

UC INTERNATIONAL'S

GUIDE to STUDY ABROAD


University of
CINCINNATI

GUIDE TO STUDY ABROAD

So you're thinking about going abroad (or maybe you made that decision long ago)...

How exciting!

We've put together a list of some of the most important steps before you set off on your adventure. If you have questions about any of these steps, feel free to contact UC International and ask. We'll get you where you're going.

CONTACT INFORMATION



uc.edu/international/study-abroad



global@uc.edu



513-556-4278



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GETTING STARTED



Attend a UC International First Timer Session.



Search the UC International system of available programs (and be aware of current travel restrictions).



Research program costs and funding opportunities.



Engage in a conversation with your Academic Advisor and your Study Abroad Advisor.



Initiate passport application/renewal and explore visa requirements.

TRAVELING ABROAD

Before you go abroad, you will need to have up-to-date travel documents.

You will need to upload copies of your travel documents to the UC International online system. You will also use this portal to apply for study abroad programs, electronically sign documents, and review travel resources.

studyabroad.uc.edu



Passport

U.S. and non-U.S. citizens need a passport to enter other countries. If you already have a passport, make sure it is valid for at least six months after your return date. New passports can take up to eight weeks for processing. Apply early to avoid complications.

passports.state.gov



Visa

A visa is an entry/residency permit granted by the authorities of the countries where you will travel. It is an official permission to enter and remain in that country. If you require a visa, you will need a passport before applying. The passport and visa application process may take several months, so start early!

International Students

During the planning stages, please consult with UC International Services regarding travel.



HEALTH & WELL-BEING



STAYING HEALTHY

Study abroad is inherently stressful – with both “good stress” and more problematic stress. Good stress includes new opportunities and excitement. However, changes of any kind are demanding on people. With study abroad, students are adjusting to many differences from home and doing so without their usual familiar environments and support. Good self-care helps people cope with stressors and stay physically and mentally healthy.

Tips for staying healthy:

- **Eat healthy food**
- **Get regular exercise**
- **Get enough sleep**

Food and Water

Traveling will bring your body in contact with different bacteria. These are not necessarily harmful in themselves, but can unsettle your stomach or cause other health problems. Water (including ice cubes), milk, fresh fruit and unwashed, raw vegetables could upset your system until your body adjusts to its new surroundings.

In some areas of the world, you may need to drink boiled water. Be aware that ice may come from tap water and should be avoided. In certain locations, travelers should not brush their teeth with tap water.

Contaminated food and water can cause travelers’ diarrhea. The typical symptoms of travelers’ diarrhea are diarrhea, nausea,

bloating, and urgency. Travelers' diarrhea usually lasts from three to seven days. It is rarely life threatening. Areas of high risk include Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and Central America. The best way to prevent travelers' diarrhea is by paying close attention to what you eat or drink or taking an over-the-counter medicine like Immodium.



MEDICATION

Vaccinations

It is your responsibility to ensure that your routine immunizations are up to date. You should inquire whether there are recommended and/or required immunizations for the country/countries you will enter. Visit the Center for Disease Control's website for more information.

www.cdc.gov/travel



Prescriptions

Prior to travel abroad, consult with a physician and let them know where you are traveling. If you have a pre-existing medical condition, be prepared. Bring an adequate supply of medication with your physician's explanation of the condition, generic and brand names of the medication, and dosage information. Always carry your prescription medication in its original container.



HEALTH & WELL-BEING



INSURANCE COVERAGE AND CARE

Health care systems vary greatly by country as well as the costs associated with that care. All UC students traveling abroad on university-sanctioned or funded international travel are required to purchase and maintain continuous insurance coverage while abroad. UC International will determine minimum requirements for international insurance.

Cultural Insurance Services International

UC International partners with Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI).

- **If you are traveling on a faculty-led program, check with your faculty member to see if you will automatically be enrolled in CISI.**
- **If you are traveling on an individual program (ex: third party, exchange, co-op), follow the self-enrollment and payment process with CISI. Further instructions are available at: www.uc.edu/international/study-abroad/preparing-to-go-abroad/insurance-for-students.html**

International SOS

The University of Cincinnati is a member of International SOS. This membership gives students studying abroad access to a full range of medical information and emergency information. As a member, you have access to International SOS information at no charge.

The University's membership number is 11BCAS000010. Record this number and carry it with you.

www.internationalsos.com

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are registered with UC disability services, please discuss your plans with your counselor before you select a program. If you need accommodations while abroad, you must register with UC Disability Services. This must be done early to allow adequate time to implement the accommodation. If you do not disclose your disability or request accommodations in a timely manner, UC may not be able to assess and accommodate your needs.

www.uc.edu/aess/disability.

Eating Habits

You may find that maintaining your normal diet abroad is challenging, especially if you have specific dietary preferences or allergies. If you have special eating habits, research your destination carefully before assuming that the food you need or want is available. Develop an effective way to communicate your allergies and handle social situations in which you may be offered food you are not comfortable eating.

Mental Health

While studying abroad, students may experience anxiety, which can sometimes make mental health symptoms or conditions worsen. If you are currently seeking the support of a professional counselor, please discuss your plans to study abroad with them. Proactive conversations can help minimize the stress abroad.

www.uc.edu/counseling.html



SAFETY

SMART TRAVEL

While you are abroad, use common sense. Avoid potentially dangerous situations such as protests or demonstrations. Since you are not a local, you may be perceived as an easy target and more vulnerable to petty theft and crime. Therefore, you are advised to leave valuable belongings at home. Unfortunately, sometimes bad things happen while you are abroad. If you are a victim of a crime, report it to someone immediately.

It is important to be aware that the traffic rules and regulations in other countries are not the same as in the U.S. You should familiarize yourself with the way traffic moves. You can protect yourself by understanding local traffic laws. Please be aware that UC International does not recommend renting or driving motorized vehicles while abroad.

If your travel plans involve visiting a lake or ocean, it is imperative to know your own swimming ability and limits. When in doubt, err on the side of caution.

If you are traveling to a country that is prone to natural disasters, political unrest, or other issues that could affect your safety, have a plan to mitigate that risk.

Department of State Travel Recommendations

The U.S. Department of State is a valuable resource for country-specific travel information. UC International monitors safety issues in countries and locations for all of our programs. UC faculty, students, and staff traveling abroad should register their travel abroad through the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) in case of an

emergency abroad. Registration is free and allows you to record information about your upcoming travel abroad so the Department of State can assist you in an emergency.

www.step.state.gov/step/

Safe Sex

It is important to note that different countries have varying cultural norms pertaining to dating and sex. Interactions vary widely by region and country. Things such as eye contact, the way one dresses, and body language can send very different messages by region and culture. If you choose to be sexually active, practice safe sex. Protect yourself and your partner against unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases.

Sexual Assault

Unfortunately sexual assault is a reality in the U.S. and abroad. If you or someone you know is sexually assaulted:

- **Contact the person in charge of your program whether an instructor, director, or coordinator, if you feel comfortable.**
- **Tell someone you trust.**
- **Call UC's 24-hour counseling help line at 001(513)556-0648. This line is free and confidential. It provides services and emotional support to victims.**

Date rape drugs cause memory loss when they are ingested with alcohol. Predators dissolve a few tablets of the drug in a drink and give it to an unaware victim. To protect yourself, do not accept drinks from anyone other than a server. Never leave your drink unattended.



EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If you are involved in an emergency abroad, follow the steps below:

1. If you are in immediate danger or harm, call local emergency responders. Know the emergency numbers in the countries you will be visiting. 911 is not the number for every country.

www.travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf

2. Contact your in-country point person (resident director, faculty leader, etc.).

3. Call UC staff to report the situation.

UC International - 001 (513) 556-4278.

During after-hours, call the UC University Police communications center - 001 (513) 556-1111 or email - PubSafetySA@ucmail.uc.edu

Be prepared to give your full name, the nature of your emergency, a number where you can be contacted, your location, and how long you will be at that location.

4. Contact the closest U.S. Embassy or Consulate:

www.usembassy.gov

5. Contact your international insurance provider. For most UC students, your international insurance provider is CISI Insurance.

Reference ID#: 01-AA-CIS-01133

Outside the U.S.: 001 (609) 986-1234

Email: medservices@assistamerica.com

OVERSEAS CITIZENS SERVICES

Overseas Citizens Services of the Bureau of Consular Affairs provides emergency services pertaining to the protection of U.S. citizens arrested or detained abroad, the search for U.S. citizens abroad, and the transmission of emergency messages to those citizens or their next of kin in the United States.

Assistance from the Overseas Citizens Services is available 24 hours a day at **001 (202) 501-4444**.

For other emergencies abroad, consult the U.S. Department of State's website.

www.travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/emergencies.html



EMERGENCY CARD

A card is available at the end of this guide for you to fill out with local emergency numbers, in-country contacts, and the locations of the nearest hospitals or embassies.

Contact information for UC International, UC Public Safety, CISI Insurance, and International SOS is already located on the card.

We recommend that you cut out this card and keep it on you at all times. You may want to take a photo of it for yourself and send it to family members or loved ones as well.



STUDENT CONDUCT

UC STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Remember, while you are abroad, you are a representative of the University of Cincinnati, Ohio, and the United States. You are expected to adhere to the policies of the UC Student Code of Conduct (SCOC), which will both protect you and provide others with a positive image of UC. The full SCOC can be viewed at the University of Cincinnati Office of University Judicial Affairs' website.

www.uc.edu/conduct/Code_of_Conduct.html

ALCOHOL & DRUGS

If you choose to drink alcohol abroad, refrain from underage and excessive drinking. As in the US, driving while intoxicated, drinking in the streets, and intoxication on public transportation may be considered an illegal activity by local authorities.

According to the SCOC, students should not use or have possession of illegal drugs. Illegal drug possession and charges abroad can carry severe consequences.

OVERSEAS LAW

While abroad, you are subject to the laws and regulations of that country. Laws abroad can vary greatly from those in the U.S. You are expected to obey the laws of the countries you visit. Those who break the law, even unknowingly, may face severe penalties including being expelled, fined, arrested, or imprisoned. You are not immune to any laws overseas simply because you are a U.S. citizen. Ignorance of the law is no excuse, so be informed.

www.travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en/smart-travel/local-laws.html

MONEY

BUDGETING

Plan ahead. You should actively be aware of how and where you spend your money abroad. It is important to know the value of the local currency where you are traveling. Exchange rates may also fluctuate. It is important to follow these changes so that you know how much money you are actually spending.

www.oanda.com/currency/converter



MONEY MATTERS

People around the world handle money in different ways. Smart travelers research these differences in advance and plan for different situations. For example, many countries have “cash-based” economies. The following are some tips to help you use your money wisely:

- Purchase small amounts of foreign currency from a U.S. bank to use when you first arrive for buses, taxis, phone calls, tips, and other incidentals.
- Bring at least two cards (credit or debit) to access money abroad via ATMs. Credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard are typically accepted abroad. They make transactions easy and are invaluable in a financial emergency.
- Typically you can only access your checking account. Do not leave your funds in a savings account.
- Research possible fees with your bank or credit card companies prior to departure.
- Contact your bank and credit card companies before you leave the U.S. to notify them of the dates and countries where you will be traveling.
- Many countries have switched to a “chip-and-PIN” card, which use an encrypted chip and a PIN number in addition to a magnetic strip. Research credit card usage in the country you are visiting to avoid financial problems.
- Do not use traveler’s checks as a way to obtain money abroad.
- Safeguard your money while using public transportation or in crowded areas where pickpocketing may be prevalent.

PACKING



You must be able to carry any luggage you bring, so pack light. Learn the climate of the locations you plan to visit. It is a good idea to research your destination prior to departure. Below is a list of recommended items to pack for your experience abroad.

Carry-On Luggage

Bring the following items in your carry-on luggage rather than your checked luggage.

- Your passport and any necessary documents for immigration*
- Boarding pass and flight itinerary*
- Medication (in original labeled container)*
- A sweater or sweatshirt*
- An extra change of clothes*
- Laptop, electronics, and other valuables*
- A small amount of cash*
- Arrival plan, local address, and contact information*

Clothing

Adjust the following list according to your destination.

- Comfortable walking shoes*
- Flip-flops*
- Socks and underwear*
- Shorts*
- Skirts/pants*
- Shirts*
- Sweater/sweatshirt*
- Rain Jacket*
- Light jacket*
- Bathing suit*
- A hat*
- A nice outfit*
- T-shirts*
- Exercise clothing and shoes*

Medicine and Toiletries

- Small First Aid Kit*
- Comb or brush*
- Sunscreen*
- Moisturizers, lip balm*
- Hygiene and cosmetic products*
- Deodorant*
- Razor*
- Eyeglasses, sunglasses, contact lenses, and cleaning solution*
- Toothbrush and toothpaste*
- Over-the-counter medication*

Miscellaneous

- Camera and memory card*
- Laptop computer*
- Chargers and power cords for any electronics*
- Adapter and voltage converter*
- Portable USB or flash drive*
- Wrist watch and/or alarm clock*
- Photos from home*
- List of important contacts, numbers, and addresses*
- Travel Journal*
- Books, guides, and maps*
- Backpack*
- Money belt*
- Combination lock*
- Sewing kit/safety pins*
- Luggage tag*

Electric Appliances

Not all outlets accept the two or three pronged plugs that are standard in the United States. You will probably need a set of adapter plugs in order to use small appliances. There are also voltage differences abroad, so some electronics may need a voltage converter. It may be to your advantage to buy electric appliances on-site.

If you are bringing expensive electronic equipment such as a computer, obtain all conversions information before departure.

PACKING



TRAVEL INFORMATION

You should arrive at the airport at least two hours before departure. Go directly to the ticket counter to check your bags and learn about any flight changes.

Baggage Restrictions

Airlines restrict the amount of baggage that passengers are allowed to carry. Requirements vary from carrier to carrier. Research all airlines involved in your travel plans to determine these requirements. For example, your flight from the U.S. to Paris may have different restrictions than an airline you fly on once in France.

Security

Be sure to familiarize yourself with The Department of Homeland Security's air travel security measures.

- **Travelers will be allowed through security checkpoints with travel-size toiletries (3 ounces or less) that fit comfortably in one quart-size, clear plastic, zip-top bag.**
- **Do not bring prohibited or sharp objects in your carry-on luggage**
- **Do attach luggage tags to each piece of luggage with your name and phone number on it.**

www.tsa.gov/traveler-information

COPIES OF DOCUMENTS

Make copies of your valuable documents and cards. Maintain a file at home containing copies of your airline ticket, passport, visa, and other important documents. You can also scan your documents and save them on your computer or as a file in your email.

CULTURE

CULTURE SHOCK

Going abroad can be an incredibly positive, transformative experience for UC students. Experiencing new cultures is rewarding, yet challenging.

Many study abroad students will experience some degree of culture shock while abroad. Culture shock is the feeling of disorientation and bewilderment experienced when one is exposed to a foreign culture.

The following are some common symptoms of culture shock:

- **Feelings of homesickness**
- **Idealizing your own culture**
- **The smallest problems seem overwhelming**

Below are suggestions to combat culture shock:

- **Be a global citizen and prepare yourself for what you are about to experience**
- **Build friendships with locals**
- **Maintain a sense of humor**

While you are abroad, you may go through the following stages of culture shock:

- **Honeymoon:** Differences between the cultures are seen in a romantic light
- **Negotiation:** Differences between the cultures become more apparent and create anxiety and frustration
- **Adjustment:** After some time, you adjust and adapt to the world around you



CULTURE

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Be sure to educate yourself on your destination prior to travel. Use this knowledge when adapting to the foreign culture and while spreading good views of the U.S. abroad. You are an ambassador of the U.S. and UC. This is an opportunity to give those in your host country, who are unfamiliar with your culture, a new way of looking at the world and the people in it.

Educating yourself will help minimize the culture shock you may experience. Culture Grams are a good resource for information about foreign culture and preparing to be a global citizen.

www.online.culturegrams.com/world/index.php

GENDER AND DIVERSITY ABROAD

Regardless of race, religion, gender, physical disability, or sexual orientation, there is a possibility that you will encounter discrimination abroad, just as you may face discrimination on your home campus or in your hometown. For example, diversity in sexual orientation has become more widely accepted in other cultures, but discrimination against the LGBTQ population has not been completely eliminated.

In certain locations and programs, women may have a hard time adjusting to attitudes they encounter abroad. Be careful about the implicit messages you are communicating, messages you may not intend in your own cultural context. You will have to learn the unwritten rules about your host country.



COMMUNICATION

It is important for you to develop a plan for communication while you are abroad. It is equally important to stay in communication with other participants and leaders on the program. This is to ensure your safety and prevent confusion during times of emergency. If you leave your program site for independent travel, tell someone where you will be. There are many ways to talk with others while abroad.

www.independenttraveler.com/travel-tips/stay-connected/international-cell-phone-guide

CELL PHONES

Calling or texting with a phone from the U.S. can be expensive. It is important to check with your carrier to understand the rates and fees if you choose to use your phone abroad. You have the option to disable the service or data plan and use your phone when it is connected to the internet. This is often a cheaper, easier way to communicate with friends and family.

There are many programs, such as Skype, FaceTime, and WhatsApp, which allow people to communicate for free with an internet connection. A Wi-Fi connection can be found on some campuses abroad as well as at coffee shops and internet cafés, among other places.

If you are on a long-term program, in many countries you can purchase a pay-as-you-go cell phone once you get to your location abroad. This is an easy way to keep in contact with other students and locals.

Countries around the world are assigned a number that is used for international calling. To dial internationally from abroad, you will need to know the country codes involved.

www.countrycallingcodes.com/



COMMUNICATION

SOCIAL MEDIA

Many students use social media, including blogs, to keep loved ones informed of what they are doing abroad. Stay in touch with UC International by using social media and our official hashtag: #BearcatsAbroad. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat! We will share your photos and posts with the UC community.

Twitter: @UC_Global

Instagram: @UCInternational

Facebook: UC International Programs

Snapchat: ucinternational



LANGUAGE

If you are traveling to a country where a different language is spoken, you may encounter language barriers when communicating with locals. While English is spoken in many countries abroad, it may not be the native language. Orientations, meetings, and other events may be conducted in a different language. Don't let the language barrier stop you from trying to speak and practice the local language! It is a good idea to carry around a pocket dictionary or a phrase book during your time abroad. Google Translate is another good resource to use when you have an internet connection.

www.translate.google.com



RETURNING HOME

You may discover that you have changed a great deal and may find it difficult to find people that understand your new perspectives. “Reverse Culture Shock” is caused when someone returns from abroad and the customs and traditions of the other culture are more familiar than their home customs and traditions.

There are many things you can do to make the readjustment to life back at UC easier:

1. Reflect on your experience by asking yourself questions to better understand how you have changed.

- Which experience(s) had the most impact on you personally?
- How did your experiences differ from your expectations?
- What did you appreciate most from your study abroad experience?
- How do you think your international experience will aid you in the future?

2. Stay connected with the people and the culture.

- Keep in touch with friends you made while abroad.
- Continue language learning at UC or elsewhere.
- Stay in tune with your host culture by reading a local newspaper or listening to their music.

3. Get involved at UC.

- Study abroad again!
- Participate in the fall study abroad fair.
- Join BearChats, IPALs, or a cultural organization on campus.

Returning from a study abroad experience can be a stressful time. If you need help adjusting to life back in the U.S., the UC Counseling Center offers professional and self-help information.

www.uc.edu/counseling.html



CHECKLIST

Traveling Abroad

- Make sure you have a valid passport
- Check for visa requirements
- Complete all pre- and post-decision documents in UC International's online system

Health and Well-Being

- Meet with your doctor to discuss immunization recommendations
- Register for CISI health insurance (if applicable)

Safety

- Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)
- Research safety and security information for your destination

Emergency Procedures

- Familiarize yourself with UC International's emergency procedures

Student Conduct

- Review the UC Student Code of Conduct
- Research the laws of the countries you will visit

Money

- Acquire a small amount of foreign currency to use upon arrival
- Inform your bank of your international travel
- Develop a budget

Packing

- Research electrical outlets and adaptors (purchase prior to travel)
- Review airline baggage restrictions
- Make copies of valuable documents and cards

Culture

- Educate yourself on the customs and traditions of your destination

Communication

- Develop a plan for regular communication abroad
- Prepare yourself for a language barrier



EMERGENCY CARD

This card is for you to fill out with local emergency numbers, in-country contacts, and the locations of the nearest hospitals or embassies.

Contact information for UC International, UC Public Safety, CISI Insurance, and International SOS is already located on the card for you.

We recommend that you cut out this card and keep it on you at all times. You may want to take a photo of it for yourself and send it to family members or loved ones as well.



MY IN-COUNTRY CONTACTS

In-Country Point Person (phone/email/location/WhatsApp):

My Accommodation Location(s):

Additional In-Country Contact(s):

THIRD-PARTY RESOURCES

CISI Insurance

800-872-1414 (in U.S.)

001-609-986-1234 (call collect outside U.S.)

email: medservices@assistamerica.com

International SOS

www.internationalsos.com

University of Cincinnati code is 11BCAS000010

U.S. / Canada

+1-215-942-8226

+00-1-215-942-8226

+44-208-762-8008

+65-6338-7800

Mexico / South & Central America

Europe / CIS / Africa / Middle East

Asia / Australia / Pacific Rim

EMERGENCY CARD

EMERGENCY PLANNING

Local Emergency #:

Nearest Embassy:

Nearest Hospital/Clinic:

UNIVERSITY CONTACTS

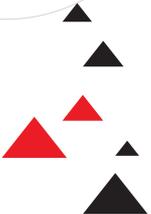
UC Public Safety (24/7)

PubSafetySA@ucmail.uc.edu

001-513-556-1111

UC International (Mon - Fri, 9 am - 5 pm)

001-513-556-4278



EMERGENCY CARD







University of
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CINCINNATI