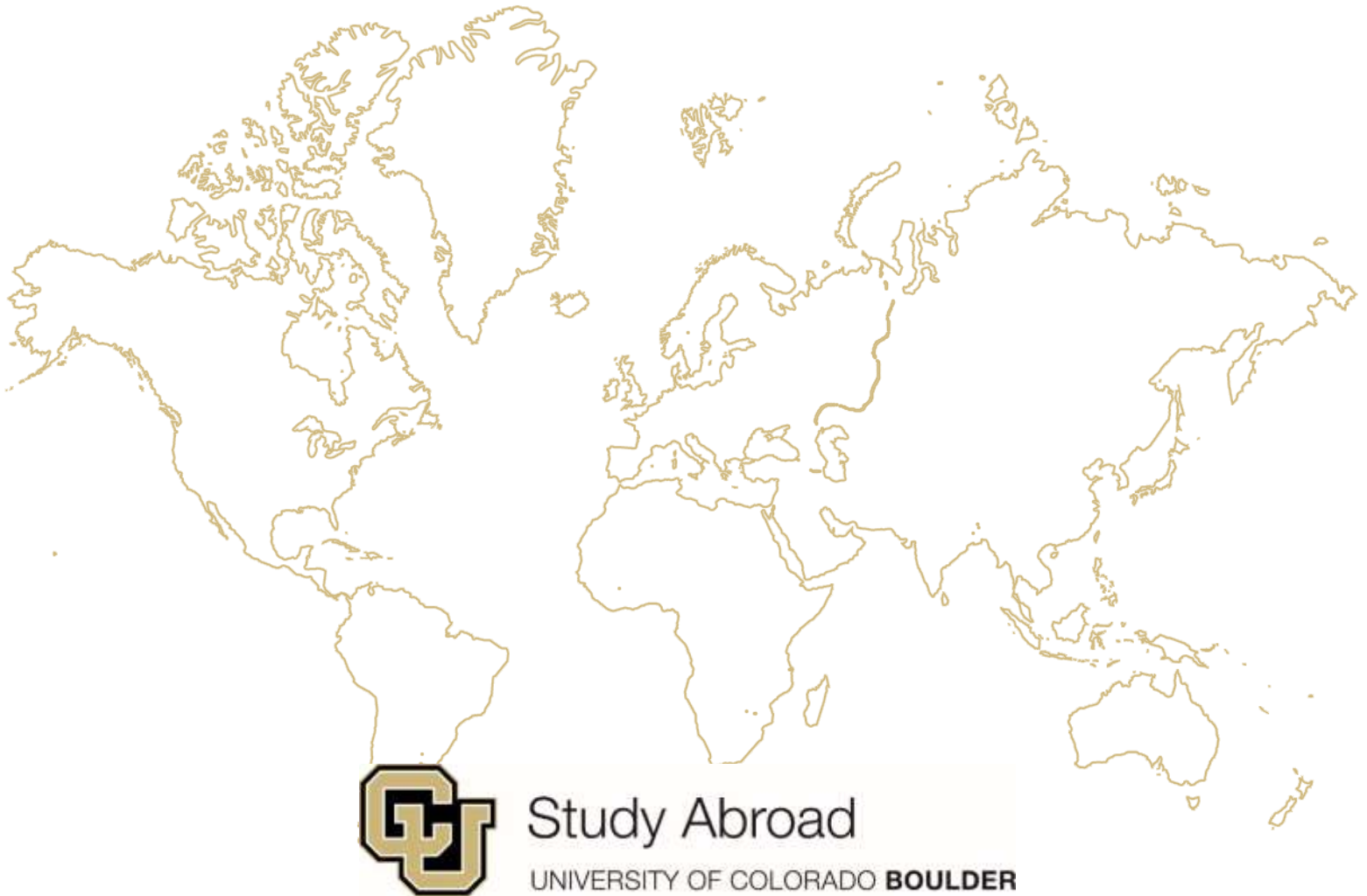


ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO STUDY ABROAD

SUMMER 2016, FALL 2016, ACADEMIC YEAR 2016-17





Contents

CONTENTS	II
CONTACTS AT CU-BOULDER.....	III
WELCOME.....	IV
GETTING READY TO GO	5
ACADEMICS	18
FINANCES	29
HEALTH	36
SAFETY	44
HOUSING	52
CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT.....	57
DISCIPLINARY ISSUES AND PROGRAM POLICIES.....	66
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	70
APPENDIX	74

Contacts at CU-Boulder

In Case of Emergency

In case of an emergency that cannot wait until the next business day:

Study Abroad Emergency: (303) 653-1671

CU-Boulder Police: (303) 492-6666

How to Contact Us:

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Center for Community
2249 Willard Loop Drive, Suite 355
University of Colorado Boulder, 123 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309-0123
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Welcome

Dear Student:

Welcome to Study Abroad at the University of Colorado Boulder. We are delighted you have chosen to study or intern abroad on a CU-Boulder program, where you will learn about:

- your host country and culture
- new ways of approaching academics, and perhaps a new perspective on your major
- new ways to look at your cultural values
- essential skills that will benefit you in your future career
- above all, yourself

Alumni often tell us that studying abroad was the best thing they did as undergraduates. It is, therefore, worth investing yourself fully in the experience. Prepare yourself for your time abroad by attending orientation and reading the materials on this website and those you will receive in the following weeks.

Most importantly, become an active learner. Start now to ask questions, to do research, and to reflect on the coming experience. If you start now and continue while you are abroad, you will take full advantage of your program.

Our society desperately needs informed citizens who know about the world and are willing to participate in the democratic process. Go out, learn, and come back ready to vote, to write that letter to the editor or to call your member of Congress and make your opinions known. In the years to come, your involvement in our democracy, along with your great memories, will make you one of the more than 24,000 satisfied alumni of CU-Boulder study abroad programs.

Enjoy!

Mary Dando
Director, Study Abroad

Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge the following organizations whose materials we refer to in this handbook:

Council on International Educational Exchange
Inter-Organizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad
University of Kansas Office of Study Abroad
University of California Education Abroad Program
Institute for the International Education of Students
University of Michigan's International Center
University of Minnesota Office of International Education
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
Penn State University's Education Abroad Programs
Margaret Pusch
School for International Training
Syracuse University's Division of International Programs Abroad
Transitions Abroad
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U.S. Department of State

Getting Ready to Go

Pre-Departure Resources.....	6
Before You Depart	6
Passports, Visas & Travel Plans.....	7
Passports	7
Getting a Passport Quickly.....	7
Passports for Family Members	7
Taking Care of Your Passport and Other Important Documents	7
Visas	8
Visa Resources	8
Travel Plans	8
U.S. Department of State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program.....	9
Non-U.S. Citizens	9
Packing For Your Trip	9
Packing Tips	9
Important Documents.....	9
Traveling with Money	10
Protecting Your Belongings.....	10
Clothing and Toiletries	10
Medical Considerations.....	11
Airline Baggage Allowances.....	11
Computers and Electronics	11
Shipping Baggage.....	12
Short Trips While Abroad	12
Storing Belongings While Abroad	12
Packing Lists	12
Communicating From Abroad	13
Parental Access to Your Records.....	13
Staying in Touch	13
Contacting Home upon Arrival	13
Short-Term Programs (3 weeks or less).....	13
Smart Phone Apps for Use with Wi-Fi.....	13
Internet-Based Options for International Calls	14
Longer-Term Programs (more than 3 weeks).....	14
Communication with Mobile Devices	14
International Plans for U.S. Cell Phones	14
Land Lines	15
Things to Consider.....	15
Security Considerations	15
Contacting Home by Mail	15
Using Email.....	16
Accessing CU-Boulder Resources Abroad	16

A Friendly Warning	16
Voting From Abroad	16
Sustainable/Responsible Travel and Study Abroad	17
Tips for Sustainable/Responsible Travel	17

Pre-Departure Resources

Once you have been accepted to a study or internship abroad program, additional tasks and information will be available to you in your [MyCUAbroad](#) account. Consult the [Once Accepted page](#) for an overview of your pre-departure responsibilities.

If you are studying or interning abroad through a partner organization (i.e. Arcadia, CAPA, CIEE, CYA, DIS, ISA, Semester at Sea, SIT, Syracuse), you will also receive information from them about required forms and tasks. Any forms that are requested through your program must be submitted to them directly – Study Abroad will not forward information to them in the post-acceptance process as we did in the initial application process.

We encourage you to share information with your parents or emergency contacts. Additional resources for parents, family and other emergency contacts are also available on our [Parents and Family page](#).

Before You Depart

In addition to the requirements in your [MyCUAbroad](#) account and through your partner organization, there are additional important tasks you should complete before you depart for your study abroad program.

Before You Leave Campus

- Update address in your [MyCUAbroad](#) (Edit Profile > Address Info) and [MyCUInfo](#) accounts (Student > MYCUINFO PROFILE > View/Update Address)
- If applicable: resolve financial matters at CU-Boulder (library fines, parking tickets, etc.), as these may affect next term's registration while abroad
- If applicable: Clear any "Incompletes", as any grades of "I" could turn into an "F" while abroad
- Optional: if you would like to give your parents access to information at CU-Boulder while you are abroad, you must do this in person at the Office of the Registrar; it cannot be done after you leave campus
- Optional: [Appoint Power of Attorney](#)

Before You Leave the U.S.

- [Contact bank\(s\) and credit card company\(ies\)](#)
- [Make copies of important documents](#)
- [Download insurance card and review insurance information](#)
- [Review host country's safety, security and health information](#)
- Gather contact information for your CU Academic Advisor, CU-Boulder [Study Abroad Program Manager](#), and on-site program staff (found in your [program-specific handbook](#))
- If applicable: [Plan for income taxes](#)
- If applicable: [Check the voting from abroad process](#)

Passports, Visas & Travel Plans

Passports

Make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after your program ends.

You will need to have a valid passport well in advance of your departure. Most students need to have their passports 3-6 months prior to departure in order to apply for student visas, so if you do not already have a passport, you should begin the application process immediately.

If you are a U.S. citizen, you can find information on [first-time passport applications](#) and [renewals](#) on the [U.S. Department of State](#) website. Unless you have urgent passport needs, you can apply for one through a regular passport acceptance facility or your local post office.

Getting a Passport Quickly

The Colorado Passport Agency in Aurora offers expedited passport services for those traveling within 14 days, or under a tight timeline to apply for foreign visas.

Colorado Passport Agency

Cherry Creek Place III Corporate Center
3151 South Vaughn Way, Suite 600
Aurora, CO 80014
1-877-487-2778

There are other options for expediting your passport including through the [U.S. Department of State's Expedited Service](#) option.

Passports for Family Members

We strongly recommend that your **emergency contacts** have a valid passport while you are abroad. This may be critical in the event of an emergency if your parent/guardian wishes to travel to be with you in a time of need. If family members are planning to visit at the end of the program we urge them to apply for, or renew, passports **before** the program begins.

Taking Care of Your Passport and Other Important Documents

- Make two paper copies and electronic scans of: the photo page of your passport, visa (if applicable), all airline tickets and/or itineraries, other ID cards, and bank cards.
- Leave copies of all important documents with your parents or another responsible party, and carry the duplicate copies separately from your wallet or purse. Email yourself the electronic scans so you always have a copy.
- Your passport is a valuable document; guard it carefully! If you must carry your passport, keep it in a money belt worn inside your clothing.
- Important: If you lose your passport abroad, immediately report it to the [U.S. Department of State](#) in Washington, D.C., (202) 955-0430. You must complete Form DS 64, Statement Regarding Lost or Stolen Passports.

Visas

Many countries require students to obtain a visa in order to study or intern abroad. As part of the application process you signed a contract agreeing to the entry requirements for your host country.

For some countries, the visa application process is long, complicated and may entail substantial fees as well as travel out-of-state to the appropriate consular office. Processing time for visas can take from a few days to several months.

Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the entry requirements for your country including the timeline, the required documentation, costs, and your consular jurisdiction (as applicable). We have provided a general overview of the process on our [Passports and Visas page](#).

If you are not a U.S. passport holder, please refer to the embassy's website of your host country to determine your requirements.

Visa Resources

1. Review the [Entry Visa Information](#) page to get an understanding of the visa application process.
2. After being accepted you will find program-specific visa information in your MyCUAbroad checklist. If you are going on a program through a partner organization (Arcadia, CAPA, CIEE, CYA, DIS, ISA, Semester at Sea, SIT, Syracuse, etc.), you may receive specific instructions from that organization.
3. Additional visa information is also available via the [U.S. Department of State's Students Abroad](#) website.

Travel Plans

Do not purchase airline tickets until you have been accepted by CU-Boulder Study Abroad, your provider or host institution AND instructed to do so.

Check the official start and end dates of your program, as listed by your provider and/or host institution (including on-site orientation, if applicable). Arriving late to your program site and/or leaving the program early is not allowed. Check pre-departure resources from your program provider to find out if a group flight is available (this is rare).

If your program does not have a group flight, start shopping around now for good airfares. Consult the resource "How to Book My Flight" for guidance (MyCUAbroad > Items to Read and Watch). Be sure to consider student discounts, one-way versus round-trip options, baggage fees, flexibility of changing your return date and any fees charged for doing so (in case you decide to stay and travel). Read the fine print and be aware of hidden fees!

If you are nervous about traveling alone, it may be possible to find a traveling partner among the other program participants. We will provide you with names and emails of the other CU students on your program during your program orientation. Many program participants start Facebook groups before departure, so do some searching for your group.

The [Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\)](#) has strict identification procedures for airline travelers. The name on a traveler's ID must match that on the travel documents. Travelers whose reservations do not contain full information will not be permitted to check in online or at airport kiosks, but must instead stand in line to see a ticket agent. Additional airport security screening and/or denied boarding may result.

Be sure to stay up-to-date with [the most current TSA and international security regulations](#), as international checkpoints may have different regulations.

U.S. Department of State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

The [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) is a free service provided by the U.S. government to citizens traveling to or living in a foreign country. Registration in this program records information the U.S. Department of State can use to assist you in case of an emergency. Once enrolled you will receive pertinent email alerts. Make sure to download the Smart Traveler app on your smart phone.

U.S. embassies and consulates assist nearly 200,000 people each year who are victims of crime, accident, or illness, or whose family and friends need to contact them in an emergency.

When an emergency happens, or if a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or civil unrest strikes during your time abroad, the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate can be your source of assistance and information. By registering you can help them assist you when you might need it the most.

Global Seminar and Exchange students:

Study Abroad will register all students who are U.S. citizens in the STEP program prior to the beginning of your program. Study Abroad will enroll you in STEP for the dates of your program and its location. If you arrive early, stay late, and/or travel in your host country or to other countries during, before, or after the program, we strongly recommend that you register with STEP for your additional travel dates and destinations if applicable.

All other study and intern abroad students:

Before you leave you should register your travel and residency plans with the U.S. Department of State if you haven't already (note that you have likely already been encouraged to register during the application process by Study Abroad or by your program). Registration is free and you can enroll via the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) enrollment page. You must include your email address when you register so you can receive email alerts.

Non-U.S. Citizens

If you are not a U.S. citizen you should register with your embassy in the country or countries where you are traveling or studying. The services that the U.S. government provides to U.S. citizens while abroad (including assistance in an emergency) will not be available to non-U.S. citizens, even if you are hosted by a U.S. program.

Packing For Your Trip

What you should bring depends greatly on where you are going and what you plan to do there. For example, while the French reserve flip flops exclusively for the beach, in Bali they are considered appropriate business attire. You should consult your program's orientation materials for additional packing suggestions.

NOTE: Never take more than you can comfortably carry, by yourself, at one time!

Packing Tips

Important Documents

There are a handful of items you need to take with you and keep track of the entire time you are abroad.

You should keep them in a safe place, and if you are traveling away from your host city, be aware of where they are at all times.

- ✓ Passport (with visa, if applicable)
- ✓ Accident and Health and Travel Insurance information
- ✓ Credit/Debit Cards
- ✓ Plane tickets or copy of your itinerary
- ✓ Health Documentation
- ✓ Emergency info (medical, itinerary, relatives)

Traveling with Money

It is usually best to assume that you will not have immediate access to an ATM when you arrive in your host country, especially if you are traveling in the developing world. If this is the case, plan on acquiring some local currency prior to your departure. You should have enough to pay for a meal, transportation to your host site, and a night in a hotel. The exact amount will vary by country.

In some countries, U.S. cash, especially non-torn dollar bills, come in handy. They can be used for tipping, purchasing small items, etc.

Protecting Your Belongings

Carry anything you can't afford to live without on your person while traveling, not in checked baggage. This includes your passport, documents, and anything you need at all times, such as contact lenses and medication.

Organize your funds into two separate packets, each with a credit card and currency. When in-country one of these packets should be left at your residence.

Don't pack more than you can carry and never let your bags out of your sight. Purchase and use a lock for your luggage. Keep your purse in your lap in public, always have a hand or foot in a loop or strap of your luggage when you set it down, and if you need to sleep on public transportation, use your pack as a pillow.

Be aware of pickpockets, and as a general precaution do not carry your money or passport in an easily accessible place. Pickpockets often mingle widely in tourist crowds, including but not limited to airports, train stations, travel agencies and museums, so be extra vigilant in touristy areas.

A concealed money belt or neck pouch is a good idea in some areas, but showing that you have one can make you a target.

Don't bring anything you can't afford to lose. This includes items of sentimental value such as family jewelry or heirlooms.

Clothing and Toiletries

Consult your [program-specific handbook](#) or information from your program for culturally appropriate clothing information. In general, pack an interchangeable wardrobe of easy washables in dark colors and neutrals. Dark colors tend not to show dirt as easily. Rolling, not folding, your clothing is more space-efficient and prevents wrinkles.

Prepare to layer. Even if you are studying in a location with a hot climate, pack a few warm items. Think about how cold summer nights can be in Colorado!

In many countries you will be able to purchase all necessary toiletries upon your arrival. Make sure that this is the case if you plan to purchase them abroad.

Pack toiletries in sealable bags and bring extras – they also work well for keeping wet or dirty clothing separate from clean things.

Medical Considerations

Pack prescription medication in its original container, and carry a letter from your doctor. Prescription medications should always be carried with you, not stored in your baggage. Be sure it's legal in your host country.

If you have any ongoing medical conditions, we recommend that you bring photocopies of your medical history, along with prescription information. For more information on taking your prescriptions overseas, see the [Health](#) chapter.

Students with a U.S. prescription for marijuana should note that according to U.S. Federal law, you cannot fly on a commercial airliner with marijuana or marijuana-containing products, even if you have a doctor's written prescription or a medical marijuana identification card (MMIC). Students with a U.S. prescription for marijuana can be arrested, prosecuted, and/or deported, if in possession of an illegal substance. You should never travel internationally with any amount of medical marijuana, otherwise you take the risk of being detained, arrested and charged, deported, missing your flight, and having your medicine confiscated.

Airline Baggage Allowances

All airlines have guidelines on the weight and size of baggage allowed. You will be charged a fee (often an expensive one) if your baggage exceeds your airline's limit. For most international flights you are allowed one free checked bag but many airlines will charge for a second one. Many airlines are now weighing all baggage and assessing fees. Know the baggage policies and weight limits for your airline.

If you plan to take your own bike, skis, or other large items, be prepared to pay an oversize luggage charge. You may want to insure these items if they are of high value.

Computers and Electronics

Electrical systems are different around the world. In most countries you will need an adapter to plug anything into the wall. In many countries you will need a converter to use U.S. appliances due to voltage differences. Even with a converter small appliances such as hairdryers, might not work properly. Check [Current Solutions, Inc.](#) for country-specific information. For more information on converters and adapters, check [Independent Traveler](#) or the [WSA website](#).

You may want to bring your laptop or tablet – check program-specific recommendations. If you bring your laptop or tablet overseas, we recommend that you insure it against damage or theft outside the U.S. Back up your information on external hard drives before leaving, or with a data cloud service that can automatically update. Most new laptops have internal current converters, but you will still need to get the proper plug adapter for the country where you study.

Register imported electronics (cameras, cell phones, etc.) with U.S. Customs before leaving the States. Foreign-made items are subject to duty charges when you reenter the U.S. unless you can prove you purchased them here. Take the items to Customs at the airport and fill out a registration slip.

For battery operated devices, be aware that batteries can be expensive abroad!

Shipping Baggage

We do not recommend that you ship your baggage, either to your program location or back home upon completion. The cost can be exorbitant, there are often customs regulations that limit what you can send and receive, and you may be charged hefty duty fees or storage fees while baggage is waiting for customs clearance. Your belongings could be held at a customs office far from your program site and you may have to retrieve it in person at great expense. It's not unusual to hear stories about paying high duty fees for packages of "personal effects" that have a high declared value for insurance purposes. One student had to pay approximately \$100 to pick up a backpack.

Should you choose to ship your belongings, label all packages "used personal effects with no commercial value." This will help you avoid costly duty fees. It's also a good idea to purchase insurance.

The least expensive way to ship baggage is by surface mail through the U.S. Postal Service, but this can take 6-10 weeks.

Prescription medications should always be carried with you and not shipped in baggage.

Short Trips While Abroad

If you plan to take short trips away from your program location while overseas, you should pack a small backpack or duffel bag, preferably one you can easily lock. This can also double as a school bag for your classes.

Storing Belongings While Abroad

If you will be returning to CU-Boulder after your term abroad, you may wish to store some of your belongings locally while you're gone. If so, there are a number of different options available to you in the Boulder area. Feel free to contact any of these organizations to learn more about their packing and moving services, as well as their short-term storage options:

- [College Student Storage](#)
- [Boulder Bins Self Storage](#)
- [Guardian Storage Solutions](#)
- [Boulder Self Storage](#)
- [College Boxes](#)
- [SecurCare Self Storage](#)

Please note that neither CU-Boulder nor the Office of International Education endorse or are affiliated in any way with these organizations.

Packing Lists

Your best sources of specific information are the alumni of your program and materials from your program provider.

There are also a number of useful online packing lists:

- This [interactive checklist](#) from Independent Traveler allows you to customize and print a packing list for your destination.
- Rick Steves' Europe offers a [Packing List for Europe](#).
- Changes in Latitude, a travel store in Boulder, provides a detailed [checklist](#).
- [Journeywoman](#) provides country-specific clothing suggestions for women.

Communicating From Abroad

Parental Access to Your Records

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) of 1974 (FERPA) protects your educational records. It limits the information that can be discussed with anyone – even your parents – unless you specifically allow them to access your information.

While overseas, you may want a parent to talk to the Office of International Education, Office of Financial Aid, Bursar's Office, or your academic advisor if problems arise with bills, registration, financial aid, or advising. You can provide blanket permission on the Student Information System by providing [written consent](#) to the Office of the Registrar.

The form should be submitted in person to the Office of the Registrar. It will be accepted from the student with ID verification. If you are out of town, your signature must be notarized, and the form can be faxed to the [Office of the Registrar](#) (303) 492-8748.

Staying in Touch

Contacting Home upon Arrival

Your family will be waiting to hear that you have arrived safely, but it may not be possible to find a phone and figure out a new system the moment you arrive. Make arrangements to call home by a certain time, and then be sure to do it! Give yourself a time cushion when you arrive to get to your destination and get settled - 48 hours is recommended.

Make sure to determine the time zone difference before you go. [Time and Date](#) has a time zone section that tells you what time it is in other parts of the world.

When your friends and family call you, if you will have a local number abroad, they will need to dial the following numbers to make an international call from the U.S.: 011 (international access code) + [country code](#) + city code + the local number. There are also international dialing apps for some smartphones. For more detailed instructions, see howtocallabroad.com

Short-Term Programs (3 weeks or less)

Many students on shorter term programs find that they are able to communicate easily from abroad without having a local phone or an international data plan. Since Wi-Fi is ever more prevalent worldwide, it's often possible to utilize Wi-Fi networks and texting/calling apps or other internet-based options for all of your communication needs. You should also check with your U.S. carrier, as a few (including T-Mobile and Sprint) are now offering free data coverage abroad in certain locations.

Smart Phone Apps for Use with Wi-Fi

If you have a smart phone and access to Wi-Fi, here is a list of apps that can help you stay in communication with friends and family via free or cheap calling and texting:

- [WhatsApp](#)
- [Pinger](#)

- [KakoaTalk](#)
- [TextMe](#)
- [Viber](#)
- [Text Now](#)

Internet-Based Options for International Calls

[Skype](#) is one of the best options for keeping in touch internationally if you have a reliable internet connection. Download the program for free on your computer before you leave the U.S. as some countries do not allow you to download the program. Encourage your family and friends to do the same. Skype provides members with one-to-one video calls, group calls, instant messaging, texts, voice messages, skype to skype calls, and calls to cell phones and landlines.

Calling, messaging, and video use between computers are free, or you can buy credit to make calls to landlines or cell phones for about 2¢ per minute (depending on where you are calling).

[Google Voice](#) is another good option while abroad. Google Voice is an internet-based phone service anyone can use regardless of phone type and cell phone provider. One great feature of Google Voice is the ability to place international calls at low rates. Create an account for free and then purchase credits through Google Checkout. You can either use the Google Voice mobile app or Google Voice website to make your call at about \$0.10/ minute depending on your location.

Longer-Term Programs (more than 3 weeks)

While you may find that it's possible for you to utilize Wi-Fi and apps exclusively for your summer, semester or year abroad, particularly if you're in a large city, students usually find that it's most convenient to have access to a cell phone of some kind for a longer stay abroad. In addition, some programs require students to get a phone abroad; you will either receive pre-departure emails on this topic or receive information during on-site orientations.

Communication with Mobile Devices

Cell phones in the U.S. are often 'locked' into a carrier contract and do not work in other countries with local SIM cards. New laws enacted in 2014 have made it easier/more common to be able to unlock your U.S. phone, but it isn't a guarantee and may or may not be compatible with carriers abroad. You'll need to research options with your carrier, and if unlocking isn't an option, you can rent or buy a cell phone in your host country. You can usually choose either a monthly or a pay-as-you-go plan. If you go this route, be sure to have your U.S. carrier put a hold on your U.S. phone while you're abroad.

U.S. smart phones with expanded networks have become a popular way to stay in touch while abroad (and AT&T even offers [a study abroad plan](#)), but be aware of hefty roaming charges for calls and texting. If you are calling locals in the host country it will be an international call from your U.S. number so you will be charged roaming plus international call rates.

International Plans for U.S. Cell Phones

Many providers offer a flat-rate billing structure that bills the same rate for calls, text messages, and data use abroad. These international rates vary by country, so be sure to do your research before you go.

Students should be wary of overage rates for international plans. If you go over the allotted amount of calls, text messages, or data, overage can become quite expensive! Uploading a few photos, downloading a few

attachments or watching short YouTube videos can easily cost \$100; watching a full-length movie can be an \$1,800 show ticket!

Wi-Fi access on phones can also be extremely expensive and smart phone apps may be updating automatically without your knowledge. Even if your phone checks the local temperature, that'll cost you, so make sure to turn off all background data and shut down unnecessary applications. Before you depart, be sure to call your U.S. carrier to ask about settings on your phone to prevent hefty Wi-Fi and/or data charges.

You also have the option of buying an international SIM card, which can be an affordable option if you have an unlocked phone, but keep in mind that you will likely not be able to keep your U.S. phone number.

Land Lines

Land lines, once the only form of communication for many locations, are now largely obsolete around the world. If you do have access to a land line (such as in a host family's home), keep in mind that making calls is likely very expensive, and you should plan to purchase a calling card to place personal calls.

Things to Consider

It is highly encouraged to plan ahead of your trip and find what mode of communication suits your needs most. Students can find great information on specific plans and packages by researching the provider's website for international plans. We also recommend that you speak with alumni who have recently returned from your host country, as they will have the most up-to-date feedback on what works best in your host city. You should ask yourself the following questions to determine what the best fit will be for you abroad:

- Am I only going to be making local calls while abroad?
- What kind of international plan does my carrier provide?
- How much calling/texting/internet use will I need while abroad?
- Can I unlock my U.S. phone and, if so, is it compatible with carriers in my host country abroad?
- Am I good at controlling/monitoring my talk time/data use (if necessary)?
- Am I going to rely more on internet for international calls or a calling plan?
- Will it be easier/more affordable to purchase a cheap phone abroad with a pay-as-you-go plan?

Security Considerations

Remember that when you travel with a smartphone, you're basically carrying a tiny computer around in your pocket! You likely have personal and sensitive data stored on your phone that may be accessible to others while you connect to a public Wi-Fi network. As much as possible, be sure you're using a secure network when accessing your bank account or completing other sensitive tasks, and only enabling GPS services when necessary. If your phone is lost or stolen, you should check with your provider to see if they are able to do a "remote-wipe" to remove your data and restore the phone to its factory settings.

Contacting Home by Mail

Mail services and prices in other countries are somewhat different than in the U.S., but things basically work the same way they do here. Please be aware that the postal systems of some countries may be much slower and less reliable. Never mail something you can't afford to lose.

If you are receiving a package abroad be aware that any item mailed to you is subject to VAT or an import tax, even if it's not new. This tax can often be 30-90% of the value on top of shipping charges paid. Never mail any prescription medication across any international border.

Using Email

Because CU-Boulder uses email for all official correspondence with students, you need to access your CU email account while you are overseas. You can add a personal email address by logging into your MyCUAbroad account and adding a "Carbon Copy email address."

Accessing CU-Boulder Resources Abroad

You can access many of the electronic resources at the CU-Boulder libraries while you are abroad via the [Chinook On-line catalog](#). You may access most of these resources either via a proxy server or via [Virtual Private Network \(VPN\)](#). The library's [off-campus access page](#) explains both the proxy and the VPN. **This information is also helpful for students traveling to countries where certain websites (such as Google, which also operates CU email) may be restricted.**

A Friendly Warning

While email, Facebook, Skype, etc. can be a very effective form of communication, don't over-use them. The more time you spend communicating with people at home, the less time you spend immersed in your new culture.

An easy way to communicate with friends and family is to set up an email distribution list or blog so that you can share the same report on your study abroad experience with everyone. This saves time and also gives you a written record that you will have later. You can also share photos and experiences with those back home without having to send separate emails. Many free blog hosting sites are available, including [Blogger.com](#) and [WordPress.com](#).

Voting From Abroad

If you will be abroad during an election cycle in the U.S., we encourage you to still participate in your civic duty by voting from abroad! Because you will be living outside the United States, there are a few steps you must take to ensure that you receive an absentee ballot. All of the information provided below is sourced from the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website and is subject to change.

Voting from abroad is easy – just follow these steps:

Step 1: Complete and mail the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) well in advance of the election date. If you are registering to vote and requesting an absentee ballot, the FPCA may need to be mailed earlier. Instructions for completing the FPCA Voter Registration and Absentee Ballot Request are available on the [Federal Voting Assistance Program](#) website.

Step 2: You must send your completed FPCA to the local election official in the county of your legal residence, which is most likely where you live while studying at CU-Boulder or where your parents live. In the state-by-state information (see website above), you will find addresses for all election offices in your state.

Step 3: A Local Election Official approves the Registration request and mails absentee ballots (usually 30-45 days before an election).

Step 4: Vote and mail the absentee ballot to the Local Election Official in time to meet state deadlines (See state specific information on the FVAP website).

If you have questions about this process, your best resources are the [Absentee Voting Frequently Asked Questions](#) page and the [Absentee Voting Information](#) provided by the U.S. Department of State.

Sustainable/Responsible Travel and Study Abroad

We all know that the CU-Boulder community strives to be “green.” Sustainability has long been a top priority on our campus and our office wants you to take that mindset with you as you travel the world on your study or internship abroad program.

Read more about sustainable travel [on our website](#). You can also consult a [list of resources](#) in the Appendix.

Tips for Sustainable/Responsible Travel

While you are abroad you can follow the suggestions below in order to minimize the adverse impact of your presence and maximize its positive impact on your host culture:

- Use water and electricity sparingly.
- Bring a reusable water bottle and drink tap water where it is potable.
- Learn about local recycling rules and schedules.
- Learn about your travel destination(s) and how it/they might be involved in sustainable practices such as their human rights record, environmental conservation record, commitment to peace, etc.
- Use the local language as much as you can.
- Learn about cultural norms by talking with and learning from locals.
- Dress appropriately.
- See if there are sustainable accommodations and transportation available when you travel.
- Don't collect, buy or export endangered natural products.
- Choose low-impact recreational activities.
- Don't disturb wildlife.
- Volunteer or intern with a local school or organization to get a better understanding of your host culture and country, or try to find an organization dedicated to environmental work.
- Research local environmental issues and initiatives or write a paper on sustainability for your class abroad.
- Try to buy locally produced goods and food.
- Try to contribute to the local community by using local services as much as possible.
- Always ask people before photographing them, as some religions and cultures forbid photography.

Taking Photographs Abroad

You will undoubtedly be excited to capture your experience abroad by taking pictures of the people and places you encounter. It is important that you always ask people before photographing them, as some religions and cultures forbid photography (and some people simply may not be comfortable with having a stranger take their picture). Before you get out your camera, your priority should be first and foremost on respecting the local community. For more tips on responsible photography abroad, read the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) Report: [Picture This: Dos and Don'ts for Photography](#).

Academics

Major/Minor Credits/Requirements	19
A&S Core, MAPS and General Elective Credits/Requirements.....	19
A&S Core	19
General Elective Credit.....	20
Minimum Academic Preparation Standards (MAPS).....	20
MAPS Foreign Language:.....	21
Grades and Credits	21
Grades	21
Course Levels (Upper vs. Lower division) and Departments	21
Important Academic Policies	22
In Residence Credit	22
Course Load Minimums	22
Course Load Maximums	22
Attendance & Participation	22
No Early Exams or Make-Up Exams	22
Incompletes.....	23
45 Hour Limit.....	23
Internships	23
Service-Learning Credit	23
Graduation	23
Registering at CU-Boulder for Study Abroad	24
How Do I Register for Study Abroad?.....	24
Special Considerations	24
Students Considering Cancellation/Withdrawal from Their Study Abroad Program	24
Students with a Conditional Acceptance or Students on a Waitlist	24
Academic Condition(s).....	24
Can I Register for Study Abroad & CU-Boulder Courses Concurrently?.....	25
Students Who Withdraw from Study Abroad after Being Registered for STDY 1001	25
Registering for CU-Boulder Classes for the Next Term	25
Prepare Before Leaving Boulder.....	25
Know Your Registration Time Assignment.....	25
Check the Current Course Schedule	25
Check for Holds and Get Them Removed <i>in Advance</i> of Your Time Assignment.....	26
Register on myCUinfo during Your Assigned Time.....	26
Registering If You Don't Have Internet Access	26
Read Your Email.....	26
Questions or Problems?	26
Web Resources	26
Honors Courses	26
Processing Study Abroad Credits at CU.....	27
Taking Time Off After a Study Abroad Program	27

Major/Minor Credits/Requirements

As a CU student, all courses you take abroad will appear on your CU transcript. Unless you take one of the rare courses that is non-transferable (see section below), your courses will count as CU in-residence credit and towards your overall graduation hours. If you want to know how the credit will apply to your major/minor requirements, you must consult with your academic advisor.

Complete the following steps to determine which courses abroad will best meet requirements for your major/minor. You should **get advising on twice as many courses as you plan to take abroad**. Why? In case courses are canceled or you could find that there is a scheduling conflict when you are enrolling at your program site. Allow yourself as much flexibility as possible and know your remaining degree requirements!

1. Make an appointment with your Academic Advisor.
2. Consult your degree audit to determine your remaining requirements.
3. Search for pre-reviewed requirements posted on the [Major/Minor Approvals List](#).
4. (If needed) search for additional courses offered on your selected study abroad program through [your program's page](#).
5. Fill out your Study Abroad Major/Minor Course evaluation form and save it to your laptop along with course descriptions/syllabi (the latter only needed if you plan to submit new courses for review). Bring your laptop with you to the appointment.
6. During the appointment with your Academic Advisor, s/he will recommend any changes to your proposed courses, guide you through any next steps, and explain the process for receiving any course evaluation decisions.

Take your advisor's contact information (including name, email and fax number) with you overseas. Also, take a copy of your department's major requirements list, your advising forms, and remember to consult your degree audit.

If you are not a CU-Boulder student, it is your responsibility to determine how credit is evaluated at your home institution.

A&S Core, MAPS and General Elective Credits/Requirements

A&S Core

Study abroad courses must be evaluated and approved by the College of Arts and Sciences before they may fulfill an A&S core requirement. Read [the Arts & Sciences criteria](#) for each core area before having courses evaluated to make sure they relate as closely as possible to the A&S core area description. Only certain College of Arts & Sciences Credit Evaluators can approve core. A&S Core requirements are very specific.

A list of the courses that have been evaluated for A&S Core is accessible on the [A&S Core & MAPS](#) page. This page also contains instructions for submitting new courses for review. Courses abroad may change, so for all reviewed courses it is extremely important that you verify that the course you intend to take will indeed be offered when you are there, and that the course number and the course title of the evaluated course match exactly what is offered abroad.

Consider Important Guidelines:

- Courses that are fewer than 2.7 credits will not fulfill core, even if the content was approved for core.
- A&S Core evaluations are limited to three courses per area that you would like to fulfill.
- **Written Communication** is rarely approved and should be taken on the Boulder campus.

- If planning to earn **Natural Science (NS)** credit, verify with the department that the course is being assigned to as this may impact the NS sequence and the NS non-sequence requirements.
- When a course is reviewed by A&S it is reviewed for all core areas; if it fulfills more than one area this will be indicated. Similarly, if a course on the list indicates “Elective only/not approved for core” it is not eligible for any core area.
- **Independent study projects** cannot be used to fulfill general education requirements at CU-Boulder, including core. Some departments further restrict the use of independent study hours toward meeting major requirements.
- Keep copies of all email correspondence regarding core credit until you graduate.
- **Have a back-up plan:** We advise that you have an approved back-up course for each core area that you need fulfilled in case you encounter unforeseen course schedule conflicts or canceled courses. Many programs give language proficiency exams on site, so you may not know exactly which class or level you will test into until you arrive.

General Elective Credit

The vast majority of courses on CU-Boulder approved programs are in traditional academic disciplines and will be applied towards degree requirements as elective credit at the very least. However, some courses taken on study abroad are not eligible for CU-Boulder credit. Below are the steps to ensure that all courses you take will count towards your general electives/hours towards graduation:

1. Check for any no-credit (non-transferable) courses on your program by viewing the [No-Credit course list](#). This list includes courses that have previously been determined as no-credit. Do NOT take courses on this list.
2. View the list below which describes courses that will not be accepted for credit by CU-Boulder. Avoid these types of courses. In general, you should **be wary of courses that a) sound *really* fun and b) don't sound like any courses that are taught at CU-Boulder.**
3. If you have any concerns about a particular course, you can submit it for review. Please use the [A&S Core](#) evaluation form and instructions.

Types of courses not eligible for credit at CU:

- Physical education courses (e.g. yoga, recreational dancing, sports)
- Cooking and food appreciation courses
- Courses about wine
- Courses identified by CU-Boulder as remedial, i.e., necessary to correct academic deficiencies, such as remedial English, mathematics, science, and developmental reading
- Outdoor leadership and related courses through Outward Bound, NOLS or similar programs
- Tourism studies courses
- Vocational-technical courses that are offered at two-year and proprietary institution
- Credits earned for work experience (including some internships) or through a cooperative education program (see the section on internships below for more information)
- Courses in religion that constitute specialized religious training or that are doctrinal in nature
- English-language proficiency courses (courses designed for non-native English speakers)
- Applied medical courses
- Courses or programs identified as college orientation

In addition, some Business classes may not be eligible for any CU-Boulder credit for Business & non-Business majors alike. Business majors should work closely with their advisor to get all Business courses pre-approved.

Minimum Academic Preparation Standards (MAPS)

CU-Boulder students are expected to have completed courses that meet certain minimum academic preparation standards (MAPS) before enrolling at CU-Boulder. The MAPS courses for the College of Arts and Sciences are listed [here](#). If you would like to **complete** (not work towards completing) a MAPS requirement abroad, you need to have the course evaluated by the appropriate department.

- Unlike initial A&S Core evaluations, MAPS evaluations require a course **syllabus**.
- Courses that are fewer than 2.7 credits will not fulfill MAPS, even if the content was approved for MAPS.
- MAPS evaluations are limited to three courses per area that you would like to fulfill.

MAPS Foreign Language:

Language courses must be evaluated and approved by the appropriate language department in order to fulfill MAPS Foreign Language deficiencies. The CU-Boulder courses that fulfill the MAPS foreign language deficiency can be found [here](#). Language courses taken on study abroad programs must be determined to be the equivalent to one of these courses in order to fulfill this requirement.

Please consult your [program-specific handbook](#) for a list of language courses which have already been evaluated.

Grades and Credits

Grades

There are two different grading systems for study abroad, depending on your program:

- **Pass/Fail:** On the majority of study abroad programs, the grades you earn abroad will be converted to pass/fail credit on your CU-Boulder transcript. See your program-specific handbook for a chart that lists the grades abroad and how they will be converted to pass/fail. Grades of “Pass” or “NC” (No Credit) will not be factored into your CU GPA, but **failing grades will**.
- **Letter Grades:** For the following programs, the letter grades (A-F) you earn abroad will appear on your CU transcript and be averaged into your CU GPA.
 - Global Seminars
 - Internships for which CU-Boulder acts as the school of record (see [your internship web page](#) if you are not sure if this applies to your program).

Regardless of which grading policy applies, the following policies hold true:

- Study abroad pass/fail credit is exempt from college limits on student-elected pass/fail credit. Courses posted with grades of “Pass” **CAN** apply towards major, minor, Core and other degree requirements, with formal approval from the relevant department.
- On programs where pass/fail credit is earned, students cannot choose to have letter grades recorded instead (and vice-versa).
- Note that graduate/professional schools may wish to see the original study abroad transcript for admission purposes. If you participated on a program that converted your grades to Pass/Fail, keep in mind that the actual grades you earned abroad may still be seen by others in the future.

If you need to clarify which grading policy applies to you, consult the program specific handbook on the [Once Accepted](#) page or the Academics chart on your [program-specific web page](#).

Course Levels (Upper vs. Lower division) and Departments

The title of the course and course level will appear on your CU transcript. Courses listed as 1999SA or 2999SA are lower-division credit. Courses listed as 3999SA or 4999SA are upper-division credit.

First-year language courses are listed as 1999SA; second-year as 2999SA and all advanced language course will be listed as 3999SA, even if they are 4th year level.

Each course will be listed under the department that would most likely offer the course at CU-Boulder.

The ultimate decision regarding how credit will be recorded on the CU transcript will be made by the University of Colorado Boulder and not by the student.

Important Academic Policies

In Residence Credit

Coursework completed on a CU-Boulder study abroad program is listed on your CU transcript as if the credit were earned on the Boulder campus. **It is CU credit, not transfer credit.**

Course Load Minimums

You must be enrolled as a full-time student on a CU-Boulder program. Full-time is defined as at least the equivalent of 12 CU-Boulder credit hours each semester or at least 24 credit hours per academic year. Some programs have higher required credit minimums. In such cases, students must abide by the program's required credit minimum. Summer course load minimums vary by program, but you must be a full-time student for the length of your program. See your [program-specific handbook](#).

You must take the full-time credit load on your study abroad program. You cannot be enrolled in courses at CU-Boulder through continuing education or independent study to substitute for your full-time course load abroad.

Non-credit internships and/or courses not eligible for CU-Boulder credit do not count as part of your required minimum load.

Under enrollment could result in dismissal from your study abroad program or host university. Under enrollment also could result in your deportation from your host country due to terms violations of your student visa. Under enrollment may affect your financial aid as well.

Course Load Maximums

14-16 credit hours is a reasonable semester load. Only in rare cases would you take more than 16 hours in a semester abroad. You may not take more than the equivalent of 21 CU-Boulder credits in one term. If you exceed the 21 hour maximum, some of your credits will be converted to "no credit" as a result of this. If you believe you will exceed this limit, you should consult your study abroad Program Manager.

Attendance & Participation

You are responsible for following your program's/host institution's attendance policy for classes and program activities, and for completing assigned work. Failure to participate fully in a program may constitute academic misconduct and result in dismissal from the program.

No Early Exams or Make-Up Exams

Exams must be taken on site at the regularly scheduled times. No exceptions are allowed.

Incompletes

It is your responsibility to finish all course work and to take all final exams before leaving your program site. Incompletes will be recorded as “IF” on your CU transcript. If we do not receive a new transcript from the program site showing a revised grade the “IF” will automatically turn into an “F” one year after the term during which it was earned.

If you officially withdraw from a program, you will receive “W’s”, not incompletes, for courses you didn’t finish before you withdrew. You will receive credit and grades for courses that were completed before you withdrew.

45 Hour Limit

If you are an A&S student, you may not apply more than 45 credit hours earned in a single department towards your degree. There is a six-hour exemption for honors courses and/or honors thesis hours.

Internships

Some internships abroad offer the *possibility* of academic credit, however, you will not *automatically* receive CU credit for internships abroad. If credit is offered on-site, your department/school/college must agree to grant credit by completing the [CU-Boulder Study Abroad Internship Credit Approval Form](#). Please note that there are limits on the number of internship credits that can apply to a CU degree, and departments have varying rules on how credit hours will be assigned.

If you complete an internship but do not obtain written approval to receive CU credit, the course will appear on your CU transcript as no credit (“NC”).

The College of Engineering and Applied Science does not award credit for international internships. Students in the College of Engineering and Applied Science will not receive academic credit for internship programs and may not use financial aid.

Some countries consider internships to be a form of work; review the restrictions for working on a student visa.

Service-Learning Credit

Credit earned on CU-Boulder study abroad for courses designated as service learning shall be recorded and posted to the CU transcript using the normal policies and procedures.

Graduation

If you plan to graduate within the next year, check with your dean's office and review the Office of the Registrar's [Graduation](#) page for graduation application deadlines and notification procedures. Students in the College of Arts & Sciences should also refer to the Academic Advising Center's [Graduation](#) page.

If you are a senior, do not plan to graduate the same semester you are abroad. It usually takes too long for transcripts to be received to make the graduation deadline. Do file for graduation before leaving Boulder, but plan to graduate the semester after your program ends. Please also note that an August graduation may or may not be possible for study abroad in the spring semester. If you hope to graduate in August after a spring abroad, check with your Program Manager to determine if this is possible.

Regardless of your official, posted graduation date, you can typically still participate in the graduation ceremony if you are on track to meet your final requirements. For example, if you study abroad in the spring semester and won't officially graduate until August or even December, you can likely still participate in the May graduation ceremony (assuming you will return from your study abroad program in time).

See the [Study Abroad Transcripts](#) page for a guide of when transcripts normally arrive to Study Abroad.

Registering at CU-Boulder for Study Abroad

The study abroad placeholder course (STDY 1001) marks your enrollment in an official study abroad program for the semester you are abroad. This temporary course will be replaced with your actual coursework when official transcript of your courses and credits completed abroad is received. This course does not register you for individual classes you plan to take on your study abroad program – that is a separate process which varies by program (see your [program-specific handbook](#) for information).

How Do I Register for Study Abroad?

The Study Abroad Registrar will register all students in the CU-Boulder study abroad placeholder course unless your acceptance is conditional (see below). The registration timeline is as follows:

- Spring and Calendar Year programs: November/December
- Summer programs: April
- Fall and Academic Year programs: April – June (depending on program start date)
- Winter programs: November

Critical to your registration in the course is that you have no holds or “Service Indicators” on your account. Most stops or Service Indicators on your CU-Boulder record will prevent registration. Make sure you have no holds on your registration by logging into your MyCUInfo account. If you expect to receive financial aid, you should always be prepared for enrollment (no stops, etc. that could prevent registration). Please address any questions concerning your study abroad enrollment to [Janice Kriegel](#), Study Abroad Registrar.

Special Considerations

Students Considering Cancellation/Withdrawal from Their Study Abroad Program

If you have *any* doubt about whether you'll go on the study abroad program, register for CU-Boulder courses. Be sure to communicate with your Program Manager if you are unsure about going abroad. Once you are sure that you are going, drop the Boulder campus courses so that you may be registered for the study abroad placeholder course.

If you have signed your CU-Boulder Participant Contract be aware of the withdrawal schedule on the [Program Costs](#) page.

Students with a Conditional Acceptance or Students on a Waitlist

If you have been accepted with a condition or you are on the waitlist for a program, you should register for regular CU-Boulder campus courses. Once you have been fully accepted into your program, you will be notified to drop the Boulder campus courses and will be enrolled in the study abroad placeholder course.

Academic Condition(s)

If you don't fulfill your conditions, let your CU-Boulder Program Manager know after your last final. Make arrangements with your professor(s) to let you know your grade(s) as soon as possible. Although we check all student transcripts at the end of the semester, it is your responsibility to provide us with this information.

If you are dismissed from a study abroad program for failing to meet academic conditions the nonrefundable deposit paid to CU will be refunded.

Can I Register for Study Abroad & CU-Boulder Courses Concurrently?

Since you do not pay CU-Boulder tuition while you are studying or interning abroad, you will not be allowed to register for any CU-Boulder course during the term you are abroad. The only exception is if you take an online course through Continuing Education, in which case you will be charged the normal fees. Taking an online course will not be considered part of your full-time enrollment abroad. You will still need to meet the minimum credit requirements of the host institution.

Students Who Withdraw from Study Abroad after Being Registered for STDY 1001

You must first notify Study Abroad **in writing** that you are withdrawing (you must use your CU email account). After notifying Study Abroad, you must drop STDY 1001-800 if you want to register for CU-Boulder courses.

Don't forget that withdrawing from study abroad after you have signed your Participant Contract will result in additional financial obligations.

Check the withdrawal schedule for your program available on the [Program Costs](#) page. Carefully read this information, **paying particular attention to the withdrawal fees and their effective dates.**

This section applies to all students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder program. Students at other universities should glance at the academic/registration topics and investigate how to return to their own institutions.

Registering for CU-Boulder Classes for the Next Term

CU-Boulder degree-seeking students can register through [myCUinfo](#) while abroad for the next semester. You will be given a time assignment for registration, as you normally would if you were on campus (based on your class standing, etc.).

Prepare Before Leaving Boulder

Discuss your courses/degree requirements with your Academic Advisor before departing for study abroad. Bring course lists or other documentation abroad with you.

Know Your Registration Time Assignment

Check [myCUinfo](#) to view your time assignment and mark your calendar. Take into account all time/day differences between your overseas time zone and the CU time zone. Time assignments should be available through [myCUinfo](#) in March (for fall) and October (for spring).

Check the Current Course Schedule

Once course and schedule information is available on the web, check to make sure the classes you hope

to take are offered and do not conflict with each other. Do this promptly so that you have time to find alternative courses and work with your Academic Advisor as needed. Registration information for Fall should be available on the web in March. Spring information is usually available in October.

Check for Holds and Get Them Removed *in Advance* of Your Time Assignment

Students currently abroad may still be flagged with an advising stop/service indicator from your major department or college on campus. Look for this as soon as you receive your registration time information, and email your Academic Advisor to have the hold removed. Don't wait to do this until your registration time, as you may delay your registration and jeopardize your ability to get into classes you need.

Register on myCUinfo during Your Assigned Time

Again, your time assignment may be at an odd hour in your time zone. Make every effort to register as early as possible during your assigned time window.

Registering If You Don't Have Internet Access

You have alternatives. Send a friend or family member your course choices and have him or her register for you.

Register by email (emergency situations ONLY and same day service is NOT guaranteed). Send an email to Janice Kriegel, Study Abroad Registrar, at Janice.Kriegel@colorado.edu. Be sure to provide her with your complete name, student ID#, full course information, and list some alternatives in case your first choices are not available. She will forward your course requests to the appropriate Registrar's Office staff member.

Read Your Email

We will send information by email to you at your CU email address. If you use another account as your primary account, please add a personal email address by logging into your [MyCUAbroad](#) account and adding a "Carbon Copy email address."

Questions or Problems?

Contact Janice Kriegel, Study Abroad Registrar, if you have questions or problems when trying to register: Janice.Kriegel@colorado.edu.

Web Resources

Registration Instructions & Course Listings	http://registrar.colorado.edu
Registration on the Web	https://mycuinfo.colorado.edu
Summer Catalog	http://www.colorado.edu/sacs/summer/

Honors Courses

Information on honors courses can be found on the [Honors Program](#) website.

If you have questions about eligibility requirements for the Honors Program, you can contact the [Honors Program](#) at (303) 492-6617.

Processing Your Study Abroad Transcript/Credits

After your academic program ends, a transcript will be sent to CU-Boulder. These are sent to Study Abroad, not the Office of Admissions nor the Office of the Registrar. It can take time for your program/university abroad to compile your grades and send your transcript to CU. For information about when your transcript is typically received by Study Abroad, please visit our [Study Abroad Transcripts](#) page.

Once Study Abroad receives your transcript from abroad, the process is as follows:

1. Study Abroad staff will post the courses, credits, and grades **to your degree audit**. Once this has been completed you and your Academic Advisor can immediately view the information by logging into your degree audit.
2. Within 1-2 days the overall credit amount and study abroad program name will appear on your CU record/transcript. The exact courses you took will not be posted to your CU transcript (but these can be viewed in DARS).
3. A copy of the study abroad transcript is scanned into CU permanent records.

All of this will take time: processing in Boulder can take 3–4 weeks to complete all steps above.

Because of this normal delay in receiving the transcript from abroad, you often cannot plan to graduate the same semester you studied abroad. It's possible there will be other delays because of this delay.

Requesting Copies of your Study Abroad Transcript in the Future

If your study abroad program sends you a copy of your transcript, it is recommended that you keep the copy for your records and consider making some additional photocopies as well. CU-Boulder Study Abroad (and any other CU-Boulder office) is prohibited from releasing copies of your study abroad transcript to anyone (including you). If you need official copies in the future (i.e. to apply to graduate/professional schools), please contact your study abroad program/university to request a copy.

Financial Aid: if you receive federal or state need-based financial aid, you must make “satisfactory progress” toward your degree each semester that you receive aid. The Office of Financial Aid runs a report each semester that tags students who have not made satisfactory progress. Although study abroad students are not supposed to be caught by this, mistakes sometimes happen. If you get a letter saying you can't get financial aid because you have not earned enough credit while abroad, **contact Study Abroad immediately**.

Private Scholarships: some private scholarships also require a transcript to show that you earned passing grades, a certain number of credits, etc. If you can't get your scholarship because study abroad grades are missing, contact Study Abroad and we will talk to your scholarship provider.

Course Prerequisites: if you feel you completed a prerequisite for a CU-Boulder course while studying abroad, get a copy of the course description and syllabus and show it to the appropriate academic department. We cannot verify that you took the course and got a passing grade until we receive the transcript from your study abroad location. Once that has arrived, the course will be posted to your degree audit as soon as possible, so the department in question can see it.

Taking Time Off After a Study Abroad Program

If you decide not to return to CU-Boulder immediately following your study abroad program, you will retain your enrollment status and preserve your time assignment priority for up to 3 semesters. We recommend that you apply for a [leave of absence](#) to continue accessing certain University benefits.

Office of the Registrar
20 UCB
University of Colorado Boulder
Boulder, CO 80309-0020 USA
Phone: (303) 492-6970
Email: withdraw@colorado.edu

Finances

Study Abroad and Internship Abroad Program Fees	30
Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF)	30
Non-Resident Fee	30
Paying your Bill	30
Power of Attorney	30
Financial Responsibility of the Student	31
Financial Aid and Study Abroad	31
Summer Programs	31
Tips on Covering Some Expenses Before Your Financial Aid Is Released:	32
Income Taxes	32
Federal Taxes - Internal Revenue Service	32
Colorado Taxes - State of Colorado Department of Revenue	32
Other States' Income Tax Filing	32
Financial Aid and Income Taxes	32
Study Abroad Figures for Income Tax	33
Personal Expenses Overseas	33
Exchange Rates and Budgeting	33
Accessing your Funds Overseas	33
ATM Cards	33
Credit Cards	34
Bank Account	34
Traveler's Checks	34
Transferring Funds Overseas	34
Withdrawing from the Program	34
 Study Abroad and Internship Abroad Program Fees	 30
Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF)	30
Non-Resident Fee	30
Paying your Bill	30
Power of Attorney	30
Financial Responsibility of the Student	31
Financial Aid and Study Abroad	31
Summer Programs	31
Tips on Covering Some Expenses Before Your Financial Aid Is Released:	32
Income Taxes	32
Federal Taxes - Internal Revenue Service	32
Colorado Taxes - State of Colorado Department of Revenue	32
Other States' Income Tax Filing	32
Financial Aid and Income Taxes	32
Study Abroad Figures for Income Tax	33
Personal Expenses Overseas	33
Exchange Rates and Budgeting	33

Accessing your Funds Overseas	33
ATM Cards.....	33
Credit Cards.....	34
Bank Account.....	34
Traveler's Checks	34
Transferring Funds Overseas	34

Withdrawing from the Program 34

Study Abroad and Internship Abroad Program Fees

The Office of International Education makes every attempt to give you complete and accurate financial information about your time abroad.

The program fee covers all expenses outlined on the [Program Costs](#) page for your study or internship abroad program. The program fee is in U.S. dollars. Once the program fee is published, fees will not be adjusted due to increases or decreases in the exchange rate.

Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF)

Colorado residents cannot receive the [Colorado Opportunity Fund](#) (COF) grant for CU-Boulder study abroad. Credit earned on study or internship abroad programs will not count toward the COF 145 lifetime credit limit.

A more detailed explanation about COF and study abroad is available in the FAQ's on the [Study Abroad Finances](#) page.

Non-Resident Fee

Per State of Colorado policy that non-residents must pay more than residents for CU-Boulder credit, non-residents are charged an additional fee. The non-resident funds are used to support the Study Abroad office in Boulder. The resident and non-resident costs are detailed on the [Program Costs](#) page.

Paying your Bill

The CU-Boulder [Bursar's Office](#) produces study abroad bills. Your bill comes to you via email through [CUBill&Pay](#). You will automatically receive an e-bill notification at your colorado.edu email address stating the new bill is available on [myCUinfo](#).

You may authorize other people to receive and pay your e-bill under the financial tab on [myCUinfo](#).

You signed a contract with CU-Boulder Study Abroad, so you pay CU-Boulder and we pay the program partner organization. There are a few exceptions where you may need to pay the program partner organization directly: application fees, deposits, course fees, additional instructional costs, special excursions and all or partial housing costs.

Contact the [finance team in Study Abroad](#) with any billing questions.

Power of Attorney

You may want to assign someone as your Power of Attorney (POA). A POA can handle your business and personal matters while you are abroad. Limited Power of Attorney forms can be found online (search for “legal forms”). Whoever you appoint as POA should keep the original Power of Attorney form. A Power of Attorney cannot sign the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Financial Responsibility of the Student

The Office of International Education expects you to conduct your private financial activities honestly and responsibly.

You are expected to pay all debts. If you leave a debt overseas which could adversely affect the operation of the study abroad program or reflect badly on the University, the Office of International Education will pay the debt and charge your CU-Boulder tuition account.

You will not be able to register for the next semester, enroll in CU-Boulder classes, and/or access transcripts and/or diplomas until the debt is paid.

Financial Aid and Study Abroad

Please view the “Guide to Billing and Financial Aid” located on your [MyCUAbroad](#) account.

Once you submit your FAFSA application the Department of Education will process it, determine your need and offer you a financial aid package in coordination with the [Office of Financial Aid](#). You may receive need-based aid such as Pell Grants, institutional grants, and subsidized loans. If you have no ‘need’ you may still be eligible for some unsubsidized loans and possibly a parent (PLUS) loan.

Study Abroad will give the Office of Financial Aid your name, student ID and your total study or internship abroad program costs in early May for fall & academic year programs and in early November for spring programs. The Office of Financial Aid will then recalculate your need, adjust your budget and send you a revised award letter via email.

Financial aid and/or scholarships are applied to your Bursar account around the same time your program fees are applied – in August for fall semester and in January for spring semester. You will receive a refund if you are receiving enough financial aid to cover your tuition and fees and some or all of your personal expenses, airfare and books. Otherwise, you will receive an e-bill for the balance due.

If you are attending a fall or academic year study abroad program that starts in June or July, and you are expecting a refund, please be aware that you will have living expenses that must be paid before your financial aid refund is available. Check your program dates and plan to have enough money to meet your needs until your financial aid refund is available. If you have concerns about pre-departure costs, inquire with the Office of Financial Aid (OFA). In some cases OFA may be able to allow an advance of your refund, if eligible. This is determined on a case-by-case basis by OFA and only certain students will be eligible.

A few programs offer optional pre-session courses. If you would like the cost of a pre-session course to be included in your financial aid award, please contact the [finance team in Study Abroad](#).

Summer Programs

Summer students must be taking at least six credit hours to be eligible for financial aid. Summer study abroad students must submit a Summer Aid Application online via the Financial Aid link within [myCUinfo](#). Your summer financial aid award is what you have remaining from your current academic year award along with a PLUS or Alternative loan.

Tips on Covering Some Expenses Before Your Financial Aid Is Released:

There are some expenses that will be due before your financial aid is available for study abroad. One of these expenses is purchasing airfare. Some ideas on how to mitigate this expense include:

[CheapAir.com](#) allows you to book and purchase airfare online and one of the payment options is using cash at a local Western Union.

[STA Travel](#) has a financial aid option where you can reserve your flight for \$300 and pay the balance one week before departure.

If you or a family member does not have access to a credit card, consider purchasing a Visa Gift Card and then using it to make an airline purchase.

Other examples of costs incurred prior to the start of a program are passports, visa fees, and medical costs such as vaccinations and medical exams.

Income Taxes

Please note, the Office of International Education cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information below if regulations about filing taxes change after this publication.

Federal Taxes - Internal Revenue Service

- If you are outside the United States or Puerto Rico on April 15th, you still have to file a return.
- You may apply for an extension by filing Form 4868 before April 15th.
- Go to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) website to [get the necessary forms](#).
- Extensions are for filing the tax form, **not** for paying any taxes owed. Interest is calculated on the tax due from April 15th until the day it is paid, and a penalty may be assessed for the delay in payment.
- Tax forms can be filed by your Power of Attorney, as long as a copy of the POA is attached.
- For questions about federal tax return filing or extensions [contact the IRS](#).

Colorado Taxes - State of Colorado Department of Revenue

- State of Colorado income tax forms are due by April 15th.
- The Department of Revenue allows an extension of six months (until October 15) for the filing of tax forms.
- The extension is for filing the tax form, not for paying the taxes. Interest will be calculated on the tax due from April 15th until the tax is paid.
- Tax forms are available on the State of Colorado [Department of Revenue](#) website.
- Tax forms can be filed by a Power of Attorney as long as a copy of the POA is attached.
- For questions about Colorado tax return filing or extensions contact the Colorado [Department of Revenue](#).

Other States' Income Tax Filing

If you reside in another state, contact that state's Department of Revenue for more information.

Financial Aid and Income Taxes

CU-Boulder's Office of Financial Aid requires you (and your parents if you are financially dependent) to submit a copy of your tax return to their office. If you do not file a tax return, complete a [Statement of Non-Filing](#).

Study Abroad Figures for Income Tax

The IRS considers grants and scholarships that exceed the cost of tuition, required fees (not including room and board), and books to be taxable income that must be declared.

The amount of your study or internship abroad program fee considered "Required Tuition and Fees" is available on the [Program Costs](#) page.

The instructional cost amount is the figure you will use for tuition and required fees. The instructional cost amount can also be used for tuition tax credits like the Hope Scholarship or Lifetime Learning tax credits.

Personal Expenses Overseas

Exchange Rates and Budgeting

Begin now to familiarize yourself with exchange rates and what they can do to your purchasing power in another country. Exchange rate information is available on websites such as xe.com

Take a realistic look at what you spend on campus in a semester, and then budget for what you may spend overseas. You may wish to alter your budget after you have spent some time at your program site.

Expenses to consider include books, cell phone and cell phone minutes, meals not included in the program fee, toiletries, and gifts and souvenirs. You may also want to budget for weekend travel expenses, including accommodation.

Know how you will access additional funds if the amount you initially budget is insufficient.

Accessing your Funds Overseas

You have a number of options for accessing funds overseas; see your [program-specific handbook](#) to determine what works best at your program site.

ATM Cards

ATM cards are the easiest way to access cash abroad, though transaction fees may apply and you cannot assume that cash machines will always be available or will always take your card.

If you choose to use your ATM card abroad, notify your bank and/or card company that you will be using your ATM card overseas to avoid having your account frozen. You will need a four-digit PIN number in order to take out cash. Also check with them to find out exactly how your cards might work overseas. Questions you should ask include:

- What is the daily limit for withdrawals?
- What is the transaction fee? Is it a percentage of the withdrawal or is there a fixed rate?
- Is there a currency exchange fee? If so, how much is this fee?
- What networks do you have access to?

- [VISA](#) or [MasterCard](#) ATM/debit cards have good networks overseas. Both companies have ATM locator sites on their web pages that you might want to check out.

Credit Cards

A growing number of locations will take major U.S. credit cards, which can be handy for emergencies and cash advances. Check your card's policy on currency conversions, including surcharges for cash advances and purchases. Be sure to check your card's grace period for payments and arrange for your monthly bills to be paid.

Be aware that many countries, especially in Europe, are migrating to a Chip and PIN system for credit cards. Each credit card has an internal microchip, and in order to use it you will need to set up a PIN. Speak with your credit card provider before you leave to alert them of your travel and determine how you will use your credit card abroad.

Bank Account

In some countries, you can open an account at a local bank. This may be recommended if you will be on a calendar or academic year program. In many places, this is difficult to do and not recommended for short programs. Ask program alumni or review your acceptance materials from your program for advice.

Traveler's Checks

You may also want to take some money in this form. Traveler's checks are safe because they are replaceable if lost or stolen. However, traveler's checks often incur high fees, so it is recommended as a back-up rather than your primary means of accessing funds.

Transferring Funds Overseas

Some ways to receive funds from home after you have left:

- Direct deposits into a bank account to which you have access via an ATM card.
- International money orders or international postal money orders. Postal money orders are purchased and cashed at Post Offices, and are inexpensive.
- Cashier's check in the currency of the host country. These can be purchased at many banks. There is usually a service charge of \$25 or more.
- In case of emergencies, money can be wired in care of a bank in your host city. This is expensive, for both senders and receivers, but the funds usually arrive in 48 to 72 hours (verify the time with the bank). You will have to give the person wiring the funds the name and address of the bank you want to use. The money is then wired in your name, and you present your passport to pick it up.
- In cases of extreme emergency, the U.S. Department State may be able to assist in securing funds. See [here](#) for more information.

Withdrawing from the Program

If you are considering **withdrawing** from your program, contact Study Abroad immediately. There can be serious academic and financial consequences associated with the withdrawal from your program. This will also affect your insurance coverage through your Study Abroad group policy.

The withdrawal schedule for your program is available on the [Program Costs page](#) (select your program, scroll down for withdrawal information).

Read this information carefully, paying particular attention to the withdrawal fees and effective dates. Withdrawing from your study or internship abroad program may affect your financial aid for the current and future semesters and could result in suspension of aid or repayment of aid you have already received.

Any CU-Boulder study abroad scholarships must be repaid.

All withdrawals must be sent in writing (CU email is acceptable) to Study Abroad. The date that Study Abroad receives written notification will be considered the official withdrawal date.

See the section on [Withdrawing from Study Abroad](#) for more discussion on this.

Health

Insurance Coverage While Abroad.....	37
Accident and Health Insurance	37
Coverage Dates	37
Evacuation and Repatriation Coverage	37
Contact Information.....	37
UnitedHealthcare Global Assistance.....	38
Coverage by More than One Policy	38
Paying Medical Bills and Making a Claim	38
Deciding Whether to Keep Your Current Health Insurance Coverage	38
Leaving the Program Early	38
International SOS.....	39
How to Register with International SOS.....	39
International SOS Online Help	39
Health Preparations	39
Recommended Medical Exams	39
Prescriptions	39
First Aid Kit.....	40
Vaccinations.....	40
International Certificate of Vaccinations.....	40
Wardenburg Health Center Travel Clinic	40
Additional Travel Clinic Options & Information	41
While Abroad.....	41
Continuing Treatment	41
If You Become Sick While Abroad.....	41
Healthy Responses to Stress	41
Jet Lag	41
Protection, Contraception and STIs.....	42
Protection and Contraception.....	42
HIV/AIDS.....	42
Hepatitis B.....	42
Nutrition While Abroad	42
Celiac Disease and Gluten-Free Diets.....	42
When You Come Home	43
Additional Resources	43

Insurance Coverage While Abroad

Accident and Health Insurance

Every student on a CU-Boulder study abroad or internship abroad program is automatically enrolled in a limited accident and health insurance policy (which is separate from any other insurance policy you may be enrolled in through the university or your personal insurance provider). In addition to health insurance coverage, this policy covers evacuation and repatriation in case of medical and non-medical emergencies.

Key insurance features:

- The cost of insurance is included in the program fee.
- The policy provides benefits often not available in your personal coverage.
- The CU-Boulder policy is managed by a third party administrator that processes claims for the insurance company.
- Once you have been enrolled, you will be sent an email containing your policy number, the website address, and instructions to access and print the policy and your identification card.
- The insurance policy can be accessed on the [CU-Boulder Study Abroad Health Insurance Policy & Claim Form](#) page.

Coverage Dates

Summer Programs	5/1/15 – 8/31/15
Fall Programs	8/1/15 – 1/31/16*
Academic Year Programs	8/1/15 – 8/31/16*
Spring Programs	1/1/16 – 8/31/16 **
Calendar Year Programs	1/1/16 – 1/31/17 **

** Some Fall/AY programs may start in late June or July. In this case, health insurance coverage begins the 1st day of the month in which the program begins, e.g. if the start date is June 23, coverage begins on June 1st.*

*** Some Spring /CY programs may start in late December. In this case, health insurance coverage begins the 1st day of the month in which the program begins, e.g. if the start date is December 27, coverage begins on December 1st.*

Evacuation and Repatriation Coverage

If you become very ill or are badly injured while abroad and require transportation to the nearest medical facility, which may be outside of your host country, this service is covered under your accident and health insurance policy.

Repatriation is also covered to send a body home in the event of a death.

Contact Information

ASRM, LLC
Attn: Claims
505 South Lenola Road, Suite 231
Moorestown, NJ 08057
Email: iees@asrmlc.com
Website: www.helpwithmyplan.com
Within the U.S. Toll-Free: (844) 898-8944
Outside the U.S. Collect: (856) 380-1213
Fax: (856) 231-7995

UnitedHealthcare Global Assistance

In case of a medical emergency overseas you should contact UnitedHealthcare Global Assistance.

You can call UnitedHealthcare Global Assistance collect at (410) 453-6330 or contact them by email at assistance@uhcglobal.com and reference Group ID #359631.

Coverage by More than One Policy

You **may** have one or more other insurance policies provided for your program:

- A required national health plan for the country where you study
- A policy provided by one of CU-Boulder's partners (SAS, ISA, SIT, CIEE, Syracuse etc.)
- Continued personal coverage while abroad.

Paying Medical Bills and Making a Claim

Take information about the companies, policy numbers, and dates of coverage that apply to your program so you can file any necessary claims while overseas. **Our policy and most other policies require you to pay your medical bills at the time of treatment** and then submit a claim for reimbursement. Claim forms can be found on the [CU-Boulder Study Abroad Health Insurance Policy & Claim Form](#) page.

Always keep copies of claim forms and receipts until the claim is completely settled.

Deciding Whether to Keep Your Current Health Insurance Coverage

Since insurance coverage is provided while you study or intern abroad, you may be thinking about dropping your current coverage. You should contact your insurance provider with any questions about your specific policy. The Office of International Education does not sell insurance or in any way guarantee payment of benefits. Do not make any assumptions about your coverage.

The CU [Student Gold Health Insurance Plan](#) (offered through the Wardenburg Health Center), unlike many parental policies, will cover illness and/or accidents outside the U.S. at an in-network coverage level. Additionally, the Student Gold Plan has evacuation and repatriation benefits, not typical on any parent plan, and often required to obtain visas.

If you choose to continue your CU student health insurance, you must speak with Patient Services at Wardenburg Health Center to make arrangements for coverage and payment. Patient Services is located in Wardenburg Health Center, room 333. For more information call (303) 492-5107.

Leaving the Program Early

If you withdraw from your study abroad or internship abroad program for any reason, your Study Abroad accident and health insurance coverage will cease.

While our insurance provider does not offer individual insurance policies, you may visit <http://www.insuremytrip.com/> to research possible coverage for the remainder of the stay abroad. Please understand these policies may not cover you while you are in your home country.

International SOS

As a student at the University of Colorado Boulder, you have access to membership in International SOS and the services they offer. This is not an insurance plan. International SOS is a resource which provides information to you while you are abroad.

A description of the services is available to you on the [International SOS website](#). Included on the International SOS website is a series of [Travel Tips](#) videos that can help you prepare for a safe and healthy time abroad.

Before you go abroad look up the International SOS call center number for your host country: <http://www.internationalsos.com/en/emergencies.htm>

How to Register with International SOS

1. Go to the [International SOS Website](#)
2. Enter the following University of Colorado membership number at the top in the "Members Login" field: 11BCAS000006
3. Follow the instructions to create a profile in the Personal Travel Locator (PTL) and to activate your confidential Emergency Record. Register your trip.

International SOS Online Help

If you experience any technical difficulties with the Personal Travel Locator, or if you don't receive your Automated Travel Advisory you can also contact onlinehelp@internationalsos.com.

Health Preparations

Recommended Medical Exams

Have a general physical exam and a dental checkup if you haven't had one recently. You should be up-to-date on all shots necessary for travel in your program location.

If pertinent, have a gynecological checkup. If you plan to take prescription birth control, ask your doctor about getting a large enough supply to last the duration of your time overseas.

If you wear glasses or contacts, bring a typed copy of your prescription and an extra pair of glasses and/or a sufficient supply of contacts. In some countries, contact solution is difficult to come by or requires a prescription; ask your program provider or alumni if you need to bring your own supply.

Prescriptions

If you take prescription medication, speak to your doctor. Some medications may not be available in your host country, may only be available in generic form, or may be illegal to possess. This is especially true of medications for psychological conditions and ADD/ADHD.

Prescription medications vary from country to country in name, potency, and purity and may NOT be sent to you through international mail.

If possible, take enough medication to last the whole time you are abroad (some doctors and/or insurance companies will not permit you to obtain a large supply in advance). Keep all medication in its original container. Ask your doctor for a letter to present to customs officials and overseas doctors explaining what you need to take, including a generic breakdown (not just a generic name) of the medication.

In some countries, medications that require a prescription in the U.S. are available over-the-counter, and for very little cost. It can be tempting to stock up when the opportunity presents itself. However, some FDA-approved medications have the same brand names as medications that are marketed outside the U.S. but contain completely different active ingredients. No international regulatory system exists to ensure that new brand names are sufficiently different from existing ones elsewhere in the world. This could lead to confusion by pharmacists who are filling prescriptions from outside their country.

We advise that you consult the U.S. Department of State's [Health Information for Americans Abroad](#) page, which includes advice about traveling and prescription medication. International SOS offers a short, informative video regarding travel and prescription medication on their [Travel Tips](#) site. You can also contact [International SOS](#) to determine if the prescription medication you plan to bring abroad is legal in your host country.

Be aware that a Colorado medical marijuana prescription is not valid outside of Colorado. Additionally, laws in the State of Colorado, including the legalization of marijuana, do not apply anywhere outside of the State, including abroad. In many countries marijuana laws are strictly enforced and can carry serious consequences. Students with a U.S. prescription for marijuana can be arrested, prosecuted, and/or deported, if in possession of an illegal substance.

First Aid Kit

Take a small first aid kit and over-the-counter medications for colds, antibiotic ointment, stomach upset/diarrhea, Band-Aids, analgesics, etc.

Vaccinations

Check with reliable authorities to find out what vaccinations are currently recommended for your program site. Don't delay since you may need several shots taken weeks apart.

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) at (404) 332-4559
- [Wardenburg Travel Clinic](#) at (303) 492-5432
- Your program organization's pre-departure materials

In addition to the required travel vaccinations, consider getting a flu shot (influenza vaccine). Remember that your immune system may be weakened due to travel and exposure to new germs, making you vulnerable to the flu.

International Certificate of Vaccinations

Some countries require proof of certain immunizations for entry. The [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) has an International Certificate of Vaccinations you can use to maintain a record of your immunizations. You can get this certificate from many physicians, passport offices, or the local Department of Health. You may be asked to present it upon entry to countries that have immunization requirements.

Wardenburg Health Center Travel Clinic

If you are a fee-paying, CU-Boulder student you can schedule an appointment at the [Travel Clinic](#) at [Wardenburg Health Center](#) to prepare for your program. Wardenburg staff can assess individual needs and provide customized advice for your destination, recommend and administer vaccinations, prescribe medications if needed, and complete any required medical paperwork.

Plan ahead. If your program or visa application requires medical paperwork and/or a medical exam, you must schedule an appointment at least two weeks in advance by calling (303) 492-5432. When scheduling your appointment you will be asked which countries you are planning to visit. Please allow one hour for your travel appointment.

For more information on university health insurance coverage, pricing, and travel services visit the [Travel Clinic](#) website.

Additional Travel Clinic Options & Information

[Passport Health](#) has locations throughout the U.S., including Boulder and Denver.

[Worldwide Travel Clinic at Boulder Community Hospital](#).

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#): Travel precautions, vaccine recommendations, and advice for your destination.

While Abroad

Continuing Treatment

If you will need to see a doctor on a regular basis, inform Study Abroad before you leave. Inform the on-site director upon arrival so they will be prepared if you have a medical emergency and need fast assistance.

Take a complete medical record to your program site, along with medical and prescription histories. Know your blood type.

If You Become Sick While Abroad

Make sure you know who to call and where to go in case of any health concerns that come up. If you become ill, get proper care. Don't hesitate to tell your host family or on-site director if you are ill, and don't be afraid to visit a doctor or hospital just because you don't speak the language fluently.

Healthy Responses to Stress

Think now about how you handle stress and plan a healthy response during your time abroad. Start an exercise program, get together with new friends, plan excursions, listen to music, get involved in a volunteer activity, find a conversation partner, or join a club.

If you are having problems with adjustment, talk to the program staff for recommendations and advice. They have all had experience with the challenges of cultural adjustment.

Jet Lag

You should expect to feel jet lag on arrival overseas. It will take a few days for your system to adjust to the time and climate changes, so pace yourself.

To avoid the worst effects of jet lag, get plenty of sleep before your trip and drink lots of fluids before and during the flight to prevent dehydration. Avoid caffeine and alcohol and eat light meals on the plane.

Protection, Contraception and STIs

Protection and Contraception

Regarding being prepared for sexual contact: To minimize your risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection (STI), use latex barriers such as condoms or dental dams. To prevent pregnancy, use a reliable method of contraception such as condoms or hormonal birth control pills.

You should bring STI protection and/or contraception (if relevant) with you abroad. Each country has a different policy regarding their availability.

HIV/AIDS

Some countries require you to have an HIV test after arrival to get a residency permit. If you think there is even a remote chance that you will test positive, have a test done well in advance of your departure.

If you are traveling in a region where HIV is widespread, you should take additional precautions. The most obvious of these is avoiding sexual contact or, if you do engage in sexual contact, practice safe sex.

HIV can also be transmitted through blood, and you should be extra cautious in any situation involving needles, such as medical procedures, acupuncture, and tattooing. Needles for blood tests or injections must be sterile, preferably disposable, and come pre-packaged in a sealed container. If in doubt, ask how the equipment has been sterilized. In some countries you can buy needles and syringes and take them to the hospital for your own use.

For more information see the [CDC fact sheet](#) on HIV and AIDS.

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is much more infectious than HIV and also has no cure. The disease is endemic in Africa, the Pacific Islands, Asia and the Amazon region of South America. You should get the vaccine before you leave.

Nutrition While Abroad

Be careful what and where you eat, especially in developing countries or if you have a sensitive stomach. Make sure that all fruit and vegetables are peeled and that all foods are thoroughly cooked. Always wash your hands before eating.

If you are unsure about the safety of local water, drink bottled water. Avoid ice cubes or drinks made with ice if the local water is unsafe. Wash produce with boiled water.

Drink plenty of liquids such as purified water or clear juices, and avoid alcoholic drinks or caffeinated sodas as these are dehydrating.

Take over-the-counter anti-diarrhea medicine for normal traveler's diarrhea, but if the condition lasts more than 24 hours, seek medical attention.

Celiac Disease and Gluten-Free Diets

If you are a gluten-sensitive traveler, you may wish to do research ahead of your program abroad to determine how you may need to adapt your diet in your host country. The following websites can provide resources, suggestions, and advice that may be helpful in making your preparations:

- [Breaking Bread](#)
- [Celiac Disease Awareness Campaign](#)
- [Celiac Travel](#)
- [Gluten-Free Traveler](#)
- [Select Wisely](#)

For more tips on a healthy diet while abroad, view the short International SOS 'Nutrition on the Run' video on their [Travel Tips](#) site.

When You Come Home

If you become sick after returning, tell your health care provider that you have traveled outside of the U.S. Because some diseases have a long incubation period, you may not be sick until after you return. Schedule a tuberculosis skin test for three months after your return. If you were exposed to tuberculosis while abroad, you wouldn't necessarily be sick. Testing is the only way to prevent serious problems later.

Complete any immunization series (such as Hepatitis A or B) that you started before travel.

Additional Resources

You can find additional resources on how to stay healthy overseas in the [Appendix](#).

Safety

Thinking about Safety: a Partnership	44
Student Responsibilities.....	44
The Role of the Office of International Education	45
Involving Your Parents/Guardians and Families	45
Take Precautions Abroad to Reduce Risks	46
General Best Practices	46
Educate Yourself about Your Host Country	46
Prepare to Live in an Urban Environment	46
Pay Attention to Your Actions and Appearance and Try to Adapt.....	46
Use Common Sense.....	47
Transportation Safety.....	47
Traveling to Other Regions or Countries.....	47
Breaking the Law	47
Demonstrations and Protests.....	48
Fire Safety.....	48
Socializing Abroad	48
Safety Considerations for Women	49
Additional Resources	49
Alcohol and Illegal Drugs	50
Legal Issues.....	50
Social Issues: Use vs. Abuse of Alcohol.....	50

Thinking about Safety: a Partnership

Your personal safety while you are away from home is very important to you, to your family and friends, and to the Office of International Education. Travel to another country is not inherently dangerous, but there are risks for students that are unique to an overseas setting. When an incident occurs, the impact on participants and their families is often more profound because of the unfamiliar context and the distance that separates students from their families and friends.

OIE is committed to promoting a safe support system and to offering reliable information on potential risks and necessary precautions; however, you exercise choice in following these precautions.

The best way to prepare for a healthy and safe study or internship abroad experience is to inform yourself and discuss basic health and safety issues with your family and Study Abroad staff before leaving the U.S. The Office of International Education views safety and security as a partnership with you.

Student Responsibilities

You are ultimately responsible for your own safety. There are basic precautions you should take before you go abroad and while you are outside of the U.S. Do your homework, get to know the culture of your host country before you go, and be aware of the resources available to you. You should:

- Accept responsibility for, and consequences of, your own decisions and actions.
- Consider your own physical and mental health and safety needs when accepting a place in a CU-Boulder program.
- Disclose accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary in planning for a safe and healthy study abroad experience.
- Read and carefully consider all materials given to you that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, and cultural conditions in your host country. Participate fully in orientations.
- Follow the program policies for keeping program staff informed of your whereabouts and wellbeing.
- Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily decisions.
- Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and law enforcement services in the host country. Be sure to know the in-country equivalent of 911.
- Provide your family with emergency contact information. Keep them informed of any travel away from the program site.
- Be alert, be respectful, be informed and use your common sense.

The Role of the Office of International Education

The office adheres to the following practices regarding its programs:

- We monitor U.S. Department of State *Travel Advisories* to assess health and safety conditions at our program sites.
- We provide health and safety information so students can make informed decisions while abroad.
- We consider health and safety issues when evaluating the appropriateness of an individual's participation in a study or internship abroad program.
- We provide orientations which include information on how to deal with health and safety issues, potential risks, and appropriate emergency responses.
- We provide limited accident and health insurance coverage, including coverage for emergency evacuation and repatriation.
- We use care when contracting with any third party to provide products or services.
- We communicate applicable codes of conduct and the consequences of noncompliance to participants. We take appropriate action when we become aware of violations. In cases of serious health problems, injury, or other significant health and safety incidents, we maintain good communication with all who need to be informed.

The Office of International Education cannot:

1. Guarantee or assure your safety or eliminate all risks from the study abroad environments.
2. Monitor or control all of your daily personal decisions, choices, and activities.
3. Guarantee that you will not engage in illegal or dangerous activities.
4. Ensure that U.S. standards of medical care or the process to receive care will be available (even in developed countries).
5. Ensure that U.S. standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings; nor can we provide or pay for legal representation for you.

Prior to departure, all participants sign contracts indicating their agreement with Study Abroad policies regarding Health and Safety, including Emergency Medical Authorization, Personal Conduct Agreement, and Release. These are available in all participants' applications, and contain specific information regarding responsibilities of the office and participants.

Involving Your Parents/Guardians and Families

Parents or guardians and families can play an important role by helping make decisions and, sometimes, by influencing behavior overseas. Encourage your loved ones to take an active part in ensuring your safety overseas. The [Parents & Family](#) section of the Study Abroad website is the best source of information.

Discuss your emergency plan with your family before you go so that they are familiar with all emergency procedures.

Keep in touch with your family. If you are traveling away from your host city, make sure to share your travel plans with your loved ones in order to prevent any undue alarm.

Make sure that your emergency contacts have up-to-date passports, and bring it with them when traveling within the U.S. This will ensure that, in case of illness or injury, they can get to you abroad as quickly as possible.

Take Precautions Abroad to Reduce Risks

Travel to another country is not inherently dangerous, but there are precautions you should take to better ensure a safe and healthy experience. Remember, as a foreigner you may be subject to increased scrutiny. Get to know the local culture, be aware of your surroundings, and use your common sense. If you wouldn't do it at home, don't do it abroad.

General Best Practices

Educate Yourself about Your Host Country

Read newspapers and listen to news both local and international. Know what's going on in the world. Keep track of travel advisories in your region by checking with program staff or visiting the U.S. Department of State [International Travel Information](#) website, the [U.S. Study Abroad Office](#) website, and <http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>.

Learn how to ask for help in the local language of every country you visit, and know what to do in case of emergency. Many countries have the [equivalent of 911](#).

Prepare to Live in an Urban Environment

Many study abroad locations are in major international cities. You may experience conditions associated with dense urban living anywhere in the world: increased crime, pollution, sexual harassment, and standards of living that are not comparable to life at CU-Boulder. You will need to practice the same safety tips you would in any place you are not familiar with. The more you learn now about these realities, the better prepared you will be to handle the challenges and rewards of studying abroad.

Pay Attention to Your Actions and Appearance and Try to Adapt

Pay attention to your surroundings. Plan your route and walk confidently. Pedestrians can be at risk, so be especially careful crossing the street. Never assume that you have the right of way.

As a foreigner, you may be subject to increased scrutiny. Try to avoid drawing attention to yourself: avoid looking like a U.S.-American tourist, speaking loudly, or wearing your camera around your neck. Don't wear t-shirts, sweatshirts, or baseball caps with U.S.-American logos.

Especially in cities with lots of tourists, look at maps and metro guides before leaving the hotel.

If you are being followed, feel threatened, or are lost, go into a store, restaurant, or other public area. Know what feels comfortable and what doesn't. If your instincts tell you a situation is not right, trust them and move along. The International SOS [Travel Tips](#) site offers additional advice in their brief 'Street Smarts' video.

Use Common Sense

The same rules of being safe in the United States apply while abroad. If you wouldn't do something at home, don't do it abroad.

Avoid walking alone at night. Stay in well-lit, well-trafficked areas. If you plan to travel, go with a friend. Do not hitchhike. Avoid arguments, especially in public places. And be especially cautious if you have been drinking.

Transportation Safety

Road crashes are the leading cause of tourist death and serious injury worldwide. These far exceed deaths resulting from disease, violence or terrorism. University policy prohibits students from operating motor vehicles and airplanes (including but not limited to scooters, motorbikes, motorcycles, cars, and airplanes) while participating in an education abroad opportunity. Faculty and staff may not drive vehicles abroad in which students are passengers without consulting the Office of International Education and University Risk Management prior to departure from the U.S. to discuss liability, insurance coverage, and risks associated with this activity.

As a result, student groups should use public transportation wherever that option exists and is safe. Where vehicles and drivers are hired, student groups should use only licensed and appropriately insured/bonded professional drivers and vehicles abroad.

University contracts require certain levels of insurance that might be informative for student groups. The U.S. Department of State (DOS) [Road Safety](#) resources should be reviewed. Transportation plans should not include roads that the U.S. DOS or [ASIRT](#) recommends avoiding or that are indicated as extra risky at certain times.

Traveling to Other Regions or Countries

Always tell someone where you are going, including your program's on-site staff. Ensure that your visa will allow you to return to your host country. Whenever possible, avoid traveling alone.

Neighboring countries can be very different culturally and politically. Make sure you do your research and prepare, as you did before entering your host country. In some regions, particularly in the Middle East and Africa, travel outside of your host country may be not possible at all. Follow the safety guidelines and rules of your program site, and report all travel to your program staff.

Make a list of important telephone numbers and addresses in the locations you will visit. Write down the telephone number of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Breaking the Law

Each year, 2,500 U.S.-Americans are arrested overseas. One third of the arrests are on drug-related charges. Many assumed that as U.S. citizens that they could not be arrested.

When you are overseas **you are subject to the laws of that country**. U.S. citizenship gives you no immunity from local laws. Make no assumptions about your “rights”; in many countries legal processes are quite different.

You may be in a country where the principle of “innocent until proven guilty” is not assumed by the legal system. Penalties for crimes can be much more stringent, bail might not be granted when drugs are involved, evidence obtained illegally may be admissible in court, or the prisoner might not be present at the trial.

Demonstrations and Protests

It is important that you do not participate in illegal strikes or demonstrations and that you abide by the regulations of the host institution and laws of the country. Although strikes and demonstrations may occur in your host country, be aware that as a foreigner participating in political activities abroad you can be arrested and/or deported. The local constitutions of many countries around the world prohibit political activities by foreigners.

You are urged to avoid the areas of demonstrations if possible and to exercise caution if you are within the vicinity of any demonstrations. Anti-U.S. sentiments may be expressed at some political events, and even demonstrations that are intended to be peaceful can sometimes turn violent. You don’t want to be caught in the middle of such situations. Participating in an illegal demonstration or strike might not only cause you physical harm, it might also be harmful to CU’s relationship with the host institution or country.

Fire Safety

Fire safety standards differ drastically from country to country. No matter where you are staying – in a residence hall, homestay, or hotel – you should be aware of fire danger and have an emergency evacuation plan. Exercise additional caution in hotels and older apartment buildings where fire alarms and sprinklers may not exist. If possible, stay on a low floor, and always know where the exits are.

See more information on fire safety and study abroad on the website of the [JUSTICE Foundation](#).

Socializing Abroad

A truly wonderful part of travel abroad is making friends with people from different cultures. It is fun and educational to exchange ideas and find common ground with people who speak a different language and/or come from a different background. However, there can be risks because of cultural differences and misperceptions about U.S.-Americans.

Given the potential additional detriments of language problems or unfair stereotypes, you could unwittingly encounter trouble. Add alcohol or drugs to cloud your judgment and you could find yourself in a dangerous situation, including the potential threat of a physical or sexual assault. This is true of both men and women.

If you find yourself in an encounter that makes you nervous, do what you can to get out of the situation. This may mean overcoming your own concerns about embarrassing yourself or offending others. Keep in mind that dangerous situations are often unpredictable and what seems like a harmless situation can turn into a threat quickly and without much warning. You can’t always prevent a bad outcome.

Help is always available and CU takes any form of harm very seriously regardless of the relationship of those involved or the circumstances surrounding an incident. You can get assistance by contacting your on-site staff or CU Study Abroad for support in the event of any incident.

Dating, Relationships and Sex

Take time to learn about cultural norms that govern relationship roles and dating. Know that what is seen in the U.S. as casual dating may be seen in some countries as one step away from a lifetime commitment. Some behavior that is acceptable at home may be viewed as provocative overseas.

When considering a romantic relationship, be aware that you may not know very much about appropriate and expected behavior. Having a clear sense of what you want and don't want, and communicating this to a potential partner can help ensure that your experiences are within your boundaries. Language barriers and cultural expectations can make this type of communication more difficult but increase its importance.

Safety Considerations for Women

From the [U.S. Department of State](#):

Everyone traveling abroad should research safety and local customs, but women should be especially attentive.

If you are a young woman in a foreign country, even efforts to reduce your vulnerability may not always protect you against the unwelcome advances of strangers. Consider staying with a group when exploring locally and avoid walking alone. In addition, don't feel the need to be overly polite if you are bothered by someone. While it may seem rude to be unfriendly to a stranger, creating boundaries to protect yourself is important. Use facial expressions, body language and a firm voice in an attempt to fend off any unwanted attention.

While abroad, you may witness very different ideas about gender roles. Some countries have more conservative views about what constitutes appropriate female behavior. Remember, you're a visitor. Do some research on social mores before you go, and respect the customs of the nation. You may not agree with all of the cultural practices you learn about, but you should abide by them while in that country.

In some countries, wearing the wrong clothes can get you arrested or lead to a dangerous situation. What you think is casual may actually be considered provocative or unacceptable in other cultures. Know before you go, and pack accordingly. On arrival, note what local women are wearing and try to follow their lead. Any fashion statement you DO make should show consideration for the country you are visiting.

GLBTQ Concerns

We recognize that not every GLBTQ student is going to come out to program staff or other students while abroad. If you identify as GLBTQ, we advise you to learn about your host country's stance on those identities before you travel. Some countries are more accepting than others, and some countries have drastic laws concerning same-sex behavior, gender expression and transgender identification. If you feel comfortable, and would like more resources and support on these issues, please let your on-site staff or CU Study Abroad Program Manager know about your concerns.

Additional Resources

You can find links to helpful online resources on the Office of International Education's [website](#), including U.S. State Department recommendations for safe travel and resources for GLBTQ, students of color, students with disabilities and more. In addition, the International SOS 'Prepare and Prevent' video on its [Travel Tips](#) site provides a quick overview on how to prepare for a secure time abroad.

Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Legal Issues

When traveling overseas, it's important to obey the laws and regulations of the country you are visiting, especially those pertaining to drug and alcohol use. Every year, many U.S.-American students are arrested abroad on drug charges or because of their behavior under the influence. Ignorance of the law is no excuse, so be informed. It is **your responsibility** to know the drug laws in a foreign country before you go, because "I didn't know it was illegal" will not get you out of jail.

Be aware that a Colorado medical marijuana prescription is not valid outside of Colorado. Additionally, laws in the State of Colorado, including the legalization of marijuana, do not apply anywhere outside of the State, including abroad. In many countries marijuana laws are strictly enforced and can carry serious consequences.

The U.S. State Department provides a [detailed warning about illegal drugs](#) on its Student Travel site:

Avoid underage and excessive alcohol consumption. Many arrests, accidents, rape, and other violent crimes have occurred in part due to excessive alcohol consumption. While abroad, driving under the influence and drinking on the street or on public transportation may be considered criminal activities by local authorities, as they would be in many places in the United States.

Don't accept packages from anyone. Some U.S.-Americans think it's a good idea to take advantage of an offer for an all-expense paid vacation abroad in exchange for carrying a small package in their luggage. If you are caught, ignorance is no excuse. If the package contains illegal drugs or substances, the fact that you didn't know will not reduce the charges. You could miss your flight, your exams, or several years of your life during a stay behind bars.

Don't import, purchase, use, or have drugs in your possession. Even if you have a doctor's written prescription for medical marijuana in the U.S., it is illegal to travel with any amount of marijuana or marijuana-containing products. Drug charges can carry severe consequences, including imprisonment without bail for up to a year before a case is tried, physical abuse, and sentences ranging from fines and jail time, to years of hard labor. Some crimes even carry the penalty of death. Contraband or paraphernalia associated with illegal drug use can also get you in trouble.

Many countries have enacted stringent drug laws with mandatory jail sentences if convicted of possessing even small amounts of illegal substances.

Social Issues: Use vs. Abuse of Alcohol

It will probably be legal for you to purchase and drink alcohol while you are abroad, though you should inquire about the drinking age in each country you visit. Beer and wine may be consumed with meals and there may be bars in your dormitory or in classroom buildings. In addition to researching the local laws of your host country, you should also research the local cultural norms to understand how the local community interacts with alcohol.

For some students, use of alcohol is minimal or moderate, and may not cause them or others significant concern. However, a certain percentage of students go abroad with an existing alcohol or drug abuse problem. A widely agreed-upon definition of alcohol or drug abuse is when a person's use interferes with his or her physical, social, or economic functioning. Alcohol abuse can result in poor grades, social conflicts, accidents and injuries, vandalism, and diminished peer respect.

Keep in mind that beer and wine may be stronger (higher alcohol content) in many other countries, or you may be offered homebrewed or unlabeled alcohol of unknown toxicity. Excessive drinking can leave you vulnerable to crime or assault and reduce acceptance by your host culture.

Practical suggestions for responsible drinking include eating a meal before or along with drinking to slow alcohol's effects, sipping drinks to take in alcohol more slowly, spacing out drinks and limiting the number of drinks you consume. Know your limit and stick to it. Always use the buddy system while in situations where alcohol may be present so you have a friend to look out for you (and vice versa), and be sure to guard your drink at all times.

Drunk driving, besides the obvious dangers, often carries even heavier penalties outside the U.S. (and remember that university policy prohibits students from operating motor vehicles at any time).

Above all, take personal responsibility for your behavior and its consequences. That said, if you do become a victim of a crime it is not your fault. If you disclose to your on-site staff or our office, you can get assistance connecting you to resources. If you chose not to formally disclose, we encourage you to seek resources or find the support that is most helpful to you. [For more information on resources click here.](#)

Housing

Resources for Filling Your Housing in Boulder	52
Housing Abroad	53
Homestays	53
What Will My Homestay Be Like?	53
Should I Bring a Gift?	53
What Do I Do When I First Meet My Family?	53
How Do I Find Out about the Family Rules?	53
Meals	54
Bathing	54
Laundry.....	54
Heat and Light	54
Telephone.....	54
Neatness	54
Curfew	54
Guests	54
Time.....	54
Living in an Apartment	55
Security Deposits	55
Understand Your Lease	55
Know Apartment Protocol in Your Host City.....	55
Usage of Electricity and Water.....	55
Landlord Rights.....	55
Living in a Dormitory	55
Meals	55
Returning to the Residence Halls at CU-Boulder	56
Residence Halls	56

Resources for Filling Your Housing in Boulder

The [Off-Campus Housing & Neighborhood Relations](#) office on campus is a great resource for you.

OCH maintains listings of rooms, houses, apartments, and roommate requests and provides Boulder maps, free copies of the [Boulder Tenants' Guide](#), the Boulder Model Lease, subleasing agreements, furniture rental information, moving tips, renter's insurance and other materials related to living off campus.

OCH services are provided via the Web or on a walk-in basis. Use [Ralphie's List](#) or go to the office in UMC 313 to search for rentals or roommates and talk with student assistants about the Boulder housing market.

Housing Abroad

Homestays

Homestays are a great way to see the everyday lives of people in your host country, but living as part of a family is not always easy. You should be prepared to respect the customs of the household and possibly change some of your habits. Since you are the newcomer, you will be expected to adjust to the family's lifestyle. Be prepared to be flexible and observant.

What Will My Homestay Be Like?

- Families around the world vary as much as families within the U.S. You might live with a single person, a retired couple, a widow(er), or a single parent.
- Families have different interaction styles and expectations about their relationship with you. Some want to integrate you completely into their lives and you may remain close to them forever. Others will look upon you as a boarder or guest. You may also find yourself trying to walk a line between the two.
- You can usually specify what type of family you would prefer. No guarantees can be made that you will be matched with the "perfect" family.

Should I Bring a Gift?

It's always a good idea to bring a hospitality gift. Your gift does not need to be expensive. The gesture is more important than the value. Gifts that have a special meaning to you are especially nice. Some suggestions are:

- Chocolates
- Calendars or books with scenes from home
- Items with university logos
- Special edition U.S. stamps or coins
- U.S.-American cookbooks
- Scenic potholders, aprons, mugs, or glasses
- Lapel pins
- Regional U.S.-American food items
- Placemats with regional prints
- U.S. souvenirs (from Disneyland, sports teams, etc.)
- CDs of U.S.-American music
- Pen-and-ink drawings or nice photos of places in the U.S.
- Handmade crafts

What Do I Do When I First Meet My Family?

You can expect things to be a bit awkward at first. When you arrive, practice having a conversation with the family in their language. A nice icebreaker is showing them pictures from home. They are interested in knowing where you are from and about the rest of your family. You'll feel comfortable because you'll be on familiar ground.

How Do I Find Out about the Family Rules?

- When in doubt, ask! Polite questions to your family about what is expected of you often can circumvent misunderstandings.

- You can also ask the on-site program staff for advice, keeping in mind that every family has its own way of doing things.
- It is important for you to be a good observer. If the family always keeps interior doors closed, do the same. If they take their shoes off upon entering the home, follow their lead.

You will certainly want to find out what the family expects of you in the following areas:

Meals

If meals are included, be sure to be on time or to give the family plenty of notice if you will miss one. If you have any dietary restrictions, tell the family as early as possible. Otherwise, try everything – no matter how different. It's nice to compliment the cook and express appreciation for the meal.

Find out whether or not your host expects you to help with food preparation or clean up. Also, ask whether you will have free access to the kitchen. You may want to take some of your favorite recipes so you can prepare a special meal for them.

Bathing

Hot water can be an expensive and scarce commodity. Find out when and how often it is appropriate to bathe or shower, and be aware that in most other countries people do not bathe nearly as often as in the U.S.

Laundry

You may have to do your own laundry, or your host may do it for you. It is quite likely that a washer or dryer might not be available or that they are different from what you are used to.

Heat and Light

U.S.-Americans consume more of these resources on a daily basis than any other nation of people in the world. Be prepared for less central heating and air-conditioning. Turn off lights whenever you leave a room.

Telephone

In many countries people are charged for every call made from their home phones, even local calls. Never make a phone call, even a local one, without first consulting your family.

Neatness

The concept of neatness varies by family and by culture. Observe the home and try to be at least as neat as the rest of the family. As a guest, you should be respectful of the family's environment.

Curfew

In some cultures and in some families, you may be asked to be home by a certain hour at night. Even if this is not the case, keep your family apprised of your whereabouts and expected time of return so that they will not worry about you.

Guests

Your family has agreed to host you, but is not expected to house your guests. Some families may offer to do so; if they do, make sure they are really comfortable with this and be aware if they expect payment for the service. You don't want to jeopardize your good relationship with the family over a misunderstanding.

Time

Time spent with your host family can be very memorable and rewarding. Like any relationship, it takes time to develop and must be nurtured. Some misunderstandings should be expected, but usually you and the family will be able to laugh at them later! Always keep open communication as a priority, because many problems with homestays can be remedied by talking about them (just like with any family!).

If, for some reason, you and your family just don't get along, talk to on-site staff about moving. Never move out abruptly without explanation, but never stay in a situation in which you feel unsafe. Use discretion.

Living in an Apartment

If your program provides accommodations in apartments, you will receive help figuring out the ins and outs of renting an apartment in your host city. Here are some things to think about in advance.

Security Deposits

You may be required to pay deposits. Inventory the apartment with the landlord before moving in to establish the condition of the furniture, appliances, flooring, etc.

Understand Your Lease

You will be fully responsible for observing all rules in your lease and respecting the rights of other tenants in the building. Keep in mind that your lease may not be in English. If possible, ask a program staff member or a resident of the country where you are staying to read the fine print in your lease before you sign it.

Know Apartment Protocol in Your Host City

You should keep the apartment clean and in good condition and should not disturb the neighbors, especially at night. In some places there are laws allowing neighbors to call the police for excessive noise after a certain hour.

Usage of Electricity and Water

Note that even if you are living with other students in an independent apartment, you may be expected to observe local cultural norms related to electricity and water usage. If you plan on taking long hot showers or leaving lights on when you are not in a room, be aware that you potentially could be billed for excessive electricity and water usage, even if housing costs are included in your program fee. Your on-site resident staff will help you to understand how to appropriately use local resources.

Landlord Rights

Finally, be aware that owners often have the right to enter apartments with no warning. They do this to ensure compliance with the terms of the lease and to show the apartment to future potential renters.

Living in a Dormitory

Student residence halls vary widely around the world, both in the amenities they offer and in the way residents behave. Some are places where people socialize quite a bit. Others are simply places where people live and study; socializing takes place elsewhere. Talk to past program participants to find out what to expect at your host institution.

Meals

Most dorms don't include meals. There may be cafeterias on campus where you can eat inexpensively or there may be kitchens that you share in the dorm.

Resist the temptation to retreat to your room. Get out and mix with your dorm mates, even if you're not a very outgoing person. They may not seek you out, but they will be curious to meet you nonetheless.

In many countries host-country students live relatively close to the university they attend. Don't be disappointed if your new friends leave the dorm for the weekend. Plan around this and find ways to keep busy when the dorm and campus are quiet.

Returning to the Residence Halls at CU-Boulder

Residence Halls

If you're living in a residence hall now, be aware that you will lose your "continuing" status when you study or intern abroad. That means you may not get first priority for the hall or room type of your choice. First-year students are required to live in the dorms, so they get first priority along with students who live continuously in the dorms.

Apply early and make sure your deposit is paid. There is a cancellation fee for refusing a housing assignment once Occupancy Management has put you into a room, so think carefully about whether you are willing to take whatever assignment is given to you.

Contact Occupancy Management (Reservations@colorado.edu; (303) 492-6673; [Housing & Dining Services](#)).

Applications are available online early in the spring semester each year. Contact the Housing Reservation Center for exact dates. Space is not guaranteed.

If you're going abroad in the fall and want to reserve housing for the following spring, submit your application early in the spring before you leave, clearly indicating that you only need housing for the following spring.

If you're going abroad for the year and need to reserve residence hall space for your return the next fall, you can download and complete the application and send it to someone who can mail it to the Housing Reservation Center with the required non-refundable deposit.

Cultural Adjustment

Cultural Adjustment.....	58
Consider Your Situation	58
Stereotyping is Normal.....	58
Gender Roles and Expectations	58
Diversity & Inclusion Among Students in Study Abroad	59
Signs of "Culture Shock"	59
The Cultural Adjustment Cycle	60
Strategies for Coping with Cultural Adjustment	61
Keeping a Journal.....	61
Reasons for Keeping a Journal	62
Hints on Journal Writing.....	62
Some Questions to Consider	62
Before Leaving.....	62
While in the Host Country	62
Upon Returning.....	62
Cultural Identity and the Global Citizen	63
What You Gain.....	63
From Former Study Abroad Students:	63
Cultural Re-Adjustment	63
Strategies for Coping with Cultural Adjustment during Reentry to the U.S.	63
Be Reflective.....	63
Understand the Needs of Others.	64
Expect to Have Some Negative Feelings about Your "Home" Culture.....	64
Accentuate the Positive.	64
Plug in to International Activities.	64
Use Your Skills.....	64
Set Goals for Your Development.	64
Check Out What's Up with Culture?.....	64
Comments from Returned Students	64
Take Care of Your Health!	64
The Returnee Website	65

Cultural Adjustment

The best and fastest way to learn about a language and a culture is total immersion. But the fastest way can often be the most painful. "Cultural adjustment" can cause discomfort. Those who stay the longest and engage most fully will experience the most discomfort. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Consider Your Situation

If you're in a country where a different language is spoken you may at best have the communication ability of a two-year-old depending on how much of the language you've studied and how comfortable you are using it. You'll also be jet-lagged and exhausted at first.

You'll be far from your home, family, and familiar surroundings: the food is different, the habits are different, and the rules are different.

The result is known as "culture shock," or more appropriately, "cultural adjustment."

Culture shock is the unpleasant disorientation which afflicts everyone who enters a strange world. Culture shock is what happens when your expectations don't match up with reality, or when one is bewildered by things taken for granted by those who've grown up in a certain culture.

It's often true that the more eager you are to enter the host culture, the more severe the adjustment may be. Tourists who come only to gaze, taste, and move on are insulated from much of the shock. If you do not feel any discomfort during the first few weeks of your program, ask yourself if you are really engaging with the culture, or living your customary life overseas.

Stereotyping is Normal

The human tendency to simplify and organize information into neat categories is quite normal, but the results are damaging if stereotypes become the only definition of what we see and experience.

Stereotyping works both ways. Just as we have simple ideas about people and places we've never seen, others will have the same about us. If all people know of the U.S. comes from re-runs of unrealistic TV shows or the actions of our government, they will have strange ideas about life in the U.S. You may, for example, be asked by adults whether you know the President personally or if you could call Brad Pitt to say hello.

Stereotypes can be negative or positive. For example, people from the United States are often characterized as highly independent, competitive, practical, and generous. These can be viewed as positive traits. However, they can also be viewed negatively - that people from the U.S. are only concerned about themselves or money, are incapable of appreciating the intangibles in life, and are naive.

Gender Roles and Expectations

You might not have the same status or role in your host country that you experience here. The cultural definitions of harassment may be different or seem non-existent. You could find yourself in situations that cause feelings of anxiety, confusion, fear, powerlessness or anger. Conversely, you may feel uncomfortable because you enjoy a different status than the local women simply because you are from elsewhere.

Past students have found that many host country nationals have a distorted and stereotyped image of U.S.-American women from ads, TV, and movies. Feel free to discuss these issues with your peers and/or your on-site staff.

Diversity & Inclusion Among Students in Study Abroad

Everyone is going to encounter some challenges while abroad. Students who are members of groups traditionally underrepresented in study abroad (students of color, students with disabilities, religious minorities, GLBTQ students, etc.) might face particular challenges in the host country setting because of assumptions of what a U.S.-American is like. Alternatively, the host country may be more open than the United States. The good news is you likely already have cross-cultural navigational skills that will be a great asset to you while abroad and you may be more prepared than you may think. We encourage you to talk with your CU-Boulder [Study Abroad Program Manager](#) or a [Study Abroad Advisor](#) if there is anything you would like to discuss.

African-American students in St. Petersburg and white students in the Dominican Republic might find that the host country nationals hold misconceptions about their ethnic groups.

Heritage students such as Japanese-American students going to Japan might find that people are disappointed if they are not “Japanese enough.”

The GLBTQ student who can be ‘out’ at home may feel pressure to modify behavior in a culture where being gay is either not accepted or is against the law. Alternatively, the host country may be more open than the United States.

Students with physical disabilities or learning disorders may find that the host culture or educational system has little experience accommodating different needs. Alternatively, the host country may be more accommodating than the United States.

Adjust your behavior appropriately to keep yourself safe, but don’t lose your own identity in the process.

For more resources visit our [Diversity in Study Abroad](#) webpage. [Diversity Abroad](#) also offers valuable information on their website including their [Diversity Abroad Online Pre-departure Learning Module](#).

Signs of “Culture Shock”

Experiencing the stress of cultural adjustment is a normal part of living in a new environment. The best defense strategy is to recognize the symptoms and find healthy coping mechanisms.

- Be prepared to have a touch of the flu or a miserable cold in the first few weeks - accept it for what it is, the result of a big change in climate, diet, and routine (not to mention international flights with recycled air!).
- Be prepared to have some moments of sadness and disappointment.
- You'll probably miss the oddest things about life at home, like hamburgers or buying a tube of toothpaste at midnight.
- Be prepared for some anxiety as you discover the new rules and habits of this new place.
- You may forget you left the U.S. to learn and adapt, which means losing a bit of your cultural identity.

Travelers generally react to culture shock by following several common patterns. Look for these signs during your study or internship abroad experience:

The **FUGITIVE** avoids contact and spends lots of time in his or her room. Focus is on study, reading, sleep, and constant letter-writing or surfing the internet and blames the foreign culture a bit, but mostly him- or herself and is ashamed to feel homesick after having dreamt of a great experience abroad.

The **CHAUVINIST** talks endlessly to anyone who will listen, underlining the contrast between the U.S. and abroad and the superiority of “home.”

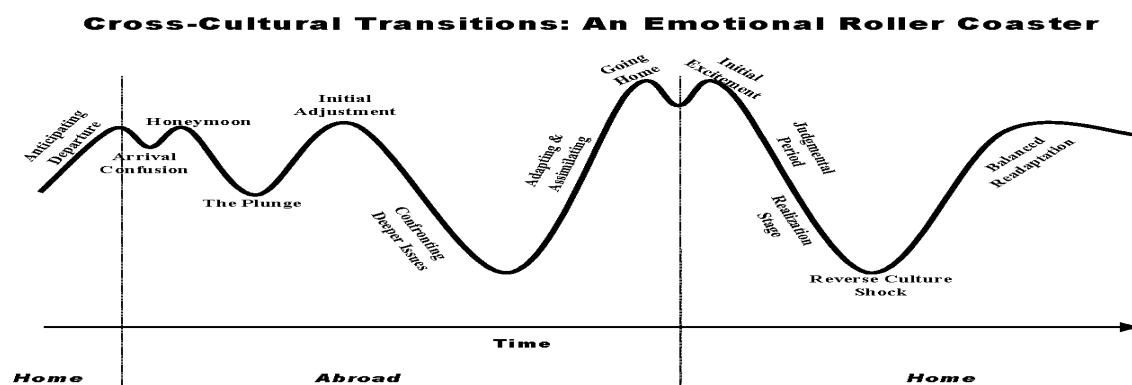
The **CRITIC** makes no comparisons, but casts blame on all sides. The weather is intolerable, the prices exorbitant, the people weird. The academic program is trivial, the teachers are dull, and the students are infantile. Nothing is right.

The **NATIVE** cuts down the U.S. and wants to melt into the crowd. A loner, she or he shuts off all contact with other U.S.-Americans and feels tempted never to return to the U.S. – that land without culture or refinement.

The Cultural Adjustment Cycle

The timing of the cultural adjustment cycle varies by person, the length of time abroad, and how involved you get in the culture. Some never go through the cycle because they don't fully engage in the host culture. The experts say that the same thing happens to everyone: Peace Corps volunteers, diplomats, missionaries, soldiers, and foreign students. It happens because it's never easy to live in a new environment.

The chart and text below describe the general stages that many people go through adjusting to another culture and then when returning home (refer to the section on Re-entry or Coming Home Again).



The above graph was adapted from works by Margaret Pusch and others.

1. **PRE-DEPARTURE ANTICIPATION:** While planning and packing, you may feel exhilarated and nervous. You might lose interest in current activities. You may have some insomnia.
2. **POST-ARRIVAL EXHILARATION:** You may have a heightened sense of enthusiasm; changes in routine are exciting! Some insomnia and stomach queasiness is normal.
3. **EARLY SOJOURN FRUSTRATION:** You might feel impatient or disenchanted with life in your host country or you might feel restless and irritable. You might rely on familiar activities and foreign friends and start to question your own values and those of your host country. Some minor health problems are normal.

4. **MID-SOJOURN DISCOURAGEMENT:** You may be quite homesick, discouraged, or disoriented and feel hostility towards local people and customs. Colds and headaches are common, as are some stomach problems.
5. **LATE SOJOURN ASSIMILATION AND INTEGRATION:** You begin to reconcile who you are within the local culture and to recognize changes in yourself, including changes in your values. You experience renewed interest in the host culture and have a more constructive attitude. You feel adapted to the host culture and in equilibrium with the host country. Your health is normal.

Strategies for Coping with Cultural Adjustment

- **Keep a journal:** This helps you keep a sense of perspective and offers an opportunity to vent feelings without having to tell others. (Read more below).
- **Get your personal life in focus:** If you are leaving a partner behind, you may limit your experience because you are concentrating on a person far away. Similarly, if you attach yourself too strongly to your U.S.-American group, you can also limit your experience.
- **Find a few supportive people:** Don't feel shy about asking for help. Talk to your program coordinator or teachers. They will know what you are going through - they have probably been there themselves.
- **Keep active:** Resist the temptation to withdraw. Keep regular hours. Always go to class. Plan to eat, sleep, and study at about the same time every day. Physical exercise is often the best medicine for anxiety and will help burn off frustration.
- **Be Aware of Alcohol Abuse:** Sometimes the temptation to use alcohol to cope with sadness, isolation, or shyness while abroad can become a true problem. Seek help from on-site staff if you feel you or a friend may have a problem with alcohol.
- **Explore:** Find a map, strike out on your own, and explore the territory. Observe people closely to pick up subtle nuances about the culture.
- **Visitors from home:** Time learning about your host country will be your most precious possession. If parents or friends are planning to visit you, encourage them to wait until a scheduled break or the end of the program.
- **Evaluate your goals:** Remind yourself of the goals you set for the experience. If they were unrealistic, admit it.
- **Hobbies and outside activities:** Engage in hobbies or activities that interest you. Play chess in France, join a rowing team in Italy, play rugby in South Africa, or join a tea ceremony club in Japan.
- **Create Activities to Relax:** Find a place that is comfortable, where you can think and be away from people and culture for an hour or so. Make a cup of tea. Read a chapter of a book. Listen to music. Try to do some things that you enjoy every week.
- **Remember, all this is temporary:** Keep reminding yourself that you will get through this. The satisfaction that you have adjusted to the new culture will be its own reward.
- And... above all, **Keep your sense of humor!** This is the most important piece of advice that we can give you. If you can do this you can handle almost anything.

Keeping a Journal

Think of a journal as a scrapbook, the written and visual record of your experience abroad that you will have for years to come.

There are so many ways to keep a journal. Don't worry about your writing. You can start now, before you leave, and continue after your return. No one we know has regretted keeping a journal, but many regret not doing it.

Reasons for Keeping a Journal

- to record your goals and personal agenda for your sojourn abroad
- to keep addresses and references you collect
- as a diary to record travel and daily routines
- as a vehicle for thinking through observation, reflection and analysis
- to vent feelings safely and then reevaluate once the initial anger, sadness, etc. has passed
- to assist in the cultural adaptation process
- to record your feelings when you come home

Hints on Journal Writing

- write as you would in a letter to a close friend
- provide a context for the stories you relate
- use and translate foreign words you learn
- tell stories; quote from the people you meet

Some Questions to Consider

The following questions will help you reflect on the process of effectively moving across cultures.

Before Leaving

- Why did I select this program?
- What do I want to get out of this experience?
- How can I make friends in the host culture?
- If I expect to improve my language skills, will I have to avoid other English speakers?
- Am I concerned about missing friends, family?
- How do I plan to stay in touch with them?
- How would I describe the U.S.? People from the States? Myself?
- How do I want my experience overseas to appear to future employers?
- How will I describe this experience on my resume?

While in the Host Country

- What are my initial reactions?
- Are my reactions different from those of my travelling companion(s)?
- What type of experience do I feel engages me most? Isolates me most?
- What interaction was the most confusing in the past week? The most stressful? The most fun?
- How effectively did I deal with those situations?
- Who was most helpful to me this past week?
- What am I doing to meet people?
- Am I viewed as an individual, as a U.S.-American, as a foreigner?
- Have my goals changed?
- Am I progressing towards my goals? Do I need to change my goals?

Upon Returning

- What did I learn about the host culture? About myself?
- How can I apply what I learned to my life now?
- Who will listen to my stories? How can I get more involved in international activities?
- Do I think of the U.S. any differently now that I have returned?
- What advice would I give to those who are leaving tomorrow for my host culture?
- How can I use my international experience in my career?

Cultural Identity and the Global Citizen

What You Gain

You probably have a variety of expectations about your upcoming study or internship abroad experience. For many, one outcome is knowledge gained about yourself, your cultural identity, and the transformation towards becoming a globalized citizen.

In learning about your host country's customs, worldviews, religions, communication styles, etc., you will also find yourself examining your own beliefs and values. You will begin to see *how you came to be who you are*. As you learn, you will adapt by combining elements of both cultures into your own value set.

The experience you have depends on many factors, including the cultural identity you bring to your experience. The way you look, speak, and dress; your religion, gender, ethnicity, sexual identity, or whether you are physically challenged - all influence how you will approach the experience and how locals will react to you.

Besides getting the opportunity to learn about yourself and your host culture, living in a foreign culture and being an outsider gives you a great opportunity to learn what it's like to be different from the majority culture. If you have never had the experience of being part of a minority, you may gain greater understanding of peoples in the U.S. who are in this situation. These can be very powerful lessons.

From Former Study Abroad Students:

"I've grown so much as a person. It challenged me to view issues from a global perspective. It also increased my confidence significantly."

"I extended myself in every possibly way. I struggled. But my reward was personal growth and tolerance that I am still building on back in the States."

"It definitely broadened my horizons. I believe I've changed my outlook on life, the world, and different cultures. I'm now much more open to accepting new ways of doing things."

"I matured a lot, having to adjust and adapt on my own with the problem of communication always there. I learned what 'living in the third world' really means, what people hope for, are afraid of, and angry about. I think study abroad should be required."

We hope you will learn a lot about yourself, your host country and its peoples, and the U.S. in all of its wonderful diversity. We hope, too, that the knowledge you bring home as a world citizen will help you contribute to a country and a world in which we are all free to be different – where others, because they *are* different, are valued and celebrated.

Cultural Re-Adjustment

Strategies for Coping with Cultural Adjustment during Reentry to the U.S.

Be Reflective.

Give some thought to your return, to the types of intellectual and emotional changes that you have undergone as a result of your time abroad.

Understand the Needs of Others.

Be patient with your friends and family who are trying to understand your experiences. Listen to the changes they underwent while you were away.

Expect to Have Some Negative Feelings about Your "Home" Culture.

You are viewing it, perhaps for the first time, from the perspective of a foreigner. A common tendency is to be highly critical of shortcomings that you did not see before. Remember that there are positive and negative aspects of **all** cultures.

Accentuate the Positive.

Identify what you like about both cultures and try to incorporate the best aspects of these into your life.

Plug in to International Activities.

Find ways to keep the "international" part of you alive. Become involved in clubs or activities on campus or in the community to maintain your language skills; do volunteer work with ethnic or multicultural groups to use your cross-cultural skills; or host a foreign student. Check out the [International Activities in the Denver/Boulder Area](#) page on our website.

Use Your Skills.

Use the cross-cultural adaptation skills you developed abroad - e.g. keep active, maintain a sense of humor, find a support group, expect differences, allow yourself to make mistakes, stay flexible during your readjustment home.

Set Goals for Your Development.

Set some long-term goals, which may involve finding ways to return abroad. Both Study Abroad and [Career Services](#) on campus have reference libraries with information on working abroad. Check the [Going Abroad Again](#) page for more information.

Check Out [What's Up with Culture?](#)

This is an interactive program to support and enhance a study abroad student's ability to make successful cultural adjustments. Sections 3 and higher of Module 2 are for returning students. We strongly recommend it.

Comments from Returned Students

"The culture shock started a week or so after I returned. The depression and disorientation came when I realized I wasn't just traveling still. The feeling of having climbed a mountain and then scaled my way down and landed in a huge valley washed over me. I felt I could not relate to anybody – not even my parents."

"Going away for so long makes coming home difficult because you notice things about home that you never did before and you have the mission of telling people about your experiences that they don't understand or appreciate. WARNING: Study abroad may make you severely dislike some things about U.S. culture."

Take Care of Your Health!

If you become sick after returning, tell your health care provider that you have traveled outside of the U.S. Because some diseases have a long incubation period, you may not be sick until after you return.

Schedule a tuberculosis skin test for 3 months after your return. If you were exposed to tuberculosis while abroad, you wouldn't necessarily be sick. Testing is the only way to prevent serious problems later!

Complete any immunization series (such as Hepatitis A or B) that you started before travel.

The Returnee Website

For those who want more tips and information on returning home, we have created a website just for returning students that is designed to help you re-adapt to life in the United States and CU-Boulder. Check the [Returning Students](#) page for information on:

- [When and how your courses from abroad will post to your](#) transcript
- How to share your experience with others in the community and at CU-Boulder
- [International activities in the Denver/Boulder area](#)
- What avenues you can pursue to [go abroad again](#)

If you have any questions or want to discuss your return to campus, please don't hesitate to stop by Study Abroad or email us at AlumniSA@colorado.edu. We'd love to hear from you!

Disciplinary Issues and Program Policies

Study Abroad & Students' Disciplinary Status	66
Eligibility and Participation	66
While Abroad	67
Academic Conduct.....	67
Social Conduct.....	67
Alcohol and Drugs.....	67
Procedure for Handling Disciplinary Action While Abroad.....	67
Disciplinary Action and Separation from a Study Abroad Program	68

Study Abroad & Students' Disciplinary Status

Eligibility and Participation

Students may not participate on a CU-Boulder study abroad or internship abroad program while they are undergoing a sanction of formal probation from the Office of Student Conduct.

Program partners may have additional, related policies, such as requiring that students not be on disciplinary probation during their time abroad. Students who are currently suspended for any reason from any institution of higher education may not apply to a study abroad program.

During the study abroad application process, students are asked the following question: "Have you ever been subject to disciplinary action, including probation or community service, by an educational institution or government entity (such as a police department)?"

Students who are currently on informal probation may apply to study abroad, and are not automatically prevented from studying abroad. Applicants who have a disciplinary record, or who will be on informal probation during the study abroad period will be subject to additional scrutiny during the acceptance process.

If accepted, the faculty director, host institution, or program provider will be notified of their status. In some cases, additional restrictions may be placed on their participation in the program at the discretion of the host institution and/or CU-Boulder.

After all students have been accepted to study or internship abroad programs each semester, the Office of Student Conduct provides Study Abroad with a report listing any study abroad students with past and current sanctions. Any sanctions that were not disclosed in students' applications will be reviewed, and acceptances will be re-considered. Students *may* be dismissed based on their disciplinary record, depending on the severity of their actions. Students who will be on formal probation during any portion of their time abroad will be immediately dismissed from the program.

For more information regarding CU-Boulder's policies on disciplinary status and study abroad, please refer to the eligibility requirements on the [Getting Started](#) page of our website, and the policies in this guide.

While Abroad

All students sign the 'Personal Conduct Agreement' in their CU-Boulder Study Abroad application. Study abroad participants are still registered students at the University of Colorado Boulder and continue to be subject to university rules and regulations while participating in the study abroad program. The applicable CU-Boulder policies include, but are not limited to the following:

- Review the Honor Code
- Student Conduct Policies and Procedures

Students in study abroad programs also must comply with all applicable laws and policies of the host institution and the host country. Participating students should also remember that they are viewed as representatives of the United States as well as the University of Colorado. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct abroad may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and adjudicated once the student returns home.

Academic Conduct

Each student must abide by the academic policies of the host university and/or study abroad program provider.

Social Conduct

Information regarding standards of acceptable behavior and conduct in the country(ies) of study is discussed at pre-departure and on-site orientations and in written pre-departure materials. Participants are expected to be familiar with, and abide by, standards of acceptable conduct and to understand that social behaviors acceptable in a U.S. academic setting might be highly objectionable abroad. Behavior which violates those standards could harm the university's and/or program provider's relationship with host country(ies) and institution(s) as well as the participants' own health and personal safety.

Alcohol and Drugs

While studying or interning abroad, participants are expected to adhere to alcohol and drug policies of the host university and/or study abroad program provider, in addition to the laws of the host country.

Failure to abide by the conditions or spirit of this agreement may result in dismissal from the program and/or other penalties as outlined above in the CU-Boulder Study Abroad *Disciplinary Action While Abroad* section.

Procedure for Handling Disciplinary Action While Abroad

Participants on University of Colorado Boulder study abroad or internship abroad programs are responsible for their personal behavior while in a new country, culture, and educational system. CU-Boulder and the host institutions and third-party program providers with whom it affiliates are responsible for maintaining appropriate standards of conduct during the program.

Standards of conduct and social behavior will be defined and explained in orientation materials made available to participants after acceptance to a CU-Boulder program. These issues, along with the social norms of the country of study, will be further discussed during pre-departure and on-site orientation

sessions. Students are expected to watch and read the materials, attend the orientations, and familiarize themselves with these standards of conduct. It is particularly important for students to understand that social behaviors tolerated in the United States may be highly offensive in the host culture or university setting.

Disciplinary Action and Separation from a Study Abroad Program

In the case of violations of standards, CU-Boulder and the host institution or program provider each may take disciplinary action. The process will include the following steps:

- Written notice of the alleged conduct and the standards alleged to have been violated.
- A conference between the student and the resident director or other on-site program personnel that provides the student with the opportunity to accept responsibility or dispute the allegations.
- In cases where the student is found responsible for violating a standard, the resident director or delegate will establish a plan to avoid future infractions. This may take the form of a contract outlining acceptable conduct for the rest of the study abroad program, required counseling or other medical intervention, or other activity to correct the behavior that led to the infraction.
- Notification of CU-Boulder Study Abroad by the overseas staff of the violation and the resulting plan.
- CU-Boulder, the host institution, or the program provider may, at their individual discretion, deem an offense sufficiently serious to require that a student be dismissed from the program. If the resident director or on-site program representative decides that an offense is so serious that the student should be separated from the program, he or she shall dismiss the student and inform CU-Boulder Study Abroad. In these cases, the Director of Study Abroad shall notify the student's emergency contact in accordance with CU-Boulder *Parental Notification Guidelines – Disciplinary and Personal Matters*.
- If a student is dismissed, unspent program fees will be refunded according to the posted withdrawal schedule. Neither CU-Boulder, the host institution, nor the program provider are under any obligation to assume any cost of separation from the program. No academic credit shall be awarded unless a course has been completed and final assessment has been made before the date of separation.
- Study Abroad will, in accordance with the [University of Colorado Boulder Student Conduct Policy and Procedures](#), report violations to the Office of Student Conduct for further action after the student returns to the Boulder campus.

NOTE: Evidence of a student's failure to comply with local laws will make the student subject to immediate dismissal from the program in accordance with the above procedure. Separation from a study abroad program is not tantamount to expulsion from the University of Colorado.

Reaffirmed by the Study Abroad Committee on March 18, 2005

Students' Disciplinary Status and Eligibility for Study Abroad

Policy:

Students may not be on formal probation status for disciplinary reasons at CU-Boulder at any time during a CU-Boulder study abroad program. Program partners may have additional, related policies, such as

requiring that students not be on probation at the time of application. Students who are currently suspended for any reason from any institution of higher education may not apply to a study abroad program.

Students placed on informal or formal probation are expected to complete certain tasks before returning to good standing at CU-Boulder. Students on formal probation are expected to participate in campus life without further violating the campus codes of conduct. Since studying abroad would take the student away from Boulder, it is not appropriate to give students this opportunity to continue studying away from the normal oversight mechanisms.

Students can be placed on informal disciplinary probation after a violation of codes of conduct if that violation does not involve alcohol or drug possession (such as an MIP) or abuse or violent acts (sexual harassment/assault, destroying university property, fighting). Applicants who will be on informal disciplinary probation during the study abroad period will be subject to additional scrutiny during the acceptance process. If accepted, the faculty director, host institution, or program provider will be notified of their status. In some cases, additional restrictions may be placed on their participation in the program at the discretion of the host institution and/or CU-Boulder.

Rationale:

Study abroad is not a right; it is a privilege available to students who demonstrate that they have achieved a certain level of academic and personal maturity. Students who cannot maintain a GPA that exceeds the—in good standing minimum or who have violated disciplinary rules to the extent that they are placed on academic probation or formal disciplinary probation have not demonstrated the required maturity.

Approved by the Study Abroad Committee
May 2, 2006

Revised Policy Approved
September 22, 2006

Emergency Procedures

Emergencies While Abroad.....	70
Steps to Take in the Event of an Emergency Abroad.....	70
Additional Resources	71
The Office of International Education's Policy in Case of Political or Social Unrest, Terrorism and the Threat of War	71
Important Information for Students Considering Withdrawing From a Study Abroad Program.....	72
Seek Assistance before Deciding	72
Financial Considerations	72
Health Insurance Considerations.....	73
Academic Considerations	73
Effective Date of Withdrawal.....	73

Emergencies While Abroad

CU-Boulder Study Abroad staff is concerned about your health, safety and well-being while abroad. This section provides general suggestions of what steps to take in the case of an emergency. *If your on-site program has an emergency protocol, be sure to follow those procedures first.*

Steps to Take in the Event of an Emergency Abroad

While your instinct may be to call your parents first, in an actual emergency you should follow the general guidelines outlined below. This is because your parents may be thousands of miles away and not in an immediate position to do anything for you, other than offer moral support. We suggest following steps 1 to 3 in the event of an emergency or urgent situation abroad in order to get help in the quickest manner. We also recommend that you discuss this emergency protocol with your parents before you leave.

1. If it is a true medical emergency, contact the local police or medical emergency services in your host country (know the equivalent of 911).
2. Contact the on-site program staff. Because they are on-site, they can often best assist in the case of emergencies. Your program handbooks and other post-acceptance materials will contain contact information for local staff of the program organization or host university's international office.
3. Contact CU-Boulder Study Abroad at (303) 492-7741. If our office is closed, call the CU-Boulder Study Abroad emergency phone at (303) 653-1671.
4. Contact your parents.

The on-site staff for your program will be able to provide the best assistance in the case of one of the following **non-emergency difficulties**.

- Petty pick-pocketing or theft (as long as no physical injuries occurred)
- Lost or stolen passport
- Problems with your host family or housing abroad
- Problems with your courses abroad

Please note: The CU-Boulder Study Abroad staff is required to report any incident of harassment or discrimination to the Office of Discrimination & Harassment (ODH) on campus. Each incident might be handled differently, but in general the ODH cannot take action unless the allegation is against someone connected with the University of Colorado Boulder. However, the ODH will provide referral information to

the alleged victim to other campus offices that can assist him or her (for example, the Office of Victim Assistance, Counseling and Psychological Services, Office of Student Conduct, etc.).

Additional Resources

While you are abroad, you can contact your [Program Manager](#) who can put you in touch with the appropriate resources. You may also contact these on and off campus offices directly:

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (303) 492-6766

[Office of Victim Assistance at CU-Boulder](#) (303) 492-8855

[Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network \(RAINN\)](#) (800) 656-4673

[Sexual Assault Support and Help for Americans Abroad \(SASHAA\)](#) (866) 879-6636

The Office of International Education's Policy in Case of Political or Social Unrest, Terrorism and the Threat of War

We are often asked about our policy for dealing with emergencies or other events that could jeopardize the security of students on our study abroad programs. We routinely do several things:

First: We tell you how to access official information about the country to which you are going. In particular, you have been given the website for the United States Department of State's [Background Notes](#). We urge you to read the [Consular Information Sheet](#) for your country of study since they provide basic health and safety information that we want and expect you to know.

Second: We give you the information you need to register with the U.S. State Department so they know where and when you will be studying abroad. Use [the website](#) to register with the embassy in the country where you are studying in case it is necessary for a consular officer to contact you in an emergency.

Third: We monitor [U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings](#), which document the potential for unrest or signal imminent or actual problems. When a Warning is issued, the Study Abroad staff will evaluate the advice and communicate it to program contacts on-site. The contacts make sure students are notified and advised so that appropriate action can be taken.

Travel Warnings are also the "trigger" used to cancel a program. If the State Department prohibits travel to a certain country and/or orders U.S.-American government dependents to leave, the Office of International Education will cancel either our program or CU's participation in the program.

If we cancel a program before it begins, we do the following:

1. All funds paid to the University of Colorado Boulder's Office of International Education will be refunded. Fees paid directly by you to our study abroad partners, deposits made to hold housing, or payments for plane tickets may or may not be returned, depending on each organization's policies.
2. If classes have not begun in Boulder, you will be given information on how to register. Those who wish to take the semester off will be given information about taking a [leave of absence](#) from CU-Boulder.
3. If you receive financial aid, steps will be taken to ensure that future aid is not jeopardized.
4. If you wish to secure housing in CU-Boulder dorms, the Office of International Education will work with the Housing Reservations office to help find space whenever possible.

If we cancel after a program has begun, we do the following:

1. Advise you to immediately leave the country or area. If you choose to remain in unsettled areas, you do so at your own risk.
2. Depending on how much coursework has been completed and where you are in the academic term, facilitate the completion of credit and the registration for the next term at your home campus. *If partial or full credit can be awarded, tuition will not be fully refunded (see #3).*
3. Refund all fees paid to the University of Colorado Boulder's Office of International Education, unless partial or full credit can be awarded. Fees paid directly by you to our study abroad partners, deposits made to hold housing may or may not be refunded, depending on each organization's policies. Payments for plane tickets, visa fees, immunizations, etc. are generally not refundable.

If you or members of your family have additional questions, please contact us. Our overall goal is to ensure that you have a safe, productive experience abroad.

Important Information for Students Considering Withdrawing From a Study Abroad Program

If you are thinking about withdrawing from your study abroad or internship abroad program, you should consider that withdrawing either before or after the program has begun can have serious financial and academic consequences.

Seek Assistance before Deciding

Contact your CU-Boulder Study Abroad [Program Manager](#). Your Program Manager can explain possible ramifications of withdrawing and can help you think through your decision.

If you are already abroad, contact the study abroad staff at your program site. They are in the best position to help resolve problems that you might be experiencing (such as housing or your classes).

Financial Considerations

First check the financial withdrawal schedule to see what you will owe. The schedule is available on the [Program Costs](#) page of the Study Abroad website. The amount due, which represents what has been spent on your behalf to date, can be sizeable.

Exceptions to the withdrawal schedule are considered only if you withdraw for medical reasons or because of a family emergency. In that case, discuss your situation with your CU-Boulder Study Abroad [Program Manager](#).

Appropriate documentation must be submitted to Study Abroad to request an exception to published withdrawal fees.

If you receive financial aid, contact the CU-Boulder [Office of Financial Aid](#) to find out how withdrawing will impact your aid. You risk either losing a portion or all of your aid if you are not enrolled full-time. If you have received a CU-Boulder study abroad scholarship, you will need to repay the full amount of the scholarship for the term you have not completed.

Keep in mind that if you withdraw from a study abroad or internship abroad program and plan to return to Boulder to take classes for that semester, you will need to make sure you authorize payment for your Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF) if you have applied for it. If you haven't applied for it (and if you are eligible) you will need to do so by the appropriate deadlines, before you can authorize payment.

Health Insurance Considerations

The Study Abroad group accident and health insurance ends on the official withdrawal date. If you are already abroad when you withdraw, you will need to secure health insurance for the remainder of the semester. While our insurance provider does not offer individual insurance policies for students, you may visit <http://www.insuremytrip.com/> to research possible coverage for the remainder of your stay abroad. Please understand these policies may not cover you while you are in your home country – consult with the insurance provider for exact coverage information.

Academic Considerations

If you withdraw before the program begins, register for CU-Boulder courses as quickly as possible. If you don't plan to register for the term at CU-Boulder, you may register for a [leave of absence](#) to continue accessing some University benefits.

If you withdraw after the program begins:

To earn credit for coursework you have completed (e.g., an intensive pre-session course), you must stay enrolled in study abroad for that term to have the work posted on your CU transcript. If you are not receiving credit for completed coursework, you may want to register for a [leave of absence](#) for the rest of the term.

Check with the on-site study abroad staff to find out how the withdrawal will impact your study abroad grades. In some cases it may be too late to withdraw without failing some or all of your courses. If this happens, the failing grades will appear on your CU transcript.

Effective Date of Withdrawal

Your withdrawal is effective the day written notification is received by the CU-Boulder Study Abroad Program Manager. Sending the notification by CU email is required. The email needs to state that you are withdrawing from your program as of the date of the email and should include the reason for the withdrawal.

Appendix

Suggested Resource List	74
General Resources	74
Health Resources	75
Sustainable Travel	75
Self-Orientation Pre-Departure Guide	76
Am I Prepared for the Overall Experience?	76
Am I Ready to Make the Trip?	76
What Do I Know About Academics on My Study Abroad Program?	76
What Do I Know About My Host City?	76
Where Will I Live and Eat?	77
Have I Made Appropriate Financial Arrangements?	77
What Else Should I Be Thinking About?	77

Suggested Resource List

Learning more about your host country before you leave is a great idea, both for your own satisfaction and to make a good impression on the locals.

General Resources

Your CU-Boulder and host organization study abroad or internship abroad orientation materials.

The Study Abroad [Once Accepted](#) page.

[CU-Boulder Libraries - Chinook On-line Catalog](#). Norlin Library has resources to help you learn about your host country and city, including magazines and newspapers. Many resources are electronic and you can access them even after leaving Boulder.

Guides for all countries of the world are now available through the Government Information Library and can be accessed directly from the [Government Information web site](#).

The [U.S. Department of State](#) web site provides information on passports, travel safety, and more.

[U.S. Study Abroad Office](#) (the U.S. Department of State's study-abroad specific information and resources).

[U.S. Department of State Students Abroad](#).

[U.S. Department of State Electronic Information Publications](#) provides information on geography, economies, and political systems of foreign countries.

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) provides recommended vaccinations and health precautions for travelers.

[Overseas Security Advisory Council](#) (OSAC) "[Crime & Safety Reports](#)" for each country.

[The Lonely Planet](#), [Let's Go](#) and [Rough Guides](#) travel guides. These guides have practical information for traveling on a student budget.

The Back Door travel guides by [Rick Steves](#). Books on budget travel that provide excellent advice about how you can learn about the places you visit.

[Nomadic Matt](#) is a website with tips on economical travel.

[Transitions Abroad](#) is a journal with excellent resources and articles on study, work, and educational travel abroad.

[The University of Michigan Work Abroad](#) page is a good resource if you are preparing to intern abroad.

[The Electronic Embassy](#) is a frequently updated site that provides direct links to home pages of consulates and embassies. It has information on visa requirements, study, work and travel.

[Ethical Traveler](#) is a grass-roots alliance with information about being an environmentally-conscious traveler, being a good Ambassador abroad and more.

Health Resources

Your state's Department of Health

[Travel Health Online](#)

[Passport Health](#)

[CDC Travelers' Health](#)

[Health & Safety Tips from CIEE](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[FrontierMEDEX Assistance Corporation](#)

Sustainable Travel

[Carbon Footprint Calculator](#)

Carbon Offsets Programs:

[Climate Trust](#)

[Native Energy](#)

[TerraPass](#)

Information on the Carbon Offsets Debate:

[Carbon Responsibility Magazine](#)

[CU Environment Center](#)

[CU One Million Acts of Green](#)

[Ecological Footprint Quiz](#)

[Ethical Traveler](#)

National Geographic's [Ultimate Guide to Sustainable Travel](#)

[Responsible Travel Pledge](#)

Daily email tips:

[The EPA](#)

[Friends of the Earth \(UK\)](#)

[350 Project](#): an international campaign for worldwide solutions to the climate crisis – find out what the number 350 refers to on their website.

Self-Orientation Pre-Departure Guide

Pre-Departure Guide

Here is a handy list of questions to help you think about what it will be like to live in your host country. Use this to ask questions at your program-specific orientation.

Am I Prepared for the Overall Experience?

- What do I want to get out of my academic experience abroad?
- Have I made a list of goals? Are they realistic?
- What are my hidden (or unspoken) expectations?
- Can I answer questions about my university and my hometown?
- How familiar am I with my own cultural heritage?
- How will I use this overseas experience to prepare for my life post-graduation, my career?

Am I Ready to Make the Trip?

- Do I have a passport that is valid for at least six months after the program ends? If not, how do I get one?
- What can I do to protect my passport from being stolen? Have I made copies of my passport and other important documents?
- Have I acquired any necessary visas?
- Do I know when I need to arrive to begin my program and do I know where I need to go?
- What if I arrive on a weekend or late at night? Where will I stay? Is there someone I can call?
- Have I made flight arrangements? Do I know weight and size limits for luggage on my flight(s)? Do I realize that I need to be able to carry all of my luggage? Should I repack?
- What health issues should I be aware of in my host country? Do I need inoculations before I leave? What medications should I take with me?
- What is the value to me of an International Student ID card, Youth Hostel membership, or train pass? Should I get these before I leave?

What Do I Know About Academics on My Study Abroad Program?

- Have I talked to my academic advisor(s) here to determine what courses I should take abroad as well as the courses I will need to take after I return?
- How do I register? Is there a course catalog? How do I find out about classes offered? How many credits are the courses worth? Will there be anyone available to help me?
- What is the academic calendar? When do classes begin?
- Is there a campus? Where will my classes be held? What is the classroom environment like? How often will my classes meet and for how long?
- What type of work will I be expected to do - class presentations, research papers, essay exams? How will these be evaluated?
- What is the library like? Can books be checked out? Do students purchase textbooks?
- How will my courses appear on my CU transcript? Will the grades be A-F or Pass/Fail? Will they be averaged into my GPA?
- What clubs are available for me to join? What other activities are available on campus?
- How will I register for my return to CU-Boulder (or other school)?

What Do I Know About My Host City?

- Is my host location urban, rural, or suburban?

- What is the climate like in my host city? Are there seasons? Do I have appropriate clothes for the climate? Am I bringing too many clothes? What types of clothes are culturally appropriate? How do students dress?
- Will I use public transportation to get to classes? What is it like and how much does it cost? Should I plan to buy or rent a bicycle? How long is my commute?
- Do I have an international calling card for phone calls? Are local calls free? Does the phone company charge by both time and distance? Do I have a means of calling via Google or Skype voice and video chat?
- What are normal expectations regarding the use of hot water, heating, and power consumption? Can I use my electric appliances?

Where Will I Live and Eat?

- Where will I be living? What do I need to take to set up my living quarters (e.g. towels, bed linens)? How will I do my laundry?
- What will my housing situation be like? Will I have my own room? What will be expected of me in terms of cleaning my living quarters?
- If I am staying with a family, have I selected gifts to take for them? Am I familiar with "host/host gift" customs?
- Where will I eat? Will meals be prepared for me or do I need to prepare my own? Do I have a choice?
- Do I need to take precautions about eating certain foods or drinking tap water?
- Do I have specific dietary needs that may require special arrangements while abroad?

Have I Made Appropriate Financial Arrangements?

- Will I be receiving financial aid for my study abroad experience? Have I made arrangements for the disbursement of my financial aid?
- Have I made arrangements to pay my study abroad program fee?
- What is included in the program fee? What extra money should I bring for vacation travel, entertainment, and gifts?
- Do I know the exchange rate for the currency of my host country? Do I know how to obtain some of my host country's currency before I leave?
- Can I open a bank account in my host city? How can I transfer money from home if I need to? Do I have an ATM card that I can use in my host city? Should I bring a credit card?

What Else Should I Be Thinking About?

- Have I read about the political system, economy, religion and culture of my host country?
- Have I been reading magazines and/or newspapers to become more familiar with U.S. and world news and events? Am I prepared to discuss world events with new acquaintances?
- Am I familiar with my health insurance? If I have to make a claim, how does the insurance work?
- Do I have any prescription drugs that I need to take with me? If so, how do I legally transport them?
- Do my family and friends know how to reach me while abroad? Do I have their addresses?
- Are there particular social customs (e.g. for greetings, gifts, eating) that I should know about? Are people treated differently because of age, gender or other factors?
- Are there any uniquely North American habits that I should avoid?