail & Guardian (<http://www.mg.co.za/>). Foreign newspapers are also available.

TRAVELING IN HOST COUNTRY

CARS



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 may be required and can be purchased through the American Automobile Association (AAA).



Most of the cars in South Africa are manuals (stick shifts). This is important to keep in mind if you rent a car. You can rent an automatic, but you must usually do so far in advance because there aren't many of them. You should also keep in mind that renting an automatic is usually more expensive than renting a stick shift.

TAXIS AND MINIBUS TAXIS (KOMBIS)



South Africa generally has two kinds of taxis: metered taxis and minibus taxis. Unlike many cities, metered taxis are not allowed to drive around the city to solicit fares and instead must be called and ordered to a specific location. There are a number of companies which service the Durban and surrounding regions. These taxis can also be called upon for airport transfers, point to point pickups, and shuttles.

The popularity of minibus taxi (kombi) services has now surpassed the popularity of both rail and bus services in South Africa. Minibus taxis are a very convenient and

relatively inexpensive way to travel around and between cities. Minibus taxis are vans that hold up to 15 passengers. They travel specific routes throughout the city and in between cities. You can board a minibus taxi at one of their many stops in both urban and suburban areas.



The easiest way to travel around the city is by kombis. They are so cheap and will take you almost anywhere in the city. Kombis can be a little cramped and uncomfortable at times, but they are *SO* cheap that nobody really cares. On kombis, after you have boarded, you pass your money up to the front of the van once everybody else starts to. The person in the front seat on the passenger side of the van will take your money and put it in an envelope for the driver; that person will then pass your change back to you. In the kombi, you will also usually be responsible for helping to pass up the other passengers' money as well. I would strongly recommend that the first couple times you ride in a kombi, you do not sit in the front seats. If you do, you will be responsible for collecting everyone's money, counting it out, giving it to the driver, and then passing back change. This can be daunting, especially if there are a lot of people in the van.

BUSES

Buses are a great way to travel long distances across South Africa for a relatively low price. Intercape (www.intercape.co.za/), Greyhound (<https://www.greyhound.co.za/>), Translux (www.translux.co.za/), and Baz Bus (www.bazbus.com/) are all reputable, comfortable bus services that operate a variety of routes throughout South Africa. You can book tickets with most bus services at Computicket (www.computicket.com/web/).

FLIGHTS



South Africa has a number of airlines flying between its major cities, and to some of its smaller ones, with fares ranging from first-class to cut-price economy.

There are three major international airports in South Africa. They are located in Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town. There are seven domestic airports in the cities of Bloemfontein, Port Elizabeth, East London, George, Kimberley, Upington and Pilanesberg. The biggest airlines that operate domestic flights in South Africa are South African Airways, South African Express, and Airlink.

Kulula.com offers cut-price flights on the more popular routes between Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Nelspruit and George. All flight operators offer

online booking services, with payment by credit card or directly into the relevant bank account.

NOTES

DO NOT HITCHHIKE!



Be careful when traveling and review the travel tips in this handbook before you go. Do not underestimate the amount of walking you will be doing. For other traveling details and guidelines, you can look on the State Department Travel Advisory website: <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country/south-africa.html>

SAFETY AND SECURITY IN HOST COUNTRY

(as taken from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>)

Most parts of the country can be safely visited by tourists, provided they take basic common-sense precautions (e.g., not walking alone in deserted areas at night, not flashing photographic equipment or jewelry, etc.). Travelers are encouraged to be vigilant and avoid protests and demonstrations.

SAFETY TIPS - CRIME

Although the vast majority of visitors complete their travels in South Africa without incident, visitors should be aware that criminal activity, sometimes violent, occurs routinely. Notwithstanding government anti-crime efforts, violent crimes such as armed robbery, carjacking, mugging, "smash and grab" attacks on vehicles, and other incidents are regularly reported by foreign visitors.

Crimes against property, such as carjacking, have often been accompanied by violent acts, including murder, when victims resist or are slow to respond to attackers' demands. South Africa also has the highest incidence of reported rape in the world. Foreigners are not specifically targeted, but several have been the victims of rape. Victims of violent crime, especially rape, are strongly encouraged to seek immediate medical attention, including antiretroviral therapy against HIV/AIDS. Questions about how to receive such treatment should be directed to the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Criminal activity, such as assault, armed robbery, and theft is particularly high in areas surrounding many hotels and public transportation centers, especially in major cities. Theft of passports and other valuables is most likely to occur at airports, bus terminals, and train stations. A number of Americans have been mugged or violently attacked on commuter and metro trains, especially between Johannesburg and Pretoria. Several American travelers also reported theft of personal belongings after strangers whom they invited into their hotel drugged them.

There is a serious baggage pilferage problem at Johannesburg and Cape Town International airports, particularly travelers changing airlines and those flying on smaller airlines—passengers flying on major international carriers may not be affected to the same degree. Travelers are encouraged to secure their luggage with Transportation Security Administration (TSA) approved locks, use an airport plastic wrapping service, and avoid placing electronics, jewelry, cameras or other valuables in checked luggage. Make an inventory of items in checked baggage to aid in claims processing if theft does occur.

Armed robbery of cash-in-transit vehicles and personnel occur throughout South Africa and peak during December and January due to the increase in cash flow from commercial stores to banks. These attacks have also included incidents at major malls and in large grocery stores. Individuals should raise their level of situational awareness while in the vicinity of cash-in-transit vehicles and personnel and avoid areas where they are located to the maximum extent possible.

Credit card fraud, counterfeit U.S. currency, and various check-cashing scams are frequently reported. Do not accept "assistance" from anyone, or agree to assist others with ATM transactions. Travelers should try to avoid using ATMs after bank business hours or in remote locations. When giving your credit card to a store or restaurant employee for processing, do not let them take the card out of your sight.



Honestly, I had no problems with my safety while I was in South Africa, nor did anyone that I knew. The biggest piece of advice that I can give is to use **COMMON SENSE**. Do not invite strange people that you meet in the city back to your dorm; don't listen to your brand new iPod as you're walking down the street in a shady part of town; don't decide to stand in a dark alley just so that you have a quiet place to chat on your cell phone; and don't sit at a bus stop when the sun has gone down typing away on your laptop. Just behave the same way that you would in any big American city and you shouldn't encounter many problems. In South Africa, you should **ALWAYS** avoid walking alone at night, even if it is only for a few blocks. Always have the number of a taxi company in your wallet or stored in your cell phone so that you can call it for a ride. I also would advise students not to carry a large bag or purse in the city, or draw too much attention to themselves by repeatedly using a flashy camera or talking on a cool cell phone.

INTERNATIONAL CONVERSIONS

24-HOUR CLOCK



South Africa is unique in that it operates on both the 12-hour and the 24-hour clock system. The 12-clock system is the same system that we operate on here in the U.S. In the 24-hour clock system, the day runs from midnight to midnight and is divided into 24 hours. This system is the most commonly used time notation in the world today. If you subtract 12 from all times between 13:00 and 24:00, you will arrive at our standard afternoon and evening times. On the 24-hour clock, for example, 1:00 p.m. appears as 13:00.

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. You can check the world's different time zones at www.timezoneconverter.com

South Africa is either 5 or 6 hours ahead of EST depending on whether it is Daylight Savings Time in the U.S. Therefore, when Daylight Savings Time occurs in the U.S., be sure to remind friends and relatives of this time difference.

METRIC SYSTEM

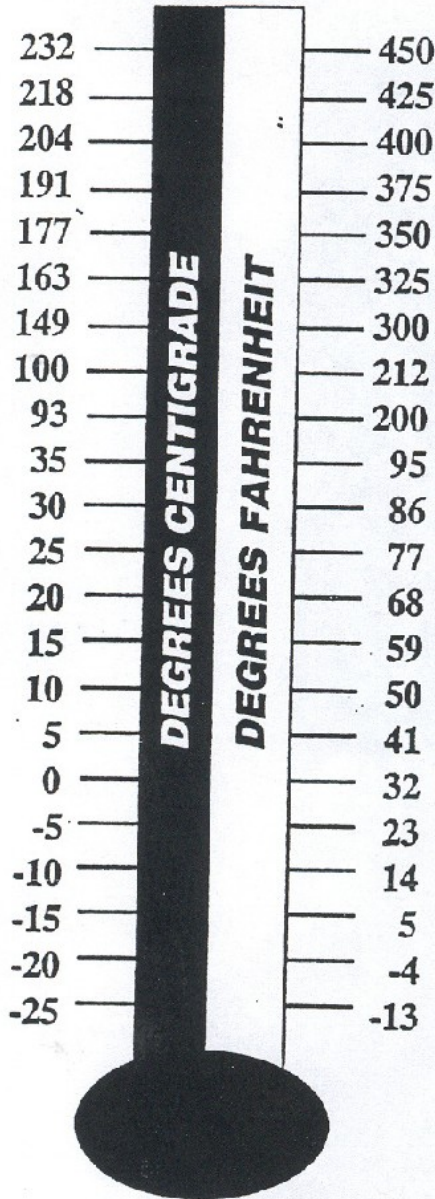


The metric system has been the standard in most countries for years; it is only the U.S. that has been out of step. If you are accustomed to thinking in terms of quarts, miles and pounds, it may take some time to get used to the metric system. Conversions that might be helpful:

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

(as taken from <http://www.southafricalogue.com/travel-tips/clothing-shoe-and-ring-size-conversions-for-south-africa.html>)

Clothing

Clothing in South Africa is **smaller** than clothing elsewhere in the world, or at least those parts of it generally categorized as “western”. A westerner’s small is a medium; a medium is a large; and so on.

Apart from S, M and L, clothing often carries U.K. and European measurements. The U.K. measurements are:

Women’s Suits and Dresses

USA/American	UK/British
6	8
8	10
10	12
12	14
14	16
16	18

Men’s Suits and Overcoats

USA/American	UK/British
36	36
38	38
40	40
42	42
44	44

Men’s Trousers

USA/American	UK/British
28	28
30	30
32	32
34	34
36	36
38	38
40	40
42	42
44	44

Shoes

Women's

USA/American	UK/British
6	4.5
6.5	5
7.5	6
8	6.5
8.5	7

Men's

USA/American	UK/British
8	7.5
8.5	8
9.5	9
10	9.5

Shoes

Now that most of the shoes in the world are made in China, it's become quite easy to find one in your size, because at least three sizes are now listed - usually, for the U.S., U.K. and Europe - where, formerly, there would have been just one. When looking for a shoe in South Africa, then, the first thing to do is check under the shoe's tongue to see if you're familiar with any of the sizes.

If only one size is listed, and it's above the number 30, then it's a European size; if it's a number between 3 and 15, then it's a U.K./U.S. size.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

FOOD AND WATER

Tap water in South Africa is safe to drink as it is treated and is free of harmful microorganisms. In hotels, restaurants, and nightspots, the standards of hygiene and food preparation are similar to the U.S. It is also safe to eat fresh fruit, salads, and use ice in your drinks.

However, when you are traveling, the water may not always be safe to drink, especially if you travel outside of South Africa. It is therefore your responsibility to research the quality of the water wherever you plan to travel to.