



STUDY ABROAD

A HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Why Study Abroad?

Studying abroad may be that defining moment in your education that will change your life. Nothing will be quite the same upon your return. Your perspectives will be global, your attitudes will be international and you will have memories that will last a lifetime. You will have a more impressive resume; in some cases your language skills will improve and you'll develop close-knit friendships.

Tri-C encourages and provides opportunities for students to begin their journey as a global citizen. Study Abroad gives students first-hand experiences of various cultures, topographies and environments that could not otherwise be found in Northeast Ohio or even the United States.

In general, Study Abroad is a teaching and learning strategy occurring outside the student's home country that results in progress toward an academic degree at the student's home institution. At Tri-C, the term Study Abroad typically refers to a short-term (7-21 days) international experience that is a component of, and reinforces the learning objectives of, an on-campus course.

Study Abroad directly relates to two of the College's General Education Outcomes: Global Awareness and Cultural Sensitivity. It is taught at the same level of academic rigor as the rest of the course. Students studying abroad will be challenged by the need to perform at a high academic level while adapting to a cultural environment different from their own. However, students usually thrive and consider Study Abroad to be a valuable life learning experience.

This handbook will provide you with general and specific information regarding processes, responsibilities and opportunities that you can expect throughout the phases of studying abroad. You are encouraged to review it thoroughly and ask questions if needed (refer to the RESOURCES section).

It can happen for you!

GETTING STARTED

Study Abroad Information Sessions:

All students interested in participating in Study Abroad are required to attend an information session no more than twelve (12) months in advance of the term in which Study Abroad is anticipated. At the information session, you will learn more about the application process, what your roles and responsibilities will include, financial responsibilities, preparation for travelling abroad, and other information related to study abroad. Information sessions will give you a better idea of what to expect and what is expected of you. Check the Study Abroad website for specific dates and times for the information sessions associated with the Study Abroad course in which you are interested. Failure to attend the required information session will preclude you from eligibility.

Once accepted into a Study Abroad course, all students are also required to participate in one or more pre-departure orientation sessions. Please refer to the Preparation for Your Study Abroad Experience section in this manual for further information about mandatory pre-departure student orientation sessions. Failure to attend the required pre-departure orientation session will preclude you from participating in the Study Abroad program.

Eligibility for Study Abroad:

In order to participate in Study Abroad at Tri-C, all of the following eligibility requirements must be met:

- As with any course at Tri-C, all course pre-requisites must be met prior to enrolling in the Study Abroad course.
- All students participating in Study Abroad must be age 18 or older at the time of departure.
- Students cannot participate in Study Abroad while on academic or disciplinary probation.
- All students must agree to a criminal background check. Students on probation due to a criminal offense, have been convicted of a felony, or who are a sex offender cannot participate in Study Abroad.
- Students must be able to demonstrate the physical requirements specific to the course. For example, a Marine Biology course may require the ability to swim.

How to Apply:

Students must complete the application form specific to the Study Abroad course in which they would like to participate. Application forms are available for download on the Study Abroad website and are also available at the Study Abroad information sessions. The forms must be submitted to the lead instructor by the deadline indicated. An application must be submitted prior to being able to register for the course. If your application is accepted, you will be notified to register and pay a deposit. Applications submitted after the established deadline will not be accepted. The deposit is non-refundable unless the College cancels the course.

Students with Disabilities:

As cultures differ from country to country, so does the perception of disability and accommodations. Some countries may have a wide range of services for students with disabilities, others may rely on peer or family support, and some may have limited disability accommodations available. The most important quality for any Study Abroad participant is flexibility and an open mind. The College cannot guarantee the quality and/or the sufficiency of accommodations that may be available or provided in a host country.

Academic Accommodations:

If you require academic accommodations through the ACCESS Office, you MUST communicate this to your instructor so that we have an opportunity to consider alternative ways to meet your needs. The ACCESS Office can assist students in determining the type of accommodations possible for their program and considerations to think about before studying abroad. The College cannot guarantee the quality and/or the sufficiency of accommodations that may be available or provided in a host country.

PREPARATION FOR YOUR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

Pre-Departure Orientation:

Prior to studying abroad, all students are required to participate in one or more pre-departure orientation sessions. For Study Abroad courses with regularly scheduled on-campus meeting times, the orientation sessions will generally be incorporated into the course meeting times. For other courses, the mandatory orientation sessions will be scheduled by the lead faculty. The goals for the orientation sessions are to provide the academic expectations and requirements of the course, including assignments prior to, during, and after travel. Additionally, an overview of the policies, itinerary, travel arrangements, health, housing, safety, culture, behavior, and other issues specific to your Study Abroad course will be addressed. You will also have an opportunity to become better acquainted with the faculty and fellow students and ask questions in preparation for studying abroad.

Costs Associated with Study Abroad:

You must pay a non-refundable deposit, which will be applied against the total cost of the Study Abroad. The amount of the non-refundable deposit will vary depending on the course. The costs and timelines of the remaining payments will be communicated to you before you make your deposit. Payment deadlines must be met – no exceptions. As trip expenses are committed (for instance, when airline tickets are purchased), additional portions of your payments will not be refundable. You will be given a schedule with the approximate dates of trip-related purchases; in the event that you must withdraw from the course, the schedule will help you determine the non-refundable portion of your payment.

Aside from the cost of travel, additional expenses will arise. Be prepared to pay for some or all of the following expenses:

- Course tuition (varies based on number of credit hours)
- Cost of travel (includes non-refundable deposit)
- Textbooks
- Passport
- Visa(s) as required
- Immunizations as required
- Specialized clothing or gear required for the course
- Spending/souvenir money
- Money for meals that are not included in cost of travel

Depending on the course, there may be other required fees or costs that arise. If this is the case, your instructor will notify you so that you can plan for these expenses.

Financial Aid and Scholarship Opportunities:

If you are planning to use financial aid in whole or in part to pay for a Study Abroad course, you must contact a College financial aid advisor prior to applying to Study Abroad to ensure that the funds can be used for this purpose. They will also advise you on how to appropriately use financial aid funds for this purpose.

Scholarship opportunities may be available to support students who wish to study abroad. Some links to scholarship opportunities can be found at the Study Abroad website.

Passports and Visas:

You are responsible for having a valid passport by the time the study abroad portion of the course begins. Applying for a passport is at the student's own expense. Students should apply for a passport immediately, even if they are just considering studying abroad. It may take several weeks or more to obtain a passport. For more information go to travel.state.gov and click on Passports. If you do not have a passport by the departure date, you will not be permitted to participate in the Study Abroad portion of the course. This will affect your final grade in the course. No refunds will be made. Some destinations require a visa in addition to a passport. The lead faculty will inform the students if they need to apply for a visa.

Vaccinations:

The country to which you are travelling may require certain vaccinations. You should consult your doctor or a travel health specialist, ideally 2 months or more before your trip. Most vaccines take time to become effective in your body and some vaccines must be given in a series over a period of days or sometimes weeks. If it is less than 4 weeks before you leave, you should still see your doctor. You might still benefit from shots or medications and other information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while traveling. For further information, you can consult the Centers for Disease Control travel site at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.

Health Insurance:

You are responsible for any and all healthcare costs incurred during your Study Abroad experience. You should check your health insurance policy regarding out-of-country coverage. If your policy does not cover out-of-country healthcare costs or if you do not have healthcare insurance, you are still responsible for all expenses associated with your healthcare while studying abroad.

U.S. Department of State Travel Registration:

All students who are U.S. citizens are asked to register with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate through the U.S. Department of State travel registration website at:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html

Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact you in an emergency. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, information on your welfare and whereabouts may not be released without your express authorization. Millions of Americans travel abroad every year and encounter no difficulties; however, U.S. embassies and consulates can provide both emergency and non-emergency services to American citizens who encounter problems while abroad. Registration is voluntary, costs nothing and should be a part of your travel planning and security. Non-U.S. citizens cannot register through the U.S. Department of State travel registration website, so you are encouraged to check the website of your home country embassy to find out if you can register your overseas travel.

Understanding Your Host Country

You may wish to learn more about the country you are visiting. The Appendix contains a worksheet that will help you explore the culture of your host country and learn more about everyday matters that are accepted knowledge for most people living there. Where adapting to another culture is concerned, it is helpful to find out as much as you can about attitudes, beliefs, daily customs and practices. If you want to learn more, you might consider purchasing or borrowing the "Culture Smart!" book, published by Kuperard, for the country you are visiting for valuable tips on how to engage with people, act in a culturally-appropriate manner, etc. Another useful resource is a phrase book or app that helps you communicate in the local language, which makes for a richer learning experience.

DURING YOUR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

Travel To and From Program Site:

You are required to travel with the group, including at least one faculty member, to and from the study abroad destinations. You are not permitted to travel alone to or from the host country or meet the group at a location other than the designated starting point, such as a local airport or train station, except under certain limited circumstances as determined by the Assistant Dean – Honors and Experiential Learning Programs.

Housing Accommodations:

The accommodations you experience will vary depending on the Study Abroad course. You may be staying in homes, hotels, field stations, rustic lodges, tents, etc. Modern conveniences, such as hot water, electricity, internet service, phone service, etc., may not always be available. **Be prepared to be flexible.**

You may be required to share a room with one or more students; roommates may be assigned. Men and women cannot share rooms. If the faculty leader determines that this will cause unreasonable hardship (e.g., all participants will be staying in one large common area, such as a hostel, gymnasium, etc.), an exception may be made at the sole discretion of the faculty leader. Courtesy and tolerance will help to ensure a pleasant stay.

If you are staying in a home, you should spend some time up-front discussing expectations with your hosts. If your course involves a home stay you will be provided with additional information about what to expect and points to explore with your hosts, such as use of shared spaces; schedules; culturally-appropriate behavior; meal times; etc.

Schedule flexibility:

During Study Abroad, the schedule of events and activities may be unpredictable. Weather, transportation, infrastructure and unforeseen events may require significant changes. **Assume that changes and disruptions will occur and be prepared to adjust.** A cheerful attitude and willingness to adapt to the situation will help ensure a positive learning experience.

Taking Money Abroad – Cash, Credit Cards and Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs):

You are strongly encouraged to consider several methods of accessing and bringing funds to your study abroad site. ATM cards may be “eaten” by certain machines, credit cards may not work for an unknown reason, all types of credit cards may not be accepted, etc. Make sure you have a “back-up” plan for the methods selected. Also, be sure to keep a record of your card numbers and the phone numbers of the card issuers in case your cards are lost or stolen.

Cash:

- Typically, you should bring some cash with you while you travel. Ask your lead instructor for a recommendation on how much cash you should bring with you and in which currency.
- It is virtually impossible to cash personal checks abroad. Students should **not** expect to cash personal checks abroad. Traveler’s checks are not recommended. They are not accepted at all locations.

- Bring paper bills that are clean, crisp, and in small denominations. U.S. coins may not be accepted by merchants.

Credit Cards:

- Most credit card companies will charge an additional fee when using the card outside of the United States.
- Check with your bank and/or credit card company for a list of banks in your program city.
- Inform your bank and/or credit card company that you are planning on using their card outside of the United States to prevent them from being suspicious of fraudulent card usage.
- Be sure to check with your bank or credit card provider for any special requirements for use of your card outside of the United States and for any known precautions you should take so as to minimize your risk of becoming a victim of credit card fraud.
- Some credit cards are not accepted in certain countries. Check with your credit card company.
- In an emergency, many foreign banks will give cash advances in local currency charged to the major credit cards. Don't forget your PIN number.

ATMs:

- Be careful when travelling with a debit card. If your debit card is lost or stolen you may not be able to recover any charges made to the card.
- Most banks will charge a fee to use an ATM in international locations in addition to the conversion fee for currency exchange.
- Check with your bank for a list of ATM's in your program city.

Communications and Technology – Telephones, Cell Phones, Phone Cards and Internet Access:

The use of telephones can often be different in other countries. There is usually a charge for each local call made and there is generally no separate breakdown for long-distance calls. Depending on the country, you may want to purchase a phone card in the country to make calls back home. Phone cards purchased in the United States most likely will not work outside of the United States. If you are staying in someone's home, you should talk with your host about the use of the telephone for **both** local and long-distance calling. Assume that your access to telephones may be limited and plan accordingly.

Do not assume that you can use your cell phone from other countries. You may not have service or you may experience very large charges for using your phone out of the United States. Check with your cellular provider prior to studying abroad to inquire about the use of your cell phone in the country where you will be staying.

The availability and quality of internet service may vary considerably. Be prepared for slow or no service. You may be asked to limit your time online. Consider whether the advantage of having your technology with you outweigh the potential risk (theft, weight, damage due to environmental factors, unreliable power source, etc.). Be sure to check with your lead instructor for guidance. You are solely responsible for any technology that you bring with you.

Special Diets and Food Allergies:

While studying abroad, food choices will vary. You may have opportunities to try the local cuisine, to which you may not be accustomed. Be gracious when your host serves food with which you are not familiar. Food choices may often be limited and may not include types of foods that are familiar to you. If you have any special dietary needs (including vegetarians and vegans) you must inform your instructor to discuss your dietary requirements. While efforts will be made to accommodate you, food choices may be limited and you may need to be flexible. Food allergies **MUST** be communicated to your instructor well in advance of departure. If you are a “big eater” and require additional food, you may need to purchase it with your own money.

Student Conduct Abroad:

What is considered appropriate abroad is determined largely by the local context and local norms and practices. You will be a guest in another country. You will be representing yourself, your class, Tri-C, Ohio, and the United States. Your actions toward individuals and communities within another country will directly impact the Study Abroad program at Tri-C and will affect students who may want to study abroad in the future. A Study Abroad participant is obligated to take seriously the role of a student, and the College is likewise obligated to see that poor academic performance and unacceptable social behavior, even though judged on a somewhat different basis, have at minimum the same consequences abroad as they have at home.

Acceptable behavior should reflect such qualities as integrity, openness to the new and different, sensitivity to others’ needs, and a generous portion of compassion. Minimally, it must include compliance with all local laws and regulations and a genuine concern for the mores and social patterns of your hosts and the community, in order that student actions not be offensive.

The Cuyahoga Community College Student Conduct Code applies to your behavior at all times during your Study Abroad experience.

Alcohol and Drug Use Policy:

Inappropriate and/or excessive alcohol consumption can lead to serious problems. Alcohol consumption overseas poses additional security and health risks because you may be unfamiliar with the language, cultural norms, and rules and regulations regarding alcohol use. Even when alcohol consumption is legal, the College strongly discourages you from consuming alcohol and prohibits the misuse or abuse of it. Hotels, residence halls, and homestays may have their own policies about whether alcohol can be consumed in the rooms; you will be expected to comply with these policies. Additionally, the lead instructor may determine that, for their course, no alcohol consumption will be allowed. This will be shared with you prior to your enrollment in the course.

The use of illicit drugs is prohibited and will result in immediate dismissal from Study Abroad.

Safety:

You will have to learn some new “street smarts” that are suitable to your new environment. We suggest that you spend some time orienting yourself with the area in which you are staying. Learn which neighborhoods or districts should be avoided, and when you should avoid them. Learn the transport system and how to ask for and understand directions. Make an effort to internalize the culture of the host country, including your dress and behavior.

Here are some general safety tips; ask your lead instructor for more particulars:

- There will be times that, for reasons of personal safety, you do not want to be marked as an American or otherwise be identified as an easy target for theft or assault.
- Act like you know where you are going and what you are doing.
- Don't dangle purses or cameras from your wrist.
- Be careful with backpacks and big purses, they can be targets for theft.
- Don't carry wallets in a back pocket.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash.
- Don't carry your passport on your person unless you absolutely need it or security dictates that you keep it with you. A photocopy will generally be fine for everyday use.
- Avoid travelling alone. If you must travel or go anywhere alone, be sure that someone knows where you are at all times.
- Don't walk or ride the bus alone at night. Don't hitchhike. This can be extremely dangerous.
- Don't stay out late at night. Assaults and robberies most often occur late at night.

Student Withdrawal from Study Abroad:

If you choose to not complete your Study Abroad experience, you will be responsible for any and all costs associated with your return home. You will be expected to return home immediately. The College will not be obligated to provide anyone to accompany you. In addition, your decision to withdraw will likely affect your course grade, including the possibility of failure.

Student Dismissal from Study Abroad:

Student misconduct and poor behavior influenced by the abuse/misuse of alcohol may result in immediate dismissal from Study Abroad. The use of illicit drugs is prohibited and will also result in immediate dismissal from Study Abroad. More generally, any behavior which in the judgment of the Assistant Dean – Honors & Experiential Learning Programs causes pain or serious discomfort to others or which reflects discredit upon the individual or upon the College is considered unacceptable and will subject the offender to dismissal from the course and Study Abroad. You will be responsible for any and all costs associated with your return home. You will be expected to return home immediately. The College will not be obligated to provide anyone to accompany you. Dismissal will result in automatic failure of the course.

CONCLUDING YOUR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

Grades:

Depending on the course in which you are enrolled, you may be expected to submit assignments, take exams, or complete other coursework after returning from your Study Abroad experience. Be aware that you may receive an Incomplete grade ("I") if your Study Abroad experience and its required coursework extend beyond the end of a semester; this may affect your financial aid and your ability to enroll in the subsequent semester. Check with the Financial Aid Office to determine if this applies to your situation. Once all coursework is completed and evaluated, your final grade will be submitted and replace the Incomplete grade.

Your Study Abroad experience and its associated work is an integral part of the course. Failure to complete all requirements of your Study Abroad experience will impact your course grade.

Evaluation:

You are expected to complete a student evaluation of your Study Abroad experience shortly after your return. Your input is very important to help the College improve the overall educational experience for future students.

RESOURCES

Study Abroad Contact List:

Herbert Mausser

Assistant Dean of Honors and Experiential Learning Programs

Phone: 216-987-4660

Herbert.Mausser@tri-c.edu

Website:

<http://www.tri-c.edu/studyabroad>

Study Abroad Worksheet – Familiarization with a Host Country

- Time:** In what time zone is the host country located?
What is the time difference between Cleveland and the host country?
- Weather:** What is the climate?
Are there seasons?
- Currency:** Is the U.S. dollar accepted in the host country?
What currency is used in the host country?
What is the value of the U.S. dollar compared to the host country currency?
- Language:** What is the national language?
Are other languages spoken besides the national language?
Do not expect everyone to speak English. Common phrases to know in a foreign language:
- Hello
 - Goodbye
 - How much?
 - Thank you
 - Help!
 - Do you speak English?
- Food:** What foods are popular and how are they prepared?
Is tap water and ice safe for drinking? Keep in mind that most ice cubes are made from tap water and raw fruits and vegetables may be washed in tap water.
What is the policy for tipping in a restaurant?
Will you need to ask for the bill?
What are typical meal times?
- Shopping:** Is the price asked for merchandise fixed or are customers expected to barter?
How should bartering be conducted?
What are some souvenirs to look for?
Is there a daytime rest period when shops may be closed?
- Transportation:** What kind of local public transportation is available?
- U.S. Embassy** Where is it located?
- Information:** What is the process if your passport is lost or stolen?
Are there any areas in the host country where it is unsafe for Americans to travel?
- Government:** What is the political system of the country?
Who is the leader of the country?
What is the history of the relationships between the host country and the United States?
What other countries surround the host country? What is the relationship between them?

Study Abroad Worksheet – Familiarization with a Host Country (continued)

- Education:** What is the education system of the country?
Is it provided for free?
Is it compulsory? What is the progression?
What are the major universities of the country?
- Religion:** What is the predominant religion?
Are there any important religious observances and ceremonies?
- Etiquette & Behavior:** What things are considered taboo in this society?
What are some of the prevailing attitudes toward:
- other nationalities, ethnicities and races?
 - divorce, extra-marital relations?
 - homosexuality, transgender individuals?
 - alcohol? What is the legal drinking age?
- What is the usual dress and what may be considered inappropriate?
- Women?
 - Men?
- How do people greet/leave one another? Shake hands? Embrace or kiss?
What is the cultural attitude towards tipping and gratuities? Bribes?
- Activities:** What sports are popular?
Does the country have a National Park system or other dedicated natural areas?

List of Forms for Appendix:

Application

Emergency Contact and Medical Information Form

Liability Waiver Form (Risk & Release)

Publicity Release Form