SURVIVAL GUIDE
Courses Abroad

THE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
Central Connecticut State University
International Competencies for CCSU Students

Central Connecticut State University is proud of its commitment to international education and is pleased to present the following list of International Competencies that are expected of all students who study overseas.

**KNOWLEDGE**

*Students will be able to explain the complexity and interdependency of global events and issues by demonstrating:*

1.1 knowledge of world geography;

1.2 knowledge of world history;

1.3 an understanding of diversity of values, beliefs, ideas, and world views;

1.4 an understanding of one’s own culture and its relationship to the rest of the world;

1.5 knowledge of a foreign language.

**ATTITUDES**

*Students will value and respect intercultural and global diversity by exhibiting:*

2.1 curiosity and openness toward new opportunities, ideas and ways of thinking;

2.2 an awareness of ethnic and cultural differences;

2.3 the ability to examine issues objectively and without prejudice;

2.4 appreciation for multiple perspectives;

2.5 an awareness of one’s own identity and culture.

**SKILLS**

*Students will act as global citizens by:*

3.1 thinking critically and creatively and integrating knowledge of the world;

3.2 communicating effectively, including using a foreign language, and interacting with people from other cultures;

3.3 coping with unfamiliar and challenging settings with resiliency;

3.4 locating information and investigating issues about international topics.
IMPORTANT NOTE

This *Survival Guide* is an important document that includes information you need to know to prepare for your international education experience!

It is **required** reading for your Course Abroad experience. Before you leave, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the information in this *Guide* so that your overseas experience is a healthy and happy one.

**Please be sure to read through the entire Guide** and use it from the time you receive it, while you are on the program. Do not hesitate to contact the CIE with any questions.

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Centers for Disease Control

School for Field Studies (Salem, MA)

University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center

University of Southern California Center for Global Education

U. S. Department of State
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PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

PREPARATION CHECKLIST

☐ Obtain a passport, or check to make sure that your passport is valid at least six (6) months beyond your scheduled return date.

☐ Contact CCSU students who have returned from a Course Abroad to learn more about what to expect.

☐ Determine whether you need a visa to enter the country/countries to be visited.

☐ Make sure your bank/credit card companies know you will be using your cards abroad.

☐ Register your travel on the U.S. State Department’s free “Travel Registration” page at https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrui/.

☐ If you are a permanent resident of the U.S. or an international student, be sure to have the necessary documentation for re-entry into the United States.

☐ Consult with your doctor and be sure to review the following:

1. Your immunization history and required inoculations (if any) for every country in which you plan to travel.
2. Your general fitness level.
3. Medications and prescriptions in sufficient quantities and in their original containers. Check with your insurance company on how to fill prescriptions for the duration of the trip, since you may not be able to find the medicine you need in-country.
4. Any changes in treatment programs that may be necessary while you are abroad.
5. Discuss the health risks for each place where you’ll be going.

☐ Make sure you have health insurance (required!). Check with your provider to make certain that your policy offers coverage outside of the United States and specifically in the places where you are going. The evacuation and repatriation insurance that you receive through CCSU is not medical or dental insurance.

☐ Make three clear copies of your passport. Take one copy with you, leave one copy with a friend or family member, and submit one to the CIE with your registration form. It is also a good idea to scan the information page of your passport and email it to yourself. Then you can access your e-mail and print a copy, if necessary.

COURSE REGISTRATION, BILLING AUTHORIZATION AND SCHOLARSHIPS

• To be eligible to register for a Course Abroad program, a minimum GPA of 2.00 for undergraduate students and 3.00 for graduate students is required;

• When you register for the CIE Travel Program, you have authorized the CIE to place a “CIE Travel Program” charge on your University bill;
• All correspondence from CIE will be via your CCSU email address; students attending other ConnSCU institutions will be contacted via their corresponding school email addresses;

• The CIE Travel Program charge is for travel expenses only;
• Students must register separately for the academic courses associated with all Course Abroad programs and pay course fees/tuition accordingly;
  • All (full- and part-time) students register for coursework in the Registrar’s Office, located in Davidson Hall, or through their Pipeline account;
  • Full-time students registering for a Spring Break Course Abroad register for the coursework when registering for the rest of their Spring semester courses, either via their Pipeline account or in the Registrar’s Office (Davidson Hall).
• Course tuition is not included in the CIE Travel Program fee, it is a separate charge;
  • Final payments for the travel component of the program are payable through your Pipeline account, your University bill gives the due date;
  • You are responsible for paying the balance by the due date, either via the Bursar or your Pipeline account.
  • To be considered eligible for scholarship consideration, applicants must be matriculated at CCSU, be enrolled in at least 3 credits of coursework associated with the Course Abroad, have a minimum GPA of 2.50, and not receive tuition remission/waivers.
  • If you have received a scholarship for your Course Abroad, it will disburse shortly after the start of the semester in which you are traveling;
  • Scholarship award announcements will be sent to your CCSU e-mail address;
  • The scholarship will only disburse if you are registered for at least one of the 3-credit courses associated with the Course Abroad program;
  • If you are a scholarship recipient and have not yet paid the balance of your CIE Travel Program fee, you may leave a balance due equal to the amount of the scholarship you received; when your scholarship disburse, it will pay your bill;
  • If you are a scholarship recipient and your bill is already paid in full, you will receive a check in the mail (or via direct deposit, if you set that up through the Bursar’s Office);

PROGRAM CANCELLATION POLICY AND TRAVEL INSURANCE

• Students who must cancel their participation in a Course Abroad Program must do so in writing to Noreen Knortz in the Center for International Education. To ensure proper delivery, students must email notice of cancellation to Knortz@ccsu.edu from the CCSU email account. CIE Program fees will be reversed/refunded according to the schedule listed on the registration form.
INSURANCE

HEALTH INSURANCE

Students are required to carry health insurance valid in the country or countries of program operation. You will not be allowed to participate in a CCSU Course Abroad program without identifying such coverage. Some insurance carriers do not cover out-of-country medical expenses. Therefore, you should ensure that your medical policy offers coverage outside of the United States and specifically in the countries where your Course Abroad will take place. Those insurance companies that do provide international coverage often do so on a reimbursable basis. Many foreign public or private hospitals and clinics will not accept insurance as payment. In most cases, you will need to pay up-front with cash or by credit card. This means that you will need to have a valid credit card to pay for your medical expenses up-front and then request reimbursement from your insurance company after you return home.

If you require medical attention during your program, you will be liable for all medical expenses incurred during your care.

PERSONAL PROPERTY INSURANCE

CCSU insurance does not cover personal property. You may wish to check your own or your parents’ current policies or purchase personal property insurance, if this is a concern.

MEDICAL EVACUATION AND REPATRIATION INSURANCE

CCSU provides students with emergency medical evacuation and repatriation insurance. This insurance is effective for the duration of the program. Note: This is not the same as health/medical or dental insurance!

Benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Prescription Drug Replacement Assistance
- Dispatch of Physician
- Unlimited Emergency Medical Evacuation
- Unlimited Medical Repatriation
- Visit by Family Member/Friend during hospitalization
- $2,500 Emergency Return Home in the event of death or life threatening illness of a parent or sibling

The travel assistance benefits are provided by On-Call International, staffed 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Some of the services that can be accessed through On-Call International include:

- 24/7 Emergency Travel Arrangements
- Translation Assistance
- Emergency Travel Funds Assistance
- Lost Travel Documents Assistance
- Assistance with Replacement of Credit Cards/Travelers Checks
- Navigate to: http://www.aetnastudenthealth.com/; enter “Central Connecticut State University” under “Find School”; Click on “Print ID Card”; complete form and print
- For more information visit: www.aetnastudenthealth.com/stu_conn/student_connection.aspx?groupID=890429&PageID=ew
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

PASSPORT

You must have a valid passport in order to enter any foreign country. Make certain that your passport is valid until at least SIX MONTHS after the end date of your Course Abroad program!

- If you have a passport, find it! Don’t just think you know where it is!
- Check the expiration date now; it must be valid for 6 months beyond the return date of your program.
- If you need to apply for a new passport or renew a passport, visit the State Department’s website for procedural information – http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.
- Expedited processing is available for an additional fee, but it is an inconvenient and expensive process.
- If there is a discrepancy, especially one involving your name in the CCSU student database and your passport, inform CIE staff immediately.
- Bring both your passport and a photocopy of the information page of your passport with you on your trip. Leave a copy home with a family member or friend. Submit a copy with your Course Abroad Registration Form.
- If you lose your passport while traveling abroad, contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate immediately to begin the process of replacing it.
- You must leave a copy of your passport with the CIE before you depart.

AIRLINE TICKET

- Your airline ticket will most likely be an electronic ticket.
- If you are issued a paper ticket, you must bring this ticket to the departure airport with you!
- If you are issued an electronic ticket, you may check in for your flight at the airport by showing proper identification (your passport).
- Be sure to keep your passport and airline documents together in a secure place. Whatever you do, do not leave them home!
- Upon receipt of your airline documents, check the spelling of your name with your name in your passport. Immediately report discrepancies to CIE. Note: Middle names are not typically on the airline documents.

VISA

- A travel visa is a document that allows you entry into a particular foreign country or group of countries.
- Not all countries require travelers to have a visa.
- The need for a visa is determined by what country’s passport you hold and where you are traveling.
- If U.S. citizens are required to obtain a visa to enter the Course Abroad destination country, the CIE will assist you in this process. If your documents are not in order when this occurs, you will have to secure your own visa. This may mean both additional costs and travel to an embassy in Boston or New York City.
- If you are a not a U.S. citizen, you need to indicate this on your Course Abroad Registration Form to notify the CIE staff. However, it is your responsibility to contact the Consulate or Embassy of your destination country/countries to find out whether a visa is necessary and to follow the procedures to secure that visa.
GREEN CARDS

- If you are a resident alien in the United States (a foreign-born individual who has been granted permanent residency status in the U.S., but who is not yet a citizen), you must bring your original “green card” with you in order to re-enter the United States. Do not travel without it!

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC) (Optional)

- The ISIC is an identification card that certifies full-time student status at an institution of higher learning and is recognized in most areas of the world.
- The card provides students with discounts, extra travel insurance, and access to an emergency help line.
- To obtain a card or get more information go to: http://www.myisic.com/ or www.statravel.com

YOUR LUGGAGE

If your bags are delayed in travel, you must complete a lost baggage form at the airline baggage office after clearing Customs. Ask to have bags routed to your hotel or hostel. It is not unusual for bags to get delayed in transit; they usually show up within two days. Be sure to have your first hotel’s phone number on all luggage tags, as well as taped inside your luggage.

Pack your carry-on bag carefully: a change of clothes, basic toiletries, and essential medications, one warm garment, your camera, and any other essential items that would be needed to survive for two days after arrival; luggage is occasionally misplaced for that long and can be delayed longer. Test-pack your belongings to make sure you meet baggage requirements. Generally, there is a limit of one carry-on bag and one checked item. Extra baggage charges can be in the hundreds of dollars, especially if they exceed weight limitations specified by the airline. However, policies differ by airline and are prone to changes, so please check baggage limitations with your air carrier(s). Additionally, make sure that you can carry all of your belongings without assistance – and leave some space for souvenirs! Keep in mind that luggage must be left unlocked, so you should leave valuables at home or keep them with you in your carry-on bag. Never pack your car or house/room keys in luggage that will be checked (and might be delayed or lost).

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Outlets and electrical voltage vary from country to country. Please check on this before buying a converter or adapter. Some electronics, including most computers, can handle different voltage within a certain range and simply need an adapter to go from an American plug to a foreign-shaped plug, but others cannot and need to go through a voltage converter before connecting. These converters can be found at most electronic stores. It is best to check on the back of each device for the line “INPUT: 100-240” or the like. If the electrical voltage of your host country falls within the range listed on your electronic device, then you just need an adapter. If it does not fall in this range, you will also need a converter. Adapters (for different-shaped plugs) are usually available for purchase in your host country, but you should bring a voltage converter with you from the U.S.

PACKING LIST (some suggested items)

- Clothes – take clothing that can be worn in layers
- Alarm clock
- Small umbrella
- Laptop (only if suggested/required by professor)
- Adapter/converter set
- Comfortable shoes
- Money belt
• Camera
• iPod/charger
• Journal
• Small gifts (for a host family)
• Toiletries
• Small repair kit - needle, thread, safety pins, etc
• Daypack - small backpack suitable for day or weekend trips
• Over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol are not common overseas, so bring such medications, if needed
• Communication sheet – knowing key words and phrases in the language of your destination(s) at the time you arrive is very useful! You can find sample communication sheets at www.studentsabroad.com/infosheet.asp

WHAT TO LEAVE HOME

• Any valuables or sentimental items you could not stand to lose
• Ripped jeans/clothing
• Anything bearing a U.S. logo or the U.S. flag

AIRPORT CHECK-IN

• Airports employ heightened security measures.
• Take all signs, directions, and interactions with airport personnel seriously.
• Do not make jokes about airport safety anywhere in the airport.
• If you are identified for additional screening procedures, be sure to stay in possession of your passport at all times.
• Do not ever become separated from your passport.
• Never accept or watch items or baggage for someone you do not know.

CUSTOMS DECLARATION

On the plane, during your return flight to the United States, you will be asked to fill out a “Customs Declaration” form. Be prepared to list the items that you purchased while overseas and to estimate the monetary value of those items. If you purchased items worth $800 or less, you will not be charged duty (tax) on those items. If you have questions, you should consult the website of the U. S. Customs and Border Protection service at: http://cbp.gov/

LOST PASSPORT

• If you lose your passport while traveling abroad, contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate immediately to begin the process of replacing it
• You must leave a copy of your passport with the CIE before you depart.
STAYING SAFE

In some areas where our Course Abroad programs operate, the average local five-year-old has vastly superior knowledge about what is important in order to keep safe than our students do upon arrival. Learning to observe and interpret what is going on around you is an important skill that may enable you to effectively minimize risks, make better-informed decisions, and mitigate the consequences of undesirable events. Like most skills, it takes some time to develop. The following section will help guide your behavior while you are learning and help facilitate the process.

TIPS FOR TRAVELING ABROAD

Here are some quick tips to make traveling easier and safer:

- **Sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program so the State Department can better assist you in an emergency:** Let us know your travel plans through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, a free online service at [https://step.state.gov/step/](https://step.state.gov/step/). This will help us contact you if there is a family emergency in the U.S., or if there is a crisis where you are traveling. In accordance with the Privacy Act, information on your welfare and whereabouts will not be released to others without your express authorization.

- **Know the local conditions and laws:** While in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws. The State Department website at [http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html) has useful safety and other information about the countries you will visit.

- **Contact us in an emergency:** Consular personnel at U.S. Embassies and Consulates abroad and in the U.S. are available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, to provide emergency assistance to U.S. citizens. Contact information for U.S. Embassies and Consulates appears on the Bureau of Consular Affairs website at [http://travel.state.gov/](http://travel.state.gov/). Also note that the Office of Overseas Citizen Services in the State Department’s Bureau of Consular Affairs may be reached for assistance with emergencies at 1-888-407-4747, if calling from the U.S. or Canada; or 202-501-4444, if calling from overseas.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE RESOURCES

The Department of State has developed a website specifically for students who travel or reside abroad: [www.studentsabroad.state.gov](http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov).

Students and their families should be aware that the U.S. Department of State maintains a website for U.S. citizen students who are, or will be, studying abroad. It may be found at [www.studentsabroad.state.gov](http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov) and addresses the following subject areas:

- Enrolling ones’ presence abroad with the nearest U.S. Embassy through the STEP Enrollment Program at [https://step.state.gov/step/](https://step.state.gov/step/)

- Checking country-specific conditions as well as travel warnings and alerts at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html)

- Offering students travel safety and other traveling tips provided at: [www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html)
COUNTRY SPECIFIC INFORMATION

- U.S. State Department Country by Country Background Notes: http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/
- U.S. Embassies and Consulates: http://usembassy.state.gov/
- CIA Country profiles including geography; people; government; economics; transportation; communications: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html

OTHER GOVERNMENT FOREIGN AFFAIRS SITES

The following sites contain information on road/travel safety, the political situation, laws, medical facilities, crime, political strife, terrorism, etc. in specific locations:

- U.S. State Department, Bureau of Consular Affairs: http://travel.state.gov/
- Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade: www.smartraveller.gov.au
- United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office: www.fco.gov.uk

BEST PRACTICES FOR REDUCING PERSONAL SAFETY RISKS

PERSONAL SAFETY FOR FEMALE TRAVELERS

Female students may or may not have thought about what it might mean to live as a woman in the country in which you will be studying abroad, but we encourage you to do so. 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. This is not to say that it is more dangerous to be a woman elsewhere in the world. However, language and cultural differences might mean what you consider appropriate behavior for a woman in the U.S. will be interpreted much differently by the men – and women – of your host country. This is further compounded by the fact that the people in some other countries may have distorted or stereotyped notions about American women, based on images acquired through American films and advertising. The very characteristics of American women such as independence and strength may be conceived differently in other countries.

A smile, eye contact, certain clothing, or the way you carry yourself can connote different things in different cultures. Please be aware that over consuming alcohol can especially put women in unsafe circumstances. Women who are publicly drunk may be looked at differently abroad than in the U.S. While we will supply you with what information we can, you are your own best resource. Read travel guides or articles and talk to women who have been to your host country. The more familiar you are with the customs and traditions of your host country, the more understanding you will have for why they exist and the safer you will feel while abroad.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY!

In some countries, wearing the wrong clothes can get you arrested or lead to a dangerous situation for both men and women. What you think is casual may actually be considered provocative, disrespectful or unacceptable in other cultures. Know before you go, and pack accordingly. On arrival, note what locals are wearing and try to follow their lead. Women especially should stay away from anything too revealing or tight and avoid wearing excessive makeup. The fashion statement you DO make should show consideration for the country you are visiting.
JEWELRY AND OTHER VALUABLES

Whenever you travel, be careful with your valuables. Leave your good jewelry at home, and keep money in a safe place such as a money belt or hidden pouch under your clothes. Keep a low profile with your camera and electronic equipment, and keep your bags with you at all times.

UNDERSTANDING LOCALS

Inform yourself about your new environment, making use of as many different sources as possible – the Internet, the library, television and radio news programs, and the newspaper. Make it a point to understand what locals are communicating to you, how they feel about U.S. citizens in general and how you respect their values. A stronger grasp of the local language will help you with these issues, and a few essential phrases can be immensely beneficial.

Non-verbal communication (such as body language and hand gestures) that is considered harmless in the U.S. may be offensive to people in other countries. Do your research!

BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS

- Pay attention to what people around you are saying.
- Find out which areas of the city are less safe than others.
- Know which hours of night are considered more dangerous.
- Stay and walk only in well-lit areas.
- Avoid being alone in unfamiliar neighborhoods.
- Know where to get help (police station, fire station, phones, stores, etc.).
- Do not touch suspicious items like letters or packages given to you from someone you don’t know.
- Know what is "normal" and "not normal" to see on a daily basis in the areas you frequent.
  Do not respond to explosions or gunfire by going to a window; seek cover away from windows and exterior walls.

KEEPING IN CONTROL

In addition to the circumstances that are often beyond your immediate control, there are many situations that you can control to avoid risk. These include:

- 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 under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

RISK UPON ARRIVAL

Travelers, especially those having just arrived abroad, are often targets of crime and risk being harmed, because they:

- Are unfamiliar with their surroundings;
- Might not speak the local language well;
- Are clearly recognizable as foreigners;
• Have not yet learned the social norms or unwritten rules of conduct;
• Are eager to get to know new people and the local culture;
• Are naive about the intentions of people around them;
• Are carrying all their valuables with them when they first step off the plane, train, or boat.

PRECAUTIONS WHEN ACCEPTING FOOD AND DRINK

Be cautious about accepting drinks from a stranger, alcoholic or non-alcoholic. Be cautious about accepting food from a stranger. Do not leave beverages unattended before drinking them in restaurants, pubs, etc.

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AND POLITICAL RALLIES

The foreign policy of the U.S. can be offensive to citizens of foreign countries. In some cases, Americans living or traveling abroad can be targets of the frustrations of these individuals. Consider the nature of the political climate and relations between the U.S. and the countries you plan to visit. Avoid political rallies, which can increase tensions and emotions or breed angry mobs for which a U.S. citizen may serve as a scapegoat.

FINANCIAL CONCERNS

ESTIMATED COSTS

Budget wisely! The estimated cost for Course Abroad programs vary significantly with each individual’s souvenir and other purchases. If your program does not include meals, you can expect to pay approximately $40-$60 a day for food, but you can eat more or less expensively depending on your budget. You will need to pay for any optional activities during your free time. As a general note, prices in many foreign countries, especially in tourist areas, are quite a bit higher than in the U.S.

ATMs

The easiest and most economical method for withdrawing local currency is an ATM and a major credit card for emergency purposes. If you arrive without cash, you should be sure to get some using your ATM or credit card, once you arrive at the airport. But do NOT carry large sums of cash. Be aware that ATMs in many countries overseas only withdraw from checking accounts, not from your savings account. Notify your financial institution that you will be using your debit card abroad.

CREDIT CARDS

Note that personal checks are not accepted overseas, even by banks, and you should not bring U.S. Traveler’s Checks. Major credit cards are generally accepted abroad and cash advances are possible with VISA, MasterCard, or Cirrus at ATMs (Contact your financial institution to see if a PIN number is available for your credit card). Before you leave, be sure to inform your bank or credit card company about your plans to travel abroad. American Express and Discover cards are not always accepted overseas.

COSTS OF SPECIAL DIETARY/RELIGIOUS NEEDS

Be prepared to bear any additional costs associated with vegetarianism, veganism, kosher meals, or any other special dietary requirements. If you have questions regarding special dietary or religious needs and/or about a religious holiday, which falls during your program time, you will want to alert your professor.
OBTAINING A REFUND FOR YOUR PURCHASES – VAT TAX INFO

Value Added Tax (VAT) is sales tax that you pay overseas on manufactured goods and can be quite high in some countries. If you do any extensive shopping, you may be able to get a refund for the VAT; the process is free and the refund is easy to claim. You just have to bring your passport along on your shopping trip, get the necessary documents from the retailer, and track down the right folks at the airport, harbor, or border when you leave.

To get a refund, your purchase has to be above a certain amount — ranging from about $30 to several hundred dollars, depending on the country (except in Ireland, which has no minimum). Typically, you must ring up the minimum at a single retailer, on the same day — you can't add up your purchases from various shops to reach the required amount — so if you're doing a lot of shopping, you'll benefit from finding one spot where you can buy big. You need to collect your refund within three months of your purchase.

COMMUNICATION

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Every CCSU Course Abroad faculty director is issued an international cell phone for use during their program. Upon departure for your program, you should create a list of emergency numbers, including the cell phone number assigned to our faculty director. This will enable you to contact or locate your professor if you become lost or in the event of an emergency situation. It is also advisable to look up the emergency numbers for the area you will be visiting since “911” is not a universal number for emergencies. Please also consider registering on the U.S. Department of State’s free “Travel Registration” page at https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/. This will allow the Department of State to assist you, should it be necessary.

TELEPHONE

Do not promise to call home at a specific time on a specific day. Traveling can be hectic and time change can be confusing. This could cause undue stress for parents. Pre-paid calling cards offer reasonable rates for calling home and students often find them to be the easiest and most reliable way to place a call. Students should purchase these cards once they arrive at their location since most U.S. calling cards can only be used to call from U.S. phones. You could also purchase an AT&T, Sprint, or MCI calling card. When securing one of these calling cards, verify that the card can be used for placing calls from the country (ies) where you plan to be phoning from. Cell phones are not recommended for use abroad unless you speak with your carrier about a plan for international calling/texting/e-mail. If you do not have a plan that includes international usage, cell phone calls and text messages can become VERY costly.

INTERNET

Internet access will most likely be available for students at a local internet café or sometimes in hotels. You may have time for Internet use during free time while on the program. You will most likely have to pay for any Internet usage, including in hotels. Do not expect high speed internet. Note: Be aware of your surroundings while in internet cafés, since they are popular with pickpockets.

PRIVACY POLICY (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. In compliance with the law, CCSU requires written permission from a student before releasing any type of information from the student's education record.
Since the Center for International Education abides by this policy, our staff will not discuss – with a parent, relative, or other third party – any aspect of a student’s participation in a study abroad program without receiving a FERPA Release form (available from the Registrar’s Office). Faculty advisors and faculty leading overseas programs must also comply with the Federal law to avoid personal liability.

**BEHAVIOR MATTERS**

**STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

- CCSU’s Student Code of Conduct travels with you while you participate in your Course Abroad; you are held to the same standards of conduct as if you were on campus.
- Faculty are empowered with the ability to dismiss students from the program and send them home early *at their own expense* and with no refunds.
- You are representing yourself, CCSU, and the U.S. while abroad, so represent us well.
- You are subject to the laws of the land on whose soil you are standing.
- If you are following the law, your program leader(s) will assist you if you are in trouble. If you are outside the law, there is nothing your program leader(s) can do to get you out of trouble.
- Use your common sense about what is right/wrong, legal/illegal.
- If something is illegal in the U.S., it is probably illegal abroad. But, if something is legal in the U.S., it is not necessarily legal abroad.
- If you are arrested and given the opportunity to make a phone call (not guaranteed), call the U.S. Embassy; they are the closest to you and your best initial advocate and source of information.
- You can find legal information for the country you are visiting at [www.studentsabroad.com/foreignlaws.asp](http://www.studentsabroad.com/foreignlaws.asp).
- Remember you are traveling with a group. Your actions and attitude may affect all participants. Be respectful of the people you are traveling with.
- Course Abroad programs follow the same housing policies used on campus: Co-ed rooms are not offered or allowed.

A copy of CCSU’s Letter of Warning is provided on the next page:
LETTER OF WARNING TO COURSE ABROAD PARTICIPANT

Date: __________

Dear __________________________________________________________,

(full name of student)

One of the main objectives of CCSU Course Abroad programs is to build bridges for respectful dialogue and discussion between people with the goal of fostering responsible global citizenship and developing a better world. For that reason, we take seriously issues of cultural sensitivity, student safety, and behaviors that reflect negatively on the group dynamic during our overseas programs. While we cannot force students to engage fully in different cultural environments, we can require students to conduct themselves appropriately, to respect cultural norms, and not to put themselves, other participants, or the program at risk.

This letter is in response to the incident that occurred on _______________________________. As explained to you verbally, your behavior during that incident was not appropriate. It did not comply with the agreement that you made when you signed the “Statement of Responsibility, Release, Indemnification and Authorization to Participate in A Course Abroad Program” and is in violation of the CCSU Student Code of Conduct, which applies to this University-sponsored program. The following is a summary:

[summary of incident]

Due to these actions, you are now on notice and are asked to sign this form in agreement.

In signing this form, you agree that
- you will alter your behavior immediately and cease the activity that resulted in this warning;
- you will abide by your signed Statement of Responsibility and the CCSU Code of Conduct; and
- you will, from this time forward, uphold all requirements and responsibilities for the duration of the program.

In signing, you further agree that
- an additional incident or failure to comply with these rules and responsibilities will lead to your immediate dismissal from the program;
- your departure will be at your own expense; and
- additional disciplinary actions may be initiated through the Office of Student Conduct upon your return.

A copy of this letter will be sent to the CCSU Center for International Education, the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs, and the Office of Student Conduct. If you are a student of Southern, Eastern, or Western Connecticut State University, officials at your home institution will be informed of the incident.

___________________________________________________  ______________________________
Student’s Signature                                      Date

___________________________________________________  ______________________________
Course Abroad Director’s Signature(s)                    Date
I, (insert name) ______________, agree to participate in the course abroad to Austria and Germany sponsored by Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) from (dates of the program). I understand and hereby acknowledge that my participation in the Program is wholly voluntary. In consideration of being allowed to participate in the program, I hereby agree as follows:

- I have been advised and am aware of the inherent and/or latent danger (including but not limited to: risk of serious injury, the hazards of travel, accident, or illness, or acts of God) of participating in a program requiring international travel. I am aware and have been advised to have a medical examination prior to participating in this activity to insure that I am in good physical health. Further, I hereby represent and warrant that I am and will be covered throughout the Program by a policy of comprehensive health and accident insurance which provides coverage for injuries or illness I may sustain or experience overseas. By my signature below, I certify that my health insurance policy will adequately cover me while outside the United States; and, I absolve CCSU and the host institution of all responsibility and liability, except for that which arises out of the negligent acts or omissions of the University or its employees, for any injuries (including death), illness, claims, damages, charges, bills and/or expenses I may incur while I am abroad. I agree to report to the University any physical or mental condition I have which may require special medical attention or accommodation during the program at least thirty (30) days prior to departure. I am also aware and have been advised that I will be enrolled by CCSU in a supplemental insurance policy which provides for a minimum coverage of $25,000 for international medical evacuation and $7,500 for the repatriation of remains.

- I understand that this is a university sponsored program, and that standards of Central Connecticut State University must be observed. I accept that the University reserves the right to decline to accept or retain me in the Program at any time should my actions or general behavior impede the operation of the Program or the rights or welfare of any person. Similarly, if my conduct violates any CCSU policy or procedure, I understand that I may be required to leave the Program at the sole discretion of the employees, agents, or representatives of CCSU, and I may be referred to the appropriate CCSU officials for further disciplinary or other actions. In such an event, I am responsible for reimbursing CCSU for the cost of my participation in the Program. CCSU reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to cancel the Program or any aspect thereof prior to departure; and, in its sole discretion to cancel the Program or any aspect thereof after departure, may require that all participants return to the United States, if CCSU determines or believes that any person is or will be in danger if the Program or any aspect thereof is continued.

- I understand that CCSU reserves the right to make changes to the Program itinerary at any time and for any reason, with or without notice, and CCSU shall not be liable for any loss whatsoever to me by reason of any such cancellation or change. CCSU is not responsible for penalties assessed by air carriers that may result due to operational and/or itinerary changes, regardless of whether CCSU makes a flight arrangement. Any additional expense resulting from the above will be paid by me. CCSU reserves the right to substitute hotels or accommodations or housing of a similar category at any time. Specific room and housing assignments are within the sole discretion of CCSU.

- I understand and acknowledge that the University assumes no responsibility or liability, except for that which arises out of the negligent acts or omissions of the University and its employees, in whole or in part, for any delays, delayed or changed departure or arrival times, fare changes, dishonored hotel, airline or vehicle rental reservations, missed carrier connections, sickness, disease, injuries (including death), losses, weather, strikes, acts of God, circumstances beyond the control of the University, force majeure, war, quarantine, civil unrest, public health risks, criminal activity, terrorism, accident, damage to property, bankruptcies of airlines or other service providers, inconveniences, cessation of operations, mechanical defects, failure or negligence of any nature howsoever caused in connection with any accommodations, restaurant, transportation, or other services or for any substitutions of hotels or of common carriers beyond the University’s control, with or without notice, or for any additional expense occasioned by any of the foregoing. If due to weather, flight schedules, or other uncontrollable factors I am required to spend additional nights in travel status, the University will not be responsible for my hotel, transfers, meal costs, or other expenses. My baggage and personal property are transported at my risk entirely.

- I understand and hereby acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the U.S. Consular Information Sheet for the country/countries to be visited, as well as the Centers for Disease Control information, on travel to, in and around the country/countries to be visited; that I am aware of and understand the risks and dangers of travel to, in, and around the country/countries to be visited, including but not limited to the dangers to my own health and personal safety posed by the use of public transportation, and by civil unrest, political instability, terrorism, crime, violence, and disease in the country/countries to be visited. I hereby assume, knowingly and voluntarily, each of these risks and all of the other risks that could arise out of or occur during my travels to, from, in or around the country/countries to be visited.

- I understand that I bear full legal and financial responsibility for all indebtedness or other legal obligations incurred by me while a Program participant.

- In the event of sickness or injury, I hereby authorize the Program Director of the host institution, or his or her designee, to secure whatever medical treatment is deemed necessary, including admission to a hospital, the administration of anesthetics, the transfusion of blood, and surgery.

- I agree that this Waiver, Release and Indemnification Agreement is to be construed under the laws of the State of Connecticut, U.S.A., and that if any portion hereof is held invalid, the balance hereof shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect. In signing this document I hereby acknowledge that I have read this entire document, that I understand its terms, that I will abide by each of the terms, that by signing it I am giving up substantial legal rights I might otherwise have, and that I have signed it knowingly and voluntarily.

**THE FOLLOWING SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED IN THE PRESENCE OF A NOTARY PUBLIC:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCSU ID Number:</td>
<td>Date of Birth:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TO BE COMPLETED BY NOTARY PUBLIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTARIZATION:</th>
<th>(student’s name) personally appeared before me, and by me known, and swore or affirmed that she/he freely and without reservation signed this release form.</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notarized by</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY AND CCSU

Please know that CCSU faculty and the University:

- Cannot guarantee or ensure the safety of participants or eliminate all risks from the study abroad environments.
- Cannot monitor or control all of the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of individual participants.
- Cannot prevent participants from engaging in illegal, dangerous, or unwise activities.
- Cannot ensure that U.S. standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings, nor provide or pay for legal representation for participants.
- Cannot ensure that home country cultural values and norms will apply in the host country.
- Cannot fully replicate home campus support services at overseas locations.
- Cannot assume responsibility for the actions of persons not employed or otherwise engaged by the CIE, for events that are not part of the program, or that are beyond the control of the CIE and its subcontractors, or for situations that may arise due to the failure of a participant to disclose pertinent information.

HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

Every region has its own unique health challenges. We strongly recommended that you consult with a travel clinic or physician who can look at your travel itinerary and your personal health profile and work with you to devise a health strategy for your travel, including all appropriate vaccinations, medications, and treatment options.

To locate a travel clinic, as well as information on destinations, outbreaks, diseases, vaccinations, insect protection, safe food and water, and medical emergency preparation, check out: The Centers for Disease Control: [http://www.cdc.gov/travel/](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/).

To find disease maps and information about health risks and precautions, travel by air, environmental health risks, accidents, injuries and violence, infectious diseases, vaccine-preventable diseases, malaria, blood transfusions, etc., check out [http://www.who.int/en/](http://www.who.int/en/).

MEDICATIONS

You should bring enough over-the-counter and/or prescription medication to last for the duration of your program. It is important to bring sufficient supplies since medications that you purchase overseas are not regulated in the same manner, e. g. by the U. S. Food and Drug Administration. In addition, your overseas destination may not be able to dispense or sell the medications or other items that you require. You must also keep your medications in their original labeled containers during your travels; this will help with Customs and other border crossings. Before you depart, it is also essential that you know if the medicines, syringes, health aids that you plan to bring with you are legal in your destination country; **what is legal in the U. S, can be considered illegal elsewhere.**
SPECIAL MEDICAL CONDITIONS/NEEDS

If you have any allergies or special conditions that might lead to sudden illness (such as asthma, diabetes, bee sting, penicillin allergies, etc.) you must inform the CIE of possible reactions. You should also consider discussing these with roommates or other friends so that other people will know how to react in case you suddenly need assistance or medication. If you have any critical medications, you must carry them with you at all times and should report these medications to the CIE. The CIE also recommends that students consider wearing a medical alert bracelet describing any special medical conditions.

If you have asthma, even if you have not had any problems for years, you should bring an inhaler and all the necessary medications because it is possible for asthma to act up in the different environments where your Study Abroad programs is held.

If you have a disability, it is important that you contact the CIE to discuss your situation in confidence and provide appropriate documentation so that the feasibility of accommodation abroad can be evaluated as soon as possible. In advance of that discussion, you will want to register and meet with the Office of Student Disability Services in Willard Hall, Room 101-03.

FOOD (From the Centers for Disease Control – the CDC)

To avoid illness, travelers should be advised to select food with care. All raw food is subject to contamination. Particularly in areas where hygiene and sanitation are less prevalent, the traveler should avoid salads, uncooked vegetables, and unpasteurized milk and milk products such as cheese, and to eat only food that has been cooked and is still hot or fruit that has been peeled by the traveler personally. Undercooked and raw meat, fish, and shellfish can carry various intestinal pathogens. Cooked food that has been allowed to stand for several hours at ambient temperature can provide a fertile medium for bacterial growth and should be thoroughly reheated before serving. Consumption of food and beverages obtained from street food vendors has been associated with an increased risk of illness.

IMMUNIZATIONS (Recommended by the CDC)

Check with your physician or the Centers for Disease Control (http://www.cdc.gov/travel/) for any recommended or required vaccinations you may need during your Course Abroad experience. Health risks may be very different depending on what country (ies) you visit. It is also highly suggested that you consult with your physician or a travel medicine specialist as to what additional measures may be required.

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

DEFINING CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

What is cultural adjustment? Most simply put, cultural adjustment is the process of adjusting to a different cultural context. It is the process of filtering through initially identifiable differences in eating style, dress, language, and customs to discover the underlying values and assumptions that are the foundation of a certain way of life. Whether you are from the United States or from another country, confronting a different way of life may entail questioning your own basic values and beliefs. Cultural adjustment may cause you to ask the question, “Who am I?” By asking such a fundamental question and working through the answers, you can build a strong sense of self, gain more confidence, learn to identify at a basic level
with people from another background, and become more accepting of others. You will begin to develop a sense of global citizenship, a crucial step in the development of a peaceful global society.

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN AMERICAN?**

Perhaps this will be your first time visiting a foreign country. By removing yourself from the U.S. or other country of origin and confronting a different culture, you may gain a greater awareness of what it means to be American, Chinese, Mexican, or whatever your identity is. You may find that people around the world have formed viewpoints, even stereotypes about Americans.

Below are some examples of stereotypes of Americans that you might encounter abroad.

- Wealthy and wasteful
- Caring about the environment
- Heavy drinkers
- Careless
- Want to help others
- Loud and dumb
- Openly friendly and kind
- Fun-loving and always smiling
- Academically-oriented

Stereotypes are not always accurate, and they do not apply to every person within a culture. Making generalizations about a culture or people is normal and even useful in learning about them. However, be aware of the possible negative impact of stereotyping. Be open to and appreciative of the great differences between individuals within a population.

**A NOTE TO WOMEN AND DIVERSE STUDENTS**

What it means to identify as LGBT, a woman, a person of color, a member of a certain religious group, a participant with a disability, etc. may be very different in your host country. For example, a gay student may find that the host community is much less accepting of homosexuality than his university community. Asian or Asian-American students may find that host nationals, who perhaps have had little or no contact with Asians, view them as exotic. Students who are accustomed to being part of the majority group at home (e.g. Caucasian students) may need to readjust to living as a minority abroad. The change may be for better or for worse, but you should be prepared for different attitudes.

There is a wealth of information about women and underrepresented students traveling abroad than it is possible to cover in this section. Please use the resources below to better inform yourself as you prepare for your abroad experience.

- LGBT Students, Students with Disabilities, Multicultural Students (University of Minnesota’s Learning Abroad Center): [http://www.umabroad.umn.edu/students/identity.php](http://www.umabroad.umn.edu/students/identity.php)
- Ethnic Minorities (All Abroad): [http://allabroad.us/](http://allabroad.us/)
- Students with Disabilities (Mobility International USA): [http://www.miusa.org/](http://www.miusa.org/)

*Thank you for enrolling in one of CCSU’s Courses Abroad! We hope this Survival Guide was helpful in preparing for your trip. If after reading it you still have questions about your participation in your Course Abroad, please contact the Center for International Education at (860)832-2040 or by e-mail to Noreen Knortz at Knortz@ccsu.edu or Keithlin Caroo at k.caroo@ccsu.edu*
Memories from Past Course Abroad Programs

Italy
Czech Republic
Australia

Chile
China

http://web.ccsu.edu/cie/files/Course_Abroad_Survival_Guide.pdf

Revised September 17, 2014