



International Travel Participant Handbook

The contents of this handbook are substantially similar to *Getting Started 2007* from Indiana University's Office of Overseas Study, Franklin Hall 303, 601 East Kirkwood Ave., Bloomington, IN 47405. IWU is deeply grateful for permission for its use.

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Predeparture Checklist	3
Preparing for Departure	4
Passport	4
Visa and Residency Permit	4
Medical Checkup	4
Health Insurance	5
Other Insurance	5
Travel to Program Site	5
Proof of Onward Journey	6
Maintaining Communication	6
Academic Advising	6
Fee Payments	6
Indiana Wesleyan University Refund Policy	6
IWU-Administered Activities	6
IWU Co-sponsored Programs	7
Tax Documentation	7
Financial Aid	7
IWU-Administered Programs	7
Co-Sponsored Programs	7
Managing Your Money	7
E-mail	8
Telephoning	8
Summer Address	8
Mailing Address	8
IWU Campus Housing	8
Travel Resources	8
Academic Policies	9
Who May Participate	9
Academic Integrity	9
Personal Conduct	9
Legal and Safety Issues	9
Legal Responsibilities	9
Working Overseas	10
Illegal Drugs	10
Health and Safety	10
Hazardous Activities	10
Emotional Problems	11
Public Disturbances	11
Sexual Harassment	11
Personal Safety	11
AIDS	12
Travel Safety	13
Air travel	13
Car travel	13
Pedestrian travel	14
Hotel stays	14
Documents	14
Adjustment and Cultural Differences	14
Personal Adjustment	14
American Identity	14
Learn about the U.S.	15
Learn about the host country	15
Housing in the host country	15
Your Appearance	15
Cultural Differences	15
Gender Roles	15
Religion	16
Ethnicity	16
Different Abilities	16
Culture Shock	16
Re-entry to the U.S.	17
Trip Questionnaire	17

Introduction

This handbook contains general information pertinent to students on all Indiana Wesleyan University international trips and activities. Throughout the booklet, reference is made to information specific to either IWU-administered programs or IWU co-sponsored programs. To fully benefit from the information presented, you should understand the difference between these designations.

IWU-administered programs are those in which IWU selects and orients students, and arranges housing, classes, staffing, activities, etc. Co-sponsored programs are those in which IWU selects and orients students, but a program provider, host institution or activity sponsor may arrange housing, classes, travel, activities and other administrative responsibilities.

If in doubt as to whether your program is IWU-administered or co-sponsored, consult the Off Campus Activities Coordinating Office (“Coordinating Office”).

Predeparture Checklist

- Secure sponsorship from a faculty member or department chair
- Faculty/Staff Submit application to the Off-Campus Activities Coordinator (available at <http://family.indwes.edu/university-Counsel/Publications/>)
- Apply for a passport. <http://travel.state.gov/>
- Selected programs:* Apply for visa when you receive instructions to do so.
- Keep two passport size photos and copies of two pieces of identification separate from your passport.
- Contact the Financial Aid office to determine the impact on, or availability of, financial aid for the program/activity.
- Meet with your academic advisor if the activity involves academic credit.
- Attend any required orientation meetings for your program/activity.
- Submit prepayment or deposits as instructed.
- Obtain medical and dental exams.
- Obtain any necessary and recommended immunizations.
- Read, understand and sign the *Release* form.
- Return other required forms as instructed.
- Obtain Cirrus or Plus bank debit card with PIN, traveler’s checks, major credit card with PIN and international student discount card.
- Secure appropriate insurance.
- Seniors:* Apply for post-program graduation.

Preparing for Departure

Passport

Apply for a passport IMMEDIATELY; many participants will need to have passports in hand several months in advance of travel in order to secure required visa or residency permits. Pick up an application at the post office, at a county clerk's office, or download it from the Internet (<http://travel.state.gov/>). You will be instructed to submit the completed application with two recent photos, a certified copy of your birth certificate, another ID with photo and a signature (such as your driver's license), and the appropriate fee. Your passport will be mailed to you in about 10 weeks. It will be valid for 10 years.

You can check the status of your passport application online at: http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/status/status_2567.html

Make two photocopies of the passport page that has your name on it. Leave one copy with your family when you go abroad and take the other with you. The copy will make it much easier for you to replace your passport if it should be lost or stolen. Also, take two passport size photos and a copy of your birth certificate. That too, will make replacement easier.

Finally, if you are traveling with a current passport, make certain that it is valid for at least six months beyond your planned return.

Visa and Residency Permit

A visa is an authorization (usually a stamp in your passport) that permits you to travel into or reside in another country for a stated period of time. The visa is issued by the country's consulate in the United States. Student visas are required for a number of programs. If your program requires a visa, you will receive visa application instructions and supporting documentation. The application process for some visas will require that applicants obtain supporting materials from other agencies, possibly including translated and/or notarized copies of official documents such as birth certificates, high school diplomas and official transcripts, and may require submission well in advance of travel dates. Some applications must be submitted in person.

If you plan to leave the U.S. well in advance of the time the program begins, contact your faculty sponsor or your program provider as early as possible. Early processing of visa applications may be complicated or, in some situations, not possible at all. Consulates process visa applications according to the start date of the study abroad program and not according to personal travel plans.

Visas are granted at the discretion of the consulate and may be denied for any reason including pending legal action, past criminal history, etc.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you are responsible for contacting the embassy of the country where you will study to determine its entry and visa requirements for citizens of your country. You are also responsible for arranging to remain in compliance with U.S. immigration regulations regarding an extended stay abroad and re-entry into this country.

Medical Checkup

You are strongly encouraged to schedule a medical exam with your family physician. A thorough dental exam is also recommended. Different locales have different health risks, including infectious diseases. Care must be taken to address these risks.

For information on vaccinations, consult your family physician or the Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov). In addition, the IWU Health Center receives up-to-date communiqués from the Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov) and the World Health Organization (www.who.int/en/).

If you are currently under medical care, talk frankly to your trip advisor, health provider, or the Off Campus Activities Coordinating Office about the support you might need while away from home.

For your own safety, provide full information to onsite staff and the Coordinating Office about medications you take regularly, drug allergies, and chronic or recurring conditions, including eating disorders.

Common health risks related to travel are jet lag, motion sickness and diarrhea.

If you currently take medications, talk to your physician or nurse practitioner about arrangements for continuing the medications abroad.

If you have a medical condition that requires emergency care, carry some kind of ID, - a tag, bracelet, card, etc. – which provides all necessary information for your care.

Any medications taken overseas should be left in their original containers and be clearly labeled. You should carry a letter from your physician describing the medical condition and any prescription medications, including generic names of prescription drugs. Be prepared for the possibility of having to see a physician abroad to authorize continued treatment during your time overseas.

Health Insurance

Most students at IWU are covered by their parent's health insurance policy. Additionally, IWU provides very limited health insurance to students participating in overseas activities. To obtain a summary of health benefits for overseas activity participants, contact the Off-Campus Activities Coordinating Office. Typically IWU does NOT provide any health insurance coverage for co-sponsored programs. Check with your program provider, sponsor, or Off-Campus Activities Coordinating Office for more information.

Please note that you may be required to pay "up front" for medical expenses incurred while traveling and in the host country. You then are responsible for submitting any medical receipts to your insurance carrier upon your return. IWU is not obligated to attend to any of your medical or medication needs. You assume all risk and responsibility for these items.

Other Insurance

You may also want to consider purchasing supplemental insurance to reimburse you for theft or loss of personal items (personal property insurance), lost expenses due to travel cancellations (travelers insurance), or enrollment in a travel assistance plan (assistance to help you replace lost or stolen travel documents, to locate medical assistance while traveling, etc.).

Some students may already be covered for these expenses by current insurance plans of their parents or guardians. Additional plans, specifically designed for overseas travelers, are available through some program providers, travel agencies, frequent flyer programs and even credit card companies.

Travel to Program Site

Typically, students will travel as a group to specific site locations. If for some reason this is not the case, make sure to inform the Coordinating Office of your travel plans and itinerary.

Proof of Onward Journey

Upon entering the foreign country you will be expected to show proof of return transportation to the U.S. or onward travel to a third country (a round-trip ticket, even if the return date has not been finalized, or written confirmation of travel reservations). Failure to produce some confirmation of arranged departure may result in your having to purchase a return ticket on the spot, which could be very expensive.

Maintaining Communication

It is imperative that you maintain a line of communication with IWU, your University activity sponsor and the Off-Campus Activities Coordinator. In an emergency, if you cannot reach any of those, call 765-677-4911.

You should develop a personal emergency action plan for how to handle a crisis should one arise.

Once you have arrived at your activity site, be sure to contact family and friends back home. They will be anxious to know you arrived safely. Contact them on a regular basis throughout your time away if possible. This may not be possible depending on the nature of the trip and the availability of communication services. You will assume the cost associated with contacting people back home. If you plan to call, establish a mutually convenient time and day.

Academic Advising

If you are receiving academic credit for this trip it is essential that you schedule an academic advising appointment with your advisor as soon as possible. All departments reserve the right to determine how much and what type of credit students receive for off-campus activities. That is why it is important for you to discuss your proposed activity with your departmental advisor and obtain permission to receive credit in your major for the activity. When you return to IWU, expect to submit documentation of your activity to your major and/or minor departments before they approve credit toward your degree requirements. Based on the information you bring back, they will also determine what level of credit you are entitled to receive. If you have questions about this process while you are away, consult your academic advisor.

Fee Payments

Participants in IWU-administered programs will pay fees directly to Indiana Wesleyan University.

Indiana Wesleyan University Refund Policy

Nonrefundable prepayment(s): The prepayments paid for any IWU program will NOT be refunded under any circumstances.

IWU-Administered Activities

- 1) Withdrawal before the program begins: Prepayment will NOT be refunded and any further payments deposited may be reimbursed if possible. (See the IWU student catalog regarding change of class if applicable).
- 2) Withdrawal after the activity begins: IWU is not responsible for costs associated with travel if you withdrawal or alter your plans and IWU is not obligated to refund any fees, deposits, or expenses.
- 3) Activity cancellation: In the unlikely event that IWU cancels an activity, IWU is not obligated to refund any fees, deposits, or expenses.

IWU Co-sponsored Programs

The non-refundable prepayment and IWU Services Fee are NOT refundable under any circumstances. Each co-sponsoring agency sets its own refund policies regarding fees paid to them. A refund of any co-sponsored program fees collected by Indiana Wesleyan University will be subject to the refund policy of the sponsoring agency.

Tax Documentation

While IWU and other U.S. institutions of higher education will issue 1098-T forms to verify qualified educational expenses, many of the organizations that offer co-sponsored programs are precluded by federal law from doing so. However, a portion of the fees paid to those organizations may be tax deductible. We recommend that you consult with your tax advisor for the appropriate tax treatment. Specific documentation of program expenses will be issued by the co-sponsoring organizations, upon request.

Financial Aid

Students should contact the Financial Aid office early in their planning to determine the availability of, or impact on, financial aid. IWU financial aid may or may not be applied to IWU-administered or co-sponsored programs. Most financial aid, including scholarships, will not be affected by your having participated in off-campus activities as long as you continue to meet the eligibility and standards required by the funding source. If you have questions about how off-campus activities will impact your funding upon your return, please contact the office at IWU responsible for your scholarship. Students with financial aid and/or scholarships should contact Financial Aid to see if the aid may be applied to off-campus activity costs.

IWU-Administered Programs

Most types of financial aid may be applied to IWU-administered programs. Consult the Financial Aid office for program specific guidance.

Co-Sponsored Programs

Some IWU financial aid may be applied to programs co-sponsored by IWU. Consult the Financial Aid office for program specific guidance.

Managing Your Money

Manage your money through a combination of the following:

- 1) A Cirrus or Plus debit card and 4-digit PIN permits you to withdraw money directly from your U.S. checking account. This option is fast and convenient. ATMs are plentiful throughout the world, but students going to non-traditional study abroad destinations should check a reliable guide book for more information. Don't carry large amounts of cash.
- 2) A major credit card and a 4-digit PIN permits a cash advance on your credit card. This is a fast and simple option, but it involves a fee, and interest is charged. VISA, MasterCard and American Express are widely recognized throughout the world, but some regions favor one over the other. You may want to investigate whether special services for travelers are available through your credit card of choice. American Express card holders are permitted to write and cash checks on their U.S. bank accounts at AmEx offices worldwide. Bring your U.S. check book and plenty of checks for this option. If planning to use ATM, debit or credit cards, be sure to check with your bank(s) to confirm that you can do so in the country or countries that you will be traveling.
- 3) Traveler's checks. It is recommended to bring traveler's checks as a fallback when ATMs are out of order.

4) Bank checks, personal checks, or scholarship checks should be avoided. They must be sent by registered or insured mail and can take two to four weeks to clear before you have access to the cash. Instead have the sums deposited in your U.S. bank account and withdraw the funds with a debit card. Be prepared in case of loss or theft of financial resources. Keep important information such as check serial numbers and credit card phone numbers separate from original documents. For currency converter information consult the following websites: www.xe.net/ucc and www.oanda.com

E-mail

If you are on an extended trip, you should have e-mail access away from home. Because IWU will need to contact you throughout your time away for such things as advising and registration, it is important that you maintain regular e-mail contact at your IWU e-mail address. Students who want to use other e-mail services should forward their IWU e-mail messages to their preferred account. The student will assume any costs associated with using e-mail.

Telephoning

On most long-term programs, students find that having a cell phone is a convenient way to stay in touch locally, and some activities may require every student to have a cell phone to facilitate communication. Many of the newer U.S. cell phones can accommodate a SIM card that you may purchase for international use. You should contact your cell phone service provider to inquire if that would be an option, although it may be more costly than purchasing a pay-as-you-go cell phone abroad. Program providers very often provide detailed information about cell phone options. All major U.S. carriers issue international calling cards that permit you to bill calls to a charge card or a U.S. telephone number. Calling cards work from public phones and cell phones.

Summer Address

If you are going on a fall or academic year program, leave your summer address and telephone number with IWU. Program arrangements sometimes change at the last minute, and you may need to be contacted. If you will be traveling during vacation periods, provide a contact through whom you may be reached at all times.

Mailing Address

During the time you are away, IWU will automatically direct its mailings to the address you specify. Please make sure to notify the IWU Post Office of your forwarding address. You should then have someone at that address screen your mail and forward important correspondence to you. IWU offices will not send mail to foreign addresses. If you or your emergency contact moves, please notify IWU by phone, fax or e-mail of the address and/or phone number changes.

IWU Campus Housing

To cancel campus housing for your period abroad, make sure to coordinate with the IWU Housing Department. To reserve housing for the semester you return, contact IWU Housing before you leave. You should also provide an address where IWU housing can send you housing information. Contact the Housing Department two to three months before your return to confirm your housing status and change any housing preferences.

Travel Resources

Should you plan to travel around from your program site on weekends and breaks, plan ahead by bringing travel guidebooks for destinations. Also, prepare and bring a list of useful travel websites. These may include sites for cheap hotels and youth hostels as well as discount airlines. IWU is not responsible for any loss or damage to person or property that you may suffer while you are traveling. Any independent travel before or after the conclusion of the trip is also at your own risk and expense.

Academic Policies

While away you must adhere to the same IWU academic policies and regulations that you are subject to on your home campus.

Who May Participate

Without granting of a specific exception, only IWU enrolled students, faculty and staff may participate in IWU off-campus activities. Occasionally others who have strong connections to IWU may also participate. In that case, those persons must obtain permission from the chair of the department or division sponsoring the trip and agree to be bound by any reasonable rules imposed by IWU. For those persons, IWU will NOT provide insurance and will NOT be responsible for any medical expenses incurred.

Academic Integrity

All students must respect and abide by the academic regulations of IWU, any co-sponsoring agency or local host institutions. Any acts of academic misconduct, including cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, interference, violation of course rules, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will be adjudicated by local academic officials and then be referred to the judicial process at IWU.

Personal Conduct

All participants must respect and abide by the laws of the host country and local jurisdiction. In addition, all IWU rules and regulations as stated in the Catalog, Student Handbook, program handbooks and other publications, and any rules and regulations for student conduct made or adopted by IWU, its employees, agents, consortium partners, and partner institutions, from the published official activity arrival date through the official program completion date, including but not limited to host institution rules and regulations for student conduct designed to safeguard health, well-being, and safety must be followed. Students should behave themselves in the same manner as if they were on campus. Indeed, they should always remember that they represent and reflect on IWU. Failure to abide by these rules of conduct may result in disciplinary action by IWU up to and including expulsion without financial refund and/or refusal to grant academic credit.

Legal and Safety Issues

Legal Responsibilities

It is important to respect the laws of the host country, local jurisdictions, rules of Indiana Wesleyan University, and all other reasonable standards of conduct promulgated by IWU, its agents and consortium partners. Moreover, it is important to participate fully in the academic program by attending classes, remaining at the host institution for the full length of the program and completing examinations (if applicable). You have acknowledged that if the activity staff determines that your conduct is detrimental to the best interests of the activity or of Indiana Wesleyan University; your participation in the activity may be terminated without a refund. Any host institution or activity sponsor will have primary responsibility for discipline in connection with violations of its regulations. Although host institution officials may consult with Indiana Wesleyan University concerning student misconduct, final disposition rests with the host institution and in extreme cases may also become a matter of concern to the local government.

For example, student demonstrations that start out on a peaceful basis can rapidly escalate into confrontations with the police. In criminal matters, (which may be defined differently outside the U.S.) neither IWU nor U.S. consular officials can intercede effectively on your behalf. In some countries the burden of proof rests with the defense and not with the prosecution. Be alert! What constitutes a crime and punishments for crimes in some countries can be surprisingly different than in the U.S.!

Working Overseas

Do not count on earning any significant portion of your expenses by working while you are overseas. In most countries, student status does not grant the legal authorization to work.

Illegal Drugs

Avoid illegal drugs. They are a violation of IWU policy and can impair your judgment in situations that require increased awareness. In addition, penalties can be very severe if you violate local drug laws.

Health and Safety

You should have the U.S. Embassy or Consulate contact information for the countries where you will be traveling. For this and other information you can go to the U.S. Department of State website at http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html. U.S. citizens traveling abroad can call the U.S. Department of State at 202-501-4444 (from the U.S. call 1-888-407-4747) for emergency assistance.

In the event that you or someone in your party becomes ill or injured, contact any necessary emergency services. In the U.S., call 911. Outside of the U.S., determine the manner of contacting such services immediately upon arriving. Someone should stay with the sick or injured party at all times. That person should act as liaison for communicating between the injured/ill student and IWU and/or parents back home. They should call the Off-Campus Activities Coordinator as soon as possible at 765-677-2874. In the absence of a volunteer, all participants will stay, regardless of the disruption on future plans. Indiana Wesleyan University will work to protect your health and safety, but you must take responsibility for the results of your decisions, choices and behavior.

Please make sure to view the Safe Passage video located at <http://family.indwes.edu/university-Counsel/Publications> for important health and safety tips. Before the activity, read carefully and consider the information given to you regarding your health and any special needs. You are also encouraged to consult the State Department Consular Information Sheets and Travel Warnings at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html and the Centers for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov. While IWU can provide information about health and safety issues, we cannot eliminate all risks or ensure that U.S. standards of due process will be applied in legal proceedings outside this country. Please be especially alert to the following aspects, which may not at first appear to you as safety or health issues:

Hazardous Activities

On trips away from home, students sometimes participate in new activities in which they are not well-practiced or proficient. Be cautious if you are attempting any activity that has an element of danger or risk, particularly if you are far from assistance. These activities can include but are not limited to rock climbing, cliff jumping, snorkeling, bungee jumping, skydiving and skiing. Many insurance companies will not cover accidents that occur during engagement in sports or activities deemed to be dangerous, including those listed above. For more information about insurance exclusions, participants on IWU-administered programs should see the IWU insurance policy for foreign travel. Participants on co-sponsored programs should contact their co-sponsoring agency. Extra insurance or special riders can often be purchased.

Emotional Problems

You are likely to experience some form of culture shock during your time abroad, but this should not be confused with a real emotional crisis. If you feel withdrawn or detached and cannot cope with your environment, ask the program director onsite for guidance and/or a recommendation for a skilled health care provider. If your problem involves an eating disorder, share your burden with someone and seek professional help before you become seriously weakened. Any medication that you take for a mental health condition should be continued during your time away since an interruption in medication can produce serious consequences.

Public Disturbances

Keep a low profile during political events abroad that may be anti-American in nature. At such times, avoid places that attract Americans and dress to fit in with the local culture. Be wary about unattended packages or backpacks in public places like subways, trains, and buses and report such unclaimed objects to a local authority. In the event of public disturbances — including violent demonstrations, terrorist acts and natural disasters—get in touch with your program staff to report on your own situation and to find out how the event may impact you as well as others around you. Also contact your friends and family, if possible, since they may hear about the disturbances on the news and will be concerned for your safety.

Sexual Harassment

If you feel you may be the victim of sexual harassment, consult the program administration and the Coordinating Office immediately. They can help you sort out the difference between unacceptable harassment and culturally acceptable behavior that is nonetheless uncomfortable for you. In the case of sexual harassment, you may need to file a report at the local police station with the assistance of the program administrator onsite.

Personal Safety

General advice for safeguarding valuables is as follows:

While on Foot: Be cognizant of your surroundings. Know where you need to go and walk with a purpose. Do not give the impression that you are off balance in your walking style or appear to be lost or wandering. There is evidence that criminals will observe these vulnerabilities and target these types of individuals. Also, do not walk close to the street or too close to the buildings. Whenever possible, walk against the traffic.

Public Transportation: Be attentive to your surroundings and keep control of your personal items. While waiting in line, keep your luggage close to your person, or put the luggage straps through your arm or one of your legs to keep control of your personal belongings.

Drug-spiking crimes. Motives include theft or robbery, kidnapping, extortion, sexual assaults, and even amusement. There are reportedly over 60 different drugs recognized as “spiking” agents. Many of them are cheap and readily available. These drugs, for the most part, are odorless, tasteless, and colorless, and most will leave the body before 72 hours of ingestion.

The following steps can help to avoid becoming a victim:

- Do not go out alone. If possible, go to restaurants, parties, and so on with a group of friends and plan to leave together.
- Before going out, bring a cell phone and make sure it is fully charged.
- Never accept a drink from a stranger.
- Never leave your drink unattended.
- If a drink looks or tastes different or has been moved or topped off, do not drink it.

- If an individual begins to feel sick, woozy, or intoxicated, they should tell a group member/friend, go somewhere safe, and call for help if needed. If someone collapses or becomes unconscious immediately call an ambulance, advise management of the establishment, and do not leave the friend alone.
- If sent to the hospital, tell the staff of the suspicion so they can run the proper tests.
- Do not think only alcoholic drinks are spiked; food, soft drinks, and other items can be spiked as well.

AIDS

AIDS, the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, is a viral disease which breaks down the body's immune system and leads to infections and cancers that may be fatal. There are no known vaccines to prevent AIDS. AIDS is a chronic illness which is almost always fatal.

Transmission of AIDS

The World Health Organization states that "AIDS is not spread by daily and routine activities such as sitting next to someone, shaking hands, or working with people. Nor is it spread by insects or insect bites. And AIDS is not spread by swimming pools, food, cups, public transportation, plates, toilets, water, air, touching, hugging, coughing or sneezing."

Transmission occurs through:

- intimate sexual contact—the virus can be transmitted from any infected person to his or her sexual partner, when semen, blood or vaginal fluids are exchanged.
- infected blood and blood products. This includes blood transfusions in which the blood donated either is not screened or is improperly screened for HIV antibodies.
- contaminated needles or any other HIV contaminated skin piercing instruments. This applies to acupuncture, illicit drugs, steroid injections, medical and dental procedures, ear & body piercing, and tattooing.
- an infected mother to her infant before or during delivery, or possibly while breastfeeding.

You and AIDS Overseas

If you need medical care overseas, ask your program administration for recommended physicians, hospitals and dentists. Make clear that you expect high standards of hygiene (use of disposable gloves by care givers, etc.).

While many countries such as the U.S. and parts of Europe have mandatory screening of donated blood for the AIDS virus, not all do. In some locales, ascertaining the availability of HIV screened blood and blood products may be difficult. Because of obvious uncertainties, consider these precautions:

- If you are injured or ill while abroad, avoid or postpone any blood transfusion unless it is absolutely necessary.
- If you do need blood, try to ensure that screened blood is used.

In some countries even disposable equipment is reused. In some places, if an injection is required, you can buy needles and syringes and bring them to the hospital for your own use. Avoid injections unless absolutely necessary.

The Center for Disease Control recommends that diabetics or other persons who require routine or frequent injections should carry a supply of syringes and needles sufficient to last their stay abroad. But carrying needles and syringes without a prescription may be illegal in some countries. Take a note from your doctor.

The risk of getting AIDS depends on you. Here are some general precautions against AIDS you can follow anywhere in the world:

- Avoid the exchange of semen, blood, or vaginal fluids with anyone. Abstain from sexual activity.
- Do not use illicit injectable drugs. Do not use needles and syringes that may have been used previously.

Additional Information

CDC Sexually Transmitted Disease, HIV & AIDS Helpline
1-800-342-AIDS or 1-800-227-8922

Indiana Wesleyan University Health Center
765.677.2206

Travel Safety

Air travel

Recent increased security measures at airport facilities and on aircrafts will require that you take additional precautions when flying. You should be prepared to comply with multiple document checks, baggage searches, and inquiries. Be patient — these steps are being taken for your protection.

Packing: Examine everything that you normally pack in your suitcase and evaluate whether an object could be scrutinized by airport security. (This includes items found in manicure kits, etc.) Consider removing anything that could be perceived as threatening, or may raise suspicion at a security screening checkpoint. No knives of any size will be accepted. Avoid over-packing so that carry-on luggage and checked suitcases can be opened and closed with ease. Mark your bags with your address. Do not put important documents or essential medicines in your bags, as they sometimes get lost. Do not bring expensive jewelry.

Airport etiquette: Arrive at the airport early (at least two to three hours before scheduled departure). Be sure to have your ticket, paperwork and passport available. Be prepared to demonstrate the operation of electronic equipment such as laptops, cell phones, etc. Never make jokes about bombs, explosives, hijacking or terrorism.

In transit: Maintain your sense of awareness and keep your possessions with you at all times.

Upon arrival: Have your luggage receipts available for verification when retrieving luggage.

Car travel

Everyday traffic accidents are the main cause of injury to students traveling abroad. The more adventuresome a destination you choose, the more primitive the roads, automobiles, trucks, buses, emergency medical resources, and safety equipment, inevitably become. You may be exposed to narrow, winding roads with no guardrails on hairpin turns, poorly maintained vehicles, and dangerously overcrowded buses.

- Keep track of local holidays that increase traffic and exercise the same caution you would on a holiday weekend in the U.S.
- Do not ride in a car without wearing a seat belt.
- Demand that taxi and bus drivers drive safely. “Slow down,” “Stop,” and “Let me out,” are three of the most powerful phrases you can use.
- Do not hitchhike.

The Association for Safe International Road Travel (www.asirt.org) offers statistics, tips, and articles about road safety around the world.

Pedestrian travel

- Avoid crowded areas where you are most likely to be robbed: crowded bus stations, market places, festivals. Don't use narrow alleys or poorly-lit streets.
- Do not travel alone. Travel in small groups, three to five, male and female, if possible.
- Beware of pickpockets. They often have an accomplice who will jostle you, ask for directions or the time, point to something spilled on your clothing, or distract you by causing a disturbance. Beware of groups of vagrant children who create a distraction while picking your pocket.
- Try to seem purposeful while you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know what you are doing.
- Go into a store or a restaurant to look at a map. Standing on a street corner with your map is a clear sign that you are a tourist.

Hotel stays

- Keep your hotel door locked at all times. Meet visitors in the lobby.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Take note of exit and stairways for use in case of emergencies.

Documents

Carry color pictures of everyone in your party in case something happens. Photocopy important documents such as those below, give a copy to your family and keep a copy separate from the originals and in a safe place.

- Passport
- Plane tickets
- Travelers checks
- Student ID card
- Driver's license
- Numbers for lost/stolen credit cards
- Telephone number to health insurance carrier

You should carry a "mugger's wallet" containing a small amount of money along with a photo ID (not your driver's license or passport.) Use this wallet for your daily small expenses but be prepared to surrender it in an emergency.

Adjustment and Cultural Differences

Personal Adjustment

Part of your success abroad will depend on how well you have prepared the logistics covered earlier in this handbook, but even more depends on how you prepare yourself for cultural adjustments and personal growth abroad.

American Identity

Before you can understand another culture, you should understand your own. What does it mean to be American? What characteristics, values and attitudes define American culture? What generalizations can you make about American attitudes towards education, gender, family, money, politics, race, relationships, religion, success, time, work? How do Americans measure success in life? What role does tradition play in our culture? A clear understanding of what is characteristically American (and its many variations) will give you a better chance of appreciating similarities and differences in another culture.

Learn about the U.S.

Every student abroad is inevitably put in the position of having to explain (or even defend) the home country's political or economic system or its stance on global issues. If you begin now to keep abreast of the U.S. role in global activities, you will be more articulate when you are questioned about U.S. policies and reactions to world issues. Remember, however, that you probably don't want to get into a hostile debate with questioners or automatically defend everything that is American. What are some strategies for deflecting potentially hostile questions so that they lead to conversations in which everybody listens and everyone learns?

Learn about the host country

Learn as much as possible about the country to which you are traveling, since understanding the culture will facilitate your adjustment to living there. How do you plan to inform yourself about the host country before arrival? Taking courses is one method, but you can also independently explore histories, periodicals, novels, travel books, videos and tapes that inform you about the differences in daily life you will encounter overseas.

Housing in the host country

The housing accommodations may vary widely depending on the trip. If you have concerns about your host family, roommate issues, inhospitable living conditions, or other issues related to your housing immediately contact your trip sponsor and/or the Coordinating Office depending on the seriousness of the issues.

Your Appearance

Carefully consider how you will dress. American students often comment that their clothing gives them away instantly as foreigners and can make them more vulnerable to derogatory remarks and as potential targets for petty thefts. Be prepared to be as flexible about your clothing as you are about other aspects of your behavior. Dress conservatively and do not wear obvious signs of wealth.

Cultural Differences

You will adjust in many small ways over a long period of time to the new culture, even though the familiar term "Culture Shock," leads you to expect a jolting and immediate clash of values. While there are many differences between the U.S. and your host country to which you will have to adjust, the following are particularly significant:

Gender Roles

Both male and female students abroad will discover that growing up in the U.S. has prepared them for different roles in society than the ones their contemporaries in other countries expect. Many events in recent decades have heightened U.S. awareness of gender stereotypes, sexism, and the limitations of traditional male-female roles. However, it may not be politic to suggest to your host country friends that U.S. patterns are appropriate for their culture. Instead, look at gender difference in the host culture from its historical and sociological perspective. Since you will be viewed according to the gender expectations of the host culture, you may feel uncomfortable at times. This is particularly true for female students who may find themselves the targets of unwanted attention. Be aware that in some cultures, female eye contact with a male may be considered flirtatious.

Religion

Few countries have the religious diversity and pluralism that you find in the U.S., and few have such a strong tradition of separation of church and state. As a result, you may be struck by the number of public holidays that are based on a religious calendar and the extent of public prayer and public religious ceremonies. It is important to remember that certain jewelry might be offensive in other cultures and certain actions might be offensive to the religion of the culture you are in (and possibly even against the law.) Wearing a cross might be an example of how a common religious item may prove to be offensive in a different culture. You may need to limit your own personal expression of faith while in certain cultures. Always ask permission before taking pictures and in general do not take photographs of women or the infirmed or elderly.

Ethnicity

U.S. citizens often identify strongly with their family's cultural and ethnic heritage and refer to themselves as Asian-American, Italian-American, African-American, or Hispanic-American. In other countries such ethnic differences are often overlooked, and U.S. students report that for the first time they have been identified (and have identified themselves) as simply "American." Students may find that physical features that distinguish them from the host population may result in stares, comments, or sometimes overt prejudice. Consult the program administration regarding these matters, particularly if there are certain areas to avoid and steps to take to minimize negative interactions.

Different Abilities

The passage of legislation such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act has spurred schools in the U.S. to accommodate students with varying abilities. Other countries are not bound by U.S. legislation, of course, and physical facilities and academic resources vary significantly from one overseas site to another. IWU endeavors to provide reasonable accommodation for students with documented disability conditions (e.g., physical, learning, etc.), but only if you disclose your needs to us well before the program begins. If you are currently receiving disability-related accommodations at IWU or anticipate needing them at your program site, send documentation that confirms the disability, information about the accommodation currently provided and details about accommodation required abroad. IWU will then be in a position to work with you, Aldersgate Center, and other relevant offices to seek appropriate responses for your needs.

Culture Shock

"Culture shock" is the term used to describe the disorientation that every student experiences to some degree when spending an extended period in a new culture. The common symptoms include homesickness, boredom, withdrawing from the culture by spending excessive amounts of time alone or with other Americans, excessive sleeping, compulsive eating, irritability, stereotyping of or hostility toward host country nationals, weepiness or even some psychosomatic illnesses. Although you will inevitably experience some degree of culture shock, you certainly won't have all these symptoms. If you recognize what is happening, keep busy, and ask friends and the program office staff for help when you need it; culture shock will not last long.

During your period abroad, you may experience several normal stages of cultural adaptation. These include:

- 1) Initial euphoria. When you first arrive in the new culture, everything seems wonderful and exciting, and you are struck with how similar people around the world can be.
- 2) Irritation and hostility. Your focus changes from the similarities between cultures to the differences, and the differences become irritating and frustrating. Small problems loom as major catastrophes.
- 3) Gradual adjustment. The crisis of adjustment passes. The new culture seems more familiar and you move more confidently in it. You make friends. You learn to interpret some of the subtle cultural clues and cues.
- 4) Adaptation and biculturalism. You are able to function in two cultures with confidence. You are so well adapted to the new culture that returning to the U.S. will provoke a “reverse culture shock.”

There are several ways you can minimize the impact of culture shock:

- Learn as much as you can about your host country before you go.
- Keep an open mind. Combine the best of your host country’s culture and life with all the good things in American culture. This “best of both worlds” approach will help you get the most out of the full cultural immersion you experience.
- Be flexible. There will be many surprises, and the more open you are to that, the more exciting and wonderful your experience will be.
- Go out and do things to meet students—remember, in most cases you will be the “outsider” and will have to make the first move. Pay attention to wall posters and read a local newspaper to learn what is going on in the city (festivals, exhibits, concerts). Read signs at the university announcing lectures, films, student organization. Attend programs where you can meet students who share your interests. Visit local student hangouts—cafes, restaurants and movie theaters. Join a sports club; if you are active in church, take part in one of the local congregations.
- Look into local volunteer opportunities through a social service agency, a school or a church.

For more information on customs and countries:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1748.html

Re-entry to the U.S.

Your host or activity sponsor should brief you prior to returning to the U.S. and help answer questions about how to explain or relate your experience back to the U.S. You will have to integrate what you have learned abroad into your life and you may find it difficult to communicate your experiences with your family and friends. You also may view your school and country in a new way. It might be helpful to keep a journal or contact students from IWU who have participated in the trip before. If you need further help in adjusting, you can contact the Aldersgate Center and other relevant offices to seek appropriate responses for your needs.

Trip Questionnaire

In an effort to ensure the safety and quality of the trips, it is important for you to fill out and complete the “Post Trip Questionnaire” form located at <http://family.indwes.edu/university-Counsel/Publications/>. This form can be confidential, and it is important that completion be done in a timely manner while the experience is still fresh in your mind. Please contact the Coordinating Office if you have any questions related to this questionnaire.