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GENERAL INFORMATION

The Office of International Program’s mission is to provide academically rigorous programs that assist a student in exploring their major field of study in another country, discover another culture by immersing themselves in the classroom, out of the classroom, and through various experiential opportunities such as volunteering, internships, and co-curricular programs.

This is an opportunity for students to earn credits towards a degree by studying in another country while living in a different culture and experiencing different attitudes and values.

Study abroad is a life-changing experience that may influence the life and career of a student. The following are some common benefits from spending a semester or year studying abroad:

- Learn about your major/minor field of study from a different perspective
- Increase your level of fluency in a foreign language
- Become acquainted with another culture and way of life
- Attain a new worldview
- See your home country with a different set of eyes
- Make friends from different cultural backgrounds
- Increase your marketability after graduation
- Develop self-reliance, independence, self-advocacy, and overall confidence through an abroad experience

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Office of International Program’s role is to support students through the application process to the return from study abroad. The office provides services such as workshops and information sessions, individual advising appointments, collaborative programming with a variety of offices, as well as offering programs upon return to assist with the transition back to campus. We hope that we are able to provide the guidance and support that will assist you with selecting a program that will meet your academic and personal goals.

STAFF

Alice Cronin, Director
Jennifer McKernan, Assistant Director
Aliki Karagiannis, Advisor
Patty Mead, Administrative Assistant

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
Location: Duffy Academic Center - Suite 131
Appointments/Main Phone: 508-565-1645

Email: international@stonehill.edu

Website: http://www.stonehill.edu/offices-services/international-programs/
STUDY ABROAD REQUIREMENTS
To be eligible to study abroad, students must meet the following requirements: Cumulative GPA of 2.8, and good academic and social standing as outlined by Stonehill College’s Community Standards. Students must be approved by the Director of International Programs and the Dean of Students, and must also meet the specific requirements of their study abroad program.

If a student’s community standard violations have changed after their approval and acceptance and prior to departure, an additional review may be necessary and student may lose their approval status for study abroad participation based on the outcome of the specific violation.

LOW GPA PETITIONS
Students with a GPA below 2.8 who are interested in studying abroad are required to meet with the Director of International Programs and to discuss the low GPA petition process. This process requires that students write a statement describing the reason for the low GPA and why they would like the college to make an exception. Students will also need a letter of support from their major(s) department chair and a letter from one additional faculty member.

Student petitions will be reviewed by the Director of the Office of International Programs and the International Advisory Committee, if necessary. Students will be notified by mail of the results of their low GPA Petition.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
International students planning to study or intern abroad should consult the Office of Intercultural Affairs to discuss their student visa status in the United States.

GETTING STARTED SESSIONS
Students are required to attend a “Getting Started” session. These sessions are conducted by our Peer Advisors and students gain valuable knowledge about the application process.

INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS
All students must meet with a staff member of the Office of International Programs. These one-on-one meetings are useful in discussing abroad options best suited to your academic and personal goals.

VISA WORKSHOPS
Workshops are offered to discuss the visa procedures for our more popular destinations. Students must attend these sessions in order to receive the necessary documentation for applying for a visa.

PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION
Students are required to attend a mandatory pre-departure orientation. The meeting will discuss important aspects of the abroad experience such as academics, health and safety, financial matters, travel information, and other areas. Students who have studied abroad will be available to answer country-specific questions and offer suggestions for packing, travel, etc.

ON-SITE ORIENTATION PROGRAMS
Students are required to attend all orientation programs upon arrival in their host country. In most cases, a program provider will offer a general orientation program that will discuss your new cultural environment, the academic and programmatic expectations, and health and safety protocols of your program. You may also need to attend an orientation conducted by your host university.
ACADEMICS

The academic experience is the central feature of a semester abroad. Students select their program based on major and minor discipline areas, as well as opportunities to conduct research, service learning, and utilizing the local culture and environment to gain a deeper understanding of areas of interest.

Consider your study abroad location with the following aspects in mind:

- Does the study abroad location offer courses in my major/minor that will augment my studies at Stonehill?
- Does the study abroad program have a specific focus in an academic area/discipline that I cannot study at Stonehill?
- Does the program offer volunteer placements, and research opportunities that will provide me with a practical application to the theoretical foundation of study.
- What co-curricular offerings in this host country may offer networking possibilities which might lead to future career opportunities?

FULL COURSE LOAD

Students should explore a full course of study. Each program or university has a different expectation of the number of courses you will be expected to take in order to be full time. Students must register for the equivalent of 15 U.S. semester credits to remain at full-time status while abroad. If you receive less than 15 credits during your semester abroad, you may need to take additional courses upon your return to campus in order to fulfill the necessary graduation requirement.

Students will find the information on full course load on their study abroad program’s website. Students must take the number of courses as a full-time degree-seeking student. It is the student’s responsibility to become familiar with this information. If you are unsure what constitutes a full semester of credit at your host program, you should discuss this with the Office of International Programs.

Students must take a full course load in order to meet the requirements of their student visa, to continue receiving financial aid from Stonehill College, and to continue to make progress towards completing requirements for graduation. Students are not permitted to enroll in course overload while abroad.

COURSE APPROVAL PROCESS

Students must have all courses preapproved by their major(s) department chair, minor(s) department chair, as well as the Office of International Programs prior to departing campus. Once all the signatures are obtained you must submit the course approval form to the Office of International Programs.

COURSES IN MAJOR(S) AND MINOR(S)

Students should select courses in their major or minor at their study abroad program. In general students take two courses in their major discipline and one in their minor, although individual departments have specific limits on the number of courses a student may take abroad. Students should print course descriptions for 8-10 courses for review by the chair of the academic department you are seeking credit. The chair must complete the Course Approval Form with the Stonehill equivalent course number.

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

Students interested in taking General Education requirements abroad must secure the approval of the Assistant Dean of General Education.
ELECTIVES
We encourage students to take a variety of courses that will provide an opportunity to learn about the culture, history, language of their new host country. Many of these courses may not fulfill major or minor courses, but may fulfill an elective within a department at Stonehill College. These courses must also be pre-approved.

COURSE CHANGES
You may need to finalize and/or revise your course schedule during the registration period at your institution. During this process it is important that you refer to the pink copy of your Stonehill College Study Abroad Course Approval Form to see which courses you already had pre-approved. You may find that you need to change some of your courses due to course cancellations or schedule conflicts. Any course changes MUST be approved by your advisor in the Office of International Programs. Send all information via e-mail to your OIP advisor and include a full course description, title of course and credits.

TRANSFER CREDIT
Students receive Stonehill College transfer credit if they earn the equivalent of a Stonehill College “C” grade or better in the courses taken abroad. Students who earn a grade below a “C” grade are unable to receive any transfer credit for the course. Transfer credit is recorded on the student’s transcript, but is not included in the calculation of a student’s cumulative grade point average. Although students are awarded transfer credit on their Stonehill transcript, grades will be figured into your overall GPA during the application process for post-graduate opportunities, such as Fulbright fellowships and for some employment positions.

GRADES
Students typically find that the grading system used while abroad is a bit tougher than what is typically experienced at Stonehill College. Students should be prepared for more stringent grading practices and standards while on a study abroad program.

Students should become familiar with the grading scale used at their particular study abroad location. Student grades will be translated from the host institutions grading scale into the US equivalencies in order to determine if the grade of a C or better was received in each course. Stonehill College does not change any grades awarded by a study abroad program.

GRADE PETITIONS
In some instances, a student may not agree with a grade awarded by a faculty member from their study abroad program. Students are encouraged to monitor academic progress throughout the study abroad semester while in the host country. It is important to meet with faculty regularly and to discuss questions about academic progress during the program, rather than waiting until your return to Stonehill.

The process for petitioning a grade varies from program to program. Keep faculty contact information from your abroad University. Keeping copies of your academic work for at least one semester after your return as you may need this information or you may want to utilize some of the work towards projects or papers in your courses back at Stonehill College.

STONEHILL COURSE REGISTRATION
Students on a study abroad program will be able to select courses for the next semester at Stonehill using the standard course selection procedures used on-campus. Students will receive an email from the Registrar’s office with PIN numbers, dates/times by class year for entering course selections using myHill. The times specified will be set in Eastern Standard Time zone, so students should plan accordingly. Students concerned about access to the internet or who may be traveling during the dates specified may work with the Registrar’s Office for assistance during the course selection process.
If a student plans to take a course upon return to Stonehill, and the course has a pre-requisite that is being fulfilled during the semester abroad, the students should contact the Associate Registrar, Veronica Dunn (vdunn@stonehill.edu) with that information. This will enable the student to select the course for the following semester.

TRANSCRIPTS
Upon successful completion of the study abroad program, students should receive an academic transcript from their study abroad program. In addition, the Registrar’s office must receive an official transcript at the end of the semester in order to post your transfer credits to your official Stonehill transcript. Students who may have outstanding financial matters (ex. outstanding library books, etc.) will not be issued a transcript until all financial obligation have been met.

REQUESTING ADDITIONAL TRANSCRIPTS
Students planning to apply for graduate school, competitive fellowships and scholarships may need additional copies of their official transcript from the study abroad university. Students should explore this process with their study abroad program provider and/or host university to ensure transcripts are received in time to meet the application deadlines. Additional transcripts may cost additional fees depending on the study abroad program. More information can be found on the Alumni section of the study abroad program provider website. The OIP cannot request additional copies on your behalf.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES
Students must realize that the support services available will vary considerably from program to program. Students should become familiar with the resources and services available by visiting the website of the abroad program. Students should utilize their International Office staff/program directors abroad as a resource to assist with any matters of concern both academically and personally.

STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES
Students who receive accommodations for learning disabilities should disclose this information to the Office of International Programs during the initial advising phase. Students with documented learning disabilities should meet with the Director of Disability Services to discuss plans for studying abroad. All documentation should be made available to the disability service office of study abroad program. Services are available on most programs, but may take time to coordinate. The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not apply to students who study in foreign countries.

LIBRARY SERVICES
Students will have access to various types of libraries depending on the location of their study abroad program. Students will be able to continue to access the on-line resources and tools on the Stonehill College’s library website using the Stonehill ID number.

Tip: Students should change their spell check on their laptop computers to the language of the host country. This will assist with avoiding simple mistakes typically made when writing papers when using British English or another language.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

STUDY ABROAD COSTS
Students are charged current Stonehill College tuition, housing (standard double room only), and board (if included). If housing or board is not provided by the study abroad program, students will not be charged for these amounts. Full payment should be made to Stonehill according to the due dates established by Student Financial Services.

Students generally retain their federal, state, need-based, and merit-based aid to their study abroad semester. Stonehill Basketball Scholarships and Tuition Exchange Scholarships are not transferable. Students holding such funding will be responsible for paying the College the full negotiated external program fees.

Work-study funds are not available while abroad. Students are encouraged to discuss the financial situation with Student Financial Services.

OTHER EXPENSES (VARIES PER PROGRAM)
Students are responsible for all fees not included in their study abroad program fees. These fees may be found on the individual websites of the program provider. The items not included are typically the following:

- $750 Study Abroad Administrative Fee (Spring semester only and waived for some direct-programs)
- Roundtrip Airfare to host country
- Housing Supplements (single rooms, meal plans, cleaning services)*
- Damages to Housing (if applicable)
- Meals (if not provided on the program)
- Passport, Visa, and Police Registration Fees (if applicable)
- Cell Phone Usage and Charges/Calling Cards/Skype, etc…
- Books
- Gym Memberships
- Laundry
- Commuting Costs (in local city/country)
- Personal Travel
- Personal Items (shampoo, notebooks, etc…)
- Gifts (family, friends, home-stay families)

*Students should closely review their housing selections and be familiar with any additional costs that may be associated with a particular housing selection. These amounts are outlined on the program websites. If a student is unsure about a particular fee, they should discuss these costs with the Office of International Programs.

NON-REFUNDABLE PROGRAM DEPOSIT:
Upon acceptance into a program, the College will send the required confirmation deposit to your provider or host institution. Students should submit the completed Study Abroad non-refundable deposit form and a copy of the provider’s acceptance letter to the Office of International Programs. If the student does not attend the abroad program after the deposit has been paid by the College, the student will be responsible for the re-payment of the deposit to Stonehill.
**HOUSING DEPOSITS**
The Office of International Programs does not pay any refundable *housing* deposits as these amounts are typically returned to the student minus any damages at the end of the semester. Students are responsible for any and all housing damages. If damage costs are over and above the housing deposit amount, students may receive a bill directly from the study abroad program and a transcript will not be released until these amounts have been paid in full.

**WITHDRAWAL POLICY**
Students who withdraw from a study abroad program prior to departure will need to inform the Office of International Programs and their specific study abroad program in writing. Students will be responsible for the non-refundable program deposit (amount depends on the program) as well as any unrecoverable costs that the program has paid on your behalf. The amounts are based on the withdrawal and refund policies stated by their specific program provider and this information can be found on the provider’s website.

**SUMMER PROGRAMS**
Students on summer or January study abroad programs pay all deposits (confirmation and housing) directly to the study abroad program. Students are responsible for paying any and all fees directly to the study abroad program and follow all stated policies and procedures of their study abroad program.
TRAVEL INFORMATION

PASSPORT
All students must have a valid United States passport in order to leave or re-enter the U.S. Once you leave the country, your U.S. passport will be your most valuable possession. When traveling anywhere, you should keep it with you at all times and in a safe place. Passports must be valid for 6 months after the end date of your study abroad program.

A passport is issued by the U.S. Department of State and is valid for ten years for people over 18 years of age. **Apply for a passport as soon as possible, preferably 6-8 months prior to departing the U.S.** You may need to apply for a visa three months prior to departure and this can only be done with a valid passport. Don't wait until the last minute! More information about applying for a new or renewal passport may be found at: [http://studentsabroad.state.gov/](http://studentsabroad.state.gov/)

As soon as you receive your passport, sign it! Fill in the information on the inside cover. Make several copies of the title page and keep one copy separate from your original passport when you travel. This will enable you to replace it if lost or stolen. Leave one with your parents and give one to the Office of International Programs.

If your passport is lost or stolen while abroad, report this to the local police immediately, inform your on-site Program Directors and staff, and contact the Office of International Programs. US citizens will need to apply for an emergency replacement passport at the nearest US Embassy. This will entail completing a new application, submitting photos, and paying a passport fee.

**Tip:** Never pack your passport in a suitcase. Always keep your passport in a dry and safe location.

VISAS
A visa is an official stamp or document, typically placed inside your passport that has been issued by a foreign government. The student visa grants permission to a student to enter, study, or live in a particular country for a specific duration of time (length of study abroad program). A student visa does not automatically permit a student to work while abroad, and some countries do not permit students to work at all during the semester abroad.

Not all countries require a student visa in order to study for a semester or year abroad. Some countries may only require certain documents, typically referred to as entry requirements, such as an official acceptance letter from Stonehill College, your host university or abroad program, as well as financial means of support (credit cards, traveler's checks, etc.). Information on necessary entry documents and student visas may be found on the following web site: [http://studentsabroad.state.gov/](http://studentsabroad.state.gov/)

Students should begin to explore the requirements for their particular host country early in the process so that they will have sufficient time to compile the necessary documents and receive the visa prior to their study abroad departure. For further visa information, go to: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html).

AIR TRAVEL
The Travel Collaborative is the official college travel agency and available for student travel, offers full travel services with a dedicated team of agents. Fees for this are $35.00 per transaction, which covers air, train, hotel, reservations. [www.travelcollaborative.com](http://www.travelcollaborative.com).

Egencia is Stonehill’s online travel reservation service. Owned by Expedia they offer bookings for air, rail, hotel, services at discounted rates. Fees are $8 per transaction. For information go to: [www.egencia.com](http://www.egencia.com).
ISIC STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC)
An International Student Identity Card (ISIC) is beneficial to have while abroad. The ISIC card comes with a directory that includes discounts on accommodations, international calling, and international money transfers, and other activities such as museums and movies. Some study abroad providers will issue an ISIC card as part of their program. If your program does not include an ISIC card, it is suggested that you apply for the card either on-line www.myISIC.com or at one of the official locations. Students enrolled in a Stonehill-sponsored program will be issued an ISIC card as part of their program.

OVERSEAS SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE
All students studying abroad are required to have overseas supplemental insurance to cover any accident or sickness that may occur. Most study abroad programs provide supplemental insurance for the duration of the study abroad program. Information about overseas insurance plans may be found on the specific study abroad program provider websites.

For those programs that do not provide insurance, Stonehill College will purchase insurance through HTH Worldwide Insurance Services (HTH) on behalf of each student and provide an emergency card and information on the plan. Students are not able to use the International Student Identity Card (ISIC) to fulfill the mandatory overseas insurance coverage requirement.

More information about the insurance coverage is available by contacting the OIP Office.

CLAIMS PROCESS
If an accident or emergency should occur abroad, students should seek treatment or care immediately, inform the on-site Directors and advisors, contact the Office of International Programs, and inform their parents/guardians. In addition, students must inform their overseas insurance carrier about any incident where medical treatment is provided. An emergency card will be provided by your study abroad program and will have a phone number that may be called 24/7 in the event of an accident or injury. The insurance company may be able to direct pay the expenses for medical care to the health provider or hospital, but in most cases students will need to complete a Claim Form and submit all receipts for medical treatment for reimbursement. Claim Forms will be made available to students through their study abroad program and/or insurance carrier. Students with questions about their particular coverage should contact their study abroad program provider directly for more information.
PERSONAL PROPERTY INSURANCE
The Office of International Programs does not insure the personal property of students during a study abroad program. We recommend that students investigate property insurance options for items such as laptops, jewelry, portable CD/DVD players, and purchased items prior to departure. Students may utilize insurance through a parent’s homeowners insurance or through an outside insurance provider found on http://www.insuremytrip.com.

MONEY
Handle your finances carefully and wisely when traveling abroad. Utilize the budget planning worksheet (available in the Office of International Programs) to plan for your financial needs while abroad.

It is recommended that you bring a small amount of foreign currency with you (approx. $100) to cover any expenses on the day of your arrival. Most major airports have currency exchange services, but fees tend to be higher. It is much easier to "buy before you go." Local banks in the United States do not have foreign currency on hand, so you will have to order it in advance. Main branches of large commercial banks do have supplies of most major foreign currencies. Be sure to check with any bank before going to purchase foreign currency.

There are ATM locations overseas at which you can use your ATM cards (Cirrus or Plus system as a rule). ATM cards are even more valuable if they also contain the VISA or MasterCard logo. This combination will allow you to withdraw cash at even more locations. Check with your bank for locations overseas where your card is accepted and if your Pin # will work in your host country. Many foreign ATMs will not recognize a 5 digit Pin # and as a general rule, 4 digit Pins are the most commonly recognized. You should, however, not use an ATM card as you would at home. Though you usually receive a good currency conversion rate, there may be higher fees when abroad. Your local bank should be able to give you all the details. You should be aware that you can only withdraw funds from your primary checking. You cannot access your account balance and you cannot transfer funds between accounts.

If possible, bring a credit card, such as Visa or MasterCard. A credit card used wisely or only for an emergency can be very reassuring. Students may also want to set-up pin # with their credit card company as this will permit students to withdraw cash from the credit card. This service does take some time to arrange, and student should be aware of the high credit card fees associated with withdrawing cash from a credit card. This should only be used in cases of emergency when abroad. Another secure and convenient method for carrying and accessing cash abroad is by purchasing a “Visa TravelMoney” or “Cash Passport” card through AAA. Cards are password protected, reloadable, and can be used to make purchases or withdraw money from ATMs. More information can be found at: https://www.aaamyaccount.com. You do not have to be an AAA member to purchase a travel card.

Wire transfers are another option. Banks, American Express offices, and commercial agencies will wire money to a bank account or agent abroad in 3-4 business days. There may be a transaction fee both to send and to receive the money. Ask about these fees both at home and abroad before wiring money.

Tip: Students should contact their credit card companies and inform them of their travel plans. Notify the credit card companies of any countries that you may wish to visit during your semester abroad. Also, keep a copy of your credit card numbers in case they are lost or stolen.
PHONES
It is strongly advised that you obtain a calling card in order to place long-distance telephone. Most U.S. long-distance companies have overseas calling plans that greatly reduce the cost of overseas calls. Sign up for these before you leave and get a list of local access numbers for each country you plan to visit. These numbers are toll-free or local call numbers that provide direct access to a U.S. operator. Also, once overseas, you may find that it is even less expensive to purchase pre-paid phone cards to use when calling home. These are similar to phone cards here in the U.S. Similar to U.S. phone cards, they are issued by a variety of phone companies, and available just about anywhere.

You may also wish to purchase a cellular phone when you arrive overseas. Consult with the Peer Advisor for your destination to learn about the use of cell phones. In addition, your study abroad program will be conducting an orientation program on-site and will share the most up-to-date information on the phone companies and calling plans that will assist the students with communicating in the most cost effective and efficient manner.

Students have also utilized a service called SKYPE (http://www.skype.com/) which permits students to talk to family and friends via the internet. You do need to register for this service in advance of your departure, and you will need to purchase a head-set and a camera (If you would like to see your family and friends).

PACKING
Don’t over pack! Many people have advised you to pack lightly and take this advice seriously. Most airlines will allow you to check two pieces of luggage and one carry-on. Generally, there is a weight limit of 50 pounds per piece and a maximum dimension of 60” for check in and carry-on luggage should not be greater than 9”x 17” x 18”. Check with your airline regarding specific regulations.

You should bring the following with you:
- Umbrella and warm waterproof jacket
- Camera
- Any prescription medication (enough for the duration of your program)
- Backpack for weekend travel
- Maps and guidebooks
- Copy of the first page of passport
- Copy of plane tickets
- Gifts for host families (if living with a host family)
- Important phone numbers for Stonehill, your program/host family, insurance, etc.
- Small quantity of personal hygiene items such as shampoo, conditioner, soap, deodorant, contact lens solution. *Remember that you can buy these necessities overseas too!
- Electrical appliances do not work without an adapter and often do not work properly using an adapter. If necessary, purchase a hair dryer when you are settled in your new environment. It is important to speak with a peer advisor about your particular host country for more information and details.
CULTURAL PREPARATION

Become familiar with the culture of your new host country through coursework, informal interactions with international students, foreign movies, novels, etc. This is an important part of the integration in your study abroad location. Understand the attitudes, values and beliefs of that culture and try to approach the country where you will be living through the eyes of a native. One of the main reasons for being in a foreign country is to develop fluency in that language. Even if you are going to an English-speaking country, be aware that you will need to learn new vocabulary and get accustomed to a new accent.

It is important to read about current events not only in your host country but also in the United States. U.S. students report that foreign students are much more politically aware than American students about world events. American students are often embarrassed when asked questions on United States foreign policy, which they cannot answer as easily as students from the host country.

CULTURE SHOCK

Be aware that most people who live abroad for an extended period of time encounter some form of culture shock. This occurs because most of the cultural cues and rules, which we are accustomed to at home, no longer apply. Culture shock is predictable and manageable, and if you are prepared for it, you can do a great deal to control it. It is marked by five phases outlined below:

**Phase 1: Euphoria**—The tourist phase. You are excited about living in a new place, and at first glance it strikes you that the people and the way of life are not that different from what you are used to. Students typically see the culture from a surface approach, which is very similar to when you travel for vacations.

**Phase 2: Irritation and Hostility**—After the initial excitement is over, you start noticing dissimilarities between life in the foreign country and life in the U.S. Your initial curiosity and enthusiasm may turn into irritation, frustration, anger or depression. Symptoms experienced during this phase include homesickness, boredom, withdrawal, stereotyping of and hostility toward local people, loss of ability to work effectively, irritability, etc. Fortunately, most people only experience a few of these symptoms, but this phase can be difficult. Be aware of these symptoms, so you can understand what is happening to you or your friends, and can take steps to counteract them.

**Phase 3: Gradual Adjustment**—Over time you gradually learn to change your perspective and will adapt to the new culture. Once you begin to orient yourself and are able to interpret some of the subtle cultural clues and cues, the culture will seem more familiar. You start feeling more comfortable and less isolated. Your self-confidence returns.

**Phase 4: Adaptation or Biculturalism**—Full recovery has occurred when you are able to function in two cultures with confidence. At that time you will find you enjoy the customs, ways of doing and saying things, and personal attitudes which bothered you so much in Phase 2. You may not realize how well you have adjusted to the new culture until you return to the U.S., at which point you may experience Reverse Culture Shock.

**Phase 5: Reentry Shock or Reverse Culture Shock**—This final phase is when a student has returned home and experiences both the elation of seeing old friends and family with the loss of experience overseas. You will need some adjustment as you have developed new skills (foreign language, cross-cultural communication), have established new friends and relationships abroad, and need to find ways to merge the newly established person from the study abroad experience with the life back in the United States. This takes some time and the Office of International Programs offers programs to assist with integrating you back into life at Stonehill College.
INTRODUCTION

When thinking about safety around the world, it is important to have a balanced perspective. As Americans have come to realize, the U.S. is no more immune to acts of crime or violence than other parts of the world. The resources provided assist you in understanding the particular safety challenges in the country where you will study. And will provide a framework of information, checklists, questions, and resources that help you review the type of study abroad program you will choose/have chosen, the available support services, and ways for you to be prepared for the realities abroad.

While no international program can offer an absolute guarantee that students will be safe, there are many steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of becoming injured or a victim of crime abroad. We encourage all students and parents to read through the following safety suggestions in order to better prepare themselves in the case of health or safety challenges abroad.

BASIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

The process of wellness starts before you go abroad with a visit to your doctor.

- **Physicals and Check-ups**: Get a complete physical, eye exam and dental check-up before going abroad.

- **Mental and Physical Health**: Consider your own mental and physical health issues when applying for a study abroad program, and make all necessary health information available to the program’s administrators so they can assist you with any special needs, or advise you on the risks you might face. Study abroad may include both physical and mental challenges for students.

- **Prescriptions**: International rules for carrying medicines vary. Some countries do not allow certain medicines to be imported or require official documents, such as a doctor’s letter to prove drugs have been prescribed by a doctor and obtained legally. It is sensible to contact the relevant embassy of your destination to check what their drug transportation rules are before you travel.

- **Infectious Diseases and Inoculations**: Find out about the infectious diseases in countries you will be traveling. Get the appropriate shots and pills and appropriate medications your doctor thinks are necessary. Find out about any potential side effects of shots and pills that you may take.

- **What to Know about Your Country**: Learn all you can about the health and safety issues of the countries you plan to visit. This includes reading about the cultural and political climate of those countries, as well as learning about how others view people from your country, race, ethnic group, religion, gender and sexual orientation.

- **Can You Drink the Water?**: Find out if water is safe to drink in the countries you will be traveling. Purify unsafe water before you drink it. Make sure water bottles come sealed when you buy them. Remember that ice can also be unsafe, as well as the water you use to brush your teeth.
• **Food Safety:** Poor refrigeration, undercooked meat, and roadside/outdoor vendors could pose problems related to food contamination. If you get diarrhea or food poisoning, remember to drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. As with any illness, consider seeing a doctor if your condition worsens. Give your body time to adjust to new types of foods you will be eating.

• **Laws and Codes of Conduct:** Make yourself aware of both the rules and regulations of the study abroad program sponsor and the local laws and customs of the countries which you will be visiting. Understand that you will not only have to conform to the country’s legal system, but also obey the codes of conduct required of program participants. You must still abide by the Stonehill Community Standards.

• **Emergency Contacts:** Keep the program staff and an emergency contact at home well informed of your whereabouts and activities and provide these people with copies of your important travel documents (i.e. passport, visa, plane tickets, traveler’s checks, and prescriptions).

• **Transportation:** Accidents involving in-country travel, whether by air, bus, train, taxi, car, etc., are a major cause of injury to students abroad. It is important to understand what the safe modes of travel are abroad.

• **Alcohol and Drugs:** Many study abroad accidents and injury are related to the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs abroad. Violating drug laws abroad may result in very serious consequences. In some countries, being found guilty of violating drug laws can result in serious consequences.
RISK FACTORS AND STRATEGIES TO REDUCE RISK

Avoid being a target of crime! These helpful tips on how non-verbal communication—like gestures or manner of dress—can help keep you safer. Based on anecdotal information, most of the incidents resulting in injury or death of students while participating in study abroad involve:

- travel/traffic accidents
- use and abuse of drugs or alcohol
- sexual harassment and assault
- crime/petty theft
- mental health issues/stress
- diseases and illnesses that exist in the host country

- Become Aware of Your Surroundings:
  1. Pay attention to what people around you are saying
  2. Find out which areas of the city are less safe than others
  3. Know which hours of night are considered more dangerous
  4. Stay and walk only in well lit areas
  5. Avoid being alone in unfamiliar neighborhoods
  6. Know where to get help (police station, fire station, phones, stores, etc.)
  7. Do not touch suspicious items like letters or packages
  8. Know what is "normal" and "not normal" to see on a daily basis in the areas
  9. Do not respond to explosions or gunfire by going to a window

- Risk Upon Arrival: Travelers, especially those having just arrived abroad, are often targets of crime and at higher risk of harm, because they:
  1. Are unfamiliar with their surroundings
  2. Might not speak the local language well
  3. Are clearly recognizable as foreigners
  4. Have not yet learned the social norms or unwritten rules of conduct
  5. Are eager to get to know new people and the local culture
  6. Are naive to the intentions of people around them
  7. Are carrying all their valuables with them

- Keep in Control: There are many situations that students can control. Some controllable factors that place students at greatest risk include:
  1. Being out after midnight or after local curfew
  2. Being alone at night in an isolated or high crime area
  4. Sleeping in an unlocked place
  6. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

- Non-verbal Communication: Non-verbal communication (body language, hand gestures) considered harmless in the U.S. may be offensive to people in other countries. The list of gestures considered rude in other countries can grow beyond the obvious.

- Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Keep yourself free from sexually transmitted diseases by using protection (like condoms or abstinence). Remember that “no” may not always be interpreted as “no” in other countries.
• **Understanding Locals**: Make it a point to try to understand what locals are communicating to you, how they feel about you and about U.S. citizens in general, how you are fitting with their values, and how well you understand them. Obviously a stronger grasp of the native language will help you with these things, but even knowing a few essential phrases can be immensely beneficial.

• **How to Dress**: It is often best to dress conservatively – by local standards, so you can’t be identified on sight as a tourist or a U.S. citizen. For example, avoiding insignia clothing, baseball caps, and other items that identify you as an American.

• **Jewelry and Other Valuables**: Leave your good jewelry at home, and keep money in a safe place.

• **Effects of U.S. Foreign Policy**: The foreign policy of the U.S. does not always sit well with citizens of foreign countries. In some cases, Americans living abroad can be targets of the frustrations of these individuals. Consider the nature of the political climate and relations between the U.S. and the countries you plan to visit.

• **Crimes against U.S. Citizens**: There are steps you can take to avoid being targeted for politically motivated crime or anti-U.S. crime in general. Try to assimilate your style of dress and mannerisms as much as possible into the local norms.

• **Political Rallies**: Avoid political rallies, which can increase tensions and emotions or breed angry mobs for which a U.S. citizen may serve as a scapegoat.

• **Political Conversations**: Try not to engage in conversations about contentious political issues with host nationals and avoid retaliating against hostile or bigoted remarks about Americans.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The information below is not meant to make you nervous or afraid. It is to make sure you are aware of all situations and how to react if an emergency:

- **Injuries & Health Issues**: You should go to the nearest hospital emergency room. If you are not with a program staff member or another student, get to the nearest hospital and contact the program director or staff member as soon as possible. Contact your health insurance carrier as soon as possible to initiate a claim and to process any reimbursements for medical care. Be aware that medical care must be paid for at the time of service. This can cost you a substantial amount up front. You will then be reimbursed once the proper forms are filed with your health insurance carrier.

- **Lost or Stolen Items**: Report lost or stolen items of value to the local police. You should also inform your program directors if any items have been lost or stolen.

- **Passport/Visa Issues**: If your passport or visa is lost or stolen, you should report this to the nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy. Students should provide passport copies to family, the Office of International Programs, and keep a copy separate from the originals. Your particular overseas supplemental insurance coverage may also be of assistance in the replacement process.

- **War/Political Unrest/Terrorism**: If war or civil unrest should occur in your study abroad location, the Office of International Programs, in collaboration with your program provider, hosts in country, and the U.S. Department of State will make the best decision for your personal safety regarding your particular study abroad program.
Returning from an abroad experience includes a number of components including housing, courses, as well as your personal transition from an overseas environment. The Office of International Programs will help you navigate these pieces along with various offices and departments throughout campus to ensure your transition back to Stonehill is as seamless as possible.

**HOUSING**
Students who have resided on-campus previously are guaranteed housing upon their return from abroad. Students that withdraw from study abroad after the completion of Stonehill College’s non-refundable Study Abroad Deposit Form and after completing Residence Life’s Abroad Notification Form will not be guaranteed on-campus housing for the following semester. Residence Life Office requires a completed housing preference application prior to departure from campus.

**MERIT POINTS**
Students who participate in a study abroad semester will receive merit points for their participation. Students will receive 2 merit points for fall and 1 merit point for spring. Students who do not successfully complete a study abroad semester (ex. withdraw before or during) will surrender the points related to study abroad.

**FINANCIAL AID**
Students who receive financial aid should continue to complete the necessary forms according to the deadline set by Student Financial Services: [http://www.stonehill.edu/costs-financial-aid/](http://www.stonehill.edu/costs-financial-aid/)

**LEADERSHIP**
Students who have studied abroad make wonderful leaders at the college. They bring skills, abilities, and newfound excitement for other Stonehill students and can assist as peer tutors, resident assistants, teaching assistants, peer advisors in the OIP, and other options throughout campus. Students should explore these opportunities prior to study abroad, but also contact the various offices involved with selecting students for these leadership opportunities.

**OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**
The Office of International Programs offers a variety of programs upon your return to campus to assist you with your transition back to campus. Each semester we organize a Welcome Back Dinner so that you can hear about a variety of opportunities to utilize your abroad experience back on campus.

- **MARKETING YOUR INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**
  Students are invited to attend a Marketing your International Experience workshop which will highlight how you talk about your experience in interviews, in classes, and other venues. It also assists with making sure you highlight this experience on your resume for your job search with potential internships and employers. This event is collaboration between the Office of International Programs and the Office of Career Services.

**COMPETITIVE FELLOWSHIPS & SCHOLARSHIPS**
Study abroad students who had a transformative experience abroad often find that they would like to continue to go overseas to further their studies, research, or teaching abroad. There are a variety of fellowships and scholarships available such as the Fulbright, Rhodes, Truman, Rotary, and others. Students can explore these options with the Dean of Academic Achievement, Craig Almeida (Duffy 134 – calmeida@stonehill.edu).
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<td>Alice M. Cronin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:acronin@stonehill.edu">acronin@stonehill.edu</a></td>
<td>508-565-1021</td>
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<td><strong>Assistant Director:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer McKernan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jmckernan@stonehill.edu">jmckernan@stonehill.edu</a></td>
<td>508-565-1581</td>
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<td><strong>Advisor:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aliki Karagiannis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:akaragiannis@stonehill.edu">akaragiannis@stonehill.edu</a></td>
<td>508-565-1537</td>
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<td><strong>Registrar:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>John Pestana</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jpestana@stonehill.edu">jpestana@stonehill.edu</a></td>
<td>508-565-1104</td>
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<td><strong>Associate Director of Residence Life:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Andy Anderson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aanderson@stonehill.edu">aanderson@stonehill.edu</a></td>
<td>508-565-1290</td>
<td>508-565-1447</td>
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Enter the contact information for your Faculty Advisor and major Department Chair.

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<th>Faculty Advisor</th>
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ON-LINE RESOURCES

For country-specific on-line Study Abroad Student Handbooks, go to http://www.studentsabroad.com and click on the country of your destination.

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT: www.travel.state.gov/

Absentee Voting: Federal Voting Program - Provides links to state voting officials, state voting requirements and forms to register absentee and request ballots. www.fvap.gov


Airports: Provides links to major international airports worldwide. www.hotelstravel.com/airports.html


Communication: Dialing access numbers (country codes) for international calls. www.countrycallingcodes.com


Currency: Current exchange rates for nearly every nation’s currency. www.oanda.com/convert/classic


Drugs: Details the penalties for drug possession and what the U.S. consular officers can and cannot do for you in the event you are arrested. http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/living/drugs/drugs_1237.html


LGBTQ travelers: Site dedicated to lesbians, bisexuals, and gay students traveling abroad. http://criticalservicelearning.org/2013/06/17/study-abroad-safety-resources-for-lgbtq-travelers/

Health: Advice on how to deal with environmental hazards ranging from hurricanes to air pollution. www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm


Parents: Resources for parents to participate in study abroad - http://www.globaled.us/parents.asp

Subways: A virtual tour of subway routes for all major cities throughout the world. http://www.urbanrail.net/index.html


Time Zones: Provides all time zones and up-to-date clocks for all capital cities. www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/

Translations: A helpful site for on-the-spot translations of words, phrases and paragraphs into a long list of world languages. http://translate.google.com/

Travel Guides: Site for one of the most popular student guidebooks on the market. www.letsgo.com/

Women Travelers: Travel tips geared toward women, including everything from personal travel stories to what to wear. http://criticalservicelearning.org/2013/06/17/safety-for-female-travelers/