

National Student Exchange



Handbook 2010-2011

**Global Education Office
Keene State College
Keene, New Hampshire**

Dear NSE Participant,

Congratulations on your acceptance into the National Student Exchange Program, through the Global Education Office at Keene State College. You are about to experience what will surely be one of the most rewarding semesters of your college career.

National Student Exchange affords its participants the opportunity to experience new cultures, attitudes, geographic regions, and academic institutions without leaving the United States. Students who participate in NSE see an increase in their personal growth: they become better decision-makers, risk-takers, and are more thoughtful, mature young adults. Academically, students are exposed to new campuses, programs, and professors, collectively enriching the NSE participant.

Students choose to participate in NSE for a variety of reasons. Some desire a change of scenery. Others have family and friends in the area of their exchange. Still others are very interested in a certain geographic region; perhaps to be nearer mountains or oceans that they love. However, these reasons alone are not substantial enough to warrant a change unless the student is also able to thrive academically. The opportunity to enroll in courses and programs not offered at Keene State College, *without having to go through the process of transferring*, is the number one reason students participate in NSE.

Whatever your reasons for studying away, The Global Education Office wants you to have the very best experience possible. To help you achieve success, we have prepared The NSE Handbook to serve as your reference and guide. It contains essential information that you need before, during, and after your exchange. Read it carefully now, and as you prepare to leave. The NSE Handbook highlights important dates to remember and forms to be filled out before you leave, found in chapter one. Also, take the Handbook with you to your host institution; it contains phone numbers and advice on how to stay connected to KSC while you're away. Pay special attention to chapter 2 (Planning for a Safe and Healthy Trip Away) and chapter 3 (Cultural Adjustment). These two chapters outline how to remain healthy and happy in your new location. For academic questions and concerns, refer to chapter 4 (Academics). Finally, as you prepare to return home, refer to chapter 5 for helpful tips on re-entry, as well as vital information on course selection and housing at KSC. In addition to the NSE Handbook prepared by the Global Education Office, we also strongly suggest that you read carefully the Exchange Policies and Considerations outlined in the [NSE Directory of Exchange Opportunities](http://www.nse.org) (www.nse.org).

Have a wonderful semester. We all wish you the very best!

The Global Education Office Staff

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CHAPTER 1

BEFORE YOU GO



PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

Now that you have been accepted to a study away program, you will need to complete several tasks. Below is a general guideline of things to take care of. There are additional details on the following pages.

To do immediately:

- Read the handbook and the associated information. Then read it again. Pay particular attention to this checklist.
- You should have completed the Placement Acceptance Form (PAF) stating that you will accept the NSE placement.
- Inform your academic advisor that you have been accepted to study away.
- Research your host institution and the surrounding area thoroughly. Access the school's website.
- Complete all forms on the checklist in your packet. See the Pre-departure Paperwork section for a complete description and explanation of all forms. Please return them to the Global Education Office before the deadline.
- Schedule any physical exams that may be required.
- If you have financial aid, meet with Student Financial Services to discuss financial aid applicability towards your study away program.
- Begin planning a budget for study away.
- Contact all clubs and organizations you might belong to and tell them you'll be away next semester.
- Continue researching your host institution and contact a Study Away Alumni. The Global Education Office can let you know who to speak to.

To do before the end of the semester:

- Check with your financial aid office to make sure all your paperwork is in order.
- Communicated with the NSE coordinator at your host school.
- Secure housing and classes at your host school.
- Have a complete physical and dental check-up. Arrange to take enough of any prescription medication to last for your entire time away, and pack a copy of the prescription for refills.
- Continue researching your host institution. Visit the Mason Library, and read newspapers or magazines from the area you'll be traveling to.

To do one month prior to departure:

- ❑ Make travel arrangements and return the **Flight Information Form** to the KSC Global Education Office at least thirty days prior to departure.
- ❑ Receive your bill and pay your program fees to KSC.
- ❑ Pay housing, meals and other fees to your host school.
- ❑ Ensure that all holds on your student account are cleared.
- ❑ Make financial arrangements: Decide how you'll structure your finances while you're away. Will you open a local bank account or use an ATM (check on fees) from your home bank. You should arrive with a small amount of cash (~\$100-\$200) but should refrain from carrying large amounts of cash.
- ❑ KSC students who currently live on campus and wish to live in KSC housing the semester of their return: complete and return the housing form, which will be given to you at Orientation. Return the form to **Residential Life**, *not* the Global Education Office.
- ❑ Do you know where you'll be living? If you haven't received notification of your housing placement, please contact the Global Education Office.
- ❑ Begin packing. See our tips that are contained in this packet regarding packing.
- ❑ Continue to research your host area! Continue to read newspapers! A smart traveler is an informed traveler!
- ❑ **Make sure your MyKSC password is activated and working and that you're using your KSC mailcruiser account. You'll keep up with what's happening at home, as well as register for classes through MyKSC. Accessing MyKSC from away is no different than if you were on campus. Just log in as you normally would. The Global Education Office will use MyKSC to communicate with you.**

To do one day prior to departure:

- ❑ Make sure you have all your paperwork in order: plane tickets, photo ID, (two forms of identification is a good idea) credit cards, ATM cards, etc.
- ❑ Review arrival procedures and on-site contact information. Leave a copy of your address, email address, and the contact information for your study away advisor and your on-site contact with your family. Put your emergency card in your wallet or purse.
- ❑ Confirm your flight reservations and pre-arrange a time to contact your family to let them know you've arrived safely.

PRE-DEPARTURE PAPERWORK

All forms must be completed and returned to the following address the semester prior to departure:

**Global Education Office
Keene State College
Elliot Hall 3rd Floor
229 Main Street
Keene, NH 03435-2612
Fax: (603) 358-2469**

*****We suggest that you keep copies of all paperwork you submit for your own records.*****

Emergency Contact Information

This form contains address, email, and telephone information, as well as very important emergency contact information.

Pre-Approval Course Substitution

This may be the most important form you fill out! It must be completed if you want the courses you're taking away from KSC to substitute for one of your Elective, General Education, Major or Minor course requirements at KSC. Once away, you MUST notify the Global Education Office of changes, and get professor approval or else the courses you take may not count towards your requirements. Without approval, "Major" or "Minor" courses could count as electives.

Release and Waiver of Liability, Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement Form

This is a four-page form. Please read, complete, and sign on the last page.

Medical History Form for Off-Campus Study

Please read, complete, and sign the form

Arrival Information

Please complete with all your arrival information, and notify the office of any last minutes changes.

Accident and Sickness Insurance Certification

Please read, complete, and sign the form.

NOTE: Your host institution will be sending you paperwork directly as well. Fill out all necessary forms and return them to your host school promptly.



YOU MAY NOT LEAVE HOME WITHOUT

AIRLINE TICKETS

The Global Education Office recommends that you price compare. You may use any travel agency you wish. There are a few which are geared toward student travelers and tend to be a bit cheaper.

STA Travel
1-800-329-9537

<http://www.sta-travel.com>

Travel Cuts
1-800-592-CUTS

<http://www.travelcuts.com>

Student Universe
1-800-272-9676

<http://www.studentuniverse.com>

Once you have secured your reservations, please don't forget to complete the **Flight Information Form**, and return it to the Global Education Office.

PAYING YOUR BILLS

An invoice indicating the remaining balance of the program will be sent to your billing address by the KSC Bursar's Office. You are required to pay the balance of your program fee 30 days prior to departure. Non-settlement may result in your inability to register for courses, transcript holds, or your elimination from the program.

Checks should be made payable to "Keene State College," and all checks should include your name, KSC ID (or social security number) to ensure the proper credit to your account. Checks should be sent (or taken) to the Bursar's Office to ensure immediate credit to your account.

Billing for fall and summer programs generally begins in July. Billing for spring semester programs is in November. If you do not receive an invoice or have any questions regarding payment of the program fee, you should contact the Global Education Office directly at 603-358-2348.

FINANCIAL AID

Students who are studying away and receiving any type of financial aid should meet with the Student Financial Services office to discuss financial aid applicability for study away.

SPENDING MONEY

You should familiarize yourself with your program and what it includes and then develop a budget so that you'll have a better idea of what financial resources you'll require. You'll gain a better idea of what your program requires monetarily in the program-specific groups you'll meet in at orientation. If there is a recent alum of your exchange still on campus, the Global Education Office will arrange for you to speak with this individual so you can get a better idea of what the area requires financially.

How to carry your money

Cash: We suggest that you carry a small amount (\$100-150) with you to use for immediate necessities such as bus and taxi fare, phone calls, tips, etc., once you arrive in your host location.

Credit Cards: Major U.S. credit cards can be used across the country. Many permit you to obtain cash advances. Make sure that the credit card you carry is in your name and that the necessary PIN codes for cash advances have been activated. Check out the possibilities with your credit card company.

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs): You should check with your credit card company/bank for details on fees associated with using your card. Cards from smaller institutions generally have fewer locations where you can access your money without a fee.

Joint Accounts: You may want to open a joint checking/savings account with a parent/guardian before you go away. If funds need to be deposited while you're away, this is easy to accomplish. Also, parents or guardians can write checks, which is helpful in keeping up with monthly bills while you're away. Joint accounts are an easy way to effectively manage and access your money, while avoiding the need to bring one lump sum of money.

Local Bank Accounts: In some areas, students may be able to open a bank account locally. Consider if this is worth your while for the short amount of time you'll be in the area.

How NOT to carry your money

Personal Checks, Cashier's Checks and Money Orders: All of the above may be very difficult for you to cash if you are new in the area, and do not have a permanent local address or a local bank. Checks with out-of-state addresses are very difficult to cash. And forget trying to cash a cashier's check or money order.

PACKING

Plan your wardrobe carefully so that you take as few clothes as possible. Remember that you will almost always be carrying your own bags. Most airlines allow you two pieces of checked luggage (each can be no more than 62" or 70 pounds) *call your airline for specific details*. You may also have a small carry-on piece that can fit under your seat. Most students recommend taking a backpack or small duffel bag for this purpose, which will be useful later on. It's also recommended that you carry a toothbrush and a change of clothing in this bag should your luggage become lost. *Put your address on a luggage tag INSIDE your suitcase in case your bag is lost or broken!*

GOLDEN RULE OF PACKING:

Lay out everything you think you'll need, eliminate half, and take more money!

Do's and Don'ts of Packing

DON'T pack anything you can buy in your host area (e.g. toiletries, school supplies.) Just bring enough toiletries to last for the first few days.

DON'T pack as many clothes as you can jam into your suitcase. You'll want to save room in your suitcase for clothes and souvenirs that you buy while away.

DO pack versatile, sturdy, easily interchangeable clothes. Bring some clothing that you know is going to last through some heavy use. Dark colors are better than whites. Comfortable walking shoes are a MUST! Do pack some nice clothes for when you want to go to the theater, a concert, or a nice dinner. Pack comfortable clothing. Pack clothing you can layer rather than bulky winter wear.

DO pack clothing that is appropriate for that area's climate. Find out the traditional weather patterns in the area or regions that you are going to be living. You can check out the weather on the web at: <http://www.weather.com>

DO pack necessary medications and prescriptions. Bring a copy of your prescriptions with generic and brand names of the drug. If any medications contain narcotics, carry a doctor's letter attesting to your need to take it. You may want to bring antacid or anti-diarrhea medication for upset stomach and traveler's diarrhea.

DO pack a little of yourself. You will want to share with your new friends what your hometown and state are like.

Additional Packing Suggestions:

Ipods, MP3 Player

Camera

Laptop with travel insurance

NSE Handbook

Battery operated travel alarm

Small flashlight

Small gifts from your home state to give to new friends and roommates

RESEARCHING YOUR HOST INSTITUTION AND STATE/TERRITORY

It's extremely important to do as much research as possible about the area to which you are traveling. You may think this is unnecessary if you are still in the country. However, even if you're in the States, and not one of the islands or territories, which are part of NSE, you are still going to find that the new area is very different from what you're used to. If you understand this and expect it before you go, you'll have a much smoother transition to the area, and you'll welcome the differences you find, rather than be hindered by them. You want to return from your exchange as someone who observed and understood the area. You should be able to compare and contrast your exchange to your home institution/state in the following areas:

Bear in mind that the differences among the following categories will seem greater if your National Student Exchange takes place in Guam, Puerto Rico, Quebec, St. Croix, or St. Thomas.

Daily Life: How is it different from what you're used to? Are there different habits, customs, and practices?

Values: Different areas of the country can vary widely with respect to values, influenced by history, tradition and ethnic groups. Compare and contrast these values with your home state.

Health: Geography can play a major role in influencing the health attitudes/behaviors of an area. Are people health conscious? Is the area prone to certain types of health issues, concerns, or trends?

Leisure Activities: What is valued for free time? Again, you'll find vast differences depending on where you are. If you're in an urban environment, your leisure activities will be very different from those in a rural setting. How do the activities compare/contrast to your home institution/state?

Food: There's no doubt that what you eat in Louisiana will differ from what's available in Puerto Rico or Alaska. Be prepared for the difference. Find out what to expect before you go.

Dress: Should you bring that ten-gallon hat, or throw an extra fleece jacket into your suitcase? Maybe one more bikini? The differences in dress across the US and its territories and islands are vast! Know what to bring and bring what's appropriate.

Social Etiquette/Relationships: Here you might find the biggest differences between the islands/territories and the 50 states. This is a topic you should not overlook in your preparation to study away. Social Etiquette and Relationships are going to be different. You want to do the right thing in a given situation so you need to understand the expected and normal behavior and attitudes of the area that you're traveling to. You don't want to risk offending or angering someone, or put yourself in an awkward situation. **KNOW YOUR AREA!**

History: You'll understand more of the present if you glance into the past. Have some knowledge of the history of your area: who were important characters; what were defining events of the area; how has the past influenced the present?

Politics/Issues: You'll be able to participate in discussions with the locals if you understand and care about what's important to them. Politically, certain states may support specific candidates, philosophies, and ideologies. Important issues vary from area to area as well: it might be illegal immigration in California, logging in the Northwest, election reform in Florida, or the closing of Vieques Base in Puerto Rico. Whatever the current, hot local issue, you'll fit in better if you understand important local politics and issues.

CHAPTER 2

Planning for a Safe and Healthy Trip Away



Health Issues

Visit Your Doctor

Remember that studying away, in a new environment, can be stressful both physically and mentally. A healthy mind and body are essential for a successful study away experience. If you are experiencing physical or emotional problems; please address them before leaving home. If you haven't been feeling well, make an appointment to see your doctor for a checkup. Have any dental work done before your departure. If you are experiencing emotional, eating, or substance abuse problems, consider deferring your participation in a study away program until you have the problem under control. The sorts of pressures that lead to eating disorders, emotional, and dependency problems are only intensified when you are coping with adjustments to a new culture and way of life. Students are encouraged to have complete medical and dental exams prior to departure. For your safety and well-being, it is also vital that you inform us of any physical, emotional, or psychological difficulties or special needs that you have.

Students who have medical problems that are not easily recognized (such as diabetes, allergic reactions to antibiotics or bee stings, heart conditions, or epilepsy) should consider obtaining a medic alert ID tag. These are nationally recognized. Check with your doctor or local hospital for more information.

Obtain Copies of Your Prescriptions

You should be sure to bring copies of prescriptions for medications including eyeglass prescriptions, allergy medicine, birth control pills, asthma medicine or any other medication you may be taking. Medications should be in the original, properly labeled bottles. If you wear glasses or contact lens, take an extra pair in case you lose or damage your original pair. If you have not already had them removed, you should also get a thorough dental x-ray to make sure your wisdom teeth will not cause you any problems.

Immunizations

Most NSE member colleges and universities will require proof of immunization for measles, rubella, and/or meningitis. For some campuses, you will not be permitted to register for classes, and/or move into residence halls until you have provided this documentation. It's your responsibility to ensure that this, and any other requested medical information, is submitted to your host campus in a timely manner.

Health Insurance

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are adequately covered by health and other insurance for the period and place of your exchange, including travel between your home and host institutions. Keene State College and the Global Education Office will require you to show proof of such insurance when you complete the Student Accident and Sickness Insurance Certification and Waiver Form.

STDs and AIDS

Attitudes and behaviors surrounding STDs and AIDS can vary within the United States, its islands and territories. You cannot be sure of the amount of education that has taken place in an area among the general population to curb the spread of STDs and AIDS. Therefore, should you decide to enter into a relationship, it is very important that you use the safe sex practices you have learned. Remember, these diseases can be avoided through appropriate behavior.

Travel In and Around Your Host Location

One of the most wonderful features of your semester will be the opportunity to travel widely and see parts of the country that you haven't seen before. Doing some background reading on the places you're traveling to will allow you to appreciate the sights and culture better. The following suggestions will help you make the most of your trip:

Before you leave...

- Plan ahead. Research transportation schedules before your trip begins to find the most affordable tickets. Always ask if there are discount student fares.
- Talk to people who have been where you want to go. Get advice from the locals once you arrive.
- Arrive at the airport early for check-in if you're flying.
- Bring toiletries on board to freshen up.
- Bring extra underwear, shirt, and socks in your carry-on in case your luggage is lost.
- Wear glasses, not contacts (they tend to dry out).
- Drink plenty of water, not alcohol. Flying can dehydrate a traveler.

While you are traveling...

- Never hitchhike!
- Flexibility can make all the difference.
- Carry your money and identification in a security belt/pouch.
- Read the local paper if you can get it before you go and once you arrive. Read the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, or any other nationally syndicated news venue so that you are abreast of current events.
- Buy a map and learn its geography.
- Never leave your bags alone or accept bags/packages from anyone you do not know.
- Be wary of strangers. Keep an eye on your belongings.

Jet Lag...

You may experience jet lag if your exchange is on the west coast, Hawaii, or Guam. The symptoms of jet lag include overwhelming exhaustion that affects memory, concentration and performance and physical symptoms such as headaches, sleeplessness, diarrhea or constipation. Some general recommendations to help overcome jet lag include:

- Prior to departure: Eat lightly for a few days before you leave, reduce or eliminate coffee, tea, caffeine, soda and chocolate. Plan for a good night's sleep before you leave.
- During the flight: Eat little or nothing, drink lots of non-alcoholic liquids, relax and try to sleep.
- When you arrive at your destination, immediately put yourself on the local schedule. Don't worry; jet lag usually disappears quickly.

Eating on the Road...

Because sanitary conditions vary from place to place, not all of the following precautions are necessary everywhere. A few guidelines include:

- Don't eat dairy products unless they have been pasteurized and refrigerated.
- Don't eat "street" foods unless they smell fresh and are cooked in front of you.
- Don't eat raw seafood, shellfish, eggs, meat, or unpeeled vegetables.
- Drink bottled, carbonated liquids that have been opened in front of you. You can drink water that has been brought to a vigorous boil. If you are in a hepatitis zone, the water should be boiled for at least 20 minutes.
- Don't put ice in your boiled water or bottled drinks. Neither freezing nor alcohol kills microbes.

Safety and Responsibility

You will be entering a city and culture that may be foreign to you. Because of this, you may miss some of the danger signals that a local person would automatically take into consideration. You should realize also that in our shrinking country it is inevitable that many cultures exist within one community. For this reason, one must be aware of, and sensitive to, the majority culture as well as minority cultures in the host location. Please read through the following information carefully and take it with you. It is not meant to frighten you, but rather to inform you of issues about which you should be aware upon your arrival in your new setting.

General Safety in Public Places

By following the suggestions below you can minimize your exposure to unsafe situations:

Do not leave your bag or belongings unattended at any time. Security staff in airports or train stations is instructed to remove or destroy unattended luggage. Do not agree to carry or look after packages or suitcases for anyone.

When you travel, use a security pouch to carry your identification, credit cards and travelers' checks. Wear the pouch under your clothes. Keep a separate record of your travelers' checks in another part of your belongings so that you will have a record if the travelers' checks are lost or stolen.

Be as inconspicuous in dress and demeanor as possible. Downplay those elements of your appearance and manner that broadcast that you are not a local. Observe and mimic the behavior and dress of local people of your own age, within reason.

Use the buddy system or travel in small groups. This is wise, especially during the first few weeks of your stay. Walking with someone else helps to deflect approaches from would-be harassers. Try not to travel in large packs, but in small groups of 2-4 people.

Be careful how late you come home at night. Try to make it home while public transportation is still running, or plan to take a taxi. If you visit friends alone in the evening, ask them to escort you to the nearest train station, or even to escort you home if you are concerned. Be extremely cautious about whom you accept rides from.

Be aware of your surroundings. If you want to visit a new neighborhood, try to go during the day first. Look at a map before you leave and note the nearest metro stops and the bus/trolley routes. Walk at your own pace, but look alert and purposeful. If you find yourself in uncomfortable surroundings, try to act like you know what you're doing and where you're going and move to a place where you're comfortable.

Be wary of people who seem overly friendly or overly interested in you. Be cautious when you meet new people and do not give out your address and phone number. Be careful sharing information about other students or group events. Be alert to anyone who appears to be following you or to unusual activity surrounding your place of residence or classroom. Report immediately unusual, suspicious people or activities to your on-site contact and/or authorities.

Be careful to observe traffic lights. Stay on sidewalks away from the curb and walk facing oncoming traffic whenever possible. Drivers in large cities are especially aggressive and often erratic. NEVER assume a car will stop for you or steer out of your way.

Keep people informed of your travel plans

Before you travel out of your host community, even for a weekend, inform your family at home AND the on-site coordinator of your travel plans. Tell them where you will go, how you will get there, and when you will be back. Include contact information for your hotel/hostel. Inform your family and the on-site coordinator of your cell-phone number. **This information is vital for your family and the study away program in reaching you in case of emergency.**

Be cautious with money and other valuables

It is *strongly* suggested that students bring a security belt that can be worn around the neck or waist, concealed under your clothes. Big cities, in the U.S. and elsewhere, can pose problems for the unwary traveler.

Keep your cash and other valuables in a secure place, such as a locked suitcase.

Do not take expensive jewelry or things that cannot be replaced. Students have lost jewelry in hostels and dorm rooms- some while wearing it, or sleeping. Leave your valuables at home!!

Avoid putting things in the back pocket of your pants or backpack: this is an easy target for pickpockets and, contrary to what you might think, you will not feel the thief picking your pocket or rummaging through your backpack. Wear your backpack in front of you in crowded places.

Do not handle or display large quantities of money on the street. Take only as much money with you as you need for the day or night.

Always keep your eye and your hands on your purse, bag or wallet, especially in crowded public areas, such as public transportation, crowded sidewalks, markets, and train stations.

Be particularly cautious with your things in areas where there have been numerous reports of pick pocketing and purse snatching.

If you suddenly feel yourself being “crowded” in a market, move away from the crowd. Thieves have been known to slice open purses or backpacks with a razor. Be cautious and prudent, just as you would in any big city.

Your housing facility may have a safe available to you. If you are going to be away for a day or more, consider storing your valuables (money, laptop etc) in this safe rather than in your room while you are away. Also, find out if your parents’/guardians’ homeowners insurance will cover your laptop in case it’s lost or stolen while you’re away. Consider property insurance for your computer.

Additional Safety Issues To Consider

Alcohol and Drugs

While on NSE, you are subject to the standards and policies of Keene State College, to the standards and policies of the host institutions, as well as to local laws and sanctions of the state or territory in which you are staying. The punishment for possession and/or distribution of controlled substances, and for driving while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances, is different for each state and territory.

Avoid consuming large quantities of alcohol, particularly with people you do not know in public places, cafes, bars, or at parties. You should be careful in public places where alcohol is consumed, and be constantly aware that you are in another location, possibly with different customs. It is better to err on the side of caution. If you consume alcohol, remember that your ability to make sound decisions is impaired and, therefore, you may be putting yourself in danger.

Relationships

Entering into a personal relationship while studying away should be approached with the same precautions as at home. It can be very tempting to be charmed by the idea of a once-in-lifetime romance, but you should consider a relationship very carefully, particularly when you are studying away. There are different cultural values and rules regarding dating and relationships in different areas. Proceed cautiously, realizing that you are only in the area for a short time. Evaluate your reasons for entering the relationship and those of the other person.

Be aware that in any type of relationship, you could end up with a sexually transmitted disease, AIDS or pregnancy. Be sure that you know the person very well before developing a more intimate relationship and always demand that you both practice safe sex. Assume that AIDS is everywhere. No matter what your current commitments or plans are, take condoms if you are sexually active.

Avoiding Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assaults

Both men and women should read this section.

Again, these tips may not apply to all students in all exchange locations. Because NSE offers the opportunity to study in so many areas, the advice contained here will apply to you depending on where you are.

It is important that men understand and be sensitive to the problems women in the group may face. Also, men shouldn't think that they could not be the victims of sexual assault; it *has* happened.

Some tips to remember

- Clothing makes a dramatic statement. Be cautious of your dress.
- Act like you know where you're going and what you're doing. Walk with confidence. Don't go to dark, unlit areas at night, or alone. If you want to go to an area you haven't been to before, try going first during the day, so that you know exactly where you're going. This reduces the chance that you'll get lost at night.
- Usually the best response to unwanted stares, comments, or touches is to ignore the harassers and to remove yourself from the situation quickly and calmly. Avoidance is the safest tactic.
- If you continue to be followed, spoken to, or touched after repeated attempts to get away, try to remove yourself to a very public place. Tell your harasser firmly and calmly to leave you alone. Threatening to call the police is sometimes effective, but other times the police are less than supportive. It depends on where you are.
- Do not judge the appearance of your local friends by standards you've used at home. You may be inclined to trust someone because he or she is nicely dressed, well groomed, self-confident and outgoing. Sometimes, however, the most fashionable people are the most skilled con artists.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We obviously don't like to think about some of the hazards that come along with study away. And while the actual incidents of any of the following emergencies are rare, it is important to be armed with the necessary information to help you make sound decisions during a difficult situation. In your Orientation folder you will find a card with emergency numbers, which you should place in your wallet. In addition, you will be asked to give your weekend or holiday travel itinerary to on-site staff a week before you travel. You should also give them your cell phone number if you have one.

For any issue needing immediate assistance, contact the NSE student coordinator at your host institution or program.

Different types of emergencies require different procedures

- 1. Injury, harm, illness, etc...** In case you find yourself with a sprained ankle or have the common cold, you should go to the campus health facilities at your host location. If it's something more of an emergency matter, you should go to the closest hospital emergency room and get there as soon as you can. You will want to keep the number of your insurance card handy at all times. If you're traveling, you should familiarize yourself with the city you're in and locate the nearest hospital.
- 2. Lost or stolen travelers' checks and other stolen items...** If you have anything stolen you should report it to the local police. If you have travelers' checks you should keep a photocopy of the serial numbers separate from the actual checks. You can bring these to your local American Express Office and have them reissued for you. Cash is never recoverable if it's lost or stolen. We recommend that you have your personal items insured before you leave, in the event of loss or theft.
- 3. Political Emergency or Natural Disaster...** In case of a political emergency or natural disaster the Global Education Office has developed a plan in conjunction with our partner institutions to look after the safety of students participating in the program. Should an emergency of this nature occur, a member of the on-site staff or the Global Education Office would notify you of specific action to take. If you are traveling or are unreachable for any reason, you should get in touch with on-site staff, or contact the GLOBAL EDUCATION OFFICE immediately.
- 4. Other emergencies...** We obviously cannot predict all the possible emergency situations that may happen during study away. In the case of any other emergency, please contact our office at the following numbers:

REGULAR HOURS: Monday-Friday, 8 am-4:30pm

Global Education Office **phone:** 603-358-2348
Global Education Office **fax:** 603-358-2469

NIGHT/WEEKEND HOURS:

In the event that a situation arises during the hours when the GLOBAL EDUCATION OFFICE is not open, please call Campus Safety, who will be able to contact the necessary school official. If your crisis is more emotional in nature, you may also contact the Student Counseling Center.

KSC Campus Safety 603-358-2228

Counseling Center 603-358-2437

CHAPTER 3

Cultural Adjustment





Cultural Adjustment

The decision to study away is one of the most important choices that you will make, particularly in your college career. It is worth your while to take some time before leaving to investigate the cross-cultural experience and adjustment that you are likely to encounter and to re-evaluate your academic, personal and professional goals for the program.

You should have a good general knowledge of the area in which you are planning to study. Geographical, cultural, societal and economic knowledge that you take with you will make the transition to living in a different region quite a bit easier. Most college libraries maintain subscriptions to a variety of newspapers, which will give you a different perspective on the news in the state/territory you will visit. The more prepared you are for the trip, the more able you will be to assimilate new experiences into a framework of understanding, optimize your learning experiences, achieve a deeper sensitivity to the new region and minimize the effects of culture shock.

What is "Culture Shock"?

"Culture shock" is the name given to a feeling of disorientation, loneliness, insecurity, or confusion that often occurs when a person leaves a familiar place and moves for a period of time into a culture or location that is different from his or her own. Culture shock does not only occur after prolonged interpersonal contact with people who are culturally different. For some, the absence of familiar foods or the need to become accustomed to different sleeping habits can be enough to cause culture shock.

Culture shock can cause intense discomfort and is often accompanied by hyperirritability, bitterness, resentment, homesickness, and even depression. In some cases, distinct physical symptoms occur. Following is a list of some of the symptoms of culture shock:

- Homesickness
- Boredom
- Withdrawal/isolationism
- Need for excessive amounts of sleep
- Compulsive eating
- Irritability
- Chauvinistic tendencies
- Stereotyping of host nationals
- Hostility toward host nationals

For some people, culture shock is brief and hardly noticeable. For many of us, however, culture shock is something that we have to deal with over several weeks or possibly months. In a sense, culture shock is a hazard of living in a new location that a person must go through in order to appreciate the pleasures of experiencing other places and cultures in depth. Everybody experiences culture shock to some degree, and it is usually at its worst during the beginning of the trip. Students also should know that it will not last forever. You will get used to your new surroundings.

How to Adapt to A New Location:

Do not travel with misconceptions or stereotypes! Be prepared to find differences, even if you're still in the States!

Go away informed about your state. Be prepared to answer questions about life in your state.

Be flexible. Do not have rigid preconceptions of what you will find. Be ready to adapt yourself to another culture. You will enjoy the experience!

Be sensitive to the new cultural cues you will be receiving. Keep an open mind. Remember that you are the stranger and that the burden of adaptation is on you!

Your total experience will depend on you and what you make of your time away. Begin to look consciously for reasons behind anything in the host culture that seems strange to you.

Know the host location. Learn as much as possible about where you are planning to go.

Culture shock is not necessarily an entirely bad thing. Experiencing culture shock can mean that you are being open to new experiences and that you are recognizing cultural differences. Experiencing culture shock can be an opportunity to reflect on yourself and your surroundings, ask questions, and smooth the process of cultural adjustment.

Above all, have faith in yourself, in the good will of your hosts and in the positive outcome of the experience. NSE success requires adjusting to the differences between your own area and a new area, successfully performing your tasks in the new location and establishing intercultural interaction. Adjusting to such a different situation requires a receptive, uncritical attitude, sensibility, curiosity, inventiveness, and originality.

Stereotypes

When you study away keep in mind that people who do not know you personally may tend to judge you according to the state that you come from. We've all heard stereotypes such as: "People from California are _____. People from New York are _____." Don't be afraid *ignore* stereotypes. Keep your mind open and you may find some surprises. Just be yourself and hope that your behavior may positively change other people's judgment of you and of other people from your state that they meet. And remember, stereotypes work both ways – you, most likely, have prejudgments of other people. Try to remain open to the likelihood that these views are *also* inaccurate.

Using a Journal to Combat Culture Shock

Your NSE experience will give you the opportunity to re-evaluate the way you view yourself and others. All of us have preconceived ideas or beliefs that will come into question while away, and you should try to keep an open mind. Being in a new environment and culture will present challenges of many kinds and how you deal with these challenges will ultimately help shape the person you become. Take advantage of this tremendous "growth" experience and **keep a journal** (before, during and after your trip) that records your impressions of new experiences and the transformations that are occurring in your own mind and spirit.

Suggestions for Keeping a Journal

(Excerpted from "Writing Across Culture" by Kenneth Wagner & Tony Magistrale, Peter Lang, 1995)

- Record observations of daily life.
- Speculate about connections between what you study in the classroom and what you experience outside of School.
- Respond to what you study in class and what you read.
- Reflect on ethnocentric moments.
- Reflect on times when you break social norms.

Recommended Readings for Cultural Preparation

American Cultural Patterns, Edward Stewart. (Intercultural Press, Inc.)

The Whole World Guide to Cultural Learning, J. Daniel Hess. (Intercultural Press, Inc., 1994)

CHAPTER 4

Academics



REGISTERING FOR CLASSES

Note: Registering for classes for your return semester at KSC will be covered in Chapter 5.

Many of you have already registered for your classes as part of the application process. However, most of you will have to look at, think about, and *select* courses from your host institution so that the courses can be pre-approved before you go. Keep in mind that pre-approval is very important. In the case of ISP requirements and Electives, pre-approval can be given by the Global Education Office. In the case of major and minor requirements, pre-approval needs to be given by your academic advisor or department chair of your major.

If you haven't already registered for your courses, you can find out your host institution's course offerings in two ways: visit the Global Education Office to look through course catalogs, or visit your host institution's website. If the website hasn't been updated to include the semester you need, keep this in mind: Courses at colleges and universities tend to repeat seasonally. Therefore, if you are studying away in the spring semester and that course list isn't available yet, it is far more reliable to look at the *previous* spring as a guide for what courses will be offered. Don't use the semester immediately preceding the one in which you'll be studying. Also, you must register for a full academic load.

It is imperative that before you leave you fill out your **Program Planning Sheet**. If you haven't already completed this form you should do so in conjunction with selecting your courses. You actually should have done this when you were working with the Global Education Office and your academic advisor in your initial course selection. This form is your blueprint, or map, of all your coursework. It enables you to see clearly what courses you've taken and what you still need to take. *Be aware of what you need to take, and what you don't need to take!* Don't waste your courses during your away experience with those that are unnecessary and which may not count for credit when you arrive back at KSC. That's an expensive mistake.

Occasionally, you will find that a course you have received pre-approval for has been cancelled. You then need to find another to take its place. In this case, you must complete **the Pre-Approval Course Substitution, AGAIN** listing your replacement courses; submit it to the Global Education Office AND to your academic advisor for approval. You have already been given a copy of this form in this packet. Additionally, the form will be available on-line at the KSC Global Education Office website www.keene.edu/niec. You can also email the Global Education Office at exchange@keene.edu regarding this issue. Don't wait until you return from your NSE experience to try to get approval for a course that you have substituted. If you do this, it's possible your credits won't transfer. Trust us; it's much easier to do while you're still at your host institution.

GRADES

The grades reported for students' coursework are based on the host institution's transcripts that the Global Education Office receives. Your host institution will send you a transcript. **THEN.... YOU MUST REQUEST THAT YOUR HOST INSTITUTION SEND A COPY OF YOUR TRANSCRIPT TO US! IF YOU FAIL TO DO THIS IT IS POSSIBLE YOUR CREDITS WILL NOT TRANSFER.** The transcript from your host institution will contain the course title, grade and credits granted. When the Global Education Office receives your transcript, it is taken to the KSC Registrar's Office, along with your completed **Pre-Approval Course Substitution form**, and the Registrar's Office attaches it to your Keene State transcript. The courses that you take while on NSE will not be listed individually on your Keene State transcript; your KSC transcript will read – Approved Study Away, and the credits you received will be listed. Individual grades for the courses you took will not be on the *Keene State* transcript. Remember, your GPA does not change to reflect the grades you received while on NSE. Your GPA remains unchanged, however; you will receive credit at Keene State College **IF** you receive credit at the host institution **AND** the course was pre-approved.

Important Note: Because the individual courses you take while on NSE are not listed on your Keene State transcript it is vital that you keep a copy of the host institution's transcript for future reference should you decide to attend graduate school and you need to offer proof of courses taken.

Receiving Your Transcript From the Host Institution

PLEASE REMEMBER TO REQUEST YOUR HOST INSTITUTION TO SEND TO KSC'S GLOBAL EDUCATION OFFICE A COPY OF YOUR TRANSCRIPT. IF YOU DO NOT REQUEST THAT THE HOST INSTITUTION SEND US A COPY OF YOUR TRANSCRIPT, YOUR CREDITS WILL NOT TRANSFER.

On-site Academic Policies and Procedures

While away, all academic policies of Keene State College apply to your NSE studies. You must follow the policies set forth by the host institution.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend each class session, tutorial, excursion, internship/practicum and any other course-related event. Attendance and class participation will influence your grade for the course. If you have been absent from a course excessively, you may be required to withdraw from the course without credit or may receive a failing grade. If you expect to be absent from a class you must notify your instructor and the on-site contact in advance, preferably in writing.

Tardiness

You are expected to be on time for all scheduled meetings and class sessions and should notify the appropriate person by phone or written message of circumstances that result in tardiness.

Language Policy

In non-English speaking countries or territories, students are expected to speak the language of the host territory or country as much as possible. Speaking the host language will improve your proficiency as well as ease cultural adjustments and help you make the most of your program. Students on NSE in Puerto Rico will take coursework in Spanish. The language of instruction at the Universite de Sherbrooke is in French. All other NSE locations are taught in English.

Coursework

Students are required to turn in course assignments on time; turning in assignments late will have a negative effect on your grades. All academic commitments must be completed according to the academic schedule of the host institution. As mentioned in the section of this handbook on grades, you will receive credit at KSC for the courses that receive credit at the host institution.

Computers

Most host institutions have a computer facility that is accessible to NSE participants. However, if you bring your computer it's also a good idea to consider property insurance. One additional thought: It can sometimes be difficult to travel through airports with your computer because of security concerns, and you should take this into consideration when deciding whether or not to bring your laptop.

Email/ MyKSC

All students will have access to email facilities while they are away However; it may take a few weeks to set up your email account and often you will not know your email address until then. You will be able to access MyKSC just as you normally do from Keene State. Make sure you know your user name and password and how to log on to MyKSC. YOU WILL REGISTER FOR CLASSES FOR YOUR RETURN SEMESTER USING YOUR MyKSC ACCOUNT.

Students are reminded that they are going away to experience life as a student in another region. Not all regions are as reliant on technology as your home institution. Students must be patient and open-minded with this, as with all, cultural differences.

CHAPTER 5

Returning Home



REGISTERING FOR CLASSES AT KSC

Just like being on campus, students are responsible for registering for classes for the next semester using their MyKSC accounts. You will be notified via email (MyKSC) of the date that you can log on and begin to register for classes. You will be able to register beginning the date that you are scheduled to register, up until the end of the registration period. If you are unable to register during this time period, you will be responsible for adding classes during the Add/Drop Period held during the first week of your semester back at KSC.

Again, many of you have a variety of email accounts that you use, but Keene State College and the Global Education Office will only be communicating with you via MyKSC; therefore, it's important that you check this account regularly for important notices.

**Registrar's Office: 603.358.2500
elliotcenter@keene.edu**

HOUSING UPON YOUR RETURN

If you want to ensure that you will still have on-campus housing when you return, you must contact residential life to complete a housing form the semester before going on exchange.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Once you have completed your study away experience, you must complete an online program evaluation. These evaluations are extremely important for the Global Education Office for two reasons. First, the evaluations provide us with feedback on how to improve our programs. Second, the information you provide is invaluable for prospective program participants as they ready for departure. Please be aware that we will not release your transcript to the Registrars Office if you do not complete your evaluation.

RE-ENTRY: RETURNING HOME

If you are reading this before you go away or during your first few weeks in your host institution, the thought of returning home may be the furthest thing from your mind. And the idea that you may have difficulty readjusting to life at home after a semester away may seem laughable. But the truth is that a study away experience can change you in ways that are only recognizable when you return home. While away, you will learn to live and succeed in a different area – study in a different academic system, shop, eat, travel and negotiate red tape in a new way. When you return home, you may need to re-adjust to how things are done here. And, as is frequently the case, you may need to deal with frustration when you discover that maybe; just maybe, you like the way things are done at your host location better.

Your national study and travel experiences can help you become more mature, independent and worldly than your peers who remained at home. You may be more interested in new events, travel, speaking languages and meeting new people. You may even be more focused on your studies, in hopes of getting a job that will allow you to return to your host area. You may be disappointed when friends and family do not share your interests, or when you find your lifestyle at home to be tamer with less travel and adventure than when you were away. In addition, you may have grown close with the other program participants, on-site advisers and your new friends. You will have shared with them the joys and struggles of your semester away – and returning home means saying goodbye to them.

This process of re-adjustment to home after a time away is called “re-entry” or sometimes “reverse culture shock.” The symptoms are similar to those that you may have encountered when you first went away and experienced culture shock: frustration, anger, disappointment, resentment, loneliness, and “homesickness” (for your host location).

You may find that people are not as interested in hearing your travel stories as you had hoped and would much rather talk about their own affairs. This may prompt feelings of irritation with others and impatience with your own inability to do things as well or as quickly as you had hoped.

Just as you overcame culture shock and learned to adjust to life away, you will also need to give yourself time to re-adjust to life at home. You will need to seek out others who share your new world outlook or have been through similar experiences. You will need to find ways to utilize your new maturity, independence, and cross-cultural skills. You will also need to be patient – with yourself, your friends and your family – as you all adjust to your return.

You can begin preparing for re-entry before you come home. Answer the following questions for yourself:

- How can I help myself adjust to being home?
- How have I changed during my time away?
- What is the one idea or experience that I want to share with my friends?
- What is the one experience I want to share with my family?
- How can I help my friends and family understand the “new” me?
- What do I need to do in order to take care of myself during this new transition period?

Take heart – the shock of re-entry is usually not as dramatic as the shock of a first trip away. You will have the support of your fellow NSE returnees, the Global Education Office, and international students on your home campus– all who have been through culture shock and many who have been through reentry.

The Global Education Office staff will be available to answer any questions, help you plan for another trip away, or recommend ways to use your new skills.

SPREADING THE WORD, SHARING THE EXCITEMENT & GETTING INVOLVED

Once you return home, you will undoubtedly want to share your excitement and enthusiasm with others. We find students to be so inspired by their NSE experiences that their energy is contagious. Many students feel passionate about the changes they have undergone, the cultures they have been exposed to, and the talents and skills they have developed. It’s a natural progression to want to utilize this new found knowledge and Keene State College has a variety of clubs, organizations and programs through which the NSE alumni can continue to develop, grow, and support NSE education.

Student Ambassador Program: Students who have studied away are invited to apply for the position of Student Ambassador through the Global Education Office. As a Student Ambassador, you will serve as an official representative of your exchange, and as a contact person for future NSE participants. Though very rewarding, this is not time consuming; other duties may include participation in student orientations, information sessions, or helping to prepare written articles for publication. Whatever your skill, we can use you! Looks great on your resume too! Contact the Global Education Office for details on becoming a Student Ambassador.

International Friends: The purpose of this organization is to welcome international students to the Keene State College campus, help them adjust to the American atmosphere, and maintain a positive experience with the campus community. International Friends also introduces students to the idea of studying away and experiencing different cultures from around the world.

Common Ground: The Common Ground Multicultural Club is a group on the Keene State College campus who are committed to planning fun activities around the issues of diversity and multiculturalism. All Keene State College students are invited to attend club meetings and attend events.

Peer Mentor Program: The Peer Mentor Program is designed to help new incoming multicultural students in their transition to the Keene State community. Students are matched with peer mentors based on their academic, social and personal interests. Peer mentors help acquaint their mentees with the KSC campus, offer support and advice as necessary, encourage the pursuit of academic excellence, and refer students to the appropriate on and off campus resources. New students are invited to participate in the program on a voluntary basis prior to their arrival on campus.

Multicultural Resource Library: The [Multicultural Resource Library](#) contains everything from financial aid information to books, videos, and other diversity resources geared toward the specific needs and interests of ethnic multicultural students.

International Scholars - Phi Beta Delta: The purpose of Phi Beta Delta is to recognize the scholarly achievement of international students and scholars, U.S. students who have studied away and faculty and staff who are involved in international activities.

Spanish - Sigma Delta Pi: The Keene Chapter of Sigma Delta Pi, the national Spanish honor society, was chartered in 1982. It promotes excellence in the study of the Spanish language and in the study of the literature and culture of the Spanish-speaking peoples.

French - Pi Delta Phi: The Kappa Sigman was chartered in 1991. Its purpose is to recognize outstanding scholarship in the French language and literature, to increase the knowledge and respect for the contributions of France to world culture, and to encourage cultural activities, such as guest speakers, which will lead to a deeper appreciation of France and its people.

French Club: The French Club promotes interest in French culture and the enjoyment of speaking the language. Most members are French majors/minors, but club membership is open to all interested students

Geography Club: The Geography Club promotes interest in the field of Geography through field trips to areas of interest, lectures, and other club activities.

History Club: The History Club helps to plan, organize and coordinate social functions for the History majors, minors and other members of the Keene State College community.

Habitat for Humanity – Campus Chapter: This organization, affiliated with Habitat for Humanity International, performs three main functions: building or rehabilitating houses in partnership with habitat affiliates and homeowners; educating the campus and local community about affordable housing issues and the work of HFH; and raising funds for the work of Habitat for Humanity. The chapter also organizes the Alternative Spring Break trips.

Have a Wonderful Trip!