

Pre-Departure: What to Expect when on a Q Course.

Congratulations on your decision to participate in a Quarter Course! Now that you are coming closer to departure, it is time to begin thinking about the experience you will want to have and preparing yourself for the trip. Below is a list of items that will help in your preparations.

Travel & Accommodations

Please follow all rules set forth by the hotel. This means that loud partying is not allowed. There are other patrons who most likely have to get up early in the morning. Remember, if you break something, you are responsible for paying for it.

Jet lag and culture shock - There is a likelihood that many students will experience culture shock and **jet lag**. Be prepared to be grouchy, irritable, disoriented and full of regret during your first few days. This is normal. It is a combination of being out of your normal sleep routine and being surrounded by a culture with which you are not familiar. Take it easy, eat healthy and get enough sleep (during local sleeping times) and this should pass.



Communication – email, phone card, cell phone, Skype

Please make it a point to communicate with your parents. You may purchase **calling cards** all around your host city. Do not purchase a calling card from the U.S. They can be expensive and/or often do not work.

Cell phones - Some US cell phones can be used while abroad. Contact your carrier for international plans and/or rental phones.

Skype is also a very popular way for students to contact their family and friends back home. Remember that internet access might not be as prevalent as you may be used to in the U.S.

Internet accessibility - While in most destinations you will have internet and 'wifi' access, the availability will not be as prevalent as you may be used to.

Money: Which is the best to use?

It is recommended that you have a **Debit** or **Credit card** with widely recognized symbols on the back. Some samples of these are below. Once you are overseas, in order to withdraw money, you just need to match up one of your card's logos to the logos shown on the ATM. If your card does not have any logo on the back, it most likely will NOT work. **Note: You need to contact your bank to inform them that you will be abroad. Discover Card** is not widely accepted abroad.

MoneyGrams/WesternUnion can be used to send money in the event of an emergency.

Traveler's checks can be a hassle. It is recommended that you avoid them.

Places to exchange currency:

- Your local bank - must order in advance.
- Airports - you will be charged a commission.
- Any change booths throughout your host city.



'In case' money - It is recommended that you have some host country currency with you before your departure. Generally, it is around the equivalent of \$100. This is in case you arrive at a different time than expected or are not being met at the airport, you can take a taxi to your accommodations.

Health Overseas

Nothing is more important than your own health. Make sure that you have taken care of any necessary medical or dental procedures before you leave, including check-ups. Inform your director immediately about any health problem that concerns or may prevent you from participating in the program. Report all serious illnesses to the program director. *If you need help, please request it.*

Medical Insurance Cards: All quarter course students (except in Cuba) will be registered for full HTH worldwide insurance for the duration of the overseas portion of the program. Before departure, you will be given an insurance card that that you should bring with you during the trip.

Medications - If you are currently on any medication, please bring it or fill a prescription for the entire duration of your stay abroad. Also, please be sure to travel with the medication in your carryon (this include syringes).

Vaccinations and Immunizations - Depending on where you study, there may be recommended vaccinations and immunizations for that region. You may view the latest recommendations from the Center for Disease Control's website at: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

Intestinal and stomach problems -The best way to protect yourself is to bring along some over-the-counter medication and to be very careful about what you eat. If you have diarrhea accompanied by severe abdominal cramps; blood in your stool or fever, contact the program director immediately and go to a doctor.

Sunburn and Heat - If you do not wear sunscreen you will get sunburned. You will be exposed to the sun, be prepared by wearing a hat, using sun block and sunglasses. If you get sunburned, be sure to cover up any affected area when you go outside.

Make sure you drink lots of fluids. If you feel dizziness, exhaustion, cramps, and headaches you may be dehydrated. Excessive sweating, extreme headaches and disorientation leading to possible convulsions and delirium are the symptoms of heat stroke, which can be fatal. If you have any of these symptoms GET TO A HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY!

Alcohol use - The legal drinking age is lower in many study abroad destinations. Observe the local attitudes towards alcohol consumption. It is very common to drink as a form of socialization but not as common to drink in order to get drunk.

Drug use - NO. Do not buy, use, or possess illegal drugs while abroad. No one, neither SUNY Oswego, nor your Director, nor the U.S. government can help you if you are arrested for violating drug laws while abroad.

Safety Overseas

Pick pocketing / Petty theft - Unfortunately, pick pocketing and petty theft are common in the majority of destinations abroad. It is most likely to happen in touristic areas, please be aware that it can happen anywhere. Be extra vigilant not just of your personal possessions (such as your wallet, purse, credit cards, money, jewelry, identification) but more importantly of yourself. Please ensure your own safety and take all necessary precautions not to fall victim to this. Do not leave any of your items unattended; doing so is asking for trouble! Pickpockets love pubs, clubs, bars, beaches, touristic areas, the metro and area where large amounts of individuals are congregated. Be extra vigilant for yourself and your belongings.

Be aware of the distraction techniques used by pickpockets. Often thieves or accomplices will present themselves as genuine by approaching you to ask for directions or by accidentally bumping into you. When this happens your awareness is lowered and thieves will take advantage of this. The best way to protect yourself is to treat everyone who approaches you with caution and always hold on tightly to your purse, bag, or wallet. Above all else, never assume that you are too savvy to fall victim to a pickpocket!

Transportation: - Always take official taxis, buses, or trains. Do not hitchhike.



Emergencies

For emergencies, you want to first contact your in-country program director or the authorities. They will be the first to assist you in getting the help you need.

What constitutes an emergency? - Emergencies are defined as providing an immediate threat to the safety and well being of the student. Some instances include:

- you are assaulted or hurt and need to go to the hospital
- you are arrested

Instances that **DO NOT** constitute an emergency include:

- you lose your wallet/purse
- you get lost (and are not in harm's way)



Worst case scenario / Preparation

While we don't like to talk about it, planning ahead for a bad situation will be less stressful if you have already organized a plan of action ahead of time.

'In case' money - It is recommended that you have some host country currency with you before your departure. Generally it is around the equivalent of \$100.

You lose your wallet/purse - Have the number to your credit card company written down in another place so you can contact them immediately.

You lose your passport - Make copies of your passport; leave one with your parents and keep one. This will aid you in getting a replacement.

You need to go to the hospital - Contact the in-country Program Director.

What to pack

Clothing and Packing: Travel light! It is tempting to bring every article of clothing and every personal belonging that is important to you. Resist the temptation to do this. Flying is stressful, security is tighter than ever, and you're only going to be abroad for about 1 week, so don't over pack!

Most airlines allow you to bring 2 checked bags weighing 50lbs or less each (please confirm the regulations with your airline company). When packing, keep in mind the temperatures that you will be experiencing while abroad. Clothes that can easily be mixed and matched are recommended.



Example of adapter



Example of converter

Adaptor or Converter? - **Adaptors** allow your electronics to be used by allowing the prongs on the plug to fit to the local electrical outlet. Adaptors DO NOT change the current feeding in to your electronics. You will either need to purchase travel-grade electronics that allow you to switch from 110v to 220 or purchase a converter. **Converters** change the electrical output to allow your electronics to function properly. These sets usually come with various adaptors to be used around the world. The average cost of these are \$25 and can be found at a travel shop or super store (Wal-mart, Target or Best Buy).

What to pack (cont'd)

Below is a list of suggested items to bring overseas. This is not an exhaustive list nor is it mandatory that students bring these items. Also keep in mind the climate and type of program you are participating in. While some of these items can easily be purchased in some countries, they may not be as accessible in others. Please check with your program specialist for details.

Bath/Hygiene

Anti-bacterial hand gel	Flip-flops for the shower and walking around
Contact lens solution	Hair dryer
Feminine hygiene items	Toiletries (soap, shampoo, razors, deodorant, toothpaste)

Clothing

Socks	Rain Gear (umbrella)
Pajamas	Sunglasses
Comfortable walking shoes (definitely a NEED) - sneakers, sandals	
Casual, comfortable, light, loose-fitting and washable cotton clothes	
1-2 nice outfits (may be needed if you go out to a conference, fancy nightclub, or restaurant)	



DO NOT bring valuable jewelry or clothing that needs special care!

Miscellaneous

Travel alarm clock	Money belt
Digital camera, USB's to save your photos	Locks for suitcases

Convenience

Traveling iron	iPod with your favorite music
A journal for writing down your thoughts	A book or two of your interest

Buon Viaggio!

잘 다녀오십시오!

BUEN VIAJE!

Boa Viagem!

Gute Reise!

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Bon Voyage!
