

STUDY
ABROAD

2009-
2010

This guide is assembled by the Office for Education Abroad as a resource to students preparing for study abroad with the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. [Updated December 2008]

**Student
Handbook**

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your decision to study abroad. Many students report that it is one of the most important and influential decisions of their lives. The Office for Education Abroad, your faculty director and the College of Saint Benedict|Saint John's University want to help you make the most of your study abroad experience. These materials will help with your safety and will provide you some useful information. The OEA wishes you the best of luck on this exciting semester or year full of study, travel, and personal growth.

This handbook is intended to be utilized as a reference work. It contains more information than you may be able to read or absorb in one sitting. Nevertheless you do need to familiarize yourself with its contents. Good preparation is the key to success abroad. We have tried not to duplicate any of the information found in the many excellent guides to study and travel abroad. Though it is impossible to cover every scenario which may take place during your semester abroad, we hope this will be a significant starting point. What you will find has been culled from the experience of former students, added to by faculty, and compiled by the Office for Education Abroad.

This handbook's most important purpose will have been accomplished if you grasp the goals of the international programs: to enter another culture as a sympathetic, curious explorer; to enhance your ability to communicate and function fully in another culture; and to emerge as a sensitive initiate in world citizenship.

This handbook has been added to by many of the students who went before you. It has been revised this year and will be revised for the following year. We, therefore, are anxious for your suggestions, editorial comments, and constructive feedback. The study abroad program you have selected will demand some personal adjustments; but if former students' comments are true, you are in for a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Please take this handbook with you to your program site. It will be a good reference and resource during the entire semester.

Should you have any additional questions, comments or concerns, please contact the Office for Education Abroad. OEA is ready to assist you at any time.

BEFORE YOU GO

The Importance of Preparation

A semester abroad may be hard to imagine at this point. What will it be like? How hard will the classes be? Will I be lonely? What will it be like to live in another country? These are reasonable and useful questions for you to ask before your departure.

There is no doubt you will be altered by your experience abroad. Few students say afterwards that their time abroad was not a great and important experience in their lives. They have survived a variety of exciting opportunities, experienced almost every sensation imaginable, met wonderful people, and learned an enormous amount about themselves. Nearly all would love to return and many do.

But studying and living abroad is not all fun or pleasant. It can be strenuous, difficult, and uncomfortable. There are three things to remember when times get tough: it takes effort to learn to cope with uncomfortable situations, the unpleasantness will soon pass, and when it does, it will be worth the effort.

The students who get the most out of their off-campus experiences are those who have a realistic understanding of themselves and their culture. They work the hardest to learn about the host culture and adapt to succeed within it. You are a product of your upbringing and home culture. Everything you do in the course of a normal day is done as you have learned to do it. You cannot change this fact, nor should you. But you must realize that this factor will make you stand out abroad. If people show you kindness or friendship, you can be assured it is not simply because you are an American, or other nationality. Rather, their friendship most likely comes from your efforts to understand them.

It is important for you to be fully aware that the people of every country have their own culture: a unique set of social mores and characteristics. If you are to make the most of this experience you must try to understand and appreciate the host culture. Observe and try to adapt to local patterns; live as a temporary resident, not a tourist. You will no doubt find that you have many things in common with the people of your host country. Being aware and sensitive to the similarities and the differences will make your semester abroad memorable.

Academic Preparation

One of the questions asked most often concerning the classes on the programs is the degree of difficulty. Are students expected to do as much work as at CSB and SJU? When will we find time to study when there are so many things to see and do? These are valid concerns that go to the heart of the off-campus experience in another country.

There are two points that need to be kept in mind: 1) the general educational expectations are the same as on-campus, and, 2) each professor has different expectations and means of evaluation. Your classes will be taught by a variety of professors from many different walks of life including CSB|SJU faculty, professors from foreign universities and scholars from the host community. Remember that this is a STUDY abroad experience. One of the greatest challenges and opportunities for you is to experience how other academic systems work...believe us, they are not all the same.

Though it may be impossible to prepare for every educational situation that you will encounter, there are

many things that you can do before departure to help you be successful. This is a list to get you started, your pre-departure homework!

1. Attend ALL pre-departure meetings with your faculty director and/or the OEA staff.
2. Buy your textbooks. Not sure if you need any? Ask your faculty director.
3. Complete all pre-departure assignments.
4. Read as much as you can about your host culture. This includes reading about their customs, traditions, languages, politics, current events, etc. You may consider purchasing a cultural guidebook, language guides, travel book, etc. (Be careful of your sources... there may be a lot of information on the internet, but be sure that it is credible.)
5. Stay up on American politics and current events. You can be sure that individuals in your host country will be also reading about the latest election news!
6. Follow-up on special interests. If you have a hobby or interest here, find out how prevalent that subject is in your host country. Can you play rugby in Australia or study music in Ireland? I am almost certain of it!
7. Talk to others who are from there or who have been there. Connect with the study abroad Ambassadors and the international students here at CSB|SJU before you go.

You can't know everything about your host country before you get there and you wouldn't want to! Learning while you are there is part of the adventure. But it is important to know the basics and not arrive in South Africa without any idea of what apartheid means. (Or in China asking what this wall is all about!)

Financial Preparation

Study abroad is a significant financial undertaking. CSB|SJU strive to keep the cost of studying abroad as close to that of a semester on-campus as possible, but it is important to plan financially for this endeavor. With increasing fuel costs and the declining dollar, this has become more crucial in recent years. When participating on a CSB|SJU sponsored program, you will pay the same tuition and fees as on-campus students. In addition, an International Program fee is assessed which covers the cost of housing, administration, excursions, on-site transportation and other program activities. (Food is included on some programs. See the specific program brochures for more details.)

It is important to not only consider the cost of tuition, room and board, but also the additional costs of travel, personal spending, sightseeing and souvenirs. International airfare is not included in the charges paid to CSB|SJU. In your acceptance packet you will find the fee schedule. You will notice the cost to be paid to CSB|SJU as well as an estimate of personal spending from past program participants.

Accessing Money Abroad

How you will access money while you on your study abroad program and travelling independently is something that you will want to discuss with your parents and set a plan for now. We have included details below for several different ways to access money, but please be aware that some of these methods may not be an option at your destination.

Consider taking your personal spending money in a combination of traveler's checks, a credit card, and ATM (cash) card. One problem with relying totally on one credit or ATM card is that these cards are no more reliable than the computer networks that make them possible. If you exceed your credit limit, lose your card, misplace your PIN, demagnetize your card, or any other complicating scenario, you will be left without access to your primary source of cash. So it is always wise to have a second card and/or some travelers' checks just as a backup.

TRAVELER'S CHECKS: Traveler checks are no longer the way in which you would typically take along your funds, but having some along as a back-up is a good idea. Visa and American Express travelers' checks seem to be the most commonly used and accepted traveler's checks. You can cash American Express checks without a commission charge at some American Express Offices. Visa travelers' checks can be cashed without a commission charge at Barclay's Banks in England. The commission policies vary from country to country and from office to office.

CREDIT/ATM/CASH CARDS: Just like in the US, you can use your cards as a credit card at the check out or as an ATM card to withdraw cash from a machine. Be sure to check with your company what fees will apply to any international transaction and what the interest rates will be. You should also let your bank and other financial institutions know that you will be traveling in _____ country from _____ to _____. If you don't call them before you leave, and the banks all of a sudden see your card being used in Japan or Guatemala, you may find your cards turned off to protect from identity theft.

NOTE: OBTAIN THE INTERNATIONAL PHONE NUMBER FOR YOUR CREDIT CARD SO YOU CAN NOTIFY THEM IN CASE IT GETS LOST OR STOLEN. Make a photo copy of all cards (both sides) that you will carry with you abroad and leave one at home with your family. Also check the expiration date on all your cards. If any cards expire while you are overseas obtain a new card before departure.

Exchanging Money: Obtain just a little foreign currency (i.e. \$100-200 worth) before leaving, so you have some cash when you arrive abroad for a bus, taxi, phone calls, food, etc. Large local banks can exchange money for you. There is also a currency exchange at the Minneapolis airport (Mutual of Omaha desk - departure level) which requires **cash** to conduct transactions. Do the rest of your exchanging abroad - you'll typically get a better exchange rate.

Withdrawing Cash: Most banks in larger cities are connected to an international money network, usually CIRRUS or PLUS. These symbols are found on the back of your card and you will have to match the machine's symbols to your card in order for your card to work. **NOTE: ATMs may not have letters on their keypads, so be sure to know your 4-digit (five or six digit numbers will not work or PIN numbers starting with zero) PIN by number.** Be sure to keep the receipts from foreign ATM machines in case of discrepancies. Contact your credit card company to obtain a directory of foreign ATM machines. (There are also ATM locators on-line.)

Purchases with Credit Cards: When making large purchases (or small, daily ones) credits cards are widely used both here and abroad. It is important to know what types of fees will be assessed if you use your credit cards internationally. Many companies will charge a 2-5% foreign conversion fee. Remember to make arrangements to have someone pay the credit card account monthly (on-line or elsewhere). And as always, keep all credit card receipts.

WIRING/CABLING MONEY: American Express, Western Union, and many personal banks, provide funds transfer by wire/cable services that are secure, prompt and reliable (for a fee). This can be a quick way to get money when all other resources are exhausted. **DO NOT SEND PERSONAL CHECKS FROM A LOCAL BANK IN THE U.S. THEY ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE ABROAD.**

EMERGENCIES: In the case of an emergency, the program can lend students money. Parents must reimburse OEA as soon as possible. Please keep in mind that this method should only be used in the case of an emergency. OEA may charge the parents any costs incurred locally or on-site involving the transaction in addition to an administrative handling fee consistent with the student handbook.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: You may consider leaving your parents or another trusted individual with a Power of Attorney form. This will allow them to have access to the accounts and records that you specify. In times of emergency, or for normal account management, this can be helpful.

YOUR ACCOUNT AT CSB|SJU: It is important that you check with the Student Accounts Office prior to your departure for your program abroad. Make sure you understand anything you must comply with while you are gone (i.e. deposit for advance registration, etc.) If the advance registration deposit is not made or if you have an unpaid balance on your student account, the Student Accounts Office will put a HOLD on your registration for the following semester until arrangements are made for payment. Until the HOLD is removed, you will not be able to register for classes for the upcoming semester and you will not participate in any CSB|SJU sponsored study abroad program.

Remember to budget your money. There is so much to see and experience, you would hate to miss out on anything due to the mishandling of funds and overspending.

Travel Document Preparation

There are a variety of government-issued documents that may be necessary in order for you to participate in this study abroad program. The Office for Education Abroad and your program director will advise you about which documents apply to your program. In special circumstances, it is always best to consult with the Department of State's Travel website: www.travel.state.gov

PASSPORTS: EVERY student participating on a study abroad program needs to have a valid passport. Students who do not have a passport must submit their passport application immediately after being accepted to their study abroad program. The passport application is available on-line at: www.travel.state.gov. A first time passport application must be submitted in person to a government office; usually a state or county office. A passport renewal can be mailed.

For your passport, as well as for your application to study abroad, you will need to provide passport photos. Below are several places where you can obtain these.

- Cash Wise in St. Cloud, approx. \$6.95 for a set of two photos
- Camera Shop in St. Cloud, with a CSB/SJU ID cost of a set of photos is approx. \$9.50-\$10.50
- Walgreen's in St. Cloud, approx. \$7.99 for a set of photos
- The Passport Office (License Center) in the Administration Center (next to the Court House) in St. Cloud also takes passport photos in their office. Cost of photos is \$16.

It is crucial that you have a passport as early as possible!

The most important document of identity is your passport. You will use it when you cross borders, cash traveler's checks, and register in a hotel. Note: Some countries do not allow entrance if your passport will expire in under 6 months. If you should lose your passport, you must go to the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate (addresses are available in the Consular Information Sheets) for a replacement. This is inconvenient, but is necessary because without a passport, the airlines will not allow you to board an aircraft for your flight home. See the specifics of what is needed to replace a Lost and Stolen Passports Abroad on the Department of State Website: www.travel.state.gov.

The replacement may be done more quickly if you have a photocopy of the front pages of your passport (make several photocopies of your passport and leave one copy with your parents and carry the remaining copies someplace other than with your passport), current identification and two passport-sized photographs. Once you have submitted your application, application fee and photographs, you should have your temporary replacement in several working days.

VISAS: This is not the same type of visa as described under the financial section! A visa is a document that allows you to enter and remain in that country for a specified period of time. A visa is required for many countries, but not all. Specific information on visa requirements for your program is included in your acceptance packet. A visa is obtained from the Consulate of the host country and they are located in larger U.S. and foreign cities. OEA will assist students with this process. If you lose your passport and had a student visa, you will need to have the student visa replaced as well as your passport.

Persons staying in a country for longer than three months will usually need a visa. However, the length of stay may vary according to the country. Currently, the CSB/SJU programs that require visas are the Australia, Austria, Chile, China, France, Greco-Roman, Japan, South Africa, and Spain programs. Students on the London program will need to obtain a visa if they plan to volunteer or plan to do an internship abroad. Students in the Irish programs must obtain their visa from the police department in Galway or Cork upon their arrival. OEA will assist students with the submission of their visa applications.

Please note: International students participating in a CSB/SJU study abroad program may have different visa requirements than U.S. students. You must check into the visa requirements for the country in which you will study as early as possible. Some countries could require that you take a specific English Exam depending on your fluency level. You must check on the visa requirements for each country in which you plan to travel, it is possible you would need a visa for each of those countries also. In addition, you must be sure to notify the Director of International Students, of your plans to study abroad. You will need paper work from her to make sure that you will be able to return to the U.S. after your semester abroad.

Absentee Voting: If you will be abroad during an election year and would like to cast a ballot, you will need to request an absentee ballot. To make voting easier, we recommend that you register to vote before you leave for your semester or year abroad. To request an absentee ballot, you need to fill out an absentee ballot application and send it to your county auditor before you leave. Your ballot will be sent to you at your study abroad location before the election.

Housing Preparation

The Office for Education Abroad will assist students with the necessary housing arrangements for their study abroad experience. The cost of housing is included with all programs.

Students should check with the CSB|SJU Housing Office before their departure for their program abroad to make sure they have made all necessary arrangements and the deposit for on-campus housing for the next semester, if you wish to live on-campus. Usually housing assignments for the next semester are communicated directly to you while you are abroad.

Medical Preparation

The best source of information concerning medical preparations for your program abroad is your own physician or a travel clinic. Students should make an appointment with the SJU Health Center Travel Clinic or another medical professional to discuss any recommended or required vaccinations for travel abroad. These appointments should be made well in advance of departure as some vaccination series require intervals between shots. OEA staff are not qualified to give medical advice. Any travel consultations, immunizations and health exams, are the financial and personal responsibility of the traveling student.

Although most foreign countries have adequate medical services including a full range of doctors, hospitals, pharmacies, and medical services; everyone traveling to another country assumes some risks, particularly in an emergency situation. Students studying on all study abroad programs should research the specific health and safety concerns for their destination using the following websites:

- The Department of State's Travel website (www.travel.state.gov) has thorough information on International Travel and Health, Travel Warnings, Consular Information Sheets, etc.
- The Centers for Disease Control website (www.cdc.gov), has complete information on health issues, *Safe Food and Water, Vaccination Requirements, Health Information for specific countries*, etc.
- World Health Organization website (www.who.int).

The Department of State, Centers for Disease Control, World Health Organization websites should not be used in lieu of advice from a medical professional.

TB TESTING: A tuberculin test 10-12 weeks following return to campus will be required of all CSB|SJU students studying for a semester in countries where TB is endemic. (This applies specifically to China and South Africa, as well as any other developing country with a high TB rate.) A "hold" will be placed on your student account by health services.

PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS: If you have a medical condition that requires regular attention, make sure that you have disclosed this on your medical disclosure form. Your program director should be made aware of your condition and any special instructions. Ask your personal physician to write a letter including background

information and instructions in case you need to be cared for abroad. You should also give a copy of the care instructions to your program director.

HEALTH INSURANCE: CSB|SJU policy requires students to maintain enrollment in a health coverage plan through a family plan, an individually policy, or a student plan. (Contact the Health Education Office at CSB 320-363-5605 or the Health Center at SJU 320-363-3124). Health insurance coverage must be in place and in force throughout the student's semester abroad.

It is the student's personal responsibility to maintain insurance coverage and protection for any accident, disability, repatriation or any loss related to their person, property or activities throughout their participation in a study abroad program. The student, in consultation with his or her parents, are responsible for determining and acquiring the appropriate levels of insurance coverage. Students are responsible for any expenses not covered by any insurance coverage plans and policies.

Check with your health insurance carrier to confirm that it will cover you while you are abroad. Become familiar with the coverage provisions, deductible items, and the process for making claims.

Typically while abroad, you will need to pay for your medical care before you leave the clinic or hospital, even if you have adequate health insurance. In order to apply for reimbursement from your insurance company in the U.S., you will have to provide a copy of all the receipts and bills for your treatment. You can send the bills and receipts home to your parents so they can submit them to the insurance company for reimbursement. Be sure to keep anything the hospital or clinic or anyone else gives you regarding your medical care!! It is very difficult to obtain this information once you have returned home.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC): All participants (students and faculty) on the semester-long study abroad programs sponsored by CSB|SJU will be issued an [International Student ID Card or ISIC](#). In addition, all CSB|SJU students participating on an External Consortium program will receive this card.

This card offers a limited amount of health insurance (NOT recommended as a primary source of insurance), with a significant benefit for emergency evacuation and repatriation. [View the summary of benefits on the ISIC website](#). In addition, students traveling abroad may be eligible for discounts on lodging, attractions, museums, transportation and other services. The web site for ISIC is: www.myisic.com .

Flight Preparations

Students studying abroad with CSB|SJU are required to make their own flight arrangements. This allows for individual consideration of travel itineraries, frequent flier miles and other details. Your acceptance packet provides details of where and when you should be in order to meet the group. Students cannot arrive at the program housing (be it in a family, hotel, apartments, dormitories, etc.) until the indicated start date of the program. Students must vacate the program housing on the last day of the program. Many students prefer to purchase tickets with other students on the program and travel independently before or after the program.

Students might want to consider contacting a travel agent or use an on-line search engine. Student travel websites include: Student Universe www.studentuniverse.com or STA Travel www.statravel.com. Other web sites you might try are: Orbitz at www.orbitz.com, Kayak at www.kayak.com, Expedia at www.expedia.com or Travelocity at www.travelocity.com.

Travel Guidebooks/Reading Materials

Guidebooks:

A good guidebook, far from marking you as a tourist, provides essential information about transportation, accommodations, cultural and historical background, visa requirements, health and safety precautions, etc. Plan to purchase guidebooks before you travel because many students have reported that they cost less here, and it gives you a chance to read up in advance.

For travel on a student budget, we suggest these books:

Let's Go Guides (St. Martin's Press)

Many travelers consider this series to be the best all-purpose budget guide. The guides are updated every year and cover European and non-European countries.

Lonely Planet Guides (Lonely Planet Pub.)

This series, published in Australia, is widely used by travelers on a low budget. Guides are available for most countries.

Moon Guides (Moon Pub.)

These guides contain extensive information that can help travelers get good value for their money. They also provide cultural, historical, and political information about each country they cover. Areas of focus: Pacific Rim, 14 countries "down under", Micronesia, Yucatan, Belize, and Costa Rica.

On a Shoestring Guides (Lonely Planet Pub.)

If you will be traveling on extra-low budgets, you will appreciate these good, sensible guides for their practical advice about saving money. Books about Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, South and Central America are part of the Shoestring series.

Rough Guides (Prentice Hall)

This series is for budget travelers to many non-European countries. They include political, social, and cultural information.

Rick Steve's Travel Guides (John Muir Pub.)

Rick's guides include selective day plans that capture the essence of each destination and highlight the best local sights, from world-famous attractions to lesser-known gems. There are plenty of restaurant and accommodation recommendations, plus clear instructions for smooth travel anywhere by car, train, or foot.

Be sure to have a travel guidebook for your host city/country and other places you visit.

Find other background information on the semester program homepage, we provide a Viewing/Reading/Listening list for all our programs, please check them at <http://www.csbsju.edu/internationaleducation/default.htm>

Packing Preparations

We are all guilty of overpacking on many occasions. When you travel abroad, the consequences for overpacking can be great. **TRAVEL LIGHT!!!** Believe it or not, if you bring enough for a week or two, it will last the semester. Here are some tips and tricks to help!

CLOTHING: The secret to success regarding your wardrobe is versatility. What you wear will obviously depend upon the program site and where you plan to travel. The more you can mix and match and the more you can use one garment for several functions, the less you have to carry around.

There are several things to remember when selecting clothing. Avoid bulky items. It should be easy to wash,

be colorfast so it can be laundered together, dry quickly, and be wrinkle-free. Try to pick one color scheme and have everything you bring match so a few garments go a long way. If possible, pack things that can be considered casual and somewhat dressy.

You should be sensitive to the culture of which you are a temporary resident. Clothing should be flattering to you and acceptable to members of the culture you plan to visit. It should not be offensive or make you stand out. Provocative, grubby and frayed outfits may offend in some areas, just as they would in the U.S. Consider the impact your clothing has on others. When visiting churches, mosques, synagogues, and temples, dress conservatively.

It is also important to consider that many other cultures dress more formally than the average American college student. Ask our study abroad Ambassadors about the everyday dress. Many students are surprised by the standard of dress.

WOMEN: conservative, casual wear, mix-and-match skirts, sweaters, dress pants, jeans (neat & clean), and one moderately dressy outfit for a party or special event.

MEN: conservative, casual wear, sport shirts, jeans (neat & clean), slacks, sweaters, and one moderately dressy outfit for a party or special event.

Rain gear: Make sure that if your backpack is not waterproof that your poncho is large enough to cover your backpack.

Coat: a waterproof, light, warm coat (a winter coat depending on the program).

Activity/athletic gear: hiking clothes, sweat pants, etc.

Other items of clothing: socks (lots) and underwear.

Laptop Computers: Many students ask about bringing laptop computers with them. Most students report that laptops are not necessary, as most programs provide computer access for students, but they are very convenient for schoolwork and staying in touch with friends/family. If you do decide to bring your laptop with, please consider the following:

- Check your parent's homeowner's insurance policy to ensure that your computer will be covered overseas. Laptops are not covered in basic property insurance, and usually require a rider.
- Find out if your computer will need either an adaptor or converter to be plugged in.
- Minimize the frequency of traveling with your laptop; we hear many reports of students having them stolen.

OTHER USEFUL ITEMS: Though you may want to pack your entire house with you, it is important to remember that they do have the majority of the items that you will need in country. For traveling and student life, the following have been recommended by past participants.

- Bath towels, hand towels and wash cloths that dry quickly (if not provided)
- Plastic bags of all sizes
- Four (4) vending-machine photographs (photos may also be obtained on site)
- A reusable water container
- Bandanna or hat
- Passport pouch, Money Belt, or travel wallet
- Travel alarm clock
- Small sewing kit

- Lots of film (or plenty of digital picture memory!)
- ALL prescription medications in their original containers. It is also a good idea to carry a note from your doctor which includes the generic names of your medications. **YOU DO NOT WANT TO TRY TO FILL PRESCRIPTIONS WHILE ABROAD.** Travelers should also check with the foreign embassy of the country they are visiting to make sure any required medications are not considered to be illegal narcotics.
- Non-prescription medications including Tylenol/Advil, cold/allergy medication, antibiotic ointment
- An extra pair of glasses/contact lens, and contact lens solution
- Feminine hygiene products
- Enough shampoo, conditioner, etc. to get you through the first week or two until you can buy more.
- Sleeping bag or travel sleep sack for staying in hostels.

LUGGAGE: You will need sturdy luggage and/or travel backpack and a carry-on. It is not necessary to buy expensive luggage or have more than two pieces of check-in baggage and a carry-on. You must be able to comfortably carry whatever you bring. The airlines will CHARGE you extra if you have more than one piece of check-in baggage, if it is over-weight (for most carriers the weight cannot exceed 50 pounds per piece) or over-sized. Remember there will not be anyone to help you carry your luggage. Your trek from the airport to the group meeting point might be a long one. Try walking around the block and up and down five flights of stairs with your packed luggage... you will be ready to lighten the load!

Be sure to check the luggage requirements of the airline on which you are traveling as the number of pieces allowed, weight limit, and size of luggage may vary from airline to airline. Also check out the information on the Transportation Security Administration's website www.tsa.gov/public/ for information on what you may pack in your check-in luggage, what you may pack in your carry-on luggage, locking your checked luggage and approved TSA locks.

Advice from Past Participants

What are the most important things you should know for your adventure abroad? Our own student travelers give you their best tips for studying and living abroad:

- Pack light. (The No. 1 suggestion from all participants).
- Bring an umbrella.
- Experiment--don't be embarrassed to ask about or try something.
- Walk wherever possible.
- Budget wisely. (Make lots of money the summer before.)
- Avoid huge groups of Americans.
- Don't stereotype people or have a closed mind.
- Women: DON'T be friendly to men if you are in a group of three or less.
- Try everything new--especially food.
- When traveling independently, stay overnight in the nicer parts of town.
- If you're hassled by anyone, be firm and mean it or try to ignore them.
- Spend more money on experiences and less on gifts.
- Get addresses of relatives and friends abroad before leaving.
- Keep a money pouch with you at all times.
- Read about the country in which you will study before leaving.
- Know how the academic evaluations will be handled.
- Be open, curious, and not afraid to say you don't know.

- Meet the host country people. (Go to cafes and mingle with the locals.)
- Keep a journal or a blog.
- Don't expect anything before your arrival. You don't necessarily have to compromise yourself, but since you must adapt to another culture, your American attitudes must be malleable.
- Know the difference between naïveté and open-mindedness--it could be crucial.
- Expect to find out a lot about yourself!

WHILE ABROAD

Customs & Immigration

Upon your arrival at your destination airport, you will immediately have to clear immigration and customs. Immigration officials will check your passport and may ask why you have come and how long you plan to stay. Customs insures the safety of travelers, protects the country against disease, and helps regulate foreign economic relations. It is normal to be nervous, just as you would be if any officer of the law was speaking to you in an official capacity.

Most of the time, Customs officers will wave you through without a lot of difficulty. They are oftentimes looking for large numbers of items that they fear you are going to sell while visiting their country or for suspicious items. In some countries the officials are looking for offensive material; writings or photographs that are offensive to the government. Here are some tips to help you navigate customs:

- Have your passport and any additional documentation ready.
- Do not wrap gifts so that they can be checked quickly.
- Carry receipts for anything you want to declare.
- Be prepared to re-pack your own bag if it is inspected.
- Be polite, courteous and answer all questions which are posed to you.

On your return flight to the United States, you will be given a Customs Declaration Form to fill out. It is illegal to omit any items of significant value that you have purchased while out of the U.S. There may be penalties levied by Customs if you fail to declare items. Detailed information on duty free exemptions, restricted or prohibited articles, "Know Before You Go" customs hints for returning U.S. residents can be found on the U.S. Customs and Boarder Protection web site: www.cbp.gov (click on Travel).

Culture Shock

Homesickness and culture shock are a difficult, but natural part of studying abroad. Homesickness should not be confused with culture shock, although severe homesickness is one of the symptoms.

Culture shock is the "psychological disorientation most people experience when they move for an extended period of time into a culture markedly different from their own" (L. Robert Kohls, Survival Kit for Overseas Living, 1979; p. 62). You may find yourself missing family and friends, hating your new host culture and wanting nothing more than to return home. Though difficult, these feelings are normal and will pass if you hang in there. Just remember that it will get better.

Some students will more easily adapt to a new culture with a minimal amount of anxiety and discomfort.

Others will need more time. Here are a few antidotes for culture shock:

1. Know as much as possible about your destination (city/country) before departure.
2. Consciously look for logical reasons behind everything in the host culture which seems strange, difficult, confusing, or threatening. Take every aspect of your experience and look at it from the perspective of your hosts. Relax your grip on your own culture in the process. There's no way you can lose it, but letting go a bit may open up some unexpected avenues of understanding.
3. Find someone from your host country who is sympathetic and understanding, and talk with that person about specific situations and about your feelings related to them. Talking with Americans can be helpful, but only to a limited extent. Your problem lies in your relationship to the host culture.
4. Above all, have faith: in yourself, in the essential good will of your hosts, and in the positive outcome of the experience.

Residential Life

Housing arrangements for each program will vary. On some programs students live with families, in dormitories, flats, hotels, cottages, student residences, etc. Services provided for students will also vary from program to program. Information specific to your program can be obtained from OEA, your program director or past participants.

VISITORS: Housing on the CSB/SJU study abroad programs has been carefully arranged for members of each program. We do not wish to jeopardize these arrangements, therefore, students will not be allowed to house family, friends or students from other programs in their room, whether it is in a dormitory, a family, an apartment, a hotel, etc.

VALUABLES: Do not keep large amounts of cash in your apartment and always be sure to lock your doors. Do not leave expensive items lying out in the open: as this could be an invitation for some one to take it. Roommates are expected to respect one another's property, but we can not guarantee the security of items.

ELECTRICITY: The electric current and the shape of the plug-ins in most countries is different from that in the U.S. In order to use an appliance purchased in the U.S. while you are abroad you need two things:

1. A converter which changes the voltage to 220 (most foreign countries) from 110 (U.S.)
 2. A plug adapter which allows you to plug the cord in the socket.
- Most laptops, i-pods, cell phone chargers or other modern electrical appliances have a converter built-in (read your battery or charger to assure that the Voltage adapts from 110-240).
 - You can also purchase "travel accessories" like blow dryers which can convert the energy.
 - It is important however to pay special attention to what is 220 Volts and what is 110V. If you plug a 110 appliance into a 220 socket, the results are expensive, dangerous and an inconvenience to all in that area. You will melt the appliance and blow a fuse.
 - It is our advice that you purchase any essential appliances when you arrive on your program site.
 - You may consider communicating with past participants to purchase items.

Class Registration for the Next Semester

The Registrar's Office will e-mail the link to the *Fall or Spring Semester Class Schedule* to all students and faculty as soon as it is available. In addition, OEA will communicate with your program director or directly

with you (Cork) to confirm that you can access the *Class Schedule* and Banner Self Service. Students going abroad should not block the e-mails from the Registrar's Office or OEA because all registration information will be communicated through e-mail. Students on all study abroad programs are able to register by accessing Banner Self Service.

Your registration label with your PIN NUMBER, REGISTRATION START DATE and START TIME will be emailed to your program director or e-mailed directly to the student (Cork) about a week or 10 days before the start of registration.

If it is difficult to access Banner Self Service, a *Study Abroad E-Mail Registration Form* can be made available to students abroad. If you find it necessary to use the E-Mail Registration Form due to technical difficulties with registration, you must request this form from the Office for Education Abroad.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS/ACADEMIC ADVISING HOLD ON ADVANCE REGISTRATION: Students who have an outstanding balance on their student account or have not made the required Fall Semester Registration Deposit (due in March) will have a Student Accounts HOLD on their advance registration which will not permit you to register for classes until you or your parents make arrangements with your Student Accounts Office and the hold is removed.

The Academic Advising Offices can likewise put a HOLD on a student's registration if a student has not declared a major or has not fulfilled an academic requirement (i.e. math proficiency exam). These academic matters should be resolved before a student departs for a program abroad program.

Academic & Disciplinary Policies for Study Abroad Programs

All students must agree to the waivers and releases of liability and sign the Agreements/Waivers signature form before being accepted to the study abroad program. These documents are linked here for your reference.

[Agreements/Waivers Signature Form and Referenced PDF Documents](#)

Communication

Remaining in contact with your friends and family in the U.S. and elsewhere is a priority for many students while studying abroad. Technology makes this easier and cheaper today than ever before.

WORD OF CAUTION: Many students report having almost daily contact with family back home during their study abroad experience. The Office for Education Abroad wishes to support the communication between overseas sites and the US and below are some ways in which students have successfully communicated in past years. We would like to also urge students, families and their friends to consider the impact that your involvement with home can have on your study abroad experience. While studying abroad, it is important to immerse yourself in the academics, culture and language. The more time you spend focusing on home, your Facebook account, and calling a significant other; the less present you are with the host culture. It is important to remain connected with your family and friends back home, but it is essential that you find the balance between staying in contact and losing touch with the host culture.

CALLING HOME: International phone calls can be very expensive; especially if you do not plan ahead. Generally, the most expensive time to call is during business hours of the place where the call originates. Reduced rates are during evening hours and on weekends.

Cell phones: Students on many programs are now purchasing mobile/cell phones when they arrive on their program site. The mobile phones do not require long-term commitment as with most U.S. plans. They are a “pay as you go option”. Many also offer free incoming calls; so your friends and family can call you, without you footing the bill. You can also consider taking your U.S. cell phone with you, but you must make sure it will work in your host country and check with your cell phone provider about the cost of service... It is probably not “free nights and weekends”!

Calling Cards: During independent travel before or after the program or during a longer program break, you can make telephone calls from most public phones in any country. You can purchase phone cards at most convenience stores. AT&T, Sprint, and MCI also have direct access numbers that you can use and the call is billed to a calling card. You should obtain the access number and any necessary information from your long distance company before leaving the US.

SKYPE: Increasingly students are using Skype to communicate with home. This is a free or very cheap service where you communicate via the internet. Visit their website for more details. Remember that the speed of your internet connection abroad may not always support this technology. (www.skype.com)

EMAIL: Internet and e-mail services are available on most program sites through classroom and office facilities that we rent, from the university that our students attend, or the organization that we work with on the program site. Some housing facilities will have wireless access, but not all. In addition, internet cafes are located in almost every international city in developed areas.

BLOG: The Office for Education Abroad has a blogspot for all students to document their time abroad. This is a great way to stay in touch with a lot of people and only have to write one time! To get started with your blog just email us at: abroad@csbsju.edu.

MAIL: International mail takes anywhere from several days to weeks to arrive. To major cities, letters generally arrive in a week. Everyone likes to receive letters and postcards while abroad. Remember that your family and friends back home will appreciate these as well!

Health and Safety Concerns

At the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University, we take the safety and security of students very seriously. Over the years, the college has continuously evaluated security operations, and has made a number of suggestions to improve and strengthen the security of students participating in our Study Abroad programs. It is our goal that students have a harmonious environment in which to pursue their study abroad education. If there are disturbances and disruptions brought about by crime, everyone in the community suffers and the educational environment can be seriously altered.

Though it is impossible to completely prevent sickness and accidents while abroad, there are many things that you can do while on-site to minimize the risks.

Emergency Medical Procedures

Every effort is made by CSB|SJU to provide a safe environment for students to study abroad in. However as colleges we cannot be responsible for accidents. In the event of an accident, however, we want to be as

helpful as possible. The following steps will be carried out:

1. An ambulance or appropriate medical care will be summoned immediately. When the ambulance arrives and the accident victim is attended to, the Director will, if available, accompany the victim to the hospital.
2. As soon as the victim's needs are being appropriately attended to at the hospital, the Program Director, or designee, will call the parents of the victim and the Director for Education Abroad to notify them of the incident. The Program Director will file an Incident Report with OEA.
3. The Director for Education Abroad will remain in contact with the students' family to provide them with any additional information and assistance.
4. If the family makes arrangements to travel overseas, the Program Director will arrange to meet them upon arrival.
5. Upon arrival of the parents, the Program Director will turn over discussions with the attending physicians to the parents.

Strategies to Reduce Risk Abroad

Based on anecdotal information, most of the incidents resulting in injury or death of students while participating in study abroad involve:

- Travel or traffic accidents
- Use and abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Sexual harassment and assault
- Crime or petty theft
- Mental health issues/stress
- Diseases and illnesses that exist in the host country

Resources and information about avoiding many of these issues can be found below. It is important to remain aware of your surroundings at all times. Consider what the "locals" do in particular situations and learn from their knowledge. When in doubt, do not put yourself in a questionable situation. Use the same safety precautions abroad as you would if traveling in any unknown city in the U.S. Travel with at least one other member of the group or person you know. Do not walk around the streets alone after dark especially in questionable neighborhoods. Check out countries, cities, and areas to which you plan to travel independently. If you plan to be gone for an overnight or longer during a program break, you must leave with your program director an itinerary and instructions on how to contact you in an emergency.

RISK UPON ARRIVAL: Travelers, especially those having just arrived abroad, are often targets of crime and at higher risk of harm. There are several reasons for this.

- Being unfamiliar with the surroundings
- Lack of fluency in the local language
- Clearly recognizable as a foreigner
- Have not yet learned the social norms or unwritten rules of conduct
- Eagerness to get to know new people and the local culture
- Naive to the intentions of people around them
- Carrying all their valuables with them when they first step off the plane, train, or boat

REMAIN IN CONTROL: In addition to the circumstances involved with being new in a foreign country, which are often beyond one's immediate control, there are many situations that you *can* control. Some controllable

factors that place students at greatest risk include:

- Being out after midnight
- Being alone at night in an isolated area
- Being in a known high crime areas
- Sleeping in an unlocked place
- Being out after a local curfew
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

PREVENT PICK POCKETING: Stay alert when you have been bumped, had your foot stepped on, and have been pushed around in a crowd; these are perfect times for pickpockets to do their work. Remember that pickpockets do not necessarily have to be adults, in many instances they may be children.

Backpacks are another easy target for pick-pocketers. Remember to turn your pack around when traveling in crowded areas. As always, passports and other essential items should be kept in a pouch close to the body.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION: Non-verbal communication (like body language and hand gestures) which are considered harmless in the U.S., may be offensive to people in other countries. The list of gestures considered rude in other countries can grow beyond the obvious. Find out what is appropriate in your destination.

SEXUAL CRIMES: No one wants to think about sexual crime. And while it can make you feel angry, sad or frightened, you cannot ignore the subject. One cannot assume with certainty that sexual assault, rape or harassment will not take place, even on a study abroad experience. Follow the rest of the risk avoiding tips in this section to help you keep up your awareness.

Don't let your guard down because a date happens to be a host family, classmate, or even a new "friend." Especially in a different cultural setting, the offender may misread or imagine that a desired "silent message" or attitude is being communicated by the victim.

If you have been violated, do not keep it to yourself. Get to a safe place and then talk to a trusted person (Your program director, host family, etc.)

CSB|SJU can provide limited counseling services to students who have been assaulted or accused of sexual misconduct. Every attempt will be made to provide counseling services in the country the student is studying in.

To obtain a copy of the entire *Joint Sexual Assault and Human Rights Policies and Procedures*, please visit the Human Right's website at <http://www.csbsju.edu/humanrights/default.htm> or contact the Office of Student Human Rights and Diversity at 320-363-5455.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES: Keep yourself free from sexually transmitted diseases by using protection (like condoms or abstinence). Also, remember that saying NO may not always be interpreted as NO in other countries or cultural contexts. Inform yourself about the types of diseases prevalent in the area in which you are traveling.

HOW TO DRESS: It is often best to dress conservatively by local standards, so you can't be identified on sight as a tourist or a U.S. citizen.

JEWELRY AND OTHER VALUABLES: Be cautious with how you display valuables (does it look like you're flaunting wealth?). Leave your good jewelry at home, and keep money in a safe place like a money belt or hidden pouch under your clothes. As a rule of thumb, never bring anything with you that if it were to be lost or stolen, it would ruin your time abroad.

BECOME AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS: You should be aware of your surroundings, remembering to:

- 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 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

KNOW THE EFFECTS OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: The foreign policy of the U.S. does not always sit well with citizens of foreign countries. In some cases, Americans living 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.

POLITICAL RALLIES & CONVERSATIONS: Avoid political rallies, which can increase tensions and emotions. Try not to engage in conversations about contentious political issues with host nationals and avoid retaliating against hostile remarks about Americans. Whatever your view of American politics, it is best to "test the waters" of your new environment before publically proclaiming your beliefs.

REGISTER WITH THE LOCAL EMBASSY: The US government has a presence in most countries through an Embassy. Registration at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate (in the country you are visiting) makes your presence and whereabouts known, in case it is necessary for a consular officer to contact you in an emergency. During a disaster overseas, American consular officers can assist in evacuation were that to become necessary. But they cannot assist you if they do not know where you are. **Students should register with the U.S. Embassy before they leave for their semester abroad or as soon as they arrive on their program site:**

http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_1186.html

STAY IN COMMUNICATION: It is important to let others on your trip and back home where you are and what you are doing. You should:

- Complete a TRAVEL FORM (see the next page) and leave it with your program director before every trip.
- Inform your host family or roommates about where you are going and when you expect to be back. Leave a contact number if at all possible.
- Communicate with family back home when you are leaving town, where, how long, and when back?

TRAVEL FORM

Please complete as thoroughly as possible. This form should be given to your program director before you leave for an overnight or extended non-program related absence.

Departure Date:	Return Date:
-----------------	--------------

Name:
Address:
Mobile phone number:

Destination(s):
Hotel(s): <i>Please include address(es) and phone number(s)</i>
Company / travel agent traveling with:
Mode of transport:
Flight number / ferry number, etc.:

Traveling companions:

Remember to communicate with your host family and/or roommates about your expected travel plans. It is also important to stay in touch with your family at home.

- **Be sure to check with your faculty director about how they would like this form submitted.**

Legal Issues

There are many misconceptions about crime and punishment outside the United States. Please read the following carefully: ***Once you leave the U.S., you are no longer under the jurisdiction of the American legal system. If you break a law in a foreign country, it is that country's penal code that determines your fate.***

The American Embassy/Consulate DOES NOT take an active role in getting you out of jail if you get into trouble. If you are arrested, you should contact the Embassy. The local U.S. officials will contact the Program Director, the Director for Education Abroad, your family, or someone else you request. They can also help obtain an attorney. Be sure to follow exactly the advice given you by American consular officials.

Not all Americans arrested internationally knew they were committing a crime. What would be a prank in the U.S., could be treated as serious crimes overseas. Do not steal the hotel's towels and ashtrays, at minimum you could be charged a fine by the hotel. Drug possession and use, as well as drinking and driving are usually treated much more severely outside the U.S. If you are caught, there is nothing anyone can do to help you.

Sexual Assault Allegations Between CSB/SJU Students Abroad

When a CSB/SJU student is accused of sexual assault involving another CSB/SJU student during Study Abroad, the following procedures for handling the sexual assault complaint should be followed. This is important not only from the stand point of supporting the alleged victim and assuring that the rights of all parties to the dispute are protected, but also to protect the institution from liability. (Some of the resources listed here may also be used to aid victims of sexual assault when the perpetrator is not a CSB/SJU student.)

As with any allegation of sexual assault, time is of the essence for all parties involved and affected. Program Directors should work with the Director for Education Abroad and CSB Security and SJU Life Safety Services to carry out an investigation of the incident immediately according to the official CSB/SJU complaint procedure (found on the Human Rights website).

A student cannot be cut from a study abroad program solely due to an allegation of sexual assault and before a hearing process has found the respondent in violation of the sexual assault policy. Sending the student home prior to a hearing to determine the student's responsibility may communicate an assumption of responsibility. If the student is found not responsible, then sending the student home would be premature and may make the institution(s) liable for the negative impact this has on the student's reputation, academic career, etc. However, if an alcohol violation occurs in conjunction with a sexual assault, the alcohol violation and/or other disruptive behavior may constitute grounds for expulsion from the program.

When an alleged sexual assault occurs on-campus, a "no contact" order may be issued to the students involved. The "no-contact" order restricts the access that each person has to the other's residence and other places they may come into contact. This order would be enforced until the issue is resolved. It may be more difficult to enforce a "no contact" order between the parties on a study abroad, depending upon how much of their space is shared (living, classroom, social, etc.). If separation is warranted or desired by either party or the institution, we will make every reasonable effort to enforce the "no-contact" order.

Counseling services at CSB/SJU can be helpful in addressing the concerns and anxieties of all those involved and inform them of the process that must be followed.

Making the Most of your experience

Explore the Territory: Get a map and venture out. Get lost and ask directions. Ride the public transportation. Discover old or important structures, stare, and ask admiring questions (people love to talk to interested newcomers). In doing this your language skills will improve, your ear will grow keen, and you'll feel right at home.

Pick up the Silent Language: Go sit in the park or a sidewalk cafe, stand in a market or store, and watch. How do people greet one another, visit, and say goodbye? How do friends act? How does one show respect? What types of mannerism do the people have? What seems to be typical dress for the different age groups? Can you spot an American? What are the American giveaways in dress, movement, voice, and gesture?

After noticing these different things chat with your American friends about what you've observed, and then with your national or international friends and see if they agree or disagree.

Try to behave like a national, using the same silent language, blending into the culture. You might not be mistaken for a native, but that is okay. Compare the way you are treated when you act in this manner and when you act like an American.

Do Not Limit Yourself to American Friends: How do you feel when you see foreign students, ethnic groups, or cliques of friends walking, talking, and eating together? Does it irritate you that they are not mixing with others? Does it seem impossible to break in or even worth it to try?

If you hope to form acquaintanceships - much less friendships - in the short time you will be in your host country, you must open yourself up to others. The more you speak English, and go out with fellow Americans the more you send out the message that you prefer American friends.

Master that language: Force yourself into situations where you must talk - no matter how scary, difficult, or awkward it may seem. You'll be surprised how fast you win the trust and respect of nationals when you attempt to and can speak their language. Practice makes perfect!

Just Ask: Ignorance is not bliss. If you do not understand something, are curious, or need any help, just ask someone. People's responsiveness may surprise you. Plus, questions are great conversation starters.

Blend In and Do Not Fight It: Plunge right in - do not wait to adjust before you participate, you adjust by participating. Your host country has its own culture with its own traditions, customs, manners, and written and unwritten laws - immerse yourself. If you do all of the above, you cannot help but feel like a part of your host country. Talk to as many people as possible, they have a lot to offer and you have a lot to learn. Whether you are staying for a semester or a year, your time abroad is too short.

UPON RETURN

Reverse Culture Shock

Coming home can be a very exciting time as you reunite with all of the people, places and things that you craved while abroad. It can also be a tough transition as you find yourself longing for the sights, sounds, smells and feelings that you had immersed yourself in during your time abroad. This phenomenon is called reverse culture shock. It can affect travelers at different times and to varying degrees. Some students may feel profoundly impacted by reverse culture shock; while others seem to be barely scathed, as they transition easily back to their lives in the US.

Almost all travelers expect to experience some degree of culture shock when they leave the US, but not as many anticipate the difficulties they may experience upon return. News flash: the world did not stop while you were abroad. Your family, friends, roommates, coworkers and classmates continued on with their lives while you were gone. They have had many experiences, just the same as you have. (Ok, so maybe they didn't get to stand on the top of the Eiffel Tower, or climb the Great Wall of China, or dwell in Nelson Mandela's cell on Robben Island, or live with an aboriginal family in Broome!) But they did have experiences, and it is important to honor the important events which took place in their lives.

The most important thing to realize about reverse culture shock is that it is a normal part of the process. Missing what you left behind means that you really embraced your experience abroad. It is important to recognize it and seek out ways to share your experiences with others and stay connected with your "abroad life". And don't worry, it shall pass.

Re-entry Programs

Returning from your semester abroad program can range from difficult for some students to a smooth less transition for others. Program directors and the Office for Education Abroad will sponsor several re-entry meetings for you to reconnect with your study abroad group and make the most of your international experience. These will be a great time to see your group members and meet with students who were studying abroad all over the world. They most often include food and a lot of great discussion.

Make the Most of Study Abroad

After you tackle the hurdle of reverse culture shock, you realize that the show must go on. But what in the world are you going to do with this vast knowledge and experience that you just acquired? The challenge before you now is to make the most of it. Visit our website section entitled "Upon Return" for complete details.

- [Attend the Re-entry Dinner sponsored by OEA.](#) This will be the first chance for you to learn about ways to stay involved with international education at CSB|SJU and begin to formulate a bigger plan for your international portfolio. Watch your email for more details.
- [Attend Re-entry meetings hosted by your faculty directors.](#)
- [Become an ambassador](#) Do you find that your friends and family are sick and tired of listening to your stories, but you still want to talk more? There are many students who are interested in going abroad and they want to hear your stories. Sign up to be an ambassador and attend many events where you can share your experiences!

- [Continue to blog](#) Even though you are back, you do not lose your privileges to blog. You may find it helpful to blog, journal, sing, write poems or just share your transition (either in private or in public).
- [Join the photo contest](#) You can submit photos to the CSB|SJU photo contest. Relive your experiences while perusing for the best photos and share these with the campuses. You may even win a great prize!
- [Make the most of your study abroad experience](#) Colleges and universities from around the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin have joined forces to offer an annual conference to help you take your international experience to the next level. This is a one day jumpstart to *Coming Home: Making Personal and Professional Use of Your Study Abroad Experience*
- [Connect with International Alumni](#) You now belong to a special group of CSB|SJU alumni and this link will stay with you forever.
- [Go abroad again](#) The most common reaction from students upon return is "When can I go back?!" So, when can you? Consider visiting your host country again to participate in a work, intern or volunteer experience. Or venture into uncharted territory and expand your international portfolio.

Transcripts and Grades

All grades and transcripts from a study abroad program will be entered onto a students' transcript by the program director and/or the Registrar's Office.

Special note for Varsity Athletes: Grades from study abroad programs must be received by the CSB|SJU Registrar's Office to determine athletic eligibility. **If, for any reason, the necessary grades have not been received at the start of the athletic season, the student will not be allowed to participate (including practice) until it is determined that the student has met all eligibility requirements.** Grades from the University College Cork in Ireland, University of Notre Dame Australia and the University of Port Elizabeth in South Africa are usually not received until 4 to 8 weeks after the term ends. Students enrolling in those programs will normally not have grades reported to the CSB|SJU Registrar's Office until mid February for Fall Semester programs and June or July for Spring Semester programs.

Program Evaluation

All program participants are asked to complete a program evaluation during the last several weeks of the academic program abroad. The entire program is evaluated and each course and professor is evaluated. This will provide the office with information on the weak and strong points of each program and also give us an indication of changes that may need to be made on a program.

OEA staff are available for group reflection and personal meetings about your experiences studying abroad. We look forward to your constructive feedback to help with the development of the programs.

CONCLUSION

We sincerely hope that you will find the information contained in this handbook to be helpful. Please remember that the Office for Education Abroad is always available as a resource throughout your study abroad adventure.

If you have any suggestions or additions for future editions of this handbook, please let us know.

CSB/SJU ON-CAMPUS TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Office for Education Abroad

Emergency Contact Numbers

Joe Rogers

Director

Office

320-363-5952

Email

jrogers@csbsju.edu

Main Switchboard, CSB

320-363-5011

Main Switchboard, SJU

320-363-2011

Mary Ann Baenninger, President, CSB

320-363-5505

Merry Hoppert

Office Coordinator

Office

320-363-5958

Email

mhoppert@csbsju.edu

Dan Whalen, Interim President, SJU

320-363-2247

Dr. Rita Knuesel, Provost, CSB

320-363-5503

SJU 320-363-3147

Peggy Retka

Advisor

Office

320-363-5962

Email

pretka@csbsju.edu

Dr. Joe DesJardins, Associate Provost and
Academic Dean CSB 320-

363-5401

SJU 363-3147

Joy Hemmesch

Advisor

Office

320-363-5590

Email

jhemmesch@csbsju.edu

Registrar's Office, SJU

320-363-3395

AFTER HOURS

Life Safety SJU

320-363-2144

Security CSB

320-363-5000

Residential Life Office, CSB

320-363-5580

Campus Life and Housing Office, SJU

320-363-2735

Dean of Student Life, SJU

320-363-3512

Dean of Students, CSB

320-362-5601

Counseling and Health Promotion

CSB 320-363-5605

SJU 320-363-3236

Academic Advising, SJU

320-363-2248

Academic Advising, CSB

320-363-5687