

# **STUDY AWAY PRE-DEPARTURE HANDBOOK**



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## SECTION 1: EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Global Education Office**

Phone: 603-358-2348

Fax: 603-358-2469

E-Mail: [geo@keene.edu](mailto:geo@keene.edu)

Regular Hours: **Monday-Friday, 8am-4:30pm**

In the event a situation arises during the hours when the GEO 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.

- **Campus Safety**

**Phone: 603-358-2228**

- **Counseling Center**

**Phone: 603-358-2437**

<http://www.keene.edu/counseling/staff.cfm>

- **After hours on-call Crisis Counselor**

**Phone: 603-358-2436**

Please note that wait times to speak with a Crisis Counselor can be influenced by high call volumes.

## SECTION 2: PASSPORTS, STUDENT VISAS, AND PRE-DEPARTURE FORMS

### PASSPORTS

All students who study outside the U.S. will need a valid passport. You can apply for a U.S. passport at select locations. The closest location to you is the Keene Post Office on Main Street. You can also download a copy of the application via the U.S. Passport Services Division's home page at:

[http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html). You may then file your application at the Keene City Post Office.

Allow yourself 10-12 weeks to obtain your passport. If you already have a passport, you are reminded to check the expiration date. Your passport must be valid for at least six months **after your planned return to the U.S.** Remember to keep copies or scans of all documentation that you give the passport agency.

If you need your passport urgently, generally in less than two weeks, you may contact the Boston Passport Agency. The Boston Passport Agency serves customers who are traveling within two weeks (14 days), or who need foreign visas for travel. You must call in advance for assistance.

Boston Passport Agency  
Thomas P. O'Neill Federal Building  
10 Causeway Street, Suite 247  
Boston, MA 02222

Hours: 9:00 – 4:00 p.m. local time, M-F,  
excluding Federal Holidays  
Automated Appointment Number:  
(617) 878-0900

### PASSPORT SECURITY

Your passport is your key to travel into other countries, as well as to return to the U.S., and without it you will not be allowed to travel. Students should always carry or store their passport in a secure place and be very leery of any vendors who might want to hold or examine the passport.

Before leaving to go abroad, it's important to make copies or scans of your passport to take with you. One copy should be kept separate from your passport in case the original is lost or stolen (or a scan should be emailed to yourself so you can access it while abroad). You should leave one copy with your family. It's also a good idea to bring extra passport photos with you for other student identification cards, or if you should need to replace the passport.

If your passport is lost or stolen, you should report this information to your designated contact person at your host institution. They will be able to assist you in making a police report and contacting the nearest U.S. embassy, or consulate, to start the process of replacing the missing passport.

### STUDENT VISAS

Many students who study away, especially on semester programs, will also need a student visa for the country in which they will be studying. A student visa is a special document from the government of your host country that provides the student with the proper authorization to live and study in that country for a specific amount of time. The Global Education Office staff and/or the study away program provider will let you know if you need a student visa and help you to obtain one. In all cases, you will need to apply and be accepted to the study away program before you can apply for a visa. *While there will be people helping you obtain this visa, it is ultimately your responsibility to do so, which oftentimes means submitting paperwork in a complete and timely manner. Please be aware that many visas carry a cost.*

The visa regulations of each country vary greatly, and it is important that you familiarize yourself with the visa requirements of your host country. Check online for information regarding your host country's visa application process. Many nations require you to apply for a student visa in person with the embassy or consulate nearest to your place of permanent residence. You may need to make an appointment to be interviewed or arrive early to the consulate if interviews cannot be scheduled. Please note that you may need to send your passport

with your application, and you may not get it back until after the paperwork has been processed. Therefore, if you are planning to travel outside the country during this time, you will need to plan the timing of your application carefully.

In most cases, a student visa does not authorize you to work while abroad. If you think you might want to work abroad, find out from the embassy if it is possible to work. In some cases, you can apply for an extra work visa.

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Some countries require that students submit certain documents (entry requirements) to immigration officials upon arrival while other countries require a student visa. These documents are similar to those required for student visa applications. If you fail to submit these documents, you might not be permitted to enter the country. Look online at your host country embassy or consulate NOW for information on entry requirements and/or a student visa application.

***Remember to keep copies of your passport and all documents that you give the consulate.***

## PRE-DEPARTURE FORMS

Be sure you have completed the required forms on the KSC Study Away portal: we suggest that you keep copies of all paperwork you submit for your own records. These forms include:

- **Emergency Contact Information Form**  
This online form contains address, email, and telephone information, as well as very important emergency contact information.
- **Release and Waiver of Liability, Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement Form**
- **Acknowledgements/Sign-Offs Related To KSC Study Away**
- **Passport Information Form (If Necessary)**  
Fill out the online form with your passport information and a scan of the photo page of your passport. Don't forget to sign your passport.
- **Course Substitution Form**  
This may be the most important form you fill out if you want courses taken while away to count as Major/Minor credit or ISP credit. Once at your host location, 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 will count as electives.
- **Travel Information Form**  
Complete this online form with all your travel arrival information. Notify the office of any last-minute changes.

**NOTE:** Your host institution will be sending you paperwork directly or through the GEO. Fill out all necessary forms and return them to your host school promptly. Let us know if you have any questions.

## SECTION 3: CROSS-CULTURAL LEARNING AND ADJUSTMENT

The decision to study away is one of the most important choices that you will make, particularly in your college career. Having good geographical, cultural, societal, and economic knowledge that you take with you will make the transition to living in a different country quite a bit easier. 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 country 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 into a culture that is different from their 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 becoming 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

Sometimes culture shock is brief and hardly noticeable, but often, culture shock is something that occurs over several weeks or possibly months. In a sense, culture shock is a hazard of living in a new place that a person risks navigating in order to appreciate the pleasures of experiencing other countries 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 should also know that it will not last forever, and they will adjust to their new surroundings.

### HOW TO ADAPT TO A NEW CULTURE

- Try not to travel with misconceptions or stereotypes: be flexible! Be prepared to find everything quite different from what you expected, even if you're in the United States. Aim to be curious about the culture, and not have rigid preconceptions of what you will find.
- Work towards questioning the ethnocentrism you may experience, your evaluation of that based on the standards and customs of your own culture. It can be useful to regard the culture you on its own terms, rather than the way you may be used to perceiving the world. Remember that you are the stranger and 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 country/location. Learn as much as possible about where you are planning to go.
- Go away informed about the United States as a whole, as well as the region of the United States which you are from. Be prepared to answer questions about society and life in general in the United States and in your region.
- Be prepared. At some program sites family life is quite different. Often more traditional habits and courtesies are observed. More is practiced in the way of politeness, like shaking hands, never walking into a room without greeting everyone, bringing flowers for someone's birthday, etc.

- Culture shock isn't necessarily an entirely bad thing, either. Experiencing culture shock can mean that you are being open to new experiences and that you are recognizing cultural differences. Experiencing culture shock is 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. Study away success requires adjusting to the differences between your own culture and a host culture, successfully performing your tasks in the new culture and establishing intercultural interaction. Adjusting to such a different situation requires a receptive, uncritical attitude, sensibility, curiosity, inventiveness, and originality.

### WRITING AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (IF RELEVANT)

Sometimes the most difficult part of being abroad is the frustration you may experience trying to communicate in another language. No longer able to communicate easily on an adult level, your efforts to convey simple requests, not to mention complete ideas, may leave you mentally and physically drained. Don't give up trying to learn the local language. This initial period of vexation will give way to feelings of pride and accomplishment as you begin to make progress in the language.

For those students who must make a linguistic adjustment to their new country, the learning of a language will be the most important step they take toward cultural assimilation. Writing in the language of your new culture is a powerful antidote to culture shock because it expands your ability to use the language as a tool for cultural inquiry and understanding. The more opportunities you give yourself to practice this new language – speaking, reading, and writing it – the more proficient you will become in using it. Some of the best free resources that will help you learn the language are called [Duolingo](#) and [Memrise](#). While away, try [Google Translate](#) and [busuu](#). If you are in a Spanish speaking country, try [Spanishdict](#). You can download these apps to your phone as well.

### USING A JOURNAL TO COMBAT CULTURE SHOCK

Your study away 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 abroad, and you should try to be receptive to new ways of being. Living 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 or blog** (before, during, and after your experience) that records your impressions of new experiences and the transformations that are occurring.

### 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.
- Interview locals of the culture about their values.
- Reflect on ethnocentric moments.
- Reflect on times when you break social norms.



## IDENTITY ISSUES ABROAD

### STEREOTYPES

When you travel away keep in mind that people who do not know many people from the U.S. and/or from your region in the U.S. personally may tend to casually judge those they meet by a stereotyped standard: *"Everyone from the U.S. is wealthy.... always in a hurry.... ignorant of other countries.... loud... etc."* Many of these stereotypes come from media like U.S. television and movies that are available worldwide. When you recognize that you are being judged by an inaccurate stereotype, try to avoid becoming angry or defensive. Just be yourself and hope that your behavior may positively change other people's judgment of you and of other U.S. Americans they meet. Remember that stereotypes work both ways – you, most likely, have prejudgments of other nationalities. Try to remain open to the likelihood that these views are **also** inaccurate.

### SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

Cultural norms and recognition of sexual orientation and gender vary around the world. While Keene State and the Global Education Office strive towards inclusivity for members of the LGBT+ community, the culture, social climate, and laws of your location of study may vary in the acceptance of these identities. Your host institution's campus offices and student groups can offer information regarding the reception of these identities in the area in which you are studying. However, depending on the social climate of your institution, students may need to look outside of the office for support related to sexual identity and LGBT+ community information. Some resources for this are the ILGA: International Lesbian Gay Association, which tracks how receptive different countries are to LGBTQIA+ ideas (<https://ilga.org>), and this guide produced by GoAbroad.com: <https://www.goabroad.com/downloads/lgbt-study-abroad-guide.pdf>.

### RACIAL IDENTITY ABROAD

Depending where students have chosen to study abroad, they may experience more or less attention based on their racial identity. This attention can come in the form of curiosity and acceptance, or discrimination, since race is constructed differently in all parts of the world, and perceptions can vary greatly due to the politics and culture of the region in which you're studying. While Keene State does not tolerate discrimination at our partner institutions, students' experiences in the larger culture may vary. As in the U.S., it's important to be aware of how someone's cultural assumptions may influence their perception of a situation. If you experience an incident where racism or discrimination occurs, reach out to your host institution for support, or the Global Education Office. For additional resources in approaching your racial identity when studying away, visit <http://www.diversityabroad.com/students/>

### PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

There have been great strides in providing study abroad opportunities for people who, in the past, were often overlooked. If you have a physical disability and/or a diagnosed learning disability, you should be aware that the regulations and support regarding disabilities may be quite different than those of the host program due to both legal differences and educational norms. It is important that you become familiar with the host site's capacity and willingness to support you during your study away experience, especially if you would like to request specific accommodations. Therefore, please make sure to contact your advisor ASAP to ensure your needs are met, as it is essential that the host institution is aware of your accessibility and learning needs before departure.

There are several resources where additional information can be obtained. [Mobility International \(www.miusa.org\)](http://www.miusa.org) and [Abroad With Disabilities \(www.abroadwithdisabilities.org\)](http://www.abroadwithdisabilities.org) are useful resources for students with physical and learning disabilities. Please note that certain programs, such as the Lorenzo de' Medici program, ask that notification of learning accommodations be made at the time of course scheduling.

Students registered with the Keene State Office of Disability Services, if needed, can request a copy of their documentation to forward to the host institution.

### RESEARCHING YOUR HOST COUNTRY

It's extremely important to familiarize yourself with the culture, history, and current political situation of the country and/or region you will be visiting. Watch the news about your program location, purchase a newspaper, and/or check online for the local newspaper of your program location. Additionally, try to be an informed citizen capable of discussing current events in the U.S. and your region, as you may be viewed as a primary source of information about what is happening at home.

### HOST LOCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

To begin thinking about the cultural differences between your culture and that of your host institution, see the Host Location Questionnaire at the end of this handbook (pg. 35), and answer the questions about your host country/location **before** you depart. Even if you are studying within the U.S., it is useful to be knowledgeable about your home state, as people may not know much about your region!

## SECTION 4: ACADEMICS

### REGISTERING FOR CLASSES FOR YOUR TERM AWAY

Note: Registering for classes for your return semester at KSC will be covered in Section 9 (pg. 27)

Some of you have already registered for your classes as part of the application process. Others will not be able to register for classes until arriving at your host institution. 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 (using the Course Substitution form) before you go. **Remember that any course you take while studying away that you pass and have not already taken will automatically transfer back to KSC as an elective. You do not have to do anything for this to happen, except pass the course.**

- All study away courses will transfer back to KSC as pass-fail on your transcript. However, many students find that when they apply to graduate schools, they are asked for their study away course transcript, so it is a good idea to take your academics as seriously while studying away as you do at KSC.
- Make sure to plan with your academic advisor the classes that you need to enroll in to keep on track! We strongly suggest that you have more classes pre-approved than you plan to take, so that when you arrive you have options if the course you were planning on taking is not available.
- Keep in mind that pre-approval is very important. In the case of lower-level ISPs, 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 the department head unless the course has already been approved for major/minor credit, which can be found on the [Transfer Website](#).

If you haven't already registered for your courses, you can find out your host institution's course offerings by visiting their 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.

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 either resubmit the course substitution form listing your replacement courses and approvals, or forward an email from your advisor to the Global Education Office stating that they approve of the new courses. Then, submit it to the Global Education Office AND to your academic advisor for approval. You can email the GEO at [geo@keene.edu](mailto:geo@keene.edu) regarding this issue. Don't wait until you return from your study away 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. It's much easier to do while you're still at your host institution.

### ON-SITE ACADEMICS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

While away, all academic policies of Keene State College apply to your studies at your host program. 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 you 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, students are expected to speak the language of the host 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.
- **Coursework**  
Students are required to submit course assignments on time; and 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 AND ADAPTERS

Most host institutions have a computer facility that is accessible to study away participants. However, the facilities may not be as state-of-the-art or as readily available as computer facilities at US universities. Students must often pay for paper when using academic computer labs or photocopying machines abroad.

For laptop, phone, and other electronics you want to take abroad, keep in mind that you'll need an **adapter** for the power system as well as a **converter**. You can purchase both adapters and converters abroad, but they may be more expensive. You can research adapter and converter requirements for your host country through: <https://www.skyscanner.net/news/international-travel-plug-adapter-guide>

If planning to bring your own computer, it's also a good idea to consider property insurance. It can sometimes be difficult to travel through airports with a laptop or tablet because of security concerns, and you should take this into consideration when deciding which electronics to bring.

### **Email/ MyKSC**

All students will have access to email facilities while they are studying away. Continue to check your KSC email account, because this is how the GEO and any other department from KSC will contact you. You will be able to access MyKSC just as you normally do from KSC.

*Students are reminded that they are going abroad to experience life as a student in another country. However, not all countries are as reliant on technology as the U.S. Students must be patient and open-minded with this, as with all cultural differences.*

## STUDY TIPS FOR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS ABROAD

Higher education systems vary around the world. Realize that these differences are part of the study away experience, and you will be held accountable to those differences, including: grading, coursework, time schedules, etc. Read the following carefully and be sure to pay attention at all orientations to gain an understanding of the system/department in which you are studying. A few examples of the different international teaching approaches that you may encounter are:

### **Large Lecture-Style Classes**

Many of your classes may be larger than you are used to. The lectures may be based on the text, with little direct interaction between you and the teacher in class. The purpose of being in the lecture is to take detailed notes. You may not have the opportunity to ask questions of the professor.

### **Discussion Groups, Seminars, Tutorials**

In addition to large lectures, students may be divided into smaller groups for once-a-week discussion of course materials.

### **Emphasis on Detail As Well As “The Big Picture”**

In U.S. colleges and universities, general concepts are often emphasized over detailed information, and applying the concepts to your own experience or adding insights of your own is often the way to academic success in the United States. In other countries, detailed knowledge of a topic area is often expected, so the reinforcements of hearing the lecture as well as reading the text are very important.

### **Comprehensive, Essay-type Examinations**

Exams are often cumulative and have a written emphasis. Being able to express the concepts and details covered in class thoroughly and thoughtfully in essay format is also important for academic success.

**NOTE: In some countries, final grades may depend on whether or not you pass the final exam. If you do well in the rest of the course, but fail the final, you can still fail the course. Most foreign universities do not permit appeal of low or failing grades.**

### **Being Called on in Class May Happen - Be Prepared**

Being prepared for class with homework assignments is expected. You may be called on to do a problem or discuss your understanding of concepts in front of the class. Be ready for this!

### **Virtual Learning**

Additionally, students may find that their host institution is offering classes virtually throughout the semester. These classes could be offered on Zoom or in another format, or in a hybrid combination; this will depend on the availability of technological resources at your host institution. If this is the case, host institutions will cover this in their orientation session. With questions about virtual learning options while abroad, it is recommended that students contact the advisor at their host institution.

If you find that you are having trouble keeping up in your classes, please speak with your professors or your on-site contact. They may be able to recommend extra practice or tutoring. If you find that you are frustrated by the educational differences, remember, part of the study away experience is to become immersed in a new culture. A large part of any culture is their educational system. Keep an open mind and work hard!

## SECTION 5: PERSONAL HEALTH/ HEALTH INSURANCE

Remember that studying away can be stressful both physically and mentally: a healthy mind and body are essential for a successful experience. If you are experiencing physical or emotional challenges, please address them before leaving the U.S. If you haven't been feeling well, make an appointment to see your doctor for a checkup. Pressures that can lead to eating disorders, emotional, and dependency issues are only intensified when coping with adjustments to a new culture, language, and way of life. Students are encouraged to have complete medical and dental exams prior to departure.

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 internationally recognized. Check with your doctor or local hospital for more information.

Some countries require certain immunizations not standard to a normal physical examination in the U.S. If you are unsure where you'll be traveling, check with your doctor and get some basic inoculations (i.e. tetanus) just in case. If you know that you'll be in Africa or in the tropics, you may need a typhoid shot or malaria tablets. Check with your doctor, the **Center for Disease Control International Hotline** (877-394-8747 or <https://www.cdc.gov/cdc-info/index.html>), and/or the New Hampshire Department of Public Health, (603-271-4334 or <http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us>) for specific health requirements regarding entrance into a particular country.

**NSE:** Most NSE member colleges and universities will require proof of immunization and vaccination (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.

### PRESCRIPTIONS

Bring copies of prescriptions for medications including eyeglass prescriptions, allergy medicine, birth control pills, asthma medicine, or any other medication you may be taking. Some medications may be expensive abroad and it can be difficult to get the appropriate equivalent medication, so we recommend bringing an adequate supply of prescription medications. Keep medications in their original containers and have the prescription with you in case a customs officer in your host country requests it. 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, it is recommended you receive a dental x-ray to make sure your wisdom teeth will not cause you any problems while away.

Additionally, if you are planning to bring a prescription medication for a psychiatric and/or attention condition during your overseas experience, students should make sure that they either take enough for their entire stay and/or have a clear procedure for getting the needed prescription in a timely manner. It is also advisable that you inform your host program coordinator or director so they can better support you during your overseas experience. Further, certain countries will require travelers to carry a letter with them from their prescribing physician - some countries have stricter policies regarding transportation of prescription medication, so it is recommended that students travel with their medications in their carry-on luggage rather than in their checked baggage.

*Please be aware that there are several countries in which certain prescriptions which can be obtained in the United States (Adderall, etc.) are not available. If you are taking a prescription on a routine basis that may be in this category, you will need to check carefully in advance whether you can obtain it at your program site. If you are concerned, please speak to a member of the GEO who can help you with this.*

## COUNSELING SERVICES

Students should be aware that the availability and nature of psychiatric and counseling services vary widely at program sites and host institutions around the world. If you are currently receiving some type of psychiatric and/or counseling support, or if you anticipate needing psychiatric or counseling support during your off campus academic experience, it is strongly encouraged that you understand clearly what is available at your host site. Many counselors, including those at Keene State, are unable to perform sessions across state or national boundaries, so it is advised for students to verify if there is an English-speaking counselor at their host institutions if they are needing this support, as well as if their insurance will cover these sessions. As there are cross-cultural differences surrounding mental health and prescription medications, it will be the student's responsibility to communicate with their network of mental health professionals to develop a plan before they travel as well as while they are away.

Keene State College has an on-call Crisis Counselor who can be reached at **603-358-2436**, although this should be reserved for emergencies and will not function the same as a consistent source of mental health support.

## STDs and AIDS

Some countries may require an AIDS test before allowing you to enter. Please check with the embassy or consulate of your host country before you arrive at the airport because they will turn you away if you don't have the proper documentation.

If you require surgery abroad and need a blood transfusion, remember that not all countries require the same standards for screening HIV-antibodies in donated blood. Red Cross offices abroad and U.S. embassies and consulates have information on sources of safe blood.

If you choose to be sexually active while away, please be careful. If choosing to do so, be aware that not all countries sell condoms. Women as well as men should bring their own supply of condoms and store them in a dry place away from heat. Always use a latex condom, preferably treated with a potent spermicide.

## INSURANCE

Students traveling on approved KSC international programs are required to have and will be provided coverage for health insurance, medical evacuation insurance, and evacuation assistance. Details of this coverage will be made available to you either by your study away program provider and/or through the GEO office. Depending on the program location, some host countries have a required health insurance for all residents which students will also be expected to purchase.

*Please note that this coverage will only be valid outside the U.S. and during the official program dates. Students who intend to depart early or extend their stay beyond the official program dates are strongly advised to obtain their own insurance coverage for this extended period of travel. In addition, we also advise that students continue to carry coverage that will provide insurance inside the U.S. in case you are forced to return home for continued care in an emergency.*

Please note that KSC students studying on domestic study away programs are expected to carry their own health insurance.

## GLOBAL HEALTH WHILE STUDYING AWAY

Our global society can be impacted by events out of our control, which extends to students who are studying away. We encourage students to consult the guidance of public health authorities such as the CDC, as well as the guidance of health authorities in their host country to best respond to global health emergencies.

Important features to mitigate risk while studying away during a global health emergency include being current on all your routine vaccinations, including booster shots, as well as planning for the unexpected. Vaccination requirements vary between host institutions and Keene State, so students should confirm if their host institution requires submission of a record showing that they are up-to-date on their vaccinations. Students should be aware that acceptance to a host institution's program could be impacted if their vaccination requirements are not fulfilled, per the requirements of the host institution.

While Keene State provides insurance for studying away, the CDC also recommends getting travel insurance while traveling and learning where to get health care during your trip. Before travelling, students may also consider consulting with a travel health specialist for destination-specific information. During your time away, it will be valuable to follow the global health safety guidelines of your host country, including local laws and the educational institution's code of conduct, to provide for the well-being of its students and staff.

It is also recommended to carry with you the contact information of the nearest US embassy or consulate and continue to monitor your physical and mental health. If you feel sick, locate and contact a healthcare provider in your host country and plan to notify the institution with whom you are studying when feeling unwell.

Navigating these events can be complicated, and we will do our best to make the guidance and precautions from Keene State College and our partner institutions available during a global health emergency occur. Some useful resources for further information on global health and pandemics while studying away include:

- CDC guidance for Traveler's Health when Studying Abroad: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/studying-abroad>
- CDC's guidance for predeparture preparation: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2020/travel-for-work-other-reasons/study-abroad-and-other-international-student-travel>
- CDC guidance for Covid-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/guidance.html>



## SECTION 6: SAFETY AND SECURITY, EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Your safety and security as a KSC study away student is of the utmost concern to all who are supporting you in your study away experience. Here in this section are some suggestions regarding your safety and security as a KSC study away student.

All approved study away programs have been carefully selected and reviewed to ensure that there is good on-site support, and the program location and institution is safe according to international standards. While approved programs vary in terms of the overall safety and security, all locations will provide students with a thorough orientation that will cover how to be as safe as possible at your program location. It is your responsibility to pay attention to what these guidelines are. It is also recommended to make contact with the advisor in your host country and inquire about local guidance, as they will be able to provide more thorough and immediate assistance than your advisors at Keene State.

### SAFETY & 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. Students should consider that in our interconnected world, it is inevitable that many cultures exist within one country, within and between states in the U.S. For this reason, students should be sensitive and aware of the dominant culture as well as the less-dominant cultures. Please read through the following information carefully, as it is meant to inform you of some issues to keep in mind upon your arrival to your new setting.

#### **General Safety in Public Places**

What non-U.S. residents see in media, television, and movies create impressions of people from the U.S. and the culture they come from. For the most part, people from the U.S. are seen as wealthy, particularly in developing countries. In many locations students will be financially better off than the local population. Locals easily notice people from the U.S. because they dress differently, speak loudly in groups, and have an unmistakable accent. By following the suggestions below, students can minimize their exposure to unsafe situations:

- **Do not leave your bag or belongings unattended at any time.**  
Security staff in airports or train stations are instructed to remove or destroy unattended luggage.
- **Be as inconspicuous in dress and demeanor as possible.**  
Downplay elements of your appearance and manner that broadcast that you are from the U.S. Observe the behavior and dress of local people that are your age.
- **Try speaking the local language in public, even with others from the U.S.**  
Even with a heavy accent you will not attract as much attention, particularly if you take a cue from the locals and speak at their volume.
- **Use the buddy system or travel in small groups.**  
Walking with someone else helps to deflect approaches from would-be harassers. This is wise, especially during the first few weeks of your stay.
- **Be mindful how late you come home at night.**  
Try to make it home while public transportation is still running, or plan to take a taxi. Be extremely cautious about whom you accept rides from.
- **Locate the nearest U.S. embassy/consulate.**  
Also locate the police station, fire alarm box, hospital emergency room and know emergency procedures.

- **Be aware of your surroundings.**

If you want to visit a new neighborhood, try to go during the day first. Note the nearest metro stops and the bus/trolley routes and check map/GPS. 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 alert to anyone who appears to be following you and immediately report unusual activities or suspicious people to your on-site contact and 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. For those situations in countries where drivers drive on the left-hand side of the road, you will need to make an extra effort to look in the right direction before crossing the street. We do not recommend that students drive while they are abroad.

### **Registration with Local Police or Embassies (for international study away)**

In some countries, you will be required to register with the local police station upon arrival. The on-site contact will inform you of the local requirements. Also when traveling, you should notify the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate once you arrive at your destination. The embassy or consulate will provide you with information such as new travel advisories and lists of English-speaking doctors in the area. You should also register online via: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>

### **Local Transportation and Travel**

Most students will be using public transportation on a regular basis. You may see other passengers who don't appear to be paying for buses or other public transportation. Consider buying a monthly pass if you will take the bus or subway every day. In the long run, it is much cheaper than fines, which can be 50 times the cost of the ticket. **Save the subway ticket - in many cases the ticket is needed to exit the station.** If someone leaves a package unattended on a seat near you in any crowded public place such as the airport, train station, or subway, or other public transportation, notify the driver and get away from it as quickly as possible.

### **Keep Others Informed of Your Travel Plans**

Before you travel out of your host community, inform your family at home AND your 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 Your Money and Other Valuables**

Keep your cash and other valuables in a secure place. 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.

Do not take expensive jewelry or things that cannot be replaced. Avoid putting things in the back pocket of your pants or backpack. This is an easy target for pickpockets. 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.

Be particularly cautious with your belongings in areas where there have been numerous reports of pickpocketing and purse-snatching. Be aware that thieves on mopeds snatch purses, so have your bag face away from the street. 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. Additionally, 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.

### IN TIMES OF POLITICAL CONFLICT

Keep in touch with current political situations by listening daily to online news outlets, the television, or reading the newspaper. The U.S. Department of State lists current travel advisories for all countries at <http://www.travel.state.gov>. In the event of an emergency, advisories may be made to the public through the media. In case of an emergency, remain in contact with the on-site staff and the U.S. embassy/consulate nearest you.

When in large cities and other popular tourist destinations, do your best to avoid potential target areas for terrorist activities, especially places frequented by U.S. travelers such as bars, clubs, U.S. fast-food restaurants, branches of U.S. banks, U.S. churches, and U.S. consulates or embassies under threat. Additionally:

- Keep away from areas known to have large concentrations of residents aligned with interests unfriendly to the U.S. and its allies. Always consult with the on-site contact before traveling to neighboring cities or popular tourist destinations.
- Steer clear of political demonstrations, which can easily result in clashes between demonstrators and authorities, particularly those aligned with the U.S. If you see a situation developing, resist the temptation to satisfy your curiosity and investigate what is happening. Walk the other way. Go home and watch it on the news.
- Do not agree to newspaper or other media interviews regarding political conflicts or controversial issues. It is important to remain as inconspicuous as possible. Do not make reference to your group. If the media approaches you, simply decline to talk and walk away.

### ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

While studying away, you are not only subject to the standards and policies of Keene State College, but also to the local laws and sanctions of the country in which you are staying. In many countries, the punishment for possession and/or distribution of controlled substances and for driving while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances is much more severe than in the United States. Even in locations where local citizens tolerate substance abuse, study away students who are apprehended are dealt with much more severely than locals. Once you leave the U.S., you are not covered or protected by our laws and you do not have the same constitutional rights. ***Be aware! If you are arrested for a crime abroad, there is little that Keene State College or the local U.S. consular authorities can do to intercede on your behalf.***

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 always be aware that you are in another country with another set of social 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 foreign romance, but you should consider a relationship very carefully, particularly when you are abroad. There are different cultural values and rules regarding dating and relationships. Proceed cautiously, realizing that you are only in the country 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 interaction, and always demand that you both practice safe sex. Some countries do not admit that they have an HIV/AIDS epidemic; assume that HIV/AIDS is everywhere. No matter what your current commitments or plans are, bring condoms with you if you are sexually active.

## TITLE IX AND STUDY AWAY

Title IX is a federal law that prevents gender discrimination. As a current student at Keene State College, Title IX is applicable regardless of if you are studying at another institution within the United States or abroad. A particular area of focus of Title IX concerns students who experience or are impacted by sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct includes such incidents as rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating/domestic violence, and sexual exploitation.

If you experience sexual misconduct, Keene State College will coordinate access to confidential support services and arrange interim measures as needed. Given the complexity and breadth of KSC's Study Away programs, you are encouraged to contact the Title IX coordinator for additional details. For more information a link is available [here](#), and can be accessed at <https://www.keene.edu/administration/student-affairs/title-ix/>

It should be noted that KSC retains jurisdiction and authority over alleged infractions of the Student Code of Conduct. The College's jurisdiction applies to both on and off campus violations of the Code of Conduct and as such all students and student organizations are expected to maintain a high standard of conduct both on and off campus.

The College also prohibits sexual harassment by third parties towards members of the College Community. Although individuals who are not students or employees of the College are not subject to discipline under the College's internal processes, the College will take prompt corrective action to eliminate sexual harassment and prevent its recurrence. Additional information, including resources for support and reporting options, are available [here](#) and at <https://www.keene.edu/administration/policy/detail/handbook/sexual-misconduct/>

Please note: if a student discloses an experience of sexual harassment and/or assault to any Global Education Office program staff member or advisor, that staff member or advisor will be required to make a report of the assault to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will follow-up with the student regarding what was reported.

## SEXUAL HARRASSMENT AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

**All students should be aware of this section.**

It is important that students understand and be sensitive to the problems fellow students in the group may face, and recognize that sexual assault can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Sexual Assault is about power, NOT attraction, can happen anywhere in the world, and can be committed by anyone.

### Some Tips to Remember

- Be aware of how you carry yourself. Even things as seemingly insignificant as smiling or your stride will mark you as a foreigner. In some countries, dressing as you would at home could be viewed very differently.
- In many parts of the world, meeting a man's gaze is widely viewed as sexually provocative, and you may be followed, verbally harassed, or touched as a result. An effective way to avoid stares while on the subway or bus is to read or check your phone.
- 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. Although verbal responses often work, avoidance is the safest tactic. If you continue to be followed, spoken to, or touched after repeated attempts to get away, try to move yourself to a very public or familiar place (host school, library, café, etc.). Tell your harasser firmly and calmly to leave you alone. Threatening to call the police is sometimes effective.
- Do not judge the appearance of your local friends by the standards of your home region. 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.
- In the event of a sexual assault, please follow the emergency procedures below, and remember to take care of yourself first (ex. Seek medical attention, get help from a trusted friend or faculty member).
- In general, the safety procedures that students practice at home should be practiced away, with an added mindfulness of the cultural context for the location in which their host institution is situated.

NOTE: these are only tips to help avoid unwanted attention or to remove yourself from a situation.

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

While the actual incidents of any of the following emergencies are rare, there are hazards that can occur when studying away and it is important to be armed with the necessary information to help students make sound decisions during a difficult situation. For any issue needing immediate assistance, contact the international student coordinator at your host institution, or the police. In addition, students will be asked to give their 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 while away.

#### Different types of emergencies require different procedures

1. **Injury, harm, illness, etc:** If you find yourself with a sprained ankle or have the common cold, you should go to the campus health facilities (if available) at your host location. If it is something that's more of an emergency, you should go to the closest hospital emergency room and get there as soon as you can. You will want to always keep the number of your insurance card handy. Many insurance companies should be made aware if you need medical assistance while abroad. If you're traveling, you should familiarize yourself with the city you're in and locate the nearest hospital or medical facility.
2. **Passport Issues:** At least one student per semester either loses their passport, or has it stolen, while abroad. As discussed earlier, you should leave photocopies of your passport with a family member and the Global Education Office, and keep one for yourself that is separate from your actual passport. It's much easier to have another passport issued with a copy of the original. If you need another passport issued, the U.S. embassy or consulate in your host country will be able to help you with that process.
3. **Lost or stolen items:** If you have anything stolen you should report it to the local police. Cash is never recoverable if it is lost or stolen. We recommend that you have your personal items insured before you leave in the event of loss or theft.
4. **Political Emergency or Natural Disaster:** In case of a political emergency or natural disaster, students are required to contact the host university exchange coordinator and contact the GEO as soon as they are able. Should an emergency occur at another location to which you have traveled, you should get

in touch with on-site staff and contact the GEO immediately so that they may assist to the best of their ability.

5. **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:

Global Education Office REGULAR HOURS (EST):

Monday-Friday, 8am-4:30pm

**Phone:** 603-358-2348

**Fax:** 603-358-2469

**Email:** [geo@keene.edu](mailto:geo@keene.edu)

**NIGHT/WEEKEND HOURS:**

If a situation arises during the hours when the GEO 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.

- **Campus Safety - 603-358-2228**
- **Counseling Center - 603-358-2437**
- <http://www.keene.edu/counseling/staff.cfm>
  - **After hours on-call Crisis Counselor:**  
**Phone: 603-358-2436**

*Please note that wait times to speak with a Crisis Counselor can be influenced by high call volumes.*

## SECTION 7: FINANCES AND MONEY MANAGEMENT

KSC makes every effort to have study away options that are affordable for students on all budgets. For in-state students, there are numerous study away options that are the same tuition and fees as KSC. In some cases, housing and food costs are comparable, if not less, so it is possible to study away for the same cost or less as a semester at KSC. In addition, your financial aid can be used for approved study away programs. Scholarships may also be available in some cases.

It is a good idea to begin thinking about how you can finance your study away dream as soon as you consider study away. Talk to the GEO study away advisors, as well as people in financial aid, for support and advice. It is a good idea to begin a discussion with your financial provider, potentially your parents or guardian.

### PROGRAM FEES/BILLING

An invoice for the study away program costs will be sent to your MyKSC account by the KSC Student Accounts Office. You are required to pay the balance of your program fee 30 days prior to departure. Non-settlement may result in transcript holds, inability to register for courses, or elimination from the program.

Billing for fall programs generally begins in July, except for a few programs that begin early and have an earlier billing cycle. Billing for spring semester programs is in November. Summer programs are billed in April to May. 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 Financial Aid Office to discuss financial aid applicability for study away. You can contact them at [financialaid@keene.edu](mailto:financialaid@keene.edu) or 800-572-1909 or 603-358-2280.

### WISE USE OF MONEY

Study away can be expensive, but it does not need to be. The key to keeping your costs down is to make a budget, and stick to it. Students should familiarize themselves with their program and what it includes, and then develop a budget so they'll have a better idea of what financial resources will be required.

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#### How to carry your money while away:

- **Cash:**  
We suggest that you carry a small amount of foreign currency (equivalent to \$100-200) with you to use for immediate necessities such as bus and taxi fare, tips, etc. once arriving in your host country. You can convert money at the airport before departure or upon your arrival abroad.
- **Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs):**  
ATMs are becoming more accessible abroad for credit card cash advances. You should check with your credit card company/bank for details on withdrawing cash from abroad before using your ATM card. Depending on your bank, a charge of \$2-\$5 will be issued each time an ATM card is used abroad. ATMs are an easy way to get local currency upon arrival and are less busy and quicker than the currency exchange counters.  
*Only use ATMs inside of buildings (airports, banks, etc.) that have security and are monitored to avoid credit card theft.*
- **Credit Cards:**  
Most major U.S. credit cards can be used worldwide. Many allow you to obtain cash advances at their abroad offices. Make sure that the credit card you carry is in your name and that the necessary PIN codes for cash advances have been activated. Look into these options with your credit card company,



and inform them that you will be traveling internationally so they do not close your account for suspicious international activity.

- **Joint Accounts:**

Joint accounts are an easy way to effectively manage and access your money abroad, while avoiding the need to bring one lump sum of money. If able, students may want to open a joint checking/savings account with a parent/guardian before going abroad. If the account has an ATM card on a major network, you'll be able to access the account abroad while your parent/guardian can access the account from home. This way, it will be easy to have funds deposited in the account while you're away. Also, checks can be written in the U.S., which is helpful in keeping up with monthly bills while away.

- **Local Bank Accounts:**

In some countries, students may be able to open a bank account locally. Please note, however, that banks abroad are not on the same schedule as typical U.S. banks. Often, they will close during the mid-day lunch hour, or close for the day in the early afternoon, and/or will NOT be open on weekends.

- **How NOT to carry your money:**

Personal Checks, Cashier's Checks Traveler's Checks and Money Orders: these are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to cash abroad. **Do not** carry money in this way.

### **Spending Money Abroad**

It takes time and money to send cash abroad. U.S. banks will mail drafts in U.S. or foreign currency for you, cashable at specific banks at a specific location for a service charge of \$5 or more. Having your money cabled through Western Union is even more expensive. You can use mobile banking apps or money-sending apps to send/receive funds while abroad. Most banks have their version of a mobile banking app which allows you to transfer money from accounts and send money to others with the same/different bank (examples include: People's Bank, TD Bank, USAA, America First, Workers Credit Union, etc). Some Apps that let you send/receive/and request money include Facebook Messenger, Zelle, Venmo, CashApp, Snapchat, and PayPal.

### **In Case of Emergency**

If you find yourself stranded abroad with no money at all, contact the U.S. embassy or consulate for suggestions, but not money. The embassy personnel are officially prohibited from furnishing cash or loaning money. However, they can suggest possible sources for financial assistance, and they can call someone back home to send money, deducting the cost of the cable or call when your cash arrives.

### **How to Exchange Money**

The key to successful money exchange is advance planning. Try to anticipate how much money you'll need for a particular country. It's costly to convert currency because each transaction carries a service charge.

Students may find that many countries use coins more often than paper currency; therefore, you may want to invest in a change wallet to carry the abundance of coins. You can exchange money at exchange houses, banks, airports, railroad stations, large hotels, some tourist information centers, and travel agencies. Banks usually offer the best rates, but take note of any minimum amount requirements when exchanging money at a bank. Avoid changing money at tourist shops or restaurants – they usually offer the worst exchange rates. *NOTE: Your passport will be required as identification every time you exchange money.* Always ask what the commission or fee charges are before you change money.

### **Exchange Rates**

Fluctuation is the key word in currency exchange rates today; so make sure your information is current! There are a variety of on-line currency exchange sites that you can consult as necessary. Once abroad, shop around at local banks and exchange counters for the best exchange rates, or simply use an ATM in a bank. You may want to bring a calculator if you don't have one in your phone to make converting easier, or if you have access to the internet you can easily google conversion rates.



## SECTION 8: FLIGHTS, TRAVEL, PACKING & COMMUNICATION

Preparing to travel for study away can be one of the most exciting, but also challenging, parts of the entire study away experience. You may have many questions you are wondering about and things you want to know. In this section, we will make some general suggestions to help you better prepare practically to study away, including important topics such as flight purchase, packing, and communication methods while abroad.

### PURCHASING YOUR PLANE TICKET TO THE PROGRAM

Many students are anxious to purchase their plane ticket to the program as soon as they think they have been accepted to study away by Keene State College. However, we strongly urge you to wait to make sure that all is well with your study away plans and that you know the suggested program arrival date. It is important to make sure you arrive to your program at the suggested program arrival date in most cases, since that is the ideal time to begin. Typically, this date is a day to a few days before the required program orientation begins at your study away destination.

When purchasing your airplane ticket, you will typically purchase a roundtrip ticket. It is a good idea to purchase a ticket with a fare that allows for date changes without too much of a penalty. Some of the cheapest tickets might not permit any date change, and sometimes situations occur where you may want to change the return flight. If you purchase the optional trip insurance with your ticket, you can make usually make changes to your itinerary without additional costs.

It is a good idea to shop around for different prices online, as there can be significant variations in fares. Google Flights, Hopper, Kayak, Orbitz, and CheapOtickets are all useful comparison websites to find the best flight for the right price.

Students are also encouraged to utilize student-based travel agencies that offer economical airfares including STA Travel ([www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com)), AESU Flights ([www.aesu.com](http://www.aesu.com)), and Student Universe ([www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com)). If you plan to travel before or after studying abroad, you may want to contact travel agencies that sell rail and bus passes, hostel memberships, etc.

### TRAVEL IN & AROUND YOUR HOME REGION

Some students choose to travel while studying away beyond the program site. If you are one of these students, the following suggestions will help you make the most of your excursions:

#### **Before you leave...**

- Plan ahead. Research transportation schedules before your trip begins to find the most affordable tickets. Ask if there are discount student fares.
- Look at a map and learn your country's geography.
- Arrive at the airport 3 hours early for international flights to check-in.
- 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 instead of contacts, as contacts tend to dry out.
- Drink plenty of water, not alcohol. Flying can dehydrate a traveler.
- Talk to alumni from the program for travel advice.
- Read the local paper if you can get it before you go, and once you arrive. Look into *The New York Times* and the *International Herald Tribune* (available in the Mason Library) to find out what important issues your host country faces. Learn something about its history and government, and if you do not speak the language, learn some key phrases.

**While you are traveling:**

- Never hitchhike
- Be flexible - it can make all the difference.
- Carry your money and passport in a security belt/pouch.
- Keep abreast of current political situations. Check the U.S. Department of State website for current travel advisories at <http://www.travel.state.gov>.
- 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:**

The symptoms of jet lag include overwhelming exhaustion that affects memory, concentration and performance, as well as physical symptoms such as headaches, sleeplessness, diarrhea, or constipation. Here are some general recommendations to help overcome jet lag.

- Prior to departure: Drink extra water. 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, drink lots of non-alcoholic liquids, relax, and try to sleep. Stay hydrated.
- On arrival: Rest if you have to, eat light meals, but stay active and *go to bed when the locals do*. If you go to sleep upon arrival in your host country and it's the morning, you'll make it harder to adjust your "body clock" to the time in your host country.

**Eating on the Road:**

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

- Not eating dairy products unless they have been pasteurized and refrigerated.
- Not eating "street" foods unless they smell fresh and are cooked in front of you.
- Not eating raw seafood, shellfish, eggs, meat, or unpeeled vegetables.
- Drinking 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.
- Not putting ice in your boiled water or bottled drinks. Neither freezing nor alcohol kill microbes.

**Budget Travel**

Traveling by rail and plane is usually straightforward in most of Europe, and several rail passes are available to students. There are also hundreds of youth hostels around the world where students can spend the night for less money than a hotel and can meet other travelers. Budget travel books are the best source of information on these:

- **Let's Go** <https://www.letsgotravel.net/>
- **Lonely Planet** <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/>
- **Rough Guides** <http://travel.roughguides.com>

Look for airlines and tickets with flexible dates when purchasing plane tickets: some airlines charge for changing your arrival/departure dates while other tickets you will not be able to change your dates once purchased. If you think you may want to stay longer/leave earlier, contact the airline to find out their policy.

## COMMUNICATION

While away, keeping in touch with family and friends can be a great concern. In this section, there are resources for different means of communication listed for every budget.

### Cellphones

There are many options for cellphones while abroad, including using your current phone or by purchasing another one in country. If you wish to buy a phone while away, there are often cheap pre-paid flip phones available that you can use for in country calls and texts. International calling on these phones is possible, but it will cost more and you will use up your pre-paid amount sooner.

To use your phone while abroad there are many options, including:

- SIM Cards - All mobile phones contain a SIM card, which is a chip in your phone that provides data and phone service. If your phone is unlocked, this means it has a compatible SIM card that can be switched out for a country-specific one. Many iPhones are unlocked, meaning you can go to a country and buy a SIM card in a phone store (usually for around 40 dollars depending on the country) and replace your American SIM card with the international one. Other phones will need to be “unlocked” before they are able to have their SIM card switched-out. It is recommended to inquire with your cell phone company prior to departure if this will be an option while away.
- International Plans - If you do not want to change your SIM card or if your phone is locked, you can ask your cellphone carrier if they have an international plan, and what the cost would be to add it to your plan. Most cell phone carriers offer international plans.
- WiFi - Not interested in paying anything? You can use any phone with WiFi to communicate with your family and friends, however, you will need to have apps on your phones that work through WiFi. Here is a list of apps that run on WiFi internationally, as well as their communication features:
  - Facebook messenger - Internet calls, text, video chat, voice messages, document-sending, location, etc. (calls and video chat can be low-quality)
  - Instagram – Direct messaging, video calling
  - WhatsApp- Calls, video calls, text, voice messages, documents, location, etc. (often more reliable)
  - ICQ - Calls, video calls, text, voice messages (more reliable)
  - Marco Polo - Video “walky-talky,” round-table video-messaging
  - Snapchat - Video/photo messages

***You can use any of these apps on a device that has WiFi capabilities (tablet, computer, etc.) if you decide not to use your cellphone.***

## SECTION 9: 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 logon and begin registering. If you are unable to register during this time, you will be responsible for adding classes during the Add/Drop Period held during the first week of your semester back at KSC. If you are planning to graduate, verify your course and major requirements are met.

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 is important that you check this account regularly for important notices. With questions regarding course registration, the contact for the Registrar's Office is:

- Registrar's Office: 603 358-2500
- [kscregistrar@keene.edu](mailto:kscregistrar@keene.edu)

### HOUSING UPON RETURN

If you want to ensure that you will still have on-campus housing when you return, you must contact the Residential Life Office to complete a housing form before you leave for your semester away.

### STUDY AWAY EVALUATION

Once you have completed your study away experience, you are requested to complete the evaluation form. 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. The link to the online evaluation will be sent to you upon return from study away.

### GRADES

1. During study away, you will be enrolled in a KSC placeholder course called "Study Away 280." Once enrolled in this course, the KSC system and offices will be alerted that you are participating in a study away program. Upon return, when your study away transcript is issued from your host program, the "Study Away 280" course will be substituted for your actual earned courses and credits.
2. The grades reported for your coursework while studying away are based on the host institutions transcripts sent to the Global Education Office. 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 sent to the Registrar's Office, along with your completed Course Substitution Form, and/or email approvals from your major and minor advisor or Department Chair. The Registrar's Office will then swap out the Study Away place-holder course and enter the courses you took during Study Away onto your KSC transcript. These Study Away courses will be entered as "Pass/Fail," and your study away transcript will not affect your KSC GPA.
3. If you have not submitted forms or emails for study away course approval in your major or minor prior to studying away, this can be done after you return through your academic advisor.
4. Please remember that ISP courses taken during Study Away are approved only by the GEO Director - neither the Registrar's Office nor your academic advisor can do this. Additionally, one upper-level ISP can be taken as a Study Away course.

5. After returning, 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 KSC transcript. Remember, your GPA will not reflect the grades you received while studying away, and your GPA will remain unchanged. You will receive credit at Keene State College if you receive credit at the host institution, if the course was pre-approved, and if you have not taken the course before.

**Important Note:** It is suggested that you obtain a transcript from the host institution for future reference should you decide to attend graduate school and you need to offer proof of courses taken – the KSC Registrar’s Office cannot access this at any time for you.

**\*NSE students will have to request that a transcript is sent to KSC.**

### RECEIVING YOUR TRANSCRIPT FROM THE HOST INSTITUTION

It can take anywhere from 8-12 weeks for the host institution to send your grades to the Global Education Office. **Please be patient during this process. The Global Education Office can do little to rush the host institution. We will notify you as soon as we receive your transcript.**

### RE-ENTRY: RETURNING HOME

If you are reading this before you study away or during your first few weeks in your host location, the thought of returning to Keene may be the furthest thing from your mind, and the idea that you may have difficulty readjusting to life in Keene after a semester away may seem laughable. The truth is, however, that a study away experience can change you in ways that are only recognizable when you return home. While abroad, you will learn to live and succeed in a different culture – speak another language, study in a different academic system, shop, eat, travel, and negotiate challenges in a new way. Even when studying within the United States, you may encounter re-entry challenges. When you return home, you may need to relearn how things are done in this culture. 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 international study and travel experiences can help you become more mature, independent, and globally aware than your peers who remained at home. You may be more interested in international events, travel, speaking languages, and meeting new people. You might encounter that you are even be more focused on your studies, in hopes of getting a job that will allow you to return to your host location. You could 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 advisors, 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.

### REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

This process of re-adjustment to home after a time away is called “re-entry” or sometimes “reverse culture shock.” The symptoms of reverse culture shock may resemble those you experienced when you first went away, including frustration, anger, disappointment, resentment, loneliness, and “homesickness” (for your host country). 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. This is also a time for reflection, to be proud of the skills you have gained, and perhaps to revisit any journaling you may have done while away.

Just as you overcame culture shock and learned to adjust to life while studying 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, and find ways to utilize your new maturity, independence, language,

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 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 to a new place. You will have the support of your fellow study away returnees, the Global Education Office, and the international students here at KSC—all of whom have been through culture shock, and many who have been through reentry. The Global Education Office staff will be available to answer any questions, to help you plan for another study away experience or to 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 study away 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 newfound knowledge, and Keene State College has a variety of clubs, organizations, and programs through which the study away alumni can continue to develop, grow, and support international education.

## **CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

### **While Away:**

- Keep a list of contacts
- Get involved and explore the culture
- If in a homestay take every opportunity to meet the family's friends and extended family, network and learn about the culture itself
- Practice the language

### **Upon Return:**

- Visit career and academic services to revise and edit your resume to incorporate your newly acquired or strengthened interpersonal skills and intercultural competencies
- Participate in campus or community programs that provide opportunities to practice articulating what you learned and the steps you took to gain or strengthen intercultural and professional skills.

Further resources for career development from study away:

- [Study Abroad and Career Development \(AIFS\)](#)

***We Hope You Have a Wonderful Study Away Experience! 😊***

## APPENDIX: CHECKLISTS

### **Before You Go:**

*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.*

#### **To do immediately:**

- ☐ Check your email for Next Steps to complete your application to the host institution. Begin to complete the necessary forms.
- ☐ Inform your family of your intentions to study away.
- ☐ Meet with your academic advisor and start to discuss what courses you can take while studying away.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with your host location and program. Ask the GEO for the contact info of an alumnus of that program.
- ☐ If leaving the country, make sure your passport will be valid for at least six months after the end date of your program. Apply for a passport or renew your passport if necessary.
- ☐ Schedule any physical or mental health exams that may be required.
- ☐ Begin planning a personal spending budget for study away.
- ☐ If you have financial aid, meet with Financial Aid Office to discuss financial aid applicability towards your study away program.
- ☐ **NSE:** Complete the Placement Acceptance Form (PAF) stating that you will accept the NSE placement.

#### **To do before the end of the semester:**

- ☐ If required, apply for your student visa. You may be required to set up an interview which can take 3-4 weeks. **Be sure to keep copies or scans of all paperwork.**
- ☐ Check with the Financial Aid Office to make sure everything is in order.
- ☐ Arrange to take enough of any prescription medication to last for your entire time away – not all medications are available while abroad. You are advised to take a copy of that prescription with you overseas.
- ☐ Stay current with news and updates about host location.
- ☐ **NSE:** Read the Exchange Policies and Considerations in the NSE Directory of Exchange Opportunities ([www.nse.org](http://www.nse.org))

#### **To do one month prior to departure:**

- ☐ Make sure your MyKSC account and email are working. You will receive communications from us via your KSC email. YOU will also register for classes for when you return to KSC through MyKSC.
- ☐ Complete ALL required forms for the GEO (see Next Steps email for these forms). This includes your Passport Information, Visa Information, and Travel Information.

- ❑ Receive your bill/s from KSC and/or from your program site and pay your program fees.
- ❑ Ensure that all holds on your student account are cleared.
- ❑ Make financial arrangements:
  - Contact your bank to find out their policies on ATM withdrawals: perhaps your bank has a partnered bank overseas that will not charge a fee for withdrawing cash in local currency. ATM withdrawal is the most convenient form for acquiring cash overseas.
  - Contact credit card companies and inform them that you will be living in a new place; this way they will not close your account for security reasons. Ask your credit card company what benefits you have if items are lost, broken, or stolen, AND the policy for obtaining a cash advance while you are away.
  - Give power of attorney to your parents or guardian so your banking needs may be met.
- ❑ If you want to live on-campus when you return, contact the Residential Life Office at [reslifeadmin@keene.edu](mailto:reslifeadmin@keene.edu) or 603-358-2339. If you would like to discuss off-campus options and have questions about subletting, etc the Office of Student and Community Relations at 603-358-2994.
- ❑ Do you know where you'll be living? If you haven't received notification of your housing placement, you may contact the Global Education Office.
- ❑ Begin packing. See our tips that are contained in this handbook regarding packing.
- ❑ **NSE:** Communicate with the NSE coordinator at your host school.

**To do one day prior to departure:**

- ❑ Make sure you have all your paperwork in order: passport, student visa, Insurance card, plane tickets, etc. **Make two copies of everything – leave one copy with your family and take one copy with you. Save electronic copies of all essential documents (ex. Passport, I.D., Visa, etc.).**
- ❑ Review arrival procedures and on-site contact information. Put your emergency card in your wallet or purse.
- ❑ Confirm your travel arrangements and establish a time to contact your family to let them know you've arrived safely.

Register with the US Consulate in your host country if leaving the U.S.

<https://step.state.gov/STEP/Pages/Common/Citizenship.aspx>



## **While You're Away**

### Logistics

- ☐ Report your study away contact information to your GEO advisor via online form. The form will be sent to you shortly after your arrival at your program location.
- ☐ Confirm your arrival with family.

### Academics

- ☐ Attend all classes and seek out assistance when needed. On site staff will be able to assist you with any challenges you might be having.
- ☐ Register for next semester classes via MyKSC. Should you need assistance with this contact your GEO Advisor
- ☐ If you did not get prior approval obtain and retain all course syllabus you would like to transfer back to KSC.

### Health and Safety

- ☐ If you have one, carry your cell phone with you.
- ☐ Know the contact information of your onsite contact.
- ☐ Be conscious of surroundings

### Financial

- ☐ Understand all fees you will be charged to utilize your credits cards and the ATM
- ☐ Set up a bank account if necessary

### Career Development

- ☐ Set up informational interviews
- ☐ Immerse yourself in the culture
- ☐ Study the language

## **After You Return**

### Re-Entry

- ☐ Review the stages of reverse culture shock.
- ☐ Stop by the GEO to share your experiences.
- ☐ Seek out ways to share and maximize your experience with others.
- ☐ Sign up to be a Global Ambassador.
- ☐ Enter the annual photo contest put on by the GEO.

### Logistics

- ☐ Complete the evaluation survey. This will be sent to you via e-mail shortly after you return.

### Academics

- ❑ Meet with your academic advisor if you have any questions about how classes transferred back. As well as where you stand academically.
- ❑ Transcript?

### Career Development

- ❑ Meet with career and academic advising to analyze your experience, skills gained and how to articulate them on your resume.

## Host Location Questionnaire

### **HISTORY**

- Name the national heroes and heroines. (Explain why they are considered heroes/heroines)
- What is the history of the country's relationship with the United States?
- What are the national holidays? Can you, as a visitor to the region, participate?

### **POLITICS**

- What is the current political structure of the country?
- Who are the major current leaders? What are the major political parties?
- Is military service compulsory? (If so, for whom and for how long?)

### **RELIGION**

- What are the country's dominant religions? Is there an official state religion?
- What are the important religious ceremonies, observances, holidays?
- Are there religious conflicts in this country? (How do members of the dominant religion feel about the others?)

### **FEMALE/MALE RELATIONSHIPS**

- Are there separate societal roles for men and women? If not, are men and women considered equal in this country?
- What are the rules/norms for "romantic" relationships in this country? What is the norm regarding premarital sex?
- Do young people date? If so, do they date in groups, in couples? Are relationships formal or informal?
- What are the rules/norms for relationships? Is it OK to hold hands, touch, and kiss in public?
- In what type of social activities do young people participate?

### **FAMILY**

- What is the common form of marriage ceremony and celebration? What are the attitudes towards divorce? Family planning? Contraception? Abortion?
- What is seen as the ideal family size? Is the typical family nuclear or extended?
- What is the legal age for voting, marriage? Driving a car? Are there differences for men and women?
- When do children usually move out of their parents' home and establish their own households?

### **SOCIAL ETIQUETTE**

- What are the special privileges of age or sex?
- When is one expected to present or accept gifts? What kind of gifts?
- How do people greet each other? Are there differences based on social status, age, or sex?
- Is there traffic/driving/pedestrian etiquette?

### **DRESS**

- Is there a traditional or indigenous style of dress? If so, describe it. Who wears it and when?
- What is appropriate dress for you as a foreigner?
- Are there special dress customs you should know about? (i.e. taking off your shoes in certain places?)
- What types of clothing must you have for various occasions you might encounter?

**FOOD**

- What foods are most popular? How are they prepared?
- How do people eat? Manners? Utensils? Customs?
- Are there taboo foods that are not considered edible or that aren't permitted for religious reasons?

**LEISURE**

- What are the favorite leisure activities of adults? For young people?
- What are the popular sports? Is there a national sport?

**HEALTH**

- What kinds of health services are available? Where are they located?
- Are there common home remedies for minor ailments? What are the attitudes towards folk medicine?
- Is the water drinkable?
- Which immunizations are required to enter the country? Which are advisable?

**VALUES**

- What is taboo in this country? What topics are taboo in conversation?
- What type of moral code is followed? (Christian, Muslim, Confucian) How does this moral code influence attitudes towards drinking alcohol, drug taking, gambling, and pre-marital or extra-marital sex?

**EDUCATION**

- Is education free? Compulsory to what age? Available to all?
- In schools, do age, sex, race, caste, and class segregate children?
- What kinds of schools are considered best---public, private, religious?
- What style of teaching prevails in schools (rote learning; importance of exams; lectures...)?
- Describe the university system. What is the school year calendar? What is the grading system like?

**DAILY LIFE**

- Are the prices asked for merchandise fixed, or is one expected to bargain? How is bargaining conducted?
- Is it OK to touch merchandise for sale? Does touching indicate a desire to buy?
- When does the normal workday begin and end? Is there a siesta (break) time?
- What is the customary time to visit friends?

**BEING A VISITOR**

- How will your financial position/social status compare with the majority of people living in this country?
- Do these people generally "like" people from the U.S.? Other non-locals?
- How many U.S. natives live in this country? Are major daily newspapers friendly towards the U.S.?
- When you arrive, must you register with city officials? The police? The U.S. Embassy?
- What regulations apply to you as a foreigner? Will you need visas to travel to neighboring countries?
- What should you do if you find yourself in legal trouble?
- Are there special laws governing the activities of non-locals that you should know about?