

Cross Cultural Studies: INFORMATION ON HEALTH, SAFETY, SECURITY

The Cross Cultural Studies (CCS) program and Center for Global Studies at Spring Arbor University takes seriously the fact we are traveling abroad with a group of often inexperienced students who may knowingly or unknowingly become involved in an unhealthy or unsafe situation.

Health, safety, and security are issues that are of great importance in selecting a destination and a specific itinerary within a country. SAU relies on a combination of informational resources to determine health, safety, and security issues for a given destination. These issues are dealt with during CCS faculty orientation periods, the entire semester prior to departure, directly with the student in small and large group settings, and continuously during a CCS experience.

ON-SITE NATIONAL CONTACTS

On-site contacts are the bedrock of knowing about a country and culture. They provide valuable cultural information of both a current and a historical nature including information, perspectives, and specifics unavailable from other sources.

Nationals

In selecting a CCS destination site, SAU usually has contacts in the culture with whom we have worked previously—often over the course of several years. Examples of these people have and could include educators, medical personnel, religious workers, government officials, foreign affairs officers, interpreters, hotel personnel, and others. SAU is in contact with these people by email and phone from the SAU campus throughout each academic year. In addition, a number of these contacts have visited Spring Arbor University's main campus as well as our CCS staff and faculty. These people live and work in the destination culture and are able to proactively advise us regarding health, safety, and security issues as we are selecting a site, planning a specific itinerary, and throughout the course of the experience. They have a good understanding of who we are and what we are trying to do in the CCS program!

Expatriates

Like the national contacts, expatriates provide valuable information regarding health, safety, and security issues to CCS. SAU often consults with expatriates serving in the country as guests and functioning as volunteers (Peace Corps), in diplomatic roles (U.S. Embassy and Consulate personnel), as religious workers (Youth With A Mission, Christian Ministries International, Wycliffe, CAM, AIM, Free Methodist personnel, etc.), as well as in a business setting (Free Zone, joint venture, trans-national, etc.).

FACULTY

Students are encouraged to dialogue with faculty members regarding their safety concerns.

Experience: Each primary or single faculty member leading a CCS team member is usually a seasoned traveler, has often traveled to the CCS destination previously, and has often led groups of students in foreign and/or domestic experiences. The secondary faculty member often has traveled internationally (but not necessarily to the target destination), and has led groups of students in off campus experiences.

Orientation: Both veteran and new CCS faculty members regularly meet during the Orientation semester. Health, safety, and security issues are dealt with in writing in the *Faculty Orientation Semester Info Handbook* and actively discussed by the group of faculty members. Veteran professors are outstanding resources in sharing their own experiences and new professors bring fresh observations and new questions.

Consultation: The CCS office updates CCS faculty periodically as new information from our on-site contacts becomes available and as the situation in a given country or area changes. We also belong to list serves and use the internet and news reports as sources of information.

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INTERNET SOURCES

U.S. State Department

Note: Political and economic realities/issues often dictate the nature of a State Department report and should not be considered as a sole source of information!

The State Department issues travel advisories for all countries of the world. These are updated as the situation in a country changes and are automatically sent via a list serve to the Cross Cultural Studies email, which is monitored daily. The State Department Consular Affairs Info Sheets can be accessed at the State Department travel website www.travel.state.gov. SAU registers each group with the U.S. State Department STEP registry.

Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC)

Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) is a cooperative alliance between American corporations, institutions, faith-based organizations and the State Department. It maintains a country-by-country database of unclassified security-related incidents and threats. Spring Arbor University's CCS Director receives daily reports on global security issues by country. This information is very detailed and allows CCS to be knowledgeable on security issues on a daily basis for any decisions that are needed for the security of CCS program participants. OSAC can be contacted via telephone at 571-345-2223 or on the web at www.osac.gov for the latest information.

Center for Disease Control – CDC (www.cdc.gov/travel) and World Health Organization – WHO (www.who.int)

The CCS office regularly checks the internet sites of the CDC and WHO with regard to health updates for CCS destinations, consults regularly with Holton Health and Wellness Services personnel, and keeps professors informed. SAU's Holton Health and Wellness Services consult via their travel medical list serve with other university health systems, CDC, and WHO.

MEDIA

Media reports (including television, radio, newspapers, magazines, etc.) are often highly selective, sensationalized, skewed, and provide only partial information about incidents and events. Therefore, wide access is necessary to obtain more reliable information about a given situation. To rely on small, local newspapers limits the scope and accuracy of one's information. It is advisable to consult national news sources such as the primary newspaper in the destination country (often available in English on the internet), *International Herald Tribune*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Reuters News Service*, *New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*.

INDIVIDUALIZED (IOCCS) OPTION AND SEMESTER ABROAD STUDENTS

IOCCS and Semester Abroad students are responsible for developing their own on-site national contacts network and to proactively access information from these people, as well as from the CCS sources provided on these pages and in the IOCCS materials and/or materials received from the host institution with whom he/she will be studying. When not traveling with an SAU professor-led group, the student is responsible for registering with the Department of State's online registry system called STEP. Registering with STEP will keep each student informed regarding alerts and security information for that country. S/he is responsible for accessing and acting upon the information provided on page 3 of this document.

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STUDENT AWARENESS OF SAFETY ISSUES

Students are responsible for listening to safety orientation and dialoguing to initiate questions they may have and to read any safety information recommended (ex. all CCS materials on reserve in the Library, *Travel Companion* pages and inserts--such as "How to Survive a Hotel Fire," "Traveling Healthy," "Tourist Dictum--Obey the Laws," and other specific items recommended by CCS or the professor).

Students are asked to read and be familiar with the document on reserve in the Library titled, "Safety on Cross Cultural Trips: Foiling Pickpockets and Bag Snatchers and Other Travel Related Crimes or Scams." This document is full of tips on navigating international and domestic travel safely by being informed of current methods of pickpockets and scams.

Spring Arbor University has a policy regarding sexual harassment, which is available in the CCS office upon request.

The following are web sites students and/or parents should check for their own information regarding health, safety, and security issues.

Centers for Disease Control for immunizations and health recommendations for a geographic area:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.htm>

U.S. State Department travel website <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html>; follow the links to find information on destination-specific Travel Advisories, Public Announcements and Consular Information Sheets; see also *Tips for Traveling Abroad* and *Tips for Students Abroad* (<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/students.html>). SAU program leaders access this information, but it is the responsibility of the student to read and be aware of the good advice offered on the State Department website and its many links.

Please review the following web pages for related health, safety, and security information:

US Department of State – Travel Advisories and Consular Information Sheets:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>

US Department of State – Students Traveling & Living Abroad:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/students.html>

US Department of State – International Travel and Country Information:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html>

US Department of State – Online Registration with U.S. Embassies Abroad:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/step.html/>

US Department of State – Safety Issues Abroad:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go.html>

US Department of State – How the U.S. Government Can Help During Emergencies & Crises:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/emergencies.html>

US Department of State – Applying for your U.S. Passport:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>

US Department of State – Document Requirements for Entry into Foreign Country and Re-Entry into U.S.:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html>

Links to U.S. Embassies Abroad:

<http://www.usembassy.gov>

SAFETI – Personal Safety and Adjustment Abroad (see index at site):

<http://www.globaled.us/safeti/>

CDC – Traveler’s Health:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

Overseas Security Advisory Council for unclassified security-related incidents and threats in countries around the world:

<http://www.osac.gov>.

I have received a copy of the above information and understand in choosing a CCS experience that this information is given to me so I can actively participate as an informed and responsible individual on my study abroad experience. I understand it is my responsibility to access the information (from my yellow copy), read it, stay informed up until the end of my program and act upon it in order to be an informed participant in my own health, safety, and security.

You signed this document to enroll on CCS. This is YOUR COPY so you can visit the above web pages to learn more about safety while traveling abroad.

Signature _____

Date _____

SERVICES WAIVED SIGN-OFF FORM

Spring Arbor University – Cross Cultural Studies

It is the wise and prudent international traveler who anticipates and prepares for certain contingencies while traveling abroad. Such a traveler saves him/herself possible complications while on his/her international trip.

In an effort to determine possible problems which may arise during international travel and contingencies to avoid complications during such travel, **Spring Arbor University requires all study abroad participants to be up to date on all childhood immunizations (as determined by the Center for Disease Control & Prevention – www.cdc.gov/travel) and tetanus immunizations.** We encourage you to get these from your primary care physician (PCP). Travel immunization services are available at SAU Holton Health and Wellness Services on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday during clinic hours for SAU students, but students must plan ahead and get the shots and prescriptions at least 60 days before travel.

Tuberculosis is on the rise globally and in the U.S. Early detection of the TB bacilli is important to timely treatment and a healthy prognosis. We recommend you get tested for TB after your program. While out of the U.S., tetanus treatment after an injury may be expensive or unavailable in certain locations. The tetanus (DT or Tdap) update immunization (recommended every 10 years) is a prudent prevention practice prior to traveling and is required. Holton Health and Wellness Services or your PCP can supply you with information on when you last received a tetanus update.

In addition, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) strongly recommend the Hepatitis A series as well as other immunizations to travelers going to many locations. See www.cdc.gov/travel for important destination specific recommendations. The wise and prudent traveler will make arrangements to be immunized as recommended by the CDC in a timely manner prior to traveling. See the CCS website for immunization costs at the Holton Health and Wellness Services: <http://www.arbor.edu/resources/offices/cross-cultural-studies/student-information> (see Immunizations and Medication).

Students and faculty may wish to consider receiving a flu shot during Fall semester as flu has prevented some from flying on the date of scheduled departure in the past. Flu season in some parts of the world includes May, June, and July.

Spring Arbor University requires students who travel abroad for any kind of credit to obtain the International ID card (*included in the study abroad fee*) and to provide an ID sized photo and birthdate for the card. The International ID card provides internationally recognized proof of student status, reduced student airfares, in-hospital and accident related medical insurance, medical evacuation insurance, access to Traveler's Assistance for medical, legal, and financial emergencies, passport replacement insurance, as well as discounts on accommodations, museums, theaters, cultural and historic attractions, and other advantages.

I understand that Spring Arbor University requires me to provide complete childhood and current immunization records and to get a current tetanus. I understand that SAU advises me to obtain any necessary immunizations from my primary care physician, health department or the Holton Health and Wellness Services at least 60 days prior to traveling. I also understand that SAU requires students traveling abroad to obtain the International ID card and that I must provide an ID photo and my birth date to complete the ID application and obtain the card. I have read and understood the paragraphs above and understand that it is my responsibility to take care of these items and report documentation of all shots received at least 60 days before travel and keep my health form updated through the duration of the travel program.

You signed this to enroll on CCS. This is YOUR COPY!

Your signature

Date

Signature of parent or guardian if under age 18

Date