INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS & SERVICES

STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021
Congratulations on your acceptance to study abroad!

The Office of International Programs and Services (IPS) at Millersville University provides international education opportunities for MU students, faculty and staff, as well as the Lancaster County community as a whole. IPS is excited to work with you to help make your experience abroad as culturally enriching and academically meaningful as possible.

IPS believes that study abroad is an integral part of the Millersville University experience. Our staff considers advising a collaborative process, and ultimately, you – the student – are responsible for being an active, engaged, and educated participant in your study abroad experience. This handbook contains an overview of important information that will assist you as you prepare to study abroad. Visit the MU Study Abroad website for more detailed information and additional resources.

We look forward to working with you throughout your experience!

**EDUCATION ABROAD TEAM**

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ROLE OF IPS STAFF
Supports students through all stages of study abroad: Advising, Application, Getting Ready to Go, While Abroad, and Upon Return. Some areas are listed below:

- Program knowledge,
- Cost information,
- Travel & immigration information,
- Academic & financial policies,
- Transfer credit process & transcript processing,
- Issues at destination that cannot be solved locally,
- Address academic issues between participants and their academic advisors,
- MU paperwork processing throughout,
- Travel & medical insurance information,
- On-call 24/7 emergency response

LIMITS OF IPS STAFF
IPS Staff cannot do the following:

- Directly make flight arrangements.
- Advise on personal travel plans outside of formal study abroad program.
- Address specific financial aid questions and issues. Please refer to the Financial Aid Office.
- Provide instant responses to non-emergency questions or routine matters.
- Assist students with issues when IPS is not aware of - nor notified by the student.
EXPECTATIONS

ROLE OF THE PARTICIPANT
Millersville University expects the following from participants:

- Take a proactive role in your experience. Learn about the program and the country in which you will be studying, and be an active participant in your preparation for study abroad.
- Review all information provided to you by IPS and any other university/organization affiliated with your program. This includes ALL emails from IPS, handbooks, website content, pre-departure and on-site orientations.
- Ask questions if you are unclear on what is expected of you.
- Inform parents/guardians, family members and friends of any program information they would find useful.
- Submit paperwork & payments by the due dates provided.
- Inform IPS if experiencing issues while abroad no matter how big or small.
- Be a good representative of Millersville University.

ROLE OF FAMILY/FRIENDS

- Understanding IPS staff may not be able to discuss your student and their situation because of FERPA privacy laws.
- Allow student to take responsibility for program knowledge and their paperwork.
- Review program information with student
- Guide students to contact IPS when information is unclear or when encountering issues.
OVERVIEW & POLICIES

STUDY ABROAD POLICY
There are basic eligibility requirements to participate in study abroad, such as a 2.0 GPA and have a good standing conduct record. The opportunity to study abroad may be denied based on a student’s conduct standing with the University as defined in the Student Code of Conduct. Any incidents while abroad that violate MU’s Code of Conduct will be processed by Millersville’s Student Conduct & Community Standards Office.

ACADEMIC POLICIES
All participants are encouraged to review the academic policies during their advising stage prior to applying. The policies review information about transfer credit eligibility, and Perspective and Diversity general education waivers.

On the study abroad application, participants sign that they have read and agreed to the Academic Policies.

FINANCIAL POLICIES
All participants must sign that they have read and agreed to the Financial Policies during their advising stage prior to applying. The policies review payment and refund eligibility, financial aid eligibility, employment abroad, scholarships, and other topics.

During the advising stage students are provided with a budget worksheet which help with financial planning. It can list estimates for: tuition, fees, program charges, housing, meals, personal expenses, books/supplies, estimated flight, transportation costs, etc. This is a tool for students to calculate their budgets and to discuss finances with the Financial Aid (FA) Office. IPS does not provide estimates or costs for free time, fun activities, and excursions for weekends and breaks.
LOGISTICS

STUDY ABROAD ORIENTATION
Orientation provides you with valuable information and training regarding your study abroad experience. All students are required to attend, and are therefore notified of the date and time early, and again in their study abroad acceptance letter. Affiliated programs and host universities may also provide separate orientation information including pre-departure emails, handbooks, newsletters, presentations, and orientations upon arrival.

Be sure to chat with past participants learn about their experience to assist you in preparing for the logistics of your study abroad program!

PASSPORT
A valid passport is required for international travel. Passports should be valid for at least six months after your return date. An electronic copy of your passport will be available on your portal should you need it to expedite a replacement if your original is lost/stolen.

VISA
A visa is an endorsement on a passport indicating that the holder is allowed to enter, leave, or stay in a country for a specified period of time. It can be in the form of a sticker, a page insert, or stamp placed in your passport. Visas are not always issued according to the length of time you will be in the country, but by the purpose of your travel. For example, some countries require you to be on a specific student visa and not a 90 day tourist visa.

The visa process can be lengthy and time consuming so it is important to apply as soon as possible. Some countries require in-person interviews at offices in cities such as Washington D.C. or New York City, some require FBI background checks, and some require medical documentation, so be sure to review the requirements carefully! Few countries allow you to get your visa online, or through a visa agency, a company that will process the visa on your behalf. TIP: Make sure that while traveling during your study abroad experience, you are also verifying the visa requirements of the countries that you wish to visit.
LOGISTICS

FLIGHTS AND TRAVEL
IPS can assist students with questions regarding flights, however, IPS cannot purchase flights for students. Although some MAPS programs may have a group flight option available to them by their Program Leader.

You will need to complete customs forms and check when entering a foreign country, and when returning to the U.S. Be sure to complete any declaration forms/paperwork before you get to the customs area to avoid a long wait.

ELECTRONICS
Electrical currents are different from country to country. If you intend to bring any electrical appliances (laptop, phone charger, etc.) you may need to take a voltage converter and/or a set of adapter plugs. These may be easier to purchase online or at electronic stores in the U.S. before traveling. Converters that convert from the U.S. style to foreign style may be difficult to find while abroad. Also, consider buying small electronics like hairdryers once you arrive in your host country.

POWER OF ATTORNEY
Assigning power of attorney (POA) is a legal process that involves the drafting of a document which assigns another person to act as your legal representative in specific situations. This enables the designated person to have access to your accounts, deposits, and withdrawals and they are able to sign on your behalf. Discuss with your family if this is something you want to pursue.
PACKING

Be sure to research current travel restrictions on the TSA website, for liquids and other items before packing, as these rules change frequently. Airlines restrict the amount and weight of luggage that passengers are allowed to bring with them and may charge extra fees to fly over the limits. Packing sensibly and lightly is important. In addition to the essential items it is important to remember the following:

- Important documents (passport/visa, emergency contact details, insurance information, housing information/directions/confirmation, program details, money, flight itinerary/confirmation, travel instructions, official acceptance email, etc.) should be on your carry-on luggage.
- Remember to bring good walking shoes! You will find yourself doing more walking than you are used to in the U.S.
- Valuable items, expensive jewelry, and items that cannot be replaced should be left at home.
- Many toiletries are universal and do not need to be packed and brought with you. However, there are some items that are not universally used (Ex. Deodorant, feminine products), make sure to research what items you will not have access to in your country.
- Remember that you will most likely do some shopping during your travels. Make sure you leave some space, or can fit what you buy in your suitcase when you return home!
- Climate for various seasons and locations will vary. Research your location and pack accordingly.
HANDLING MONEY ABROAD

How much money should I take?

Your personal spending habits, the cost of living in your host country/city, and fluctuating exchange rates should all be taken into consideration when assessing your personal budget. A program’s cost worksheet will give an estimate for personal expenses, but this does not cover personal travel and activities while abroad. Students should make their own budget for personal travel, excursions, and activities.

Some programs require payment for various things upon arrival. Things such as airport pickup, train fare, food, housing deposit, etc. will need to be paid in local cash in many locations. This means you may need access to local currency. See below for several options.

Exchanging money in the airport. This method typically does not give you the best exchange rate unless you exchange a large amount of cash (IPS does not recommend carrying large amounts of cash for safety concerns). Another option is to use your US bank card at an airport ATM that supports international cards. This method will charge you for the ATM fee and the exchange rate, but may be the best option for small sums of cash. Be sure to research the best method for your location so that you can access local currency as soon as possible.

How do I exchange money?

Familiarize yourself with the current exchange rate of your host country prior to departure. Current exchange rates can be found online. Cash can be exchanged abroad at a variety of locations: airports, banks, hotel lobbies, currency exchange centers, etc. Oftentimes program locations have a preferred method.
LOGISTICS

ATM/Debit Cards/Credit Cards
With an international ATM/Debit card, you should be able to withdraw cash (in the host country currency) from an ATM and have it debited (in U.S. dollars) to your U.S. account. MasterCard and Visa are the most widely accepted credit cards worldwide.

Be sure to contact your bank and credit card company to notify them of your travel dates and locations. This action is to prevent the banks from denying access to your card for suspicious transactions.

Your U.S. bank may impose a service fee for an international withdrawal, and impose a limit on the amount that can be withdrawn. TIP: Be sure to ask about ATM fees and withdrawal limits.

Although credit cards are widely used, not all merchants accept them, so you will still want to be prepared with some cash on hand prior to your departure. Also, there are certain countries where it is still a high cash society. Many rural locations may not accept cards of any kind.

Wire Transferring Money
In the event you need to pay certain program fees by wire transfer, consider the following options: Western Union, MoneyGram. These companies are used to transfer money worldwide. Both charge a fee for this service. If you open a foreign bank account, you can also wire money straight into that account. This can take up to 10 business days and there is typically a fee payable at the U.S. end of the transaction.

International Bank Accounts
If you are studying for a semester or longer, opening a bank account abroad may be a good option. Many host institutions offer an orientation session on this topic. Some programs will require you to open a bank account to refund housing deposits, give meal stipends, etc. If you have any questions or want to inquire about opening a bank account abroad, ask the international office at your host institution for assistance.
DIVERSITY ABROAD

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Different cultures vary in the degree of access and disability serves available. Contact IPS if you would like to see if your host school/program can initiate efforts to provide reasonable accommodations for you while you are abroad.

MULTICULTURAL STUDENTS
Race, ethnic, and cultural relations differ across the world. The behaviors and attitude you encounter may be different than those you are used to at home. If you are in the minority during your time abroad, you may be treated differently than you are typically treated at home. It may be a good idea to talk with past participants to get a sense of their experience, if you have concerns.

LGBT STUDENTS
Many of the ideas and vocabulary held in the U.S. about sexual and gender identity are culturally-based and may not translate easily into the culture you are entering. Similarly, some cultures may have unique views on gender identity that do not exist in mainstream U.S. culture. In other places, there are active communities and visible social movements for LGBT rights. If you have concerns about any of these issues in your host locations, researching the local culture in preparation will be important.
CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Much about culture is learned while in the host country. Adapting to a different culture can be exciting, frustrating, and challenging. No two students adapt at the same pace or in the same manner; however, there are several phases of cultural adaptation that are commonly seen in people living in another culture for an extended period of time.

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.”

The effects of culture shock range from mild uneasiness, homesickness, 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.
Stage 1
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 2
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. The student's focus will turn to the differences between the host and home cultures, and these differences can be troubling.

Stages 3-5
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. 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.

Stage 6+
The last stages include re-entry, when the students return home. The students will be excited about sharing their experiences, they will realize that they've changed, but will not be able to explain how or why. The student will have acquired different ways of behaving, feeling, and responding to others. These changes may clash with their life/family/friends back in the U.S., so a readjustment period is necessary.
CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

SYMPTOMS OF CULTURE SHOCK
A person experiencing culture shock may notice some of the following symptoms:

- A dependence on compatriots/other U.S. students
- Homesickness or loneliness
- Excessive irritation when things go wrong
- A fear of being cheated, injured, or robbed
- Reluctance to participate in activities
- Reluctance or refusal to learn the language of the country
- Insomnia or fatigue
- Excessive concern for cleanliness
- Loss of appetite
- Poor concentration or headaches
- Withdrawal from the host culture
- Depression

COPING WITH CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT
It is important to remember that cultural adjustment can be challenging and that you will likely be affected on some level during your time abroad. These suggestions can help minimize the impact of adjustment:

- Talk to on-site staff or IPS!
- Get involved. Find campus groups or an activity that you can participate in to become part of a community.
- Keep a journal, a written blog or photo blog
- Plan a daily activity that involves getting out and interacting with people.
- Avoid being judgmental; be flexible and open-minded
- Introduce yourself to new people and practice the local language
- Do not video call or message your friends/family daily
- Remember your motives & goals for studying abroad. Setbacks can be learning opportunities!
CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

BEING RESPECTFUL

In order to be comfortable in the host culture when you are unsure of the cultural norms, be aware of the following:

- **Volume of speech:** Avoid being too loud in public places.
- **Alcohol culture:** Excessive drinking is not widely accepted.
- **Dress:** Revealing clothing is viewed differently across the world. Be sure to research the cultural norms before you travel.
- **Etiquette:** While you will not always know the proper behavior in certain situations, take your cue from those around you.
- **Knowledge of Self:** You will be considered a representative of the U.S. while abroad. You may be asked questions about current events or politics. If you do not wish to participate just politely decline. If you choose to participate, remember that discussions regarding sensitive topics should be viewed as a learning experience for all involved and the respectful exchange of perspectives is a good thing.
- **Homestay:** If you are living with a local family, be sure to talk about expectations regarding family time, chores, kitchen & laundry use, as well as curfews, and ways to communicate when traveling, participating on activities or excursions, and during emergencies.
PRE-TRAVEL EXAMINATIONS
It is recommended that you have a medical check-up, including an eye and dental exam, before you leave, especially if you are taking prescription medication or are in regular treatment for a pre-existing condition. Consult with your personal medical and/or mental health care provider for pre-travel planning.

MEDICATION / PRESCRIPTIONS
Some countries may limit the amount of a particular drug that you can transport in and out of the host country. Be sure to update the Physical & Mental Health Questionnaire on your application and notify IPS to review if anything changes, as some prescription and over-the-counter medication can be illegal in your host country.

If you take prescription medications, make sure to bring a sufficient supply with you for the duration of your program or plan ahead as to how you will access additional doses. When traveling with medication, always keep them in the original container, bring the prescription, and a letter from your physician stating why you need the prescription medication.

IMMUNIZATIONS
It is important to educate yourself about health and safety in your travel destination. Consult the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website to learn about possible health issues, recommended immunizations, or precautions in the countries in which you will be studying or traveling. The World Health Organization also provides relevant health information.
HEALTH

JET LAG
Your body, through long years of habit, has become acclimated to functioning with its own physiological clock based on a particular daily cycle. When you travel long distances into a different time zone, you can experience jet lag, or travel fatigue. It will take your body a few days or longer, to adjust. To help minimize the effects of jet lag:

- Drink plenty of water during your flight.
- Get up and walk around on a flight to stretch your muscles or sleep on the plane if you can.
- Force yourself to follow the local time upon arrival, even if it means staying awake until the local bed time.

FOOD & WATER CONDITIONS
Unclean food and water can cause traveler’s diarrhea and other diseases. People traveling to developing countries are especially at risk. Water filtration and food regulations are different around the world. To reduce the risk of getting sick, try following these tips:

- Avoid uncooked food from street vendors.
- Avoid dairy products that are not refrigerated or pasteurized.
- Wash or peel fruits and vegetables.
- Bottled water is recommended. Locals are already accustomed to the filtered water in your host location.
- Wash your hands with soap and clean water before you eat.
- Avoid ice cubes as they are often made from tap water.
ENGAGING IN HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS
The “rules” of dating and what is considered flirting vary from culture to culture. It is important that you consider your perceived knowledge and behavior, and inform yourself as best as possible about how dating and relationships generally function in the host culture. As in the U.S., students traveling abroad should take appropriate precautions to avoid exposure to sexually transmitted diseases. Some places in the world have a higher rate of diseases, including HIV and hepatitis, than the U.S.

WOMEN’S HEALTH ABROAD
Not all types of feminine hygiene products will be available in your host country, though familiar products are available in most countries. Women may want to pack enough product to last them one cycle, so that you have time to find what you need in local stores.

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE
Millersville University policy requires that you purchase international travel and health insurance to be valid for the duration of your program abroad. The IPS Office partners with a preferred vendor that provides the minimum requirements for insurance. Information on the insurance is listed as an item on the student's Portal to complete prior to travel.

Note: Some programs include health and travel insurance. If this is the case, this insurance must be approved by the IPS Office, to determine if it meets the minimum benefits and limits required. Participants must provide the details/summary of benefits of your insurance coverage. If your coverage is determined to not be adequate, MU requires you to purchase insurance with the preferred vendor.

Keep in mind, other program’s insurance may only cover you in the country you are studying and will most likely ONLY cover your official program dates. If you travel early or stay beyond your program’s end date, you may not have coverage. If you travel outside the country, like is frequent in Europe, your insurance may not cover you.
SAFETY

The following information has been developed to provide useful practical guidance to study abroad participants. Although no set of guidelines can guarantee the safety needs of each individual, these guidelines address issues that merit attention and thoughtful judgment. Read and carefully consider all materials that relate to health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in your host country as well as for location you are considering visiting while abroad.

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT RESOURCES
The U.S. government provides accurate and timely information online for overseas travelers including specific country information and safety alerts for various situations. The below programs will be valuable to students preparing to study abroad:

Country Specific Information
Information on every country in the world, including location of the U.S. embassies and consular offices; crime and security information; health and medical conditions; and penalties for certain offenses. This is a great place to start learning.

Travel Advisories, Alerts & Warnings
Alerts are means to disseminate information about short-term conditions that pose a significant risk to the security of U.S. citizens, including: natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or sporting events that might generate a Travel Alert. Warnings are issued for long-term conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable, in which the State Department recommends that Americans avoid or consider the risk of travel to that country.

Travel Advisories are on a scale from 1 to 4. Students are not permitted to study abroad to a destination at Level 3 or higher. Note: Some countries may be a Level 2 but have territories designated at Level 3.
SAFETY

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)
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. It is recommended you add side trips to your registration when traveling outside your host country.

BASIC PRECAUTIONS
Make yourself familiar with the laws and safety conditions of your host country and any other countries you plan to visit. Most large cities as well as remote areas, in the U.S. and abroad, experience common crimes. Students should use the same precautions abroad that they would in the U.S. The Travel Safety Information for Students Abroad prepared by the U.S. Department of State has resources which you might find useful. The website can give you information on local laws, safety and security, and on other topics such as health and transportation.

- Do not travel alone! If you do, be sure someone knows of your plans and establish check points where you will contact them that you are safe.
- Do not leave your belongings unattended.
- Leave jewelry and other valuables at home and avoid flaunting wallets, purses, cell phones or cameras.
- Avoid traveling in poorly maintained vehicles. When taking a taxi, sit in the back seat.
- Inform IPS, friends, family, on-site staff of any traveling that you plan to do.
- Have sufficient funds or a credit card on hand to purchase emergency items.
- Examine your accommodations for safety measures (locks, lighting, access to exits, fire extinguishers), especially with temporary travel housing such as a hostel/AirBnB/ hotel, etc.
- Note that taking pictures of airports, policemen, and the military can be illegal in some countries.
SAFETY

PRECAUTIONS IN TIMES OF UNREST/CONFLICT

During times of political or social unrest in your host country or region, or when the U.S. becomes a party to a political conflict anywhere in the world, additional precautions are advisable:

• Avoid participating in or being near demonstrations and other political activities.
• Keep informed about the current political situations.
• Remains in close contact with the on-site staff and IPS.
• Keep away from areas known to have large concentrations of residents aligned with interests unfriendly to the U.S. and its allies. On-site staff will generally give advice for this.
• When in large cities, avoid popular tourist destinations and U.S. consulates or embassies where demonstrations could be taking place.
• Compared to locals, be as inconspicuous in dress and demeanor as possible.
• Do not agree to newspaper or other media interview regarding political conflicts, or make reference to your program group or school.

ALCOHOL & DRUGS

Most countries do not have a legal drinking age, although frequently one must be 18 to purchase liquor, and it is not uncommon for young adults to have beer or wine with a meal. There are some countries that have strict laws about drinking in public. Many countries’ laws are more severe than in the U.S. so be sure to research the local drinking culture. Alcohol is strictly prohibited in most Muslim-majority countries and in some parts of India. U.S. citizens have been detained for possessing alcohol in their luggage upon arrival in some Muslim countries.

Existing legislation in most foreign countries regarding the use or possession of marijuana, cocaine, and other illegal drugs imposes very severe penalties including jail terms, hard labor, and even the death penalty. Association with illegal drug users or possessors is considered the same as personal use or possession by authorities in some countries. If arrested, you are subject to the host country’s laws and neither Millersville University nor the U.S. Embassy can protect you from the local legal consequences.
SAFETY

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY
Driving conditions, laws, customs, and etiquette vary from country to country. Traffic related accidents are the leading cause of student injuries and deaths while abroad. Be familiar with your country/countries driving rules and pedestrian rights. Heed the advice of the on-site staff and obey all local pedestrian laws. The Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT) can be a good resource in your preparation.

As participants will be dependent on public transportation, it is best to become familiar with the rules for all forms, such as trains, metro, taxis, buses, personal bikes/tut-tuts/carriages/rickshaws.
- Only use taxis that are clearly identified with official markings. Beware of unmarked cabs.
- Do NOT hitchhike in any country even if your local peers suggest it is safe. Hitchhiking can put you in various dangerous or uncomfortable situations.
- Rules for pedestrians may be very different in the host country. Be sure to watch how locals behave at crosswalks and intersections.
SAFETY

TRAVELING WHILE ABROAD
Most incidents happen when students are traveling away from their host city as they become tourists in the new places they visit. Ask trusted locals such as the hostel/hotel management about the areas of the city to avoid and for safety tips. Students traveling independently before, during, and after a program assume total responsibility for themselves. If you plan on traveling overnight away from your host city, complete the Travel Notification Form on your Portal and send your travel information and itinerary to your study abroad advisor. If you plan to arrive early or stay after a program has ended, please inform IPS.

SAFETY IN YOUR HOSTEL/HOTEL
Here are some safety tips for staying in a Hostel or other short-term housing location:
- Keep your hotel/hostel door locked at all times.
- Do not leave money and other valuables in your hotel/hostel room while you are out.
- 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.
SAFETY

WOMEN’S SAFETY ABROAD
Many women travel safely each year without incident. However, when it comes to health and security, women travelers are more likely to experience marginalization and unwelcome behavior in the countries they visit. The truth is that women face greater obstacles, especially when travelling alone. While it is impossible to generalize about the experience of women traveling in all places in the world, you may experience some gender-specific challenges when you live or travel abroad.

Always be alert and use the same safety precautions as you would in any US city, no matter where you are going. Unfortunately, in many countries the issue of female harassment is handled quite lightly and you may be treated accordingly by host nationals. However, both your on-site program staff and IPS take these concerns very seriously and will do whatever necessary to help you.

Review the safety suggestions below:
- Do not leave your drink unattended or exchange drinks with anyone else
- Don’t accept a drink from anyone, no matter how nice they seem
- Avoid drinking from a large open container
- Be careful of talking about sex. In some cultures this may be seen as flirtation.
- Be careful in asking strangers to dance in clubs.
- Be aware of going to clubs or bars alone. Always travel with others!
- Do not respond to catcalls you may receive.
- Be firm and assertive when you say NO. Be clear and direct to be certain that your intention and the words are understood.
- Be aware that behavior which may appear normal to you, such as smiling often, friendly touching while talking, or asking someone to walk you home, may be misinterpreted and place you in uncomfortable and even dangerous situations.
SAFETY

LGBT TRAVELERS
Attitudes and tolerance toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons vary from country to country, just as they vary among U.S. cities and states. Some countries offer many legal protections to those who are LGBT, while other countries criminalize same-sex sexual activity or outward expressions of LGBT identity. Educate yourself about the social culture, the laws, and support resources before you go. Consensual same-sex sexual activity remains illegal in many countries in the world. The U.S. Department of State advises travelers of the following safety precautions:

- If you experience difficulties, don’t be afraid to contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.
- Thoroughly investigate the country to which you are traveling.
- Use discretion. Outside well-known LGBT friendly neighborhoods or resorts, public displays of affections may draw negative attention.

SEXUAL ASSAULT
Sexual assault is any sexual contact made without consent. Consent must be freely given with overt words or actions that clearly communicate an individual’s desire to engage in sexual activities. Consent is a clear yes, not the absence of a no. In the U.S., consent cannot legally be obtained if an individual is incapacitated due to alcohol or other drugs, is unconscious or asleep, or has limited mental capacity. Though sexual assault can be perpetrated by a stranger, it is more commonly committed by someone the victim knows, such as a friend, boyfriend, girlfriend, partner, or acquaintance. Sexual assault is always the fault of the perpetrator and not the fault of the victim. Whether or not the victim has been drinking is irrelevant. The victim’s previous sexual activities, behaviors, actions, and/or dress is irrelevant. No one deserves to be the victim of sexual assault.

In the event you, or someone you care about, experience relationship or sexual harassment/violence while abroad, you are strongly encouraged to seek the support and resources. Seek safety first; then talk to your on-site staff and/or your study abroad advisor with IPS.
**SAFE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS & SERVICES**

**TITLE IX**
Millersville University staff are not confidential resources. In compliance with State and Federal law, Millersville staff notified of sexual assault or harassment incidents will work with Millersville University’s Title IX Coordinator to ensure appropriate resources and information is provided to the student.

**Title IX Coordinator:**
Mrs. Alison Sehl
Alison.Sehl@millersville.edu
Student Memorial Center, Room 107B
Phone: 717-871-4100
https://www.millersville.edu/titleix

**IN AN EMERGENCY**
An emergency card is provided to all students during their Pre-Departure Orientation. The emergency card contains contact information for the local emergency services numbers and the contact information and address to the closest consulate to your program location.

If you find yourself in an emergency while abroad, after you seek safety, you are instructed to contact appropriate on-site staff immediately. As they are nearest to you and know the local resources, your program’s on-site staff are best equipped to assist you. We also encourage you to contact IPS’s emergency phone line to get through to the 24/7 on-call staff member from Millersville. IPS staff will assist you in your situation. When you make contact or if you need to leave a voicemail, provide as much information as possible and your return contact information.

Office of International Programs & services’s emergency phone number:
**717-871-5506**
RESOURCE PAGE

Study Abroad Portal:
On the IPS main website, click Study Abroad to access the Portal. A lot of the information is accessible without logging into the Portal.
https://www.millersville.edu/internationalprograms

State Department Resources:
https://step.state.gov/
https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html
https://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en.html
https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html

Diversity Abroad Resources:
The following website has resources for students with disabilities, LGBT students, racial and ethnic minorities, and women abroad:
https://www.diversityabroad.com/

Sexual Assault Resources While Abroad:
https://www.millersville.edu/titleix
https://www.rainn.org/international-sexual-assault-resources

Transportation Resources:
http://www.asirt.org
https://www.tsa.gov

Health Resources:
https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel
http://www.who.int/en/

Financial Resources:
http://www.millersville.edu/finaid/
https://secure.moneygram.com/
https://www.westernunion.com
https://www.oanda.com/