



The University of Scranton

Office of Global Education

Study Abroad  
Policies and Guidelines  
for Students Participating in Partner Programs  
(non-Faculty-led)

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## The Office of Global Education, Role and Function

The Office of Global Education (OGE) is dedicated to facilitating access to international educational opportunities for students. We serve as a resource for study abroad information and act as the liaison between students abroad and various University offices. If you decide to study abroad, we will assist you with information about appropriate study sites, method of application, duration of study, academic plan, course selection, living arrangements, transfer of credit, approval of credit, financial aid and housing.

### **Staff and Location:**

The OGE office is located on the first floor of O'Hara Hall. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Students are welcome to "drop in" during office hours, but if individual attention is desired, it is highly recommended that you make an appointment. Appointments can be made by contacting the OGE administrative assistant or the directors via email or phone.

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### **Facilities:**

The office offers space and materials for students to research study abroad opportunities, provides a meeting place for international students who are studying at the University of Scranton, and hosts a variety of international activities to foster greater global awareness of our students.

Students are assisted in their research and receive comprehensive advising from an international education staff that includes students who have returned from studying

abroad. The Office of Global Education takes pride in the relationships it builds with students and their families as they plan their study abroad experience, while they are abroad and when they return to the University.

### Academic Eligibility

1. Students wishing to study abroad will normally have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 at the time of application and meet the minimum GPA requirements of the receiving institution.
2. Students with less than the required University of Scranton GPA may request permission to study abroad through their Dean's Office.
3. Students wishing to study abroad for a semester or longer are eligible beginning with the fall semester of their sophomore year.
4. Transfer students must have completed at least 60 semester hours with at least 15 semester hours in residence at University of Scranton to be considered eligible to participate in a study abroad program.
5. Credits earned through a study abroad program are exempt from the transfer credit limits once matriculated at the University of Scranton.
6. Students on academic probation at the time of application or departure are not eligible to participate in a study abroad program.

### Financial Eligibility

1. Students are required to be cleared by the Bursar's office in order to study abroad. Normally, a financial hold on a student's account will disqualify a student from studying abroad until cleared.

### Disciplinary Eligibility

1. The University reserves the right to deny study abroad participation to students who have disciplinary histories.

2. Normally, students will not be permitted to study abroad who are on disciplinary censure, disciplinary probation or deferred suspension at the time of application or departure.
3. Students who have been previously dismissed for any reason from the University, are not eligible to study abroad.

## Study Abroad and Travel Risk Management

1. The University of Scranton reserves the right at any time to cancel any participation in study abroad programs based upon advice of its study abroad risk assessment committee.
2. Normally, undergraduate students are not permitted to participate in study abroad programs in a country where the United States Department of State has issued a Travel Warning.
3. All students will be instructed to enroll with the Department of State prior to departure from the United States.

## Study Abroad Application Requirements

1. Students who wish to participate in a study abroad program and retain their University of Scranton student status, must choose a program on the University of Scranton Affiliated Study Abroad Program List.
2. Students who choose to apply to a study abroad program not on the University of Scranton affiliated program list or choose to apply to a study abroad program independently of the University of Scranton will be withdrawn from the University.
3. All study abroad applications are made through the Office of Global Education. Students will complete a University of Scranton study abroad application and the application for the study program or host university.
4. All students will be assessed a \$125.00, non-refundable study abroad application fee.

## Credit Transfer for Study Abroad Courses

1. Credits earned abroad will be transferred to the students' academic record provided the following conditions are met: students have secured permission

from the University of Scranton to take the course(s); students have earned at least the equivalent of a “C” in the course; and an official transcript is issued by the study abroad program/university.

2. Study abroad credits will count towards the University of Scranton residency requirement and are exempt from credit transfer limits.

## Academic Requirements While Studying Abroad

1. Students studying abroad for a semester must take at minimum the equivalent of 12 University of Scranton credits. Failure to maintain full time student status may adversely affect financial aid eligibility and health insurance coverage.
2. Students are not permitted to take a course abroad on a “pass/fail” basis.
3. Students are not permitted to earn academic credit for a course previously taken at the University of Scranton. Exceptions to this rule will only be considered for language classes in which a student has been placed by virtue of a placement examination while abroad. The Chair of the World Languages and Cultures will evaluate all such exceptions.

## Study Abroad Courses and Course Approval

1. Students are required to have a set of courses pre-approved prior to departure as part of the study abroad application process.
2. Once a student is registered for courses abroad, if there are changes to what was previously agreed to on the course approval form, she/he must gain approval for the new course(s) from her/his advisor (College of Arts and Sciences) or their advising center (Kania School of Management and Panuska College of Professional Studies). All students will copy the study abroad director on all correspondence regarding changes to the course approval form.
3. Transcripts from abroad without an accurate course approval form on file will not be evaluated.
4. Courses taken while studying abroad that are not pre-approved by the student’s advisor may not be eligible for transfer to the University.

## Standards of Conduct While Studying Abroad

1. University students studying abroad are subject to the laws of the country in which they are studying and the conduct and academic codes of the host institutions.
2. While studying abroad in an Affiliated Study Abroad Program, a student is concurrently enrolled as a student at the University of Scranton and is subject to all University of Scranton conduct and academic integrity standards.
3. Misconduct of any kind by a student studying abroad will be referred to the Office of Global Education and/or the Office of Student Conduct for review and appropriate action. Serious misconduct may lead to the expulsion of a student from a study abroad program, expulsion from the country and suspension or expulsion from the University of Scranton.

## Study Abroad Costs: Billing/Invoicing

1. All students will be assessed a \$125.00, non-refundable study abroad application fee.
2. Students studying abroad for a semester or academic year will be charged the prevailing tuition rate at the University of Scranton for the term(s) abroad, the standard per semester student fee. The University of Scranton will, to the greatest extent possible, invoice the student for room, board and any administrative fees associated with an approved study abroad program.
3. For, non-University of Scranton intersession and summer programs, students will be invoiced by the University of Scranton for the costs of the program. In addition to the program costs, a non-refundable application fee of \$125.00 will additionally be billed by the University of Scranton.
4. Unless otherwise stated, students will be responsible for securing their airfare to their study destination.
5. Unless otherwise stated, students will be responsible for securing a student visa, if required, for their study destination.

## Financial Aid/Scholarship and Studying Abroad

1. Students studying abroad for a semester or academic year may apply all forms of financial aid/scholarship toward their term(s) abroad. How the award(s) is applied is determined by the Financial Aid office.
2. Students receiving tuition remission at the University of Scranton will be able to use that benefit to study at one of our exchange agreement partners only. This benefit will be further restricted based on the availability of seats with non-tuition remission students being given priority.

## Withdrawing From a Study Abroad Program

1. If a student chooses to withdraw her/his participation after matriculation in a semester study abroad program, the student must notify the Office of Global Education in writing immediately upon withdrawal.

### **Upon Withdrawal:**

1. Students participating in a University of Scranton exchange program will incur non-recoverable costs assessed by the host university (abroad). These costs may include room, board and/or administrative charges.
2. Students participating in a regular semester study abroad program will incur non-recoverable costs assessed by the host university and/or study abroad program. These costs may include room, board and/or administrative charges. Additionally, a portion of the tuition for the semester might be considered a non-recoverable cost.
3. If a student withdraws from a semester study abroad program in time to return to the University of Scranton prior to the end of the term add period, they may enroll at the University. Tuition already paid will be applied to their studies at the University, less the non-recoverable fees.
4. If the student withdraws after the normal add period at the University, they will normally not be able to enroll in classes at the University for that term. In such a case, refunds for tuition will follow the normal refund schedule at the University. Additionally, the student must apply for an official leave from the University.

## Study Abroad Risk Management Guidelines

### 1. **Pre-departure**

The University of Scranton, at its discretion, may cancel or suspend study programs because of real or potential safety, security or health risks to the participant. Decisions to cancel or suspend study programs will be based on Travel Warnings issued by the United States State Department, information from The Center for Disease Control, the Overseas Security Advisory Council, the University Travel Risk Advisory Committee, and other relevant organizations.

### 2. **In-Country**

In the case of an immediate threat to student health, safety, or welfare, the University has discretion to suspend a program and begin evacuation proceedings immediately.

### 3. **University of Scranton Exchange program**

In the event a University of Scranton Exchange program is canceled, the University will work diligently with the student to facilitate normal academic progress and will refund recoverable costs to the student. The recoverable costs refunded to the student will be determined with the following factors in mind:

- a. If the student is able to complete required coursework for the term; no tuition will be refunded. If the student is not able to complete the required coursework for the term, the University will work with the student to develop a class schedule for that term at the University of Scranton. Normally, return to the University will be allowed only within the normal add period. Tuition already paid will be applied to the current term at the University.
- b. If the student is not able to complete the required coursework for the term and the normal add period at the University of Scranton has passed, the University will refund the tuition amount paid by the student, less non-recoverable costs.

## Study Abroad Application Procedures

1. In planning to study abroad, a student should first consult with their academic advisor and determine the best semester for them to travel abroad and the best schools for their majors if they plan on taking courses to fulfill their major requirements.
2. Early in the process they should contact the study abroad office to ensure their eligibility and to further explore and discern the best programs for them.
3. Once a program has been chosen, the student will receive an access pin to begin the University of Scranton application.
4. Before applying, each student should ask one faculty member to act as recommender on the University of Scranton application.
5. The Office of Global Education will contact the faculty recommender.
6. All directions should be read and followed carefully on the application.
7. The student is also responsible to complete the host university's or third-party provider's application and supporting documents e.g. transcripts, recommendation letters, etc.

## Transcript and Credit Transfer Procedures for Study Abroad Courses

1. It is the students' responsibility to request that an official transcript is sent to the University of Scranton.
2. Transcripts from abroad should be sent to:

University of Scranton  
Office of Global Education  
800 Linden Street  
Scranton, PA 18510

3. The transcript and courses will be evaluated and submitted to the Registrar for posting to the students' official University record. The official study abroad transcript received by the University of Scranton will not be returned to the student.
4. Grades earned abroad are not used in the calculation of a student's University of Scranton GPA nor are the grades listed on the official University of Scranton transcript.

5. Students will fulfill one Cultural Diversity General Education (D) course requirement if studying abroad for one semester. Both (D) requirements may be filled if studying abroad for two semesters.
6. If students require an official transcript for their own records or for future applications in higher education, e.g. for a graduate school application or a Fulbright scholarship application, then the student must request the official transcript directly from the study abroad institution.

### Study Abroad Course Approval Procedures

1. The student will complete a Course Approval Form and submit the form to her/his advisor. The advisor will determine the suitability of the students' proposed coursework for her/his degree program.
2. The Chair of the Department must approve all major required courses.
3. The General Education Coordinator will approve all General Education courses, and assign any appropriate GE attributes.
4. The Chair of World Languages and Cultures must approve all language courses.
5. Students who are enrolled in Programs of Excellence (Honors, SJLA and/or Business Leadership) and/or Pre-Medical programs are required to have the director of their program(s) approve their course(s).
6. Students may take courses not offered at the University of Scranton while abroad. Such courses may only be used in elective areas unless approval for course substitution has been granted.
7. Courses taken abroad which have credit value of greater than 3 semester hours will fulfill a 3 semester hour requirement and the remaining credits will be applied to an elective area(s) if available.
8. Students planning to take second major or minor(s) requirements while abroad are required to seek approval from the chairperson of that department.

## Studying Abroad and University of Scranton Housing

1. Students who study abroad during the fall semester and return to University housing for the spring semester will receive a \$1,000.00 discount on their spring semester housing.
2. Students who are studying abroad for a fall semester and are returning to campus for the spring semester should contact Residence Life office to inform them they want housing upon their return. Room selection for study abroad students is usually completed by mid-December.
3. Students who study abroad during the fall semester and are returning to campus for intersession must contact Residence Life to let them know they want housing upon their return. Room selection for study abroad students is usually completed by mid-December.
4. Students who study abroad during the spring semester and will return to University housing for the fall semester will participate in the housing lottery process from their study site. Students should also contact Residence Life.

## Health, Safety, and Security

One of the chief concerns students have as they consider studying abroad is the safety and security beyond the borders of the United States. While no one can guarantee the safety of students in any location (the United States or any other country) or eliminate all risks from traveling and studying abroad, the University of Scranton is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that students are not placed in locations or situations that expose them to undue risk.

To that end, the University of Scranton carefully monitors the U.S. State Department travel warnings and public announcements and communicates regularly with our overseas partners about safety and security concerns or issues. Further, the University of Scranton carefully monitors recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control regarding health concerns worldwide. In addition to monitoring security, safety and health issues and concerns worldwide, the University of Scranton provides students with comprehensive insurance coverage and instruction on staying safe and healthy while abroad.

Mitigating safety, security and health risks abroad is a partnership between the University of Scranton and students and their families. The University of Scranton cannot control all of the daily personal decisions, choices and activities that students

make while abroad and cannot prevent students from engaging in illegal, dangerous or unwise activities. All students are strongly advised to make wise and prudent decisions while abroad.

**Participants should:**

1. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for their personal preparation for the program and participate fully in orientations.
2. Read and carefully consider all materials issued by the sponsor that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country or countries.
3. Conduct their own research on the country or countries they plan to visit with particular emphasis on health and safety concerns, as well as the social, cultural, and political situations.
4. Consider their physical and mental health, and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program, and make available to the sponsor accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary in planning for a safe and healthy study abroad experience. For some programs, study abroad applicants will need to submit an affidavit from a health provider that he/she is fit to participate in the study abroad experience.
5. Abide by any conditions imposed by our insurance provider.
6. Inform parents/guardians/families and any others who may need to know about their participation in the study abroad program, provide them with emergency contact information, and keep them informed of their whereabouts and activities.
7. Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures of the program.
8. Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals before and/or during the program.
9. Accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions.
10. Obey host-country laws.
11. Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well-being of others and encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
12. Avoid illegal drugs and excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol.
13. Follow the program policies for keeping program staff informed of their whereabouts and well-being.
14. Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and legal system services in the host country.

**Parents/guardians/families should:**

1. Be informed about and involved in the decision of the participant to enroll in a particular study abroad program.
2. Obtain and carefully evaluate participant program materials, as well as related health, safety, and security information.
3. Discuss travel plans and any activities of the student that may be independent of the study abroad program.
4. Engage the participant in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues, insurance needs, and emergency procedures related to living abroad.
5. Be responsive to requests from the program sponsor for information regarding the participant.
6. Keep in touch with the participant.
7. Be aware that the participant rather than the program may most appropriately provide some information.

**The University should:**

1. Offer guidance on health and safety information for prospective participants so that they can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation, and behavior on the program.
2. Provide orientation to participants prior to the program and as needed on site, which includes information on safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country. In addition to dealing with health and safety issues, the orientation will address potential health and safety risks, and appropriate emergency response measures.
3. Consider health and safety issues in evaluating the appropriateness of an individual's participation in a study abroad program.
4. Collect and maintain the emergency contact information of all participants to support communication efforts in the case of an emergency situation.
5. Enroll all participants in a comprehensive health and emergency evacuation insurance plan.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What is the earliest semester I can study abroad?**

A: The earliest you can study abroad for a semester is the fall of your sophomore year. Note that some study abroad programs do require that you are in your junior year.

**Q: Will I graduate on time if I study abroad?**

A: There is no reason that you should not graduate on time if you have your courses approved and pass those courses abroad. This assumes that you have engaged in careful academic planning with your advisor - figuring out which courses you need to take at the University of Scranton prior to and after studying abroad.

**Q: Will the classes I take abroad transfer back to the University of Scranton?**

A: As long as the classes you take abroad have been pre-approved and you pass them with at least the equivalent of a "C", the credits earned will transfer.

**Q: When can I study abroad?**

A: You may study abroad starting the fall of your sophomore year up to the fall and intersession semester of your senior year.

**Q: Do I need to speak another language in order to study abroad?**

A: No, you do not need to speak another language in order to study abroad. There are many study abroad sites in non-English speaking countries that teach their courses in English. However, there are some destinations that do require you to speak the host country language.

**Q: What grade-point average do I need in order to study abroad?**

A: You generally (It is recommended) need at least a 3.0 GPA in order to study abroad.

**Q: Will the grades I earn abroad be calculated into my GPA?**

A: Study abroad program grades earned through other universities or institutions are not factored into your University of Scranton GPA.

**Q: Can Pre-Med students study abroad?**

A: Pre-Med, Pre-Vet and Pre-Dental students may study abroad. Requirements such as MCATs and specific course requirements make it imperative that you meet and consult with the Pre-Med Advisor as early on in your career at the University as possible.

**Q: Can Honors, SJLA or Business Leadership students study abroad?**

A: Students who are SJLA, Honors and Business Leadership routinely study abroad. It is imperative that you consult with the director of your program as soon as possible to determine how to schedule your program specific courses at the University and to plan which courses to take abroad.

**Q: Can Nursing students study abroad?**

A: Nursing students who wish to study abroad for a semester may do so only during the second semester of their sophomore year. It is critically important that Nursing students meet with their advisor during their freshman year to plan their Nursing coursework prior to and upon return from studying abroad. The Nursing Department has devised a very specific schedule for Nursing students studying abroad for the semester. If you are a Nursing student who wishes to study abroad during a summer or intersession, then the planning is not quite so critical.

**Q: Can I study abroad if I am a transfer student?**

A: You may study abroad if you have completed at least 60 credits with at least 15 credits in residence at the University of Scranton.

**Q: How long can I study abroad?**

A: You may study abroad for as long as an academic year or as short as two weeks. Most students tend to study abroad for one semester.

**Q: How much does it cost to study abroad?**

A: When calculating the costs of studying abroad, there are a number of factors to consider. You will be paying for tuition, room, board, travel, books, personal expenses etc.: much as you would here at the University of Scranton. If you study abroad for a semester or an academic year, your tuition will be the same as it is here at the University of Scranton. If you study abroad for an intersession or summer session, you will pay the tuition charged by the study abroad program and a \$125 administrative fee to the University of Scranton.

*The costs of living and traveling will vary depending on where you are planning to go. Generally speaking, room and board costs abroad are comparable to the charges at the University of Scranton.*

**Q: Can I use my financial aid and scholarships when I study abroad?**

A: Yes, you may use your financial aid and scholarship for studying abroad as long as you study abroad during the academic year – a fall or spring semester. If you have more specific questions regarding financial aid and studying abroad please contact the Financial Aid Office.

**Q: When do you apply for studying abroad?**

A: You complete applications to study abroad at the beginning of the semester prior to studying abroad. Generally speaking, the application deadline for spring semester and intersession abroad is October 15th and the application deadline for the summer session, fall semester or academic year abroad is April 15th. You will complete two applications: one for the University of Scranton and one for the university or program abroad.

**Q: Do I need a passport or visa to study abroad?**

A: You will need a current passport in order to study abroad, regardless of destination. You will need to make sure that your passport is valid for your time abroad and extending several months after you return. In some instances, you will also be required to secure a student visa which gives you permission to have an extended stay in your host country. Visa requirements vary from country to country.

**Q: Will I need to have immunizations or vaccinations in order to study abroad?**

A: There are some study abroad destinations that require you have certain vaccinations or immunizations. The International Programs and Services Office recommends that you review the travel medicine recommendations on the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

**Q: Can I drive while I am studying abroad?**

A: As long as you have proper documentation and insurance, you may drive while you are abroad. The University of Scranton however, recommends that you use public transportation rather than renting or purchasing a car.

**Q: Can students study in more than one country?**

A: Students can and have studied abroad in more than one country. While it is not all that common, some students will study in two different countries over two different semesters to develop specific linguistic abilities. It is important to begin planning such an experience as soon as possible.

**Q: How many credits can I earn while studying abroad?**

A: You are required to take a minimum of 12 credits for a semester abroad and 3 credits for an intercession or summer session abroad. Some study abroad programs allow students to take as many as 18 credits. On average, University of Scranton students take 15 credits during the course of a semester abroad.

**Q: Can all majors study abroad?**

A: Students from all majors may study abroad. To a certain extent, your major will determine how long and where you can study abroad. Some majors, such as Occupational Therapy, can only study abroad during the summer or intercession. If your major is highly structured, you might find that you are limited to studying in countries that offer courses in your major in order to stay on track to graduate.

**Q: What happens if I get sick abroad?**

A: All students are enrolled in a health insurance plan prior to departing the United States. The health insurance policy grants access to a network of physicians and health care professionals as well as clinics and hospitals at your study abroad destination. In the event you require emergency medical evacuation, the insurance plan covers the evacuation.

**Q: Where do I live when I study abroad?**

A: Your residence abroad will depend on where you are studying. Some students reside with families and other live in residence halls or student apartments.

**Q: What kinds of classes can I take abroad?**

A: The classes you wind up taking abroad is determined in part by your major and your academic planning. For the most part, students take courses that count as electives and are not taught at the University of Scranton. Students may also take courses in their major.

**Q: Can I work while I am studying abroad?**

A: In most study abroad destinations it will be illegal for you to work without a permit. The University of Scranton does not recommend that you work while abroad. If you are working illegally, the penalties of being caught can be stiff; it isn't worth the risk.

**Q: Can I receive Writing Intensive Credit for a course abroad?**

A: While not a common practice, it is in theory possible. The GE Program Coordinator will determine whether or not a course will receive Writing Intensive Credit.

**Q: Can I receive Cultural Diversity Credit while studying abroad?**

A: If you spend a semester abroad, you will fill one Diversity requirement. If you study abroad for two semesters, you will fill both Diversity requirements.

## Information for Parents

Congratulations on becoming a newly minted supporter of students studying abroad. Your understanding of what your son or daughter is about to experience will not only help your student but will help you rest easier as well. The following essay (reprinted by permission from The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) provides a good overview about the experience.

Studying abroad will almost certainly be a defining period in your son or daughter's educational experience — a psychological journey that will transform him or her into a global thinker with international perspectives and put him or her a step ahead of the competition in the eyes of prospective employers. In spite of this, you — and your son or daughter — may have a wide range of feelings about the upcoming experience, from excitement at its potential to stress at the idea of being far apart. By understanding each other's feelings and supporting decisions before, during, and after the period of overseas study, you can help maximize this opportunity. Here is some advice on what to expect.

### Before Going Abroad

Before your student leaves, offer your full support. Let him or her know that you will be there throughout the experience if needed, including that you can still be reached from overseas. Time abroad often begins with a honeymoon period during which students are excited to finally be in the setting that they have dreamed of. After facing realities such as unfamiliar university procedures, unexpected difficulty with the local language, commuting woes, and the absence of usual support groups, culture shock can set in. At the same time, the student is away from on-campus medical, psychological and advisory services they may have come to rely on (a major change in university life since we attended college is the degree to which students rely on these resources). Expect to hear some tales of frustration, though your student will likely be experiencing many wonderful things as well, even if you are not the first to hear about them. In most cases

he or she won't expect you to solve problems —as much as you may want to—and is just looking for an understanding ear.

### **While Abroad**

It is by overcoming any difficulties that your son or daughter will quickly rise to a new level of independence, so avoid the temptation to become too involved. Ultimately, this is his or her learning experience.

Also, it's important to remember that study abroad students are not on vacation.

Attending class with him or her—or taking your student out of class to sightsee—will interrupt the educational process and immersion experience. If you want to visit, it's best to do so when the program has finished so you can travel together. And it's not usually wise to try to obtain permission for your student to return home early; the end of the semester is the most important part of his or her academic experience.

prepare for the transformation

### **Returning from Abroad**

After living abroad for as long as study abroad students do, they can't help but be changed by the experience. This can take many forms, from new ways of dressing to cravings for different kinds of food to new political perspectives. Don't worry too much: negative feelings usually last for a very short time, while a realistic view of America and its place in the world remains with most students for life.

Be prepared for him or her to experience some degree of reverse culture shock—most do—and need some time to fully readjust to living at home again. In some cases, he or she may even experience a period of depression or longing to return abroad. Once again, your support, interest, and understanding will help your son or daughter during this life-altering experience. Observing and discussing changes like these is an excellent way to share in your son or daughter's international experience, and you will probably want to hear more than most other people, which will be satisfying to your son or daughter. Most study abroad participants report years later that the time they spent overseas was the best part of their college years—and that it changed them for life.

### **Practical Preparations**

It's a delicate balance: making sure your son or daughter is prepared for his or her time abroad, and letting him or her take the lead at the beginning of this new experience.

Here is a list of things that should be resolved before departure, and our suggestions for ways to do so:

- Make sure your student understands what policies apply to him or her while abroad. Ask home schools about credit, enrollment status, financial aid, study abroad-related fees and services the school will provide while abroad. Ask

program providers for the terms of participation, which covers issues such as course load, changes to academic programs, grade reporting, fees, and refunds.

- Check that your son or daughter's passport and any required visas are in order. You should also have a valid passport in case of emergency.
- Before departure, your son or daughter should have a general physical and dental exam; women should also have a gynecological checkup. Make sure he or she packs a complete medical record and a typed copy of any vision prescriptions needed. Ask the doctor how best to handle routine prescription medications.
- Decide with your son or daughter how to access money for both everyday financial needs and emergencies. Certain monetary instruments may be preferable in certain destinations, so ask your program provider for more specific recommendations. Generally, it's important to ask your bank how (or if) its ATM card will function abroad and what extra fees there might be. A personal credit card with cash advances would make sense. Make arrangements to pay any monthly bills and, if necessary, to file your son or daughter's income taxes.
- Continue carrying your student as a dependent on your health insurance policy, even if he or she will have other coverage while studying abroad.
- Insure valuables your son or daughter will take on the trip, such as a laptop computer, camera, or video recorder. Also consider tuition, trip, travel, and luggage insurance. Advise him or her not to bring irreplaceable objects such as family jewelry.
- Research travel costs and help book flights. Learn regulations regarding the type and size of luggage that can be carried; then help your son or daughter pack lightly. Be aware of any restrictions the tickets you purchase may have (such as a change policy). A money belt can help keep valuables safe during the trip.
- Make sure you have a telephone number where you can reach your student and know the times of day when he or she is most likely to be available. Minimize the cost of staying in touch by establishing reliable methods in advance and learn the most inexpensive ways to communicate from the destination.
- Make sure you will be informed if your student runs into difficulty overseas. Since students are almost always adults (over 18 years of age), you will not receive that information unless you are designated as his or her emergency contact. In some cases, even that is not sufficient, so you may want to have him or her sign a release form as a precaution. Discuss how you will handle any family emergencies that may arise. It's best to have a written emergency communication plan listing the methods of communication to use and the order in which to use them. Give your student a copy of the plan, which should include all family telephone numbers and email addresses; access codes for messages on

family answering machines; and phone numbers for several out-of-state relatives.

- Gather all of the information you and your student might need while he or she is away, including:
  1. The Office of Global Education telephone number (570-941-4841)
  2. The University of Scranton Emergency toll free telephone number (800-709-8703)
  3. The telephone number for the U.S. consulate or embassy nearest your student's study site
  4. The telephone number of the U.S. Department of State's Overseas Citizen Services (1-888-407-4747)
  5. Insurance carriers telephone numbers and policy numbers
  6. Your student's credit card numbers and expiration dates/security codes
  7. Your student's passport number and expiration date (it is a good idea to photocopy the information page of the passport)
  8. A duplicate lost passport kit (your student should take one abroad as well) containing: two passport photos, official copy of his or her birth certificate, photocopy of passport's photo, signature, and visa pages
  9. Devise a plan to deal with emergencies (abroad or at home).