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IMMIGRATION & DOCUMENTATION

Passports
You must have a passport that is valid until 6 months after the end of your program. Apply for a passport several months in advance of your planned departure. Passports can take 2-6 weeks to receive, and longer in the peak application time in the spring and summer. If you will need visas from foreign embassies, allow additional time to do this after you get your passport. You MUST give your passport to the appropriate foreign embassy to get each visa.

Applying for a new passport you must:
- Complete form DS-11 available at http://travel.state.gov/or any passport agency or acceptance facility
- Present proof of U.S. citizenship in the form of a previous U.S. passport, a certified birth certificate issued by the city, county or state, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad or Certification of Birth, Naturalization Certificate, or Certificate of Citizenship
- Present proof of identification in the form of a previous U.S. passport, Naturalization Certificate, or current, valid driver's license, government ID (city, state or federal), or a military ID
- Provide two passport photos
- Pay the applicable fee
- Provide a Social Security Number

For details, visit http://travel.state.gov/
For a list of passport acceptance locations, visit: http://iafdb.travel.state.gov/

Visa
A student visa is required for many countries. You must send your valid passport with your visa application. Make sure that you apply for a passport well enough in advance to allow yourself ample time for acquiring a visa. Visa application processing times can take as long as 90 days. Visa requirements can be obtained by visiting http://www.perryvisa.com (click on “visas” on side menu, then on “student visa page,” and select Beloit from the drop-down box. Select the country you will be studying in from the drop-down box. In most cases the Office of International Education will provide visa forms and instructions. However, you are responsible for obtaining the necessary visa(s).

Register with the U.S. Government
Travel registration is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to/or living in, a foreign country. Registration allows you to record information about your upcoming trip abroad that the Department of State can use to assist you in case of an emergency. Americans residing abroad can also get routine information from the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Millions of Americans travel abroad every year and encounter no difficulties. However, U.S. embassies and consulates assist nearly 200,000 Americans each year who are victims of crime, accident, or illness, or whose family and friends need to contact them in an emergency. When an emergency happens, or if natural disaster, terrorism, or civil unrest strikes during your foreign travel, the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate can be your source of assistance and information. By registering your trip, you help the embassy or consulates locate you when you might need them the most. Registration is voluntary and costs nothing, but it should be a big part of your travel planning and security.

Register as a “Long-Term” Traveler. You then have the opportunity to provide information about your foreign residence, and you can opt to receive information from the nearest embassy or
Tips for Securing Valuables during Travel
(From the Studyabroad.com Handbook by Bill Hoffa)

Packing: Don't carry everything in one place! Never pack essential documents, medicine—anything you could not do without—in your checked luggage. Put them in your carry-on bag.

Credit Cards: Take only the cards you will use on the trip. Keep separate a list of cards, numbers, and emergency replacement procedures.

Cash: Never carry large amounts of cash. American Express travelers’ checks are a good idea. Have three lists of checks. Leave one at home. Carry one list with your checks and carry one list separately from your checks. Keep two lists up-to-date as you cash checks. Keep the receipts for your checks separate from your travelers’ checks. For the small amount of cash you need, try using a necklace pouch or a money belt. Both should be concealed beneath clothing to avoid attracting attention.

Insurance: Since it may be necessary to contact your insurance agent(s) while abroad, keep all names and phone numbers, as well as your policy number(s), with you, in a safe place.

Luggage: Mark all luggage, inside and out, with your name and address. If you have an itinerary, put a copy inside each bag. Keep a list of what is in each bag and carry the list with your other documents. Mark your bags in some distinctive way, so they are easily found. COUNT YOUR PIECES OF LUGGAGE EACH TIME YOU MOVE! Try to travel light; it's safer and less cumbersome!

Medicine: Take all you need for the trip. Take a copy of your prescription(s), with the generic name of the drug(s). Keep medicines in original drugstore containers. Take extra glasses and your lenses prescription with you.

Passport: Carry with you, separate from your passport, two extra passport pictures, passport number, date and place issued, and a certified, not photocopied, copy (not the original) of your birth certificate or an expired passport. If your passport is lost, report to local police; get written confirmation of the police report and, take the above documents to the nearest United States Consulate and apply for a new passport.

Ticket: Make a copy of your ticket or record your ticket number, all flights included, and name and address of issuing agency (on paper as well as electronically like in an email account so that you can access the information anywhere) and keep this list separate from your ticket.

HEALTH INFORMATION - PLANNING, PREVENTION & WELLNESS

Whenever you travel abroad you need to PLAN AHEAD for health care and the requirements for the countries you will visit. Some countries require no additional immunizations or preparation, while others require a series of immunizations, which can take several weeks to complete. Hospital equipment in developing countries may be inadequate (by U.S. standards) or non-existent. Check with a good health source for any special circumstances you should be prepared
for in your host country. Some health professionals recommend taking a medical kit, which could include any antibiotics; you might anticipate needing during your stay. At Beloit College, Jan Floto in the Health Center can assist you in this area.

**Health requirements for travel abroad**

Information is available from:

- Your own physician or clinic.
- Beloit College Health Center (ext. 2331) – Jan Floto, Director of the College Health Center, has the latest health advisories from the Centers for Disease Control as well as many other sources of information for travelers. Individual travel health itineraries can be printed out for you.
- to be used by the campus physicians or your personal physician. The Health Center can give some immunizations. Physicians who are at the center daily can do physicals at Beloit College Health Center. Costs for a physical and immunizations will be billed to the student insurance or the student may be billed. Arrangements may also be made for off-campus physician visits if necessary.
- Occupational Health and Wellness Center (affiliated with Beloit Memorial Hospital), is located in the Industrial Park near I-90: 1650 Lee Lane, Beloit (364-4666). They give personalized instruction for your site, have current information on guidelines and risks, will give you information on health centers in your host country, have vaccines in stock, and will give immunizations. They accept cash only; they do not bill insurance companies.
- The Beloit Public Health Department does not have immunization information.

**Health Check List**

(This checklist is adapted from the University of Colorado at Boulder Orientation Page for Health and Safety.)

Traveling overseas and arriving home healthy and safely is not merely a matter of chance. Students need to take responsibility for their own health and have a good basic knowledge of illness and injury prevention. By planning ahead, being aware of risks in the places you travel, and knowing about the health care delivery systems in your host country you will be better able to stay healthy and safe.

- **Have a general physical exam.** You should be up to date on all immunizations (e.g. tetanus/diphtheria, polio, measles, mumps and rubella). Obtain the relevant booster(s). Some countries require no additional immunizations or preparation, while others require a series of immunizations which can take several weeks to complete.
- **Have a dental checkup.** Have a good exam and ensure that any cavities are filled before you leave. Dental care can be inadequate, hard to access, or prohibitively costly. Taking all steps possible to avoid dental problems can mean that you may not have to seek dental care while abroad.
- **Women:** have a gynecological check-up if you have not had one recently.
- **Glasses or contact lenses:** bring a typed copy of your prescription and an extra pair of glasses or contacts with you. Find out if you need to bring solutions with you. Be aware that in some locations, conditions may be such that it is preferable to wear glasses. Don’t pack your extra glasses or contacts in your luggage – keep them in your carry-on baggage.
- **Medical record:** it is a good idea to take a complete medical record to your program site, along with medical and prescription histories. Know your blood type.
- **Prescriptions:** if you take prescription medications, talk to your doctor. Prescription medications vary from country to country by name, potency, and purity and may NOT be sent to you through international mail.

**Allergies, Chronic Medical Conditions, Medications**

If you are on medication, take enough with you to last the duration of your stay. It is your
responsibility to make sure that your medication is legal in your host country. You may do this by consulting the consulate sheets of the countries you will be visiting. Transport the medication in clearly marked sealed containers and carry a written prescription for each item from your doctor. If you have a chronic medical condition, you may want to take a multipurpose antibiotic with you (depending on which country you are going to) for illness. This can be obtained from the campus health center. Also consider taking a letter from a physician telling what to do if you have a medical emergency.

Chronic Medical Conditions
Overseas study and travel will not lessen any emotional conditions you may have had at home. If you are under the care of a psychiatrist or counselor, add them to your pre-departure health checklist. If you are on medication, take enough with you to last the duration of your stay. Transport the medication in clearly marked, sealed containers and carry a written prescription for each item from your doctor. You will probably find that you feel alternately excited about experiences the new culture offers you and frustrated with the differences you perceive. Remind yourself that these feelings are natural when adapting to new surroundings and culture and will decrease significantly once you have rested, are eating and exercising normally, and establish a routine and some familiarity. Get out and mingle with people. Explore your immediate surroundings and begin to carve out a niche for yourself so that your environment becomes a familiar and friendly place. Journaling can be a good way to help with the emotional roller coaster of the first few weeks. If homesickness, depression, or eating disorders persist, however, see them as medical problems and seek professional assistance.

Study Abroad and Disability Services
Study abroad is a significant educational opportunity offered at Beloit College. Students with disabilities interested in studying abroad should contact the Director of the Learning Enrichment and Disabilities Services. The Director will discuss strategies for transition including how studying abroad may impact the availability of medication, services, and accommodations. With the student’s permission, the Learning Enrichment and Disabilities Services staff will collaborate with the Office of International Education and host location to determine which services and accommodations options may be available.

Things to Remember:
• Address disability accommodations as soon as you know where you are studying abroad.
• Accommodations and/or services provided at Beloit College, meeting the legal obligations as determined by United States law, may be different or unavailable overseas.
• Investigate whether or what services and accommodations may be provided abroad (also know who the contact person was when arranging for the services and accommodations).
• Do not assume things will be the same at your study abroad site. Things that are not a challenge at Beloit (for example, the physical terrain) may be a challenge at your study abroad site. You may need to climb hills or stairs – or to ask for housing that avoids hills and stairs. Student services as available at Beloit may be different or non-existent. Expectations and opportunities for socializing may be different. Try to anticipate differences that may pose challenges, and inform your program if you anticipate difficulties.
• Bring along necessary documentation (medication prescription, description of disability, contact information for physician or specialist you see on a regular basis etc.).
• Transition to a different culture and climate is often stressful so accommodations not needed at home may become necessary once abroad.
• Attitudes towards certain disabilities may be very different in other countries. Research the underlying values and beliefs that shape how the host culture defines the concept of disability.
NATURAL & LOCAL LAWS - LEGALITIES

Hard Facts
• Each year, 2,500 Americans are arrested overseas. One third of the arrests are on drug-related charges. Many of those arrested assumed as U.S. citizens that they could not be arrested. From Asia to Africa, Europe to South America, U.S. citizens are finding out the hard way that drug possession or trafficking equals jail in foreign countries.
• There is very little that anyone can do to help you if you are caught with drugs.
• It is your responsibility to know what the drug laws are in a foreign country before you go, because "I didn't know it was illegal" will not get you out of jail.
• In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of women arrested abroad. The rise is a result of women who serve as drug couriers or "mules" in the belief they can make quick money and have a vacation without getting caught. Instead of a short vacation, they get a lengthy stay or life sentence in a foreign jail.
• A number of the Americans arrested abroad on drug charges in 1994 possessed marijuana. Many of these possessed one ounce or less of the substance. The risk of being put in jail for just one marijuana cigarette is not worth it.
• If you are purchasing prescription medications in quantities larger than that considered necessary for personal use, you could be arrested on suspicion of drug trafficking.
• Once you are arrested, the American consular officer CANNOT get you out.
• You may say "it couldn't happen to me" but the fact is that it could happen to you if you find yourself saying one of the following:

"I'm an American citizen and no foreign government can put me in their jail."
"If I only buy or carry a small amount, it won't be a problem."

If you are arrested on a drug charge it is important that you know what your government CAN and CANNOT do for you.

The U.S. Consular Officer CAN:
• Visit you in jail after being notified of your arrest.
• Give you a list of local attorneys. (The U.S. Government cannot assume responsibility for the professional ability or integrity of these individuals or recommend a particular attorney.)
• Notify your family and/or friends and relay requests for money or other aid -- but only with your authorization.
• Intercede with local authorities to make sure that your rights under local law are fully observed and that you are treated humanely, according to internationally accepted standards.
• Protest mistreatment or abuse to the appropriate authorities.

The U.S. Consular Officer CANNOT:
• Demand your immediate release or get you out of jail or the country!
• Represent you at trial or give legal counsel.
• Pay legal fees and/or fines with U.S. Government funds.

If you are caught buying, selling, carrying, or using drugs -- from hashish to heroin, marijuana to mescaline, cocaine to Quaaludes, to designer drugs like ecstasy....

It Could Mean:
• Interrogation and delays before trial - including mistreatment and solitary confinement for up to one year under very primitive conditions.
• Lengthy trials - conducted in a foreign language, with delays and postponements.
• **Weeks, months, or life in prison** - some places include hard labor, heavy fines, and/or lashings, if found guilty.

• **The death penalty** - in a growing number of countries (e.g., Malaysia, Pakistan and Turkey).

Although drug laws vary from country to country, it is important to realize before you make the mistake of getting involved with drugs that foreign countries do not react lightly to drug offenders. In some countries, anyone who is caught with even a very small quantity for personal use may be tried and receive the same sentence as the large-scale trafficker.

**DON'T LET YOUR TIME ABROAD BECOME A NIGHTMARE! THINK FIRST!**

Consider that:

• A number of countries, including the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico and the Philippines, have enacted more stringent drug laws, which impose mandatory jail sentences for individuals convicted of possessing even small amounts of marijuana or cocaine for personal use.

• Once you leave the United States, you are not covered by U.S. laws and constitutional rights.

• Bail is not granted in many countries when drugs are involved.

• The burden of proof in many countries is on the accused to prove his/her innocence.

• In some countries, evidence obtained illegally by local authorities may be admissible in court.

• Few countries offer drug offenders jury trials or even require the prisoner's presence at his/her trial.

• Many countries have mandatory prison sentences of seven years or life, without the possibility of parole for drug violations.

**Remember:**

• If someone offers you a free trip and some quick and easy money just for bringing back a suitcase.... **SAY NO!**

• Don't carry a package for anyone, no matter how small it might seem.

• The police and customs officials have a right to search your luggage for drugs. If they find drugs in your suitcase, you will suffer the consequences.

• You could go to jail for years and years with no possibility of parole, early release, or transfer back to the U.S.

• Don't make a jail sentence part of your trip abroad.

**Office of Overseas Citizens Services (OCS) Information**

The Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs' Office of Overseas Citizens Services provides emergency services pertaining to the protection of Americans arrested or detained abroad, the search for U.S. citizens overseas, the transmission of emergency messages to those citizens or their next of kin in the United States and other emergency and non-emergency services contact: 1-888-407-4747, from overseas: +202-501-4444, or online at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/about/about_1247.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/about/about_1247.html)

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**Telephone**

There are several options for using telephones while you are abroad:

1. Get an ATT, MCI, or other international telephone account and bring the card with the 800 number for your country. This charges phone calls to your own account.

2. Buy phone cards in the country for use in pay/card phones. (Do NOT bring pre-paid phone cards from home – they do not work).

3. Buy a cell phone after you arrive and sell it to another student when you leave. Ask around for the best and cheapest plans available and inquire whether or not charging cell phone calls to a calling card will provide the cheapest rates. Cell phones are the phones of choice
in many countries. Do NOT bring a cell phone from home. It will work only if specially
designed to function internationally.

4. Download Skype onto your computer and use this program to make phone calls back
home. You will need a microphone, either built into your computer or you can purchase one

- **Public phones** can be hard to find, and when you find one it may be out of order.
  You may not be able to make overseas calls from some pay phones. If you plan to
  use public phones, locate one that will work and keep a phone card with you. In
  many countries the post office has reliable telephones or a telecommunications
  center for public use.
- In some residence halls there will be only one telephone for the use of everyone in
  the hall or floor. You may not be able to make overseas calls or they may be VERY
  expensive. Learn the etiquette for phone use and limit your time on a shared phone.
- Your **host family** may not have a telephone or may want you to use their phone
  only to receive calls or to make local calls. Find out the rules in your host family
  home for placing and receiving calls and be sensitive about your phone use. If you
  make calls on the family phone you are responsible for the costs. Remember to pay
  your host family for all your phone calls. Phone rates are often extremely high and it
  can be difficult to determine your charges as in many countries telephone bills are
  not itemized.

*The best way to talk to people at home cheaply: Have an arranged time for your family or friends to
call you – this way they also pay for the call!!*

**Email**
Email is generally available in all study abroad locations. Some universities will give you your own
account. In other places you can access your Beloit account through the Internet. In some
locations, an Internet café will be your best option. Remember that access to email facilities may
be considerably different than at Beloit College. Hours of operation and time allowed on
computers may be limited. Learn the availability of services and plan accordingly.

**Mail**
Find out whether you can receive mail at your residence or at the program office. Remember that
mail can take several weeks to deliver in some regions so any correspondence may be
significantly delayed. Mail sent to you may, therefore, also be delayed. Sending and receiving
packages in some regions of the world can be quite problematic. Even if a package arrives safely,
you may have to pay duties (taxes) on the contents. You might suggest to your friends and family
to not send packages because of the expense and the problems they cause.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS**

**Injury and Accident Prevention**
Think before you act! You cannot avoid every accident or illness, but by using common sense and
being aware and alert you can prevent many problems. Your pre-departure health check should
include attention to immunizations such as diphtheria and tetanus. Depending on where you
travel, taking standard food and water precautions can reduce the risk of diarrhea, dehydration,
and other gastro-intestinal problems. However, no matter how careful you are, it may take a few
days to become accustomed to local conditions. Remember that traffic accidents are a leading
cause of injury and death around the world. Be especially careful as a pedestrian and don't
hesitate to ask taxi drivers to "slow down".
Alcohol and Drug Use
Alcohol and drug use carry great risk for students abroad. Alcohol may be more readily available and age laws and traditions of consumption are different. The usual precautions about alcohol use are important for guests in another country. Being intoxicated also puts you at greater risk of injury or theft. Alcohol and drug use may have severe legal as well as cultural implications. Despite the possible easy availability of illegal substances, the country you are in probably has stricter enforcement rules than the U.S. Please refer also to the written Beloit College policies on Drug and Alcohol use provided in the section on student conduct.

Sexuality, Relationships, STDs, and Contraceptives
Students abroad should take the same precautions they take at home to avoid exposure to sexually transmitted diseases. Different cultures may have very different attitudes, opinions, and policies regarding birth control and abortion. Each country also has different standards for condoms. You may wish to take condoms from the U.S. with you. Be knowledgeable of and sensitive to the cultural differences in personal relationships in your host country.

For country-specific resources, check with your on-site staff and local experts, particularly those associated with international colleges and universities in the host country/city that deal with these issues formally on their campuses abroad.

Diseases and Immunizations
Check the health report for your country or inquire at the Health Center for other countries you know you will visit, and be aware of the health risks before you go. The most current and comprehensive travel health recommendations are available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s Health website: http://www.cdc.gov/travel

If Malaria is a problem in your host country or in travel destinations, a medication will be prescribed for you. The medication prescribed will be for the specific strain of Malaria that exists in the region. There is a new medication for Malaria (Malarone) that may be used in place of Doxycycline and Mefloquine. This medication has fewer side effects but must be taken daily rather than weekly and is more costly. However, your physician may feel it will be the best medication for you to take. It is possible to fill your prescription in increments over the summer so that by the time you leave for your trip you will have the total number of prescribed pills. The CDC Malaria website offers comprehensive information on malaria prevention and treatment: http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/index.htm

Water
Finding a safe water supply can be problematic in some countries. Make sure that you get your water from a source that will provide you the best protection from water-borne diseases. Drinking enough water to avoid dehydration is important no matter where you are. Many health providers suggest 8 glasses of water a day. Remember, you can become equally dehydrated in Scotland as in Africa if you do not make sure to take in enough hydrating fluids. Also, alcoholic and caffeinated beverages are diuretics. If you drink these beverages, remember to compensate by increasing your intake of water and other fluids.

Hygiene
Wash your hands! Take soap with you. Women may want to take a 1 month supply of feminine products to last until you can find a local source.

Dietary Concerns and Eating Disorders
Be aware that local preparation of food will be different and you may experience some emotional
changes in being abroad. Many travelers experience some diarrhea for a few days while their body becomes acclimatized. People with an eating disorder need to be aware of the possibility of recurrence. Monitor your eating habits and your daily food intake, especially in the first month, to ensure that you are receiving proper nutrition.

**Exercise**
You will feel better in a new situation if you get plenty of exercise. Walking is a good way to maintain proper physical and mental health and to get to know your surroundings.

**Sleep Patterns**
You may have problems sleeping due to the time change and to the rigors of adapting to a new place. If sleeping problems persist after a few weeks, try various techniques for relaxation. Be sure to get proper nutrition and exercise every day.

**Jet Lag**
Plan your time (going both directions) so you have at least 24 hours to recover from the time difference. Do not make any especially taxing plans for the first few days upon arrival. Drinking water and avoiding alcohol can also help mitigate the negative effects of jet lag.

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**KEEPING SAFE & SECURE ♦ COMMON SENSE PRECAUTIONS**

Do your homework, listen to and heed the counsel you are given, and remain vigilant. Here are some essential Do's and Don'ts, which will serve you well:

- Keep a low profile and try not to make yourself conspicuous by dress, speech, or behavior, in ways that might identify you as a targetable individual. Do not draw attention to yourself either through expensive dress, personal accessories (cameras, radios, sunglasses, etc.), or careless behavior.
- Avoid crowds, protest groups, or other potentially volatile situations, as well as restaurants and entertainment places where Americans are known to congregate.
- Keep abreast of local news. Read local newspapers, magazines, etc. and speak with local officials to learn about any potential civil unrest. If there should be any political unrest, do not get involved.
- Be wary of unexpected packages and stay clear of unattended luggage or parcels in airports, train stations, or other areas of uncontrolled public access.
- Report to the responsible authority any suspicious persons loitering around residence or instructional facilities, or following you; keep your residence area locked; use common sense in divulging information to strangers about your study program and your fellow students.
- If you travel to countries beyond your program site and expect to be there for more than a week, register upon arrival at the U.S. consulate or embassy having jurisdiction over the location.
- Make sure the resident director, host family, or foreign university official who is assigned the responsibility for your welfare always knows where and how to contact you in an emergency and your schedule and itinerary of where you are traveling, even if only overnight.
- Develop with your family a plan for regular telephone or email contact, so that in times of heightened political tension, you will be able to communicate with your parents directly about your safety.
- The U.S. government monitors the political conditions in every country around the world. For current information, advisories, or warnings contact the State Department in Washington DC (202- 647-4000) or the local U.S. embassy or consulate here you are (see the consular information sheet for contact information).
• Be aware of local health conditions abroad: especially if you are traveling to remote areas, you should be aware of any public health service recommendations or advisories. For current health conditions abroad refer the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

• Know local laws: laws and systems of justice are not universal. Do not assume that just because it is legal in the United States, that it is legal abroad.

• Use banks to exchange your money: do not exchange your money on the black market or on the street. Do not carry on your person more money than you need for the day. Carry your credit cards, etc. in a very safe place.

• Do not impair your judgment due to excessive consumption of alcohol, and do not fall under the influence of drugs.

• Female travelers are sometimes more likely to encounter harassment, but uncomfortable situations can usually be avoided by taking the following precautions. Dress conservatively. While short skirts and tank tops may be comfortable, they may also encourage unwanted attention. Avoid walking alone late at night or in questionable neighborhoods. Do not agree to meet a person whom you do not know in a non-public place. Be aware that some men from other countries tend to mistake the friendliness of American women for romantic interest.

• Attitudes towards women, minorities and students your age may be very different in your host countries. You should investigate these to avoid negative surprises.

Obeying Local and National Laws
While you are visiting another country you are subject to the laws of that country. Legal protection taken for granted in the United States is left behind when you leave the U.S. American Embassies and Consulates are very limited in the assistance they can provide: the names of competent attorneys and doctors, but not 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 United States are rare in many other countries and pre-trial detention without bail is not uncommon. Prison conditions in developing countries may often be deplorable in comparison to conditions in the United States. The principle of "innocent until proven guilty" is not necessarily a tenet of legal systems abroad. The best advice is of course to know the laws and obey them scrupulously. If you get in trouble, seek local legal assistance as quickly as possible and contact your local consulate and the Office of International Education.

MANAGING RISK
Adapted from the "Personal Safety" module of the Pre-Service Health Training for Volunteer Binder developed by the Peace Corps Office of Medical Services.

According to the Peace Corps, the number and severity of personal safety and security issues is rising in virtually all countries. Problems range from minor verbal harassment to theft and robbery to serious physical and sexual assault. These incidents are of concern to all students and staff. Try to obtain country and region specific information on physical and sexual assault. Some incidents are not avoidable, but many are.

According to Peace Corps records, the situations which place students at greatest risk are:
• Being out after midnight
• Being alone at night in an isolated area
• Being in a known high crime area
• Sleeping in an unlocked place
• Being out after a local curfew
• Being intoxicated

**Strategies Used by Students in the United States to Reduce Risk**

It is useful to remember that you have been using a variety of strategies to avoid harm while living in the United States and to review what those strategies are:

- Listening for what is being said around you
- Keeping watch for suspicious people and vehicles
- Knowing what hours of the night are more dangerous than others
- Staying in and walking only in those areas that are well lit
- Avoiding being alone in unfamiliar neighborhoods
- Knowing where to get help (stores, phones, fire station, etc.)

It is important to know the extent to which these strategies are or are not applicable during your time abroad.

**BELOIT COLLEGE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

**Introduction**

While emergencies and crises on study abroad programs are rare, they do occur. Taking steps to prevent emergencies, maintaining vigilance, and following guidelines and advice communicated in orientations and through home and host site staff can help to avoid most causes of crises. Steps for maintaining your health, safety, and security are outlined elsewhere in this handbook.

However, situations may arise that are out of your control and that home and host institutions cannot prevent. In the event of an emergency it is vital that you take appropriate action in order to best ensure your well-being and your home and host institutions’ ability to help you. Please read the following information before you leave for your host country and refer to it in times of need.

**What is an Emergency?**

An emergency is a circumstance that poses a threat to you or has already affected your safety and well-being. Emergencies include but are not limited to:

- Physical assault
- Robbery
- Sexual assault or rape
- Serious illness, physical or emotional
- Significant accident and/or injury
- Hospitalization for any reason
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Local political crisis
- Arrest or questioning by police or other authorities
- Any legal action (lawsuit, deposition, trial, etc.) in which you are involved

**What is not an Emergency?**

Routine and minor events that do not pose an immediate or potential threat to your safety and well-being are not considered emergencies. Most non-emergencies can best be handled by contacting the employees at your host institution who are responsible for helping you with day-to-day issues. Such non-emergency events include but are not limited to:

- Loss or theft of a passport
- Visa problems
- Routine academic issues and discipline
- Homesickness and other problems with acclimation
• Flight difficulties
• Peaceful political demonstrations and labor strikes

**Preparation for Emergency Situations**

• Make sure that you consult with local faculty and staff about local doctors, emergency medical care, psychological counseling services and dentists (all preferably English-speaking) in case you need them.
• Locate the local pharmacy, record its hours of operation and ask about emergency contact information for after hours needs.
• Make sure to keep handy information about previous serious illnesses, prescribed medication, known allergies, immunization histories, etc. and be sure to notify your program director or contact at the host institution of any concerns.
• Register with the closest U.S. consulate so that they are aware of your whereabouts in an emergency situation.
• Leave travel plans with the director of your program, a friend or, a family member. Provide an itinerary if possible, identify how you will travel (bus, train, etc.), and indicate when you expect to return.

**Emergency Contact Information**

In the event that you need to contact Beloit College personnel to inform or consult with them in an emergency, please use the following emergency contact numbers. If you call when campus offices are closed, the Security Office will be able to direct you to the appropriate person.

**Contact Numbers:**

Office of International Education: 608-363-2269  
Beloit College Campus Security, **24 hr:** 608-363-2000  
Dean of Students Office: 608-363-2660  
President's Office: 608-363-2201  
Health Center: 608-363-2331  
Counseling: 608-363-2643  
V.P. for Academic Affairs: 608-363-2667

In certain cases the local U.S. embassy or consulate will be in the best position to help you. Make sure that you keep contact information for the embassy/consulate with you at all times.

**Priorities in Response to a Threat or Emergency**

Each individual event will have different circumstances that may call for different action. Use your best judgment on what order to complete these steps in and what additional steps to take when acting alone. Below is the general order of priorities to consider when responding to any danger that presents itself:

• Eliminate any immediate threat to yourself.
• Assess the situation and gather information.
• Contact the local staff or the Office of International Education or the Dean of Students Office if no one is available in the Office of International Education.
• Contact the U.S. Embassy (when appropriate).
• Contact local authorities for advice/information.
• Contact your family to alert them of the situation and to keep them informed of the most accurate information. In general environmental emergencies the information conveyed through the media can be much more startling then reality. Your parents will appreciate having a clear view of your situation.
• Take appropriate steps to diminish lingering threat.
• Keep in contact with the Office of International Education or the Dean of Students Office.
• Fill out a Beloit College Study Abroad Incident Report
• Monitor situation.

REPORTING

If you are a victim of an assault, reporting this incident to someone in authority is important because:
• You may need medical attention
• You may need to or choose to talk with someone about what has happened
• You may want or need assistance in working with the local authorities

When reporting the incident, ask if the conversation will be confidential and tailoring your remarks accordingly.

STUDENT CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Expectations of Conduct
All participants in Beloit College Study Abroad Programs are expected to behave in accordance with Beloit College’s policies, rules and expectations for behavior as outlined in the Student Handbook (available in hard copy and on the Beloit College website: http://www.beloit.edu/studentaffairs/Handbook/STUDENTHANDBOOK.pdf. Students will be held to the standards put forth and infractions will be handled as they are on campus. Serious infractions could result in expulsion from the program.

Furthermore, no program fee or other refunds will be granted in the event that a student is expelled from the program. Students who withdraw of their own accord can expect only a refund of that portion of program fees that can be prorated. Tuition refunds are given only in accordance with the refund schedule established by Beloit College. No promise of refund should be made without consulting with the Office of International Education in advance.

We have reproduced below some of the policies that pertain to study abroad for your convenience. For a complete listing of policies and expectations for behavior, please refer to the Student Handbook.

Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy
The following policy is copied verbatim from Beloit College’s Student Handbook. It is reprinted here for your convenience. For complete details of this policy, including definitions of terms, protocols, grievance procedures, etc. please refer to the Student Handbook.

Sexual Misconduct/Assault, which include non-consensual intercourse (or rape), nonconsensual sexual contact (or sexual assault), sexual exploitation and sexual harassment are illegal and violate the standards of acceptable behavior at Beloit College. All forms of sexual misconduct are acts of aggression and coercion, not an expression of sexual intimacy.

Beloit College expects that all members of the college community will conduct themselves in a responsible manner that shows respect for others and for the community at large. As a part of the larger community, Beloit College is subject to, abides by, and supports Wisconsin State Statutes and local ordinances regarding criminal sexual contact.
Beloit College will do all that is reasonably possible to offer safety, privacy, and support to victims of sexual misconduct/assault, as well as offer educational programming to decrease the risk of sexual misconduct/assault on campus. Should the College believe that a threat exists to the safety or security of a victim or others, it will take reasonable steps to attempt to mitigate that threat.

Students are reminded that they are expected to act in accordance with Beloit College Policy at all times regardless of the situation or the location.

**Personal Harassment Policy**
The following policy is copied verbatim from Beloit College’s Student Handbook. It is reprinted here for your convenience. For complete details of this policy, including definitions of terms, protocols and grievance procedures, please refer to the Student Handbook.

Personal harassment is defined as: Any kind of nonverbal, verbal, or physical conduct involving either intimidation or promise of reward where (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic advancement; or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions or academic decisions affecting that individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning educational or employment environment.

**Policy on Academic Dishonesty**
The following policy is copied verbatim from Beloit College’s Student Handbook. It is reprinted here for your convenience. For complete details of this policy, including definitions of terms, protocols, grievance procedures, etc. please refer to the Student Handbook.

**Academic Honesty**
In an academic institution, few offenses against the community are as serious as academic dishonesty. Such behavior is a direct attack upon the concept of learning and inquiry and casts doubt upon all measures of achievement. Beloit insists that only those who are committed to principles of honest scholarship may study at the College.

**Acts of Academic Dishonesty**
Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents that s/he has mastered information on an academic exercise that s/he has not mastered. For example, intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise is considered cheating.

Fabrication is the intentional use of invented information or the falsification of research, or other finds with the intent to deceive.

Plagiarism is the representation of someone else's words, ideas or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific footnote references, and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks as well. By placing his/her name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgments. Other acts that will not be tolerated include the theft and/or mutilation of any library material; willfully providing College officials with false, misleading, or incomplete Information; and forgery or unauthorized falsification of grades, college records, or documents. Collusion in any act of
academic dishonesty will be treated as a commission of the act.

Drug and Alcohol Policy
The following policy is copied verbatim from Beloit College’s Student Handbook with the following changes:

Text from paragraph one of the Alcohol Policy stating “the Wisconsin drinking age is 21 years of age” has been replaced with “Students participating in Beloit College Study Abroad programs are expected to follow the laws and regulations of the country in which they are studying...”

Text from paragraph two of the Alcohol Policy stating “Beloit College, its students, faculty and staff are subject to all laws of the State of Wisconsin regarding possession, consumption, sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages” has been deleted.

The policy is reprinted here for your convenience. For complete details of this policy, including definitions of terms, protocols, grievance procedures, etc. please refer to the Student Handbook.

Alcohol
Students participating in Beloit College Study Abroad programs are expected to follow the laws and regulations of the country in which they are studying regarding the purchase, possession, and consumption of alcoholic beverages, including age requirements. Additionally, students are expected to behave in a culturally appropriate manner regarding consumption of alcohol. Excessive drunkenness and inappropriate behavior associated with consumption of alcohol can be deemed reason for dismissal from the program.

As an educational the use of alcohol nor condone the institution Beloit College does not promote misuse of alcohol. As adults, students are encouraged to make an informed, responsible decision regarding their use or nonuse of alcohol. All community members are expected to respect the rights of those individuals who choose not to use alcoholic beverages.

Drugs
Beloit College does not condone the illegal possession, use, provision or sale of illicit drugs including, but not limited to, alcohol, cannabis (marijuana, hashish), hallucinogens, LSD compounds, mescaline, psilocybin mushrooms, DMT, stimulants, amphetamines, cocaine, depressants, methaqualone, barbiturates, narcotics, opiates, heroin, prescription tranquilizers, steroids and other compounds, which are illegal except when taken under a doctor's prescription. The sale or transfer of look-a-like (designer) drugs is also a violation of College policy.

The College will respond to reported or observed violations with counseling and/or disciplinary action. Violations of the College's Drug Policy are considered a very serious matter which may result in expulsion, suspension and/or the turning of evidence over to local authorities for criminal prosecution.

Students who may be having difficulty with alcohol or drugs are encouraged to seek appropriate counseling. The Program Director can either offer counseling or direct a concerned student to professional drug and alcohol counseling services. Conferences with these people are privileged, subject to the ethical standards for counselors and the privacy rules established by the Buckley Amendment.
The following regulations shall be enforced and are applicable regardless of the status of violations in the courts:

• Sale or resale to others, or provision for others of any illicit drug including [but not limited to] cannabis (marijuana, hashish) is considered a serious violation of College policy and will result in suspension or expulsion from the college.

• Involvement in the illegal possession, use or sharing of any illicit drug, including, [but not limited to,] cannabis (marijuana, hashish) or misconduct resulting there from is an offense that is subject to disciplinary penalties ranging from warning/counseling to suspension or expulsion.

PREPARING TO COME HOME

PRE-REGISTERING FOR CLASSES WHILE ON YOUR OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAM

• Approximately one week before advising week, you will be sent a schedule booklet of course offerings for the next term and a registration card. These are sent to your off-campus program address (if we have one), or to your home address. Course offerings and changes are also posted on the WEB. Check for current information at: http://www.beloit.edu/academic/ You will also receive an email from the Registrar before advising week outlining the procedures for pre-registration.

• You have about 3 weeks to pre-register for the following term. (The dates are indicated on the front of the booklet.) If at all possible, return your course selections before the date when pre-registration class lists are sent to faculty.

• Send the Registrar’s Office your registration card via regular mail or fax, or e-mail your course selections to registra@beloit.edu.

• After receiving your course selections, the Registrar’s Office will contact your advisor(s) for approval. We also suggest that you consult with your advisor via email before you send us your registration, so that you can discuss and clarify any advising related issues.

• The Registrar’s Office will send you a schedule confirmation via regular mail after pre-registration is concluded.

PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Program evaluations must be filled out either before returning home, shortly after arrival, or upon return to campus. You will be sent a link for the on-line evaluation through Survey Monkey. It is mandatory to send us your evaluation. Grades for the courses you took abroad will not be posted unless the evaluation is turned in.

The information that you provide in evaluations is instrumental in making changes and adjustments to current programs and for advising other programs.

HOUSING INFORMATION

Before you leave
Send a note or email to the Residential Life Office confirming your plans to study overseas.

Email address
If you know your email address for next semester, please include this in the note. We are trying to send information via email since it seems to reach people quicker and more often on time. If your email changes when you arrive at the overseas program
please send an email so we can be sure you get all the necessary information.

**Return to Beloit Campus**
Around mid-term you will be sent a letter with a “blue card.” Please send this back to the Residential Life Office via mail, fax or email with your preferences for housing.

If you will have a difficult time receiving mail or email please stop by the Residential Life Office to fill out a “blue card” before you leave to let Residential Life know of your preferences.

**Students studying abroad in the fall semester** will be assigned housing as it becomes available. Space is limited as the Residential Life office can only fill spots vacated by students that graduate in December, take vacation semester, or who study abroad in the following Spring term. In most cases there will be rooms (with a limited supply of singles). These rooms will be assigned in late December or early January so make sure that you alert the office of your preferences as early as possible.

**Students studying abroad in the spring semester** will participate in the normal “room lottery.” You will be assigned a room based on the spaces available in April. Please return the blue card as soon as you receive your information.

It is very important that you take care of all financial matters before you leave. Accounting holds for students on off-campus programs are very difficult to resolve. You may want to check with Accounting over the summer to make sure all accounts are in order and they have all of your financial aid information. We also suggest that you have someone check with Accounting in December so we don’t have to hold up housing or registration. An email or note is usually good enough to handle this check.

If you have any questions or concerns please let the Residential Life Office know. If your plans change over the summer please be sure to call us right away so we can find an appropriate space for you.

Residential Life Office  
Email: reslife@beloit.edu  
Fax: 608-363-2670  
Tel: 608-363-2350

**Stages of Culture Shock**  
(Adapted from Robert L. Kohls, *Survival Kit for Overseas Living, chapter on “Culture Shock: Occupational Hazard of Overseas Living.”*)

Sometimes, despite their preparation, people find themselves in their host country feeling homesick, bored or withdrawn. They might spend all their time with Americans, avoiding the host nationals. They may drink, eat or sleep too much. They might feel hostile or critical of the host culture. They are experiencing what many people refer to as “culture shock.” Culture shock is used to describe some of these more pronounced reactions to spending an extended period of time in a culture very different from your own. Not everyone will experience culture shock. But for those of you who do, it is helpful to be able to recognize culture shock when it occurs, so you can take appropriate action.

Adjustment to a new culture tends to occur in stages. Initially, there is a honeymoon phase. You
are in a new country, and everything is exhilarating and exciting. Perhaps you are involved in a flurry of orientation and getting settled, getting hosted around the town or city. The sights, sounds and tastes are all a new adventure. And, at first, you may even see more of the similarities between your host country and the U.S. than the differences.

However, after some time, you realize that things aren't the same. Maybe you are tired of the food or struggling with the language. Maybe the university seems incomprehensible and bureaucratic. Maybe you are tired of long commutes whenever you need to go somewhere. Maybe everything is much more expensive than you anticipated. Or perhaps things are less expensive, but not of the quality or variety you appreciate at home. Your initial enthusiasm has drifted away and you have entered the stage of irritability and hostility. Worse, you may just feel like you don't really belong.

Be patient. Almost always, these symptoms disappear with time and you will experience a stage of gradual adjustment. Your sense of humor will reappear. Things that seemed strange or just inconvenient will gradually become familiar.

Lastly, there is the stage of adaptation or biculturalism. You have finally arrived. You have managed to retain your own cultural identity but recognize the right of other cultures to retain theirs. You have a better understanding of yourself and others, and you can communicate easily and convey warmth and understanding across the cultural barriers.

There is no one way to experience culture shock. It may be acute or barely noticeable. You may find it returns once after you thought you had already passed through all the stages. If you are experiencing the irritability and hostility associated with culture shock, there are positive steps you can take and the sooner you take them, the better.

Here are some do's and don'ts for dealing with the symptoms:

**DO'S**

Be aware that culture shock exists, that it will probably affect you one way or another, but that it doesn't last forever.

- Try to keep busy.
- Plan fun things to do.
- Set goals for yourself.
- Look for the best in your situation.
- Enjoy the diversity of people and cultures.

Remember that culture shock can be a very valuable experience, which can leave you with broader perspectives, deeper insight into yourself and a wider tolerance for other people.

Keep a journal. Writing about your daily experiences provides you with a detailed record of your experience and may also help you cope with culture shock.

**DON'TS**

- Don't think you're strange or abnormal. It's not surprising you'd miss some aspects of home or feel a sense of loss.
- Don't just sit around being negative and critical; it will only prolong your unhappiness.
- Don't focus on the bad things. Instead, look for the humor in difficult situations. Things that go wrong often make the best stories when you return.
- Don’t be judgmental. When you find yourself feeling like the U.W. is superior in some aspects, try to understand what needs your host culture is meeting by their different ways of doing things.
• Do not be offended by characteristics of the culture which are not polite or appropriate here. Try to understand that country's mannerism, habits and accepted norms to avoid taking offense at things you are not used to.

• Don't immediately call/write/email your family/friends to tell them how miserable you are. The mood may pass the next day and you know that you are fine, but your family/friends are left thinking the worst. One tactic is to write the letter or email and get your frustrations out, but do not send them right away. If you feel better the next day, throw away the letter, delete the email... if you're still upset, do share your feelings with your family or friends.

• As impossible as it may seem, reverse culture shock can also occur upon your return to the United States. Be aware of this possibility and use some of the same steps listed above to help you re-adjust to life in the United States.

Below is a list of useful words that you should know or have written down before leaving in the case of an emergency.

**KEY WORDS**

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(Source: the Center of Global Education website at [http://www.studentsabroad.com/words.html](http://www.studentsabroad.com/words.html))