



A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO STUDY ABROAD IN QUEENSLAND

Prepared by the Center for Global Education

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SECTION 1: Nuts and Bolts

1.1 CONTACT INFORMATION

This 2010 course has a website (<http://academic.hws.edu/Kendrick/OZ2010>) that is chock-full of useful information that is applicable for your program. Sign up for the RSS feed and encourage your family and friends to do the same. We will be posting photos and updates just for them when we are in country. Updates will be posted over the summer. Email and the program FaceBook site will be used to keep you updated about any changes or new plans. Be sure to check your email for important information during the summer.

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Contact for: Paperwork, general inquiries

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1.2 PROGRAM PARTICIPANT LIST

Fall 2010

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1.3 TENTATIVE TERM CALENDAR

Fall 2010

Depart U.S.	August 26, 2010
Arrival in Brisbane, travel to Moreton Bay	Aug 28
Orientation	Aug 29-30
Moreton Bay Ecology Field Trip	Aug 31-Sept 3
Travel to Brisbane, start homestays	September 4
Classes at UQ begin	September 6
Long Weekend/Explore Brisbane	Sept 10-12
Lamington National Park excursion	Sept 13-17
Heron Island excursion	late night Oct 8-Oct 15
Carnavon excursion	Oct 25-29
Australia leg ends, farewell dinner	Nov 4
Homestays end	Nov 5
Student break	Nov 5 - 14 Free to travel on your own
Transit to Wellington NZ where program reconvenes	Nov 14
New Zealand portion of program	Nov 14 - 25
Program ends in Auckland NZ	Nov 28

1.4 PASSPORTS AND VISAS

By now you should have your passport in hand. If you are a U.S. citizen you will also need to secure your electronic visa (ETA) from our travel agent when you book your ticket (she'll take care of it if you book with her and provide all the requested passport information). If you choose to fly independently then you will be responsible for obtaining your own electronic visa (ETA) on line by going to the following website and completing all the requested information: <http://www.eta.immi.gov.au/>. Be sure that you list the purpose of your visit as an educational study tour rather than 'university study' (because university students need a much more complicated visa that is NOT necessary for this program given the duration of time spent in Australia).

Getting the e-visa is a very simple matter and all you will receive back once it is processed is a confirmation number just in case there is any trouble at immigration inspection. If you are a citizen of any other nation, you should check with Amy Teel of the Center for Global Education at HWS to find out whether a paper visa is necessary and if, so, the application process for a paper visa. You WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ENTER AUSTRALIA without either an ETAvisa or a paper visa.

U.S. citizens do not need a visa for New Zealand unless staying longer than 90 days. Citizens of other countries may, and should have applied already if so. We strongly recommend that you make two copies of your passport ID page and visa, if you have a paper one. Bring the copies but keep them in a separate location from the originals. Leave another set at home with your parents in a safe location. If in the unlikely event the originals are lost or stolen, it is much easier to replace them if you have good photocopies. If both the originals and copies you bring with you are lost or stolen the copies from home can be faxed so that everything can be replaced.

1.5 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC)

All program participants must obtain the International Student Identity Card (ISIC). Many of you have already done this (HWS students can get the card from the HWS Registrar's office). If you have not, please take care of this now. The card will provide you with an emergency medical insurance package; in the unlikely event that you are injured or fall ill and need to be evacuated back to the United States, the ISIC card will pay for much of the expense. Medevac services can be unbelievably expensive, so make sure you get your ISIC card! You *may* be able to receive discounts with the card (for admission fees and the like) that will identify you as a student, but this varies by country. Check out insurance coverage, discounts, emergency numbers, etc. at <https://www.myisic.com/MyISIC/Travel/Main.aspx?MenuID=5004> There is also a feature called ISICConnect (which is free but you must sign up for it online) and this gives you big discounts on phone calls as well as free voicemail, an email account and a fax service. Check this out at <https://www.myisic.com/MyISIC/Travel/Main.aspx?MenuID=5003> Finally, if your passport is lost or stolen, you will be eligible for special replacement services which will expedite the process and pay for a new passport. **PLEASE BE SURE YOU HAVE THIS CARD WITH YOU. Be sure to make a photocopy of the card in case you lose it; it will be replaced free of charge by ISIC as long as you have the ID number and issue date from the card.**

1.6 TRAVEL DATES/GROUP ARRIVAL

If you chose the optional group flight, you can expect to receive your plane tickets (or e-ticket reservation) shortly before departure. This flight is scheduled to depart U.S. on August 26 from Los Angeles and arrive in Brisbane via Auckland on August 28. You will be met at the airport by Professors Arens and Brown, just outside the baggage claim and customs area. We will immediately travel to Stradbroke Island for our first excursion to the Moreton Bay Research Station. A shuttle

bus will transport us to the ferry terminal (about a 1 hour crossing) . If you are arriving independently, you MUST schedule your arrival to get into Brisbane airport ahead of the group in order to join the bus transfer to the Stradbroke Island. Details of the group flight are below:

GROUP FLIGHT ITINERARY – FALL 2010

TO AUSTRALIA

26 AUG 10 QANTAS AIRWAYS #016 DEPART : LOS ANGELES 11:30PM
28 AUG 10 ARRIVE : BRISBANE 6:20AM

TO NEW ZEALAND

14 NOV 10 QANTAS AIRWAYS #115 DEPART : BRISBANE 8:45AM
14 NOV 10 ARRIVE : AUCKLAND 2:55PM
14 NOV 10 QANTAS AIRWAYS #4975 DEPART : AUCKLAND 5:10PM
14 NOV 10 ARRIVE : WELLINGTON 6:15PM

You will transit to Wellington through Auckland and under the terms of your ticket may go over as EARLY as Nov 5 but NO LATER than Nov 14. We have intentionally arranged a long enough layover in Auckland so that you can store all of your luggage except ONE bag light enough for you to carry around yourself for the two weeks in New Zealand.

TO THE U.S

28 NOV 10 QANTAS AIRWAYS #25 DEPART : AUCKLAND 3:40PM
28 NOV 10 ARRIVE : LOS ANGELES 6:35AM

NOTE: In Auckland you will claim your luggage, pass through the inspection area and take all but one piece (and a carry-on) to a storage facility that we will arrange for you. You will then need to get to domestic check-in and recheck your bag for the flight to Wellington. When we return to Auckland, you can get your luggage out of storage and check in for your international flight home or wherever you are headed next.

FOR THOSE NEEDING CONNECTIONS TO/FROM Los Angeles as a group:

26 AUG 10 American Airlines #3112 DEPART : NEW YORK JFK 4:40PM
26 AUG 10 ARRIVE : LOS ANGELES 8:20PM

28 NOV 10 American Airlines #107 DEPART : LOS ANGELES 9:00AM
28 NOV 10 ARRIVE : NEW YORK JFK 5:00PM

GENERAL TRAVEL SUGGESTIONS

You may want to contact your local travel agent about other travel information, especially if you are staying in your host country after the end of the program. The CGE's agency is Advantage Travel of Central NY (1-800-788-1980). Also in Geneva, Destinations Travel at 315-789-4469 (Cynthia Cannon) or Jeff's Travel Port at 315-781-0265 are convenient. In Schenectady you may want to contact Trevi Travel at 518-374-2756.

PLANE TRAVEL

The flight over is not too bad; you will be over the Pacific at night time. If you can sleep for several hours, you should not be severely jet lagged because you arrive in Australia in the morning. Avoid consumption of alcohol as this will exacerbate both dehydration and jet lag. Stick together and watch

out for each other. You will want to pack a few simple toiletries in your carry-on bag—toothbrush and the like. A backpack as a carry-on bag works well. Bring a book and music. If you bring snacks from the states, you will have to finish them or throw them away before you land. It is very important that you get up and walk every few hours to keep your circulation going. Women who use oral contraceptives in particular should be aware that they are at greater risk of blood clots if they do not make sure that they stand up and move around the cabin periodically, but we suggest that ALL of you get up and move around frequently. Plane travel can also be very dehydrating. Bring a water bottle (that you fill after passing through security—no liquids allowed through security) on the plane and try to drink 2 liters of water during the flight. Walking about and staying hydrated will make you much more comfortable while traveling and reduce unpleasant side-effects when the trip is over.

1.7 ORIENTATION

Orientation will take place upon arrival on North Stradbroke Island and is designed with two major purposes in mind. The first is to help everyone get to know one another so we can begin to work together as a unified team. The second objective is to provide a fun and safe environment to introduce all of you to the local environment and to help you understand logistical arrangements with UQ. Please understand that Australians are MUCH more laid back than Americans as a whole and even with a comprehensive orientation you may find that it takes a little while for all your UQ 'business' such as arranging for library cards, internet access, etc. to be up and running. Be patient and don't expect snappy service.

TIME DIFFERENCE

Like the US, Australia has a number of different time zones. Eastern Standard Time (EST) is observed in Queensland. Geneva and Schenectady (NY) are 14 or 15 hours behind, depending on whether Eastern Daylight Time or (US) Eastern Standard Time is in effect. In Early September, here is how to figure out times: if it is 12:00 noon in New York, it is 02:00 AM in Brisbane. All of New Zealand is two hours behind Brisbane, so at 12:00 Noon in NY, it is 04:00 AM in New Zealand. Confused? Go to Timeanddate.com or check out the program web site.

FIELD TRIPS

In Australia, we will take four major excursions:

Moreton Bay Research Station, North Stradbroke Island
Marine and terrestrial ecology

Lamington National Park (Binna Burra)
Rainforest ecology

Heron Island, Southern
Great Barrier Reef
Reef ecology and snorkeling

Carnavon Gorge
Blowholes, Australian culture

In New Zealand, we will travel continuously, visiting:

A kiwi conservation project

Thermal springs and unusual flora and fauna near Rotorua

Volcanoes of the North Island

1.8 WHAT TO BRING

CLIMATE

Straddling the Tropic of Capricorn, Queensland's climate is subtropical, similar to Florida in the States. From November to March humidity is generally high throughout the state, but sea breezes bring some relief along the coast. Brisbane in the south has a hot and humid climate, particularly in summer, but winter is mild and sunny with cool nights (July and August). The best time to visit the northern part of the state is from September to November. Tropical cyclones can occur in the north from November to April (mostly during January to March). Rainfall is generally much less inland than on the coast, where marine storms or onshore thundershowers can provide moisture during the summer.

Gold Coast	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainfall (mm)	166	175	151	88	85	81	65	46	33	100	96	121
Rainfall (inches)	6.5	6.8	5.9	3.4	3.3	3.1	2.5	1.8	1.2	3.9	3.7	4.7
Min Temp (°F)	70	68	66	61	55	52	48	50	55	61	64	66
Max Temp (°F)	84	84	82	79	73	70	68	72	75	81	82	84

New Zealand lies at a higher latitude and has a cooler and more seasonal climate than does Australia. Although the ocean keeps temperatures mild all year round, weather can change dramatically from day to day or hour to hour as cold fronts or tropical cyclones blow through. New Zealand also has significantly higher rainfall than Australia, so you should always be prepared for wet weather when traveling in New Zealand. On average, it is overcast or raining about half of the time in New Zealand. New Zealand's climate is also influenced by its mountain ranges. Expect lower temperatures and more variability at higher elevation. And expect the climate to be wetter on the western (windward) side of both the North and South Islands. November to February are summer in New Zealand. Expect the warmest daytime highs during these months, particularly January and February.

Rotorua	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainfall (mm)	99	101	115	112	104	134	130	148	119	122	102	115
Rainfall (inches)	3.9	4.0	4.5	4.4	4.1	5.3	5.1	5.8	4.7	4.8	4.0	4.5
Min Temp (°F)	55	55	53	48	43	39	37	40	43	46	49	52
Max Temp (°F)	73	73	70	65	59	55	54	55	58	62	66	68

PACKING

How much to pack is our concern here, or rather: *How little to pack!* The rule of thumb is: pack light. Most students abroad do more walking than they do in several years in the United States. And often you are carrying your luggage, or a subset of it, around with you. Students who pack three suitcases are often sorry for it. There are several ideas out there about how not to overpack:

1. Pack up what you think you'll need, and walk around the block with it. Chances are you will decide on taking about half of that.
2. Or, trust the experience behind the above piece of advice, put what you planned to take abroad on your bed, and then remove half of it.
3. Overpacking is EXPENSIVE! Penalties for overweight/over dimensions luggage can be significant. In some cases, students have been expected to pay as much as \$2 or more per excess pound/square inch.

WHAT TO BRING

*Items marked with an asterisk can be purchased in Australia.

- 1 For School 1 or 2 Bound Field Notebooks
available at http://www.forestry-suppliers.com/product_pages/View_Catalog_Page.asp?mi=5726 Rite in the Rain Field book, item # 49497
- 2 Laptop (not necessary but useful -- see below for a discussion)
- 3 *Calculator
- 4 Watch and/or Alarm clock
- 5 *A 512mb USB storage device (sold as "memory sticks", "thumb drives", "microdrives", *etc.*)
- 6 *Notebooks (bring 1 from the US for notes on our first excursion)
- 7 This handbook

You may dress casually in Australia: shorts and tops, jeans, t-shirts (no holes). Bring some warmer clothes (jeans, sweaters, turtlenecks, and sweatshirts for the field trips to Lamington and Carnarvon Gorge). Layers are ideal; it gets warm by the middle of the day.

Evening out clothes: Men: dress shoes (no sneakers), pants other than jeans and collared shirts.
Women: closed-toed shoes (no boots) 1 or 2 nice outfits.

Walking shoes, sneakers

Beach and Reef

swimsuits (2)

*beach towel

*dive booties or old sneakers/aqua shoes for reef walks

Sunglasses

*Sun block (SPF 15 or higher)

Hat (Baseball cap ok, but big brim is best)

Long sleeved t-shirt for sun protection while snorkeling

Face cloth (not usually supplied in Australian accommodations)

*Snorkel gear (optional, only mask if prescription)

*1 pair cheap cotton gardening gloves (for work in reef flats)

Hiking Gear

1 Day pack that can hold lunch, rain gear, two water bottles, camera, notebooks etc. This might be the same day pack you would use as carry on, a book bag while in Brisbane.

*1 sleeping bag for use at some field stations and at 'backpacker' hostels

1 fleece jacket

1 waterproof outer shell (rain parka)

1 pair of rain pants

1 pair hiking boots (Broken in!!) (Light to medium weight ok)
1 wool hat
1 pair of mittens

1 nylon bag with toiletries
toothpaste/toothbrush
concentrated shampoo
concentrated soap
lip balm

Miscellaneous

1 camera (optional)
film or memory cards (optional)
1 *mosquito repellent
1 qt/ltr water bottle
1 pack cover (optional)
1 Flashlight or headlamp

Other

Compact binoculars if you own or can borrow them—great for birds, marine life, kangaroos!

Gift(s) for your host family

Personal medication (extra prescription, just in case), toiletries, cosmetics, sanitary items for first week 'til you know where to buy them.
Book(s) and music for trips

Luggage

Backpack (day pack) and larger backpack (or Duffel)

Note: You may bring no more than one carry-on plus two pieces of checked luggage for the international flight. For the domestic flights within New Zealand and for our coach once we are on the ground, you will be allowed only HALF this. The program has arranged for relatively inexpensive storage at the Auckland airport for excess luggage and the travel agent arranged your flights to New Zealand specifically with the notion that you will stop BEFORE going on to Wellington to store any gear you don't want to lug around New Zealand for the whole program. You must be able to carry everything you'll have with you in New Zealand in one bag that you can easily carry yourself. To ensure that you are not overburdened, we recommend that you finish packing at least one day before you depart for orientation. Try walking a quarter of a mile with all of your gear. If you cannot, you should re-evaluate what you do and don't need.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

More luggage than you can carry on your own
Expensive jewelry

Expensive electronics that you are afraid will be stolen (petty theft is the most common crime affecting students abroad.)

Other things to keep in mind:

Point 1: Australia and New Zealand have stores! These countries have stores that sell things like toothpaste and socks. Many brands will even be familiar to you. Also, you're going to want to do some shopping abroad for souvenirs, art, clothes, etc...so leave some empty space in your luggage.

Point 2: Bring a day pack large enough for a weekend away but not so large you break your back. You'll need a day pack to get your books/things back and forth around the city, and a 4000 cubic inch frame backpack is quite inconvenient for this! You can use the same day pack for field work. It should be big enough to hold rain gear, a jacket, water, your lunch, your notebook and camera. It's also handy if your pack also has room for some essentials and a bathing suit for a weekend trip to the Sunshine Coast. If you forget any of these essentials, see point 1!

Point 3: Choose the form of your luggage carefully. Many students find the internal frame backpacks efficient for getting around since they can be worn instead of being dragged or wheeled (not nice on cobblestones or dirt roads!) But there are options for all kinds of people and all kinds of travel. You know what you like best...we really just want to you to bring less.

Point 4: Bring some nice clothes. Check with the faculty director, a guidebook, or students, and they'll all likely tell you folks from the States are some of the most informal people around. That means that for most students going abroad, you'll be diving into a more formal culture with a more formal standard of attire. In general, bring at least some dressy clothes with you. It never hurts to look "good"—just remember that this is culturally defined. (See the section on fitting in, as well.)

PRESCRIPTIONS

If you have any medication you must take while you are abroad, please be sure that, if you can, have enough for the entire time you are away as it may be difficult to have prescriptions filled. Be sure to bring the written prescription (no photocopies) and a signed statement from your doctor describing the medication and the condition for which it is prescribed if you have a particular medical requirement. Also, please notify the Center for Global Education before departure if you haven't done so already. Immigration authorities may question medications in your possession and you should have proper documentation. Finally, it would be advisable to verify that a particular drug is not restricted in the host country (or others that you may plan to visit). Some countries ban certain drugs, even when prescribed by a doctor (for example, the drug Ritalin cannot be legally brought into some countries). The best advice is to be prepared and check either through your personal physician or through official government sources (such as the US State Department www.state.gov/travel/ or the Center for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/travel/)

LAPTOPS AND ELECTRONICS

We encourage you to bring a laptop if you have one. Please check on insurance issues before you leave. Most laptops have an adapter built into the cord. Check this and make sure it says "Input 100-240 v, 50-60hz." Both the voltage and frequency are different in Australia and New Zealand. Regardless of whether you bring a laptop or not, we are requiring all students to have a 512mb or larger USB storage device (sold as flash drives, memory sticks, microdrives, etc). Please note that you may NOT have internet access at your home stay. Instead, many of you will likely access the internet through the University of Queensland network.

Australian (and New Zealand) electrical power is 240v, 50Hz using a flat 3-pin plug (different from the US). Unless you have equipment that can handle 240v, do not bring it (US is 110v, 60 hz). There are two kinds of adapters. Plug adapters can be bought for about AU\$10, but these simply allow you to plug a US-type cord into an OZ/NZ type outlet. They do not alter the voltage. The second kind of adapter, the voltage converter, will convert 240v to US 110v, but they are more expensive. What you need will depend on what you want to do. Most laptops can handle the difference in power,

meaning that you might only need the plug adapter, not the voltage converter, but make sure you check first! Cameras or other electronics might not be as flexible. On the other hand, it doesn't make sense to waste packing space with a hair dryer from home along with a converter - just buy a cheap dryer there. For more information on electric power issues, you can visit www.laptoptravel.com/Info_ForeignElectric.aspx. This is an informative commercial site that also sells power adapters and converters.

Please note that petty theft is the most common crime affecting travelers. Please do not bring anything without first considering the impact of it getting stolen, or the reality of having to worry about the safety of these possessions all the time.

Two general rules for all electronics: 1) bring copies of your receipts. If your equipment looks new, upon return to the U.S., you may be asked to pay customs duties if you don't have a receipt to prove that you didn't purchase it abroad. 2) We recommend you investigate insurance coverage for your electronic devices and other expensive items. They might be covered by parents' homeowners' insurance policies.

JOURNALS

Have you thought about keeping a journal abroad? Many students write journals as a way of capturing and reflecting upon their experiences, even though some may have never kept a "diary" before. A journal (or diary) is a book of dated entries. The author can record experiences, dialogues, feelings, dreams, describe sights, make lists, take notes, whatever the writer wants to leave as documentation of his or her passage through time. **Journals are tools for recording and interpreting the process of our lives.**

Why should you keep a journal? Because a journal...

- is a keepsake that will record memories that you'd otherwise forget.
- is a keepsake that will record the person you are now—and how you'll change abroad.
- is a way to interpret what you're seeing/experiencing.
- gives you something to do on long plane/bus/train rides or alone in cafes.
- helps you become a better writer.
- is a good remedy for homesickness.
- is a space where you can express yourself with total freedom.
- is a powerful tool of exploration and reflection.

For more about keeping journals, download the CGE's Writing to Explore Journal Handbook at http://www.hws.edu/academics/global/pdf/journal_writers.pdf

DON'T BOTHER BRINGING...

Expectations: "Don't expect, accept," is a good attitude for students crossing cultures to have. How you set your expectations now will impact how positive an experience you will have abroad. This means that you can do a lot now to help ensure you will get the most out of your program. Simply put, examine your expectations and be realistic. You are going to a different country. Expect that things will be different. You have no idea how many things will differ or in what ways, and of course you may well be surprised at how many things are similar. But for now expect that *everything will be different*.

How you set your expectations now will impact how positive an experience you will have abroad.

Believe it or not, notions of the “right way of doing things” are entirely cultural and relative. Efficiency, manners, punctuality, customer service and “the rules” do not mean the same thing in different countries. Germans might be meticulously punctual. Italians might operate under a different conception of time (and being “on-time”.) The point here is not to draw national stereotypes but to understand that different countries organize things differently, and not all of them work well from the U.S. American’s point of view. So don’t expect people in your host country to define these terms in the same way as you do. And don’t expect to escape bureaucracy. But do look at how the people around you react to these things, and follow their lead. If they’re not throwing a temper tantrum and lecturing the mail clerk/waiter/train conductor, then neither should you.

You’d be surprised how ingrained our expectations are. We don’t see them as culturally-determined; rather, we see them as part of “the right way of doing things.” So you will get frustrated. Expect that too. But keep telling yourself that things are different, and remember that it’s not the local people’s duty to meet your expectations—it’s your duty to adjust yours to what is considered right and reasonable locally. “Don’t expect, accept.”

SECTION 2: Studying and Living Abroad

2.1 ACADEMICS ABROAD

There is much to learn outside of the classroom. Nevertheless, study abroad is also fundamentally an academic endeavor. No matter what *your* goals and expectations might be, the Colleges also have expectations of *you*. These include the expectation that you will take all of your academics abroad seriously and that you will come prepared, meet deadlines, read assignments, write papers or exams with care, etc. You will also be held to high standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism in written work, cheating or simply not pulling one’s weight in group work will not be tolerated. Having said that, as study abroad programs are uniquely well-suited to non-traditional learning (i.e. experiential learning such as field-trips, internships, or field research), you will likely find that you have never had so much “fun” working so hard. The key, however, is to realize that if the fun comes at the expense of learning, you will likely be very dissatisfied with the final results. The sections that follow are designed to answer the most commonly asked questions about academics and study abroad.

COURSES

The academic program consists of four classes:

Terrestrial Ecology of Australia
Marine Ecology of Australia
Geology and Biogeography of Australia and New Zealand
Australian Culture, Society, and Contemporary Issues

While in Brisbane, students will attend mandatory daily course sessions (see daily schedule pages for details) with short breaks in between class times. Classes will consist of lectures and discussions. Classroom work alternates with fieldtrips.

The Terrestrial Ecology of Australia

Examines the heritage of the terrestrial flora and fauna of Australia, and assumes a basic familiarity with the biology and ecology of terrestrial systems. The origins and uniqueness of Australia's flora

and fauna will be discussed in light of continental drift, past and present Australian environments. The course combines lectures and field-based work with essays and research reports to develop knowledge of Australia's unique terrestrial environments and to provide the skills with which to investigate them. Highlights of our field activities include a five-day excursion to the rainforest at Lamington National Park and a trip into the Australian bush at Carnarvon Gorge. The latter trip gives students further opportunity to examine and explore aspects of terrestrial ecology shaped by heat, drought and nutrient starvation.

The Marine Ecology of Australia

Assumes some familiarity with biological and ecological principles, sampling techniques, sampling and experimental design and statistics. The course draws together background knowledge of Australian marine systems and maritime resources with a variety of concepts and exercises in marine biology. The program takes participants from the rich diversity of the estuarine and coastal systems around Moreton Bay to Heron Island on the Great Barrier Reef. It combines classroom lectures and field-based learning with essays and research reports to provide an understanding of tropical marine biology and ecology.

Geology and Biogeography of Australia and New Zealand

Geology and Biogeography of Australia and New Zealand. The marine and terrestrial biology of Australia and New Zealand are unique largely because the geology of these landmasses is unique, and their histories characterized by long isolation. In this course students will explore connections between the geologic history of Gondwana and modern patterns in the biota. This course will be grounded in an overview of plate tectonics as expressed in both the passive margin of Australia and the active margins of New Zealand. We will explore the diversity of rock types and rock-forming processes, including the development of reef carbonates. We will then explore the processes of weathering and erosion that form the contrasting landscapes and soils of Australia and New Zealand. With this background in hand, we will apply the principles of biogeography to understand the diversity of landscapes and biota we see today, and investigate the vulnerability of the exceptional geology and biology of this region to environmental change. The capstone experience of the course is a two-week field trip to the North Island of New Zealand.

Australian Culture, Society, and Contemporary Issues

Draws upon the expertise of lecturers from a number of departments and programs (especially the Australian Studies Program and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Program) at the University of Queensland, as well as practitioners from a variety of fields. Among the topics that may be covered are: Aboriginal society and culture; European impact on the environment; sustainable agriculture and development; the Australian political system; the economy of Australia; health care and education; and nuclear weapons in the South Pacific. Discussions, journals, papers, and student presentations will provide a chance for reflection on the similarities and differences between the cultures of Australia and the United States.

Note that voting is compulsory in Australia and to get into that spirit, if you are a U.S. citizen you are required to register and vote in the November election. Be sure to register and make arrangements to either vote early (if that is an option in your home state) or receive and absentee ballot.

GRADES AND CREDITS

If you are studying on any HWS/Union program at any destination, you will be required to carry a full course-load and you will receive letter grades for your work, which WILL be computed into your

regular grade point average and will be posted on your permanent transcript. A full-time course load on our shared programs abroad is four courses and, if you have not been directed otherwise, this is the load you should expect to take.

HWS Students: As on the home campus, you may request to take any course OUTSIDE your major or minor on a Credit/No credit basis so long as you do so no later than two-thirds of the way into your course term abroad. Note that the deadlines for students abroad for exercising CR/NC are based on the “host” program’s calendar, not on the HWS calendar. You must contact the HWS Registrar’s office no later than two-thirds through your term abroad if you wish to take a course CR/NC.

Union students are not allowed to take any term broad courses PASS/FAIL. Union students will be enrolled in four full courses and receive academic credit for all of them.

ACADEMIC CULTURE AND STANDARDS

As is the case on campus, there is no single “standard” or classroom culture abroad; each professor will run his/her own classroom his/her own way and your job, as the student, is to adapt to his/her expectations and teaching style. This having been said, there are some general statements that can be applied to most classroom settings outside the United States. Here are some of the most prevalent and most pressing that are likely to affect the classroom “culture” you will experience and to which you must adapt if you will have any professors from the host country.

- 1) Learning is YOUR responsibility, not your professor’s. It is much less common abroad for a faculty member to seek you out if your work is deficient, your attendance is unsatisfactory or your understanding of content inadequate. Faculty abroad expect that you will ask for help if you need it – and if you don’t then you should be prepared for the consequences.
- 2) Listen carefully to instructions and follow them—the first time. Your Australian professors will assume that if they have given an instruction or written it in the syllabus, you will follow it. If you don’t, your grade may suffer.
- 3) Assessment (i.e. graded papers or exams) is less frequent and therefore each grade counts – a lot. In the U.S., we’re accustomed to frequent assessment and feedback. You normally receive a paper back quickly and with lots of comments. A first exam is usually returned before the second exam is given. This is NOT always true abroad. If you feel uncertain about how you are doing, make a point of sitting down with the professor to ask where you stand. For some classes the ONLY assessment may be in the form of a final paper or exam. Be sure you are prepared! Also note that in Australia, while there is one Australian faculty member responsible for each discrete course and your final grade, there will be lectures by guest speakers, graduate assistants who help review and assess your work, and discrete units within each course that may be presented and assessed by local ‘experts’ on that topic. This can be confusing so ASK for help if you are unclear about standards or expectations and please do not be afraid to request support/assistance from Profs. Arens and Brown if you have concerns about the structure of the course or the expectations your local professors have.
- 4) Unlike here where assigned readings are often discussed in class, faculty abroad frequently provide students with a list of required readings and also some supplemental “recommended” readings to further illuminate some of the themes emerging in class. However, these readings may never be discussed explicitly nor are you assigned homework designed to demonstrate your understanding of the readings. Be forewarned: whether or not readings are discussed, if they are assigned they are fair game for exams. You are expected to do the readings, to understand them and to incorporate them into your thinking about a particular topic. If you feel that you’re not “getting” something, ask questions.

- 5) Grading standards may vary from those you've experienced in the U.S. In Australia, an "A" is reserved for only the most outstanding and original work, with "B"s or "C"s being more of the norm for students who have clearly learned the material but aren't going the extra 10 kilometers. Similarly, you may find that you are rewarded or penalized for different skills than are normally measured in the States. Some cultures place a higher premium than others on rote memorization, others want you to think independently, and in others you might be expected to draw upon a basic factual foundation that is assumed rather than explicitly taught. If you aren't certain what a professor expects of you or what you can expect from him or her, ask for clarification. The Center for Global Education (HWS) or Office of International Programs (Union) and its staff CANNOT change a grade once it's been assigned nor intervene in its determination.
- 6) In most societies, classrooms are run more formally than in the U.S. (there are a handful of exceptions) and the division between student and professor is more marked. Unless/until you are told otherwise, here are a few basic "don'ts" about classroom etiquette:
 - Don't eat or drink in class.
 - Don't dress more casually than is acceptable for the culture.
 - Don't shout out an answer without being called upon.
 - Do not interrupt another student while s/he is talking, even if you disagree.
 - Don't put your feet up on desks or other chairs.
 - Don't address your professors by their first names without being invited to do so.
 - Don't enter a faculty member's classroom or office (other than for the scheduled class time) without knocking first.
 - Don't challenge a professor's grade or assignment. (You can and should ask for an explanation of how a grade was determined and what you can do to improve your performance.)
 - Don't assume that "dissenting" or original opinions are equally rewarded on exams and papers. Find out whether you are free to develop your own ideas or if you must demonstrate understanding and ability to apply the faculty member's ideas or themes.
 - Class attendance is mandatory, class begins early and being tardy is unacceptable.

STUDENTS WITH LEARNING OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Both the law and the custom abroad with regard to accommodation for special student needs are different than the law and custom here. If you have a physical or learning difference that requires accommodation, you should: 1) disclose this prior to embarking on the program abroad to find out about the accommodation that is available and how to gain access and 2) be prepared to find arrangements more ad hoc than they would be here on campus. You can normally expect to receive similar accommodations as you would here for his/her particular class(es) (such as extended time on exams or access to a note-taker, etc.) but these need to be arranged and agreed to well in advance with the faculty directors.

2.2 MONEY AND BANKING

CURRENCY

Australian currency is decimal based, with the Australian dollar as the basic unit. Notes come in \$100, \$50, \$20, \$10, and \$5 denominations. Coins are minted in \$2, \$1, 50¢, 20¢, 10¢, and 5¢ denominations. There are no pennies. The terms "nickel" or "dime" are not used, and of course, there are no "quarters." In May 2010, 1 USD = 1.12 AUD and 0.88 USD = 1 AUD. The New Zealand system is virtually identical, but the NZ dollar in May 2010 was 1 USD = 1.41 NZD and 0.70 USD = 1 NZD. You can get the latest exchange rates using the Universal Currency Converter <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>. Despite the fact that the U.S. dollar is worth somewhat more than the

Australian, you WILL tend to find things more expensive there than here because 1) you'll be in a large city and 2) they import MUCH more of their produce and goods than we do in the States and tariff these imports. Be frugal!

BANKING

Among the larger banks in Australia are the ANZ, Commonwealth and National Bank of Australia. All have branches on the University of Queensland campus. Banking Hours are similar to those in the US. Most banks have automatic teller machines.

Potentially the cheapest method to obtain Australian currency is by using an ATM debit card. A more expensive alternative is using the cash advance feature on credit card. The differences are:

1. If your bank card shows the Cirrus symbol (or if you know that it has the Cirrus encoding), then you can use this card at any of the ATM machines of the ANZ and the Commonwealth banks. This gives you direct access to the funds in your checking account. There is usually a minimal fee for accessing your own funds this way. Be sure to check on fees and the maximum daily withdrawal amount before you leave the States. If you have a bank card that shows the Plus symbol (or if you know that it has the Plus encoding), then you can use this card at any of the ATM machines of the ANZ bank. Again, any transfer fees are minimal. Make sure you keep track of any funds withdrawn this way, taking into account the exchange rate; otherwise you may overdraw your checking account.
2. If you have a bank card that is actually a debit card and it shows a MasterCard or Visa logo, you can use it at most ATM machines to access funds from your bank account. Again, any transfer fees involved are minimal. (Debit cards are not credit cards; the amount of a "charge" is immediately deducted from your checking account. Debit cards are less common in the US than credit cards.) Again, keep track of any funds withdrawn this way, taking into account the exchange rate; otherwise you may overdraw your checking account.
3. If you have a credit card, (MasterCard or Visa), then you can use it in most ATM machines to get a cash advance. There can be substantial fees involved to do this! Usually there is a transaction fee plus interest charges that will appear on your next credit card statement. You are essentially taking out a small loan. This differs from the transactions in 1 or 2 where you are simply accessing your existing checking account funds. This is the least preferred method of getting money. It may be less expensive for you to use your credit card to actually make the purchases you require than it is to get "cash advances". Do note, however, that many credit cards have now added a substantial transaction fee on purchases outside of the US, so consult your card company to know what you will be charged.
4. Any card showing the MasterCard or Visa logo can be used inside almost any bank at a teller to get cash. It will be either a debit transaction (see 2) or a cash advance transaction (see 3) depending on whether you are using a debit or a credit card. Note: An ordinary US bank card (showing no Visa or MasterCard logo) cannot be used to get cash from a bank teller, even if it has the Cirrus or Plus encoding.

Using your debit/credit card will almost certainly entail an exchange fee. Card companies recently added this charge, though they apparently do absolutely nothing in the transaction - it's just another free revenue stream. In any event, ask them ahead of time what the percentage per transaction will be.

Please be aware of your surroundings when you take out money from an ATM. This is a common place for theft so stay alert.

Although traveller's checks are a safe way to carry funds, they are often inconvenient and the rate of exchange is sometimes unfavorable. Some banks require a passport to cash them and then charged a substantial fee to exchange them to Australian dollars. If it is possible to obtain traveller's checks denominated in Australian dollars, then do so but be aware that they may not be accepted everywhere you want to be.

HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU NEED?

SPENDING MONEY

Students and families always ask us to estimate the amount of funds that they'll need for personal spending in Australia. This is VERY difficult for us to estimate as "typical" student spending ranges vary so widely depending upon resources available and personal spending habits. Having said that, previous students reported that the *average* amount of money spent in Australia/New Zealand before travel at the end of the program last time was \$2800 (US), with the low being \$1200 and the high \$6500! Be forewarned, however! If you are a power shopper, expect to travel every weekend, gamble or tend to consume large amounts of alcohol or food at night, you will certainly spend more. Most students tend to spend however much they have (we seldom hear of students bringing money back home with them), whether this is \$1000 or \$5,000 or even more. Our best advice is for you to sit down as a family and decide what you can afford and what you think is reasonable. Given that it is very easy to get money to you quickly if you underestimate (mom or dad can make a deposit at the ATM in the U.S. and you have access to the funds within 24 hours), it's better to bring less and ask for more in a pinch than to re-mortgage the home up front. If you're on a tight budget and need tips, ASK us for tips on doing more with less. You certainly do not NEED to spend \$2800!

You should figure approximately \$30-40 Australian dollars per week to commute from your home-stay to campus during the weeks we are in Brisbane. You will not have commuting expenses while you are on excursions. In all, you might spend as much as \$240-\$320 for the duration of the program on commuting. There are also exit taxes required to leave both Australia and New Zealand. Budget about \$50 for these. You will also need to plan to pay about \$100 to store your excess luggage in the Auckland, New Zealand airport while we are on our excursion there. Avoid this expense by packing only one bag.

A word about gambling: During the last three or four years we have occasionally received calls from parents concerned about the amount of charges appearing on bank cards or credit cards. They felt that our recommendations and estimates here about money were too low and not realistic. Thus far, in each case where our estimates have been far off, it has turned out that students were attracted to a very rich and active life at a local casino in Brisbane. BE FOREWARNED! Gambling can be addictive and is very, very expensive. In the long run, one seldom 'wins'. If you think you will give the casino a try, set a maximum budget IN ADVANCE and do not deviate from that sum.

2.3 HOUSING AND MEALS ABROAD

U.S. Americans are used to large living spaces, lots of privacy, endless hot water and access to the telephone, internet and cable TV. Most people in the world do not have the same expectations and get by with (sometimes much) smaller spaces, less privacy, quick showers, often turning off the water between getting wet and rinsing off, use the telephone for only very brief communications, don't have email and select from a limited menu of television offerings. Often there are economic and ecological reasons for these differences. Right now Australia is facing a significant draught and water is tightly rationed. PLEASE be aware of and considerate of this.

Your family home stay is one of the most important features of the Australia program. Your home stay family details will be sent to you via email about 10 days before your departure. These will include the names of the family members, ages, address, telephone number and a brief “bio” about the family/home where you will reside. Past students have mostly been satisfied by the quality of their home stays. We expect this year to be no different. However, part of the success of your experience depends upon YOU. Be flexible. Be open. Be polite. Do not expect things to be as they are at home. Try new foods. Expect to help out in the home. If a problem does arise, we encourage you to try to address this directly with your family immediately. If you aren’t sure how to approach the issue with your family, ask Professors Arens and Brown for advice. If this does not resolve the problem, discuss the matter immediately with Professors Brown and Arens. They, the staff at the School of Biological Science and the home-stay coordinator will assist you in resolving it to everyone’s satisfaction. Please do not take it upon yourself to make your own alternate arrangements.

Do keep in mind a few things: 1) a ‘family’ can mean anything from a widow in her 70s to a single-parent with small kids, to a working couple with no or grown kids. Do not assume your host family will be a certain way. 2) In modern Australia, almost a quarter of Australians were born in another country! You are as likely to be hosted by an immigrant family, say from India, or Vietnam, or Papua New Guinea, as you are to be hosted by an Aussie family with European roots. Please be open to this! 3) Brisbane is a large city and as in most cities, families with enough room to put up a long-term student visitor tend to live in the outskirts of the city. So expect to commute up to an hour each way to/from school. That’s what all the Australian students do, too (residential campuses are quite unusual in Australia). Commuting is a good time to catch up on reading, outline a paper, review your notes, write in your journal, people-watch or catch a couple of winks (be sure not to miss your stop!). If you view commuting as part of the adventure, you will not find it so burdensome. Bear in mind, however, that busses run on schedules and “I missed the bus” will only be an acceptable excuse for missed classes once.

It is usually a nice gesture to bring a little something from home to share with your home stay family. Gifts should not be expensive but should be representative of your home or region. For example, a student from Vermont might want to bring maple syrup (only in a can, not a bottle), a student from upstate NY a “regional” memento from Niagara Falls or the Adirondacks or Finger Lakes, etc. The latest CDs are also a good idea (although make sure your selection is suitable for a family perhaps with young kids). Books are an expensive luxury in Australia, so a popular best seller or your favorite author might be another option. Do keep in mind that Australia strictly prohibits the import of ANY agricultural products so upstate NY apples, Wisconsin cheese, etc will be confiscated upon arrival.

You are covered for a 3 daily meals for the entire duration of the program. At your homestay on dates that the program is in Brisbane, you will receive breakfast and dinner daily and your family will provide ‘fixins’ so you can bring a bag lunch (usually a sandwich and a piece of fruit or snack and beverage). While in the field, whether in New Zealand or at the field research stations in Australia, all your meals will be provided for you on site. Be prepared to assist with the food preparation and clean-up, however. The field stations and hostels are not four-star facilities!

Laundry

You will have access to laundry (2 loads per week) in your home stay. Please be flexible with the times and try and accommodate wherever possible a regular laundry schedule. If you need something in between, you should be prepared to hand wash it yourself.

Telephones

Local phone calls are not free in Australia; **please** discuss this with your home stay family. Come to some arrangement about how you will pay for them. For long-distance calls, we recommend either that you have people call YOU or that you purchase a calling card/calling plan for Australia. Also discuss with your family how long you can talk. This is likely the only phone (and perhaps internet) line that they have for all. Another popular option is to purchase an Australian cell phone with an international calling plan. This is an extra expense, but allows you the freedom to call anytime and talk as long as you can afford. Your host family can help you research options when you arrive.

Do not encourage your fellow students to telephone you at your home stay except for urgent reasons. Your host family's telephone number should never be given to casual acquaintances. Your family in the US should allow for the time difference. If it is 12:00 noon in New York, it is 02:00 AM in Brisbane. All of New Zealand is two hours behind Brisbane, so at 12:00 Noon in NY, it is 04:00 AM in New Zealand. When you do make or receive a call, try to keep the time to a minimum.

Note that few US cell phones will work in Australia or New Zealand, which use a different cell phone protocol than has been adopted in the US. You might want to contact past participants to buy their used phone or else pick up an inexpensive phone upon your arrival abroad.

NOTE: For all students and telephone services, it is usually less expensive for your family and friends to call or to 'skype' you from the U.S. to your cell phone than for you to call them. Beware, regardless of the phone plan you use, if you initiate a lot of international phone calls from your Australian cell you will rack up an enormous bill quickly. Although skype is becoming a popular option, be sure to talk with your homestay family (if they have internet at all) to discuss whether and for how long you can talk on skype. Most Australian internet plans are pay as you go for both time and bandwidth, both of which skype can burn rapidly. Also be aware that when the program moves to NZ you will need to get a new SIM chip for your phone in order to use it in this new country. Save your old SIM (Australia) unless you have signed up for a plan that does not require you return it.

By far the cheapest way to call the U.S. is by purchasing a long distance calling card in Australia and using it with a land line.

2.4 SERVICE ABROAD

U.S. Americans live in a service-oriented economy. We expect a certain level of service for our money. Many other countries have no similar service culture. Store clerks don't have to be polite and warm. Wait-staff in most countries do not make their money from tips and so therefore do not feel the need to give you a lot of attention or deference. Remember that you expect what is normal, and what is normal for you is not necessarily normal for the local culture. The good side to this different definition of service is that you can often stay for as long as you would like at a café and the waiter won't bother you too often or urge you to leave. Locals are clearly okay with the quality of service at cafes and restaurants—they would have a different system if they were not. So accept it and look to the local people to help you figure out how to get your check. In Australia tipping at restaurants is not necessarily expected. A 10% tip for very good service is appropriate and appreciated.

2.5 EMAIL

Email, Facebook and My Space have become such a part of student life in the United States that many students abroad are appalled by the lack of easy email/internet access. So take note:

email/internet access is not as universally available as it is in the U.S. Please realize that you may NOT have internet access at your home. Instead, many of you will likely access the internet mainly through the University of Queensland network, which means you won't have 24/7 access. Also note that if you DO wind up placed with a host family who has internet and agrees you may use it, Australian's must pay both for TIME on the internet and for USAGE. Usage means how many bits, bytes, megabytes, etc you are using. Many of our past students were unhappily surprised by the large bills their host families presented them with due to the students' excessive usage. Other families simply said that students could not use their internet because they didn't have the means to cover the expense themselves but felt uncomfortable asking their student for money.

Keep in mind that you have chosen to study in a foreign country and you will only enhance your experience if you spend your time engaged down under rather than on the internet with home. But you will also pay to do so unless you limit yourself to only brief check-ins on a regular schedule. In New Zealand, some of the places in which we stay will have web access. In most cases, this will be a pay-per-use type of arrangement, typically \$3-5NZ for the first 10 or 20 minutes with additional charges after that. We expect that you will be able to send/receive email a few times during the NZ portion of the program, but can make no guarantees about when, where and even if this will be possible.

Be sure to check your HWS/Union email when you can as that is how HWS will contact the group if we need to. Make sure you clean out your mailbox before you go – otherwise it could fill up and you could be unable to receive any new mail.

2.6 TRAVEL TIPS

For some of you, your term abroad represents your first excursion out of the country and your first real travel experience. Some of you are already seasoned travelers, or at least seasoned *tourists*. A term abroad will open up to you many opportunities for further travel. Sometimes there are so many choices it can be difficult to make decisions. It's worth thinking about what you'd like to do, and how you'd like to do it, before you go. Develop a strategy or philosophy to guide your travels. Perhaps you have two weeks to travel after your program. Do you plan a whirl-wind tour of 10 South Pacific islands? Or do you choose one or two places to get to know well? Do you put the well-known cities and sites on your itinerary, or do you choose lesser-known, out of the way places? This is a good time to do some homework, too, reading guidebooks (*Lonely Planet* does an excellent job with the Australian states and New Zealand). Consider what is important to you, what kinds of things you think would make the best memories later on. You might want to make a list of things you hope to see and experience while abroad, or maybe you even want to make a detailed plan; or maybe you want to leave it entirely open and be spontaneous. But thinking about how you want to explore now will enable you to make better use of your time.

AROUND THE CITY

The Brisbane City Council provides services for traveling about the city: bus, high speed "cat", or ferry. The bus system in Brisbane is extensive and a prepaid travel card (the "GO" card) can be purchased, which offers a discount on the on-the-spot fare. Because many buses travel along parts of the same route, it is important to know the particular route number(s) that will take you to your destination. You must hail the bus; they do not automatically stop, even if people are waiting.

The city is divided into 5 zones (concentric rings). The fare is determined by the number of zones through which you travel. This may well be confusing initially, but soon begins to make sense. Bus schedules are available at the information kiosk in the Queen Street Mall in downtown Brisbane, in the Brisbane City Hall building, and at many local libraries. You can buy a "Go" card that you can

add money to as you need it. You get a 50% discount in a given week once you have made a certain number of trips per week (see <http://www.transinfo.qld.gov.au/qt/TransLin.nsf/index/go> for more info). As some of you will be in home stays in the suburbs around campus, you should expect to ride the bus to and from campus. As you try to anticipate your travel expenses within Brisbane, figure that MOST students (not all) will live three zones away from school and you will need to commute for approximately 8 weeks (you don't pay any local transit costs during the periods you'll be visiting the various field stations or during the New Zealand program). Please plan accordingly.

Tickets for Queensland Rail services may be purchased at train stations. Queensland Rail can take you away from town for weekends and is an economical way to get to the Gold or Sunshine coasts for a little relaxation.

Taxis

Meter operated taxicabs are found in all major cities and towns. Taxis can be a reasonably inexpensive and convenient option when traveling in groups of 3 or so. Tipping is not expected. Taxis are a safe way to get home late at night but do make sure to have enough cash left for the fare.

FAMILIARITY AND TIME

Remember that around the world, most people don't move as often as U.S. Americans do. We're a very mobile society. Globally it is much more common for a person to spend his/her entire life in one city of one country. A result of this difference in mobility is that in general, people abroad spend much more time building relationships and friendships than U.S. Americans do. What this means for you abroad is that you might need to spend more time getting to know a place and its people before you become a "regular" at a café or life-long friends with your host family. This reality is one of the reasons we suggest you explore your city and surrounding areas and save most of your major travel for the vacation prior to New Zealand or after the program.

AROUND THE COUNTRY

If you do travel during weekends outside of the excursions associated with your program, consider limiting yourself to nearby destinations. Traveling around a region and visiting its different neighborhoods or towns can give you a fascinating comparative view and a sense of the diversity of the place.

SECTION 3: All About Culture

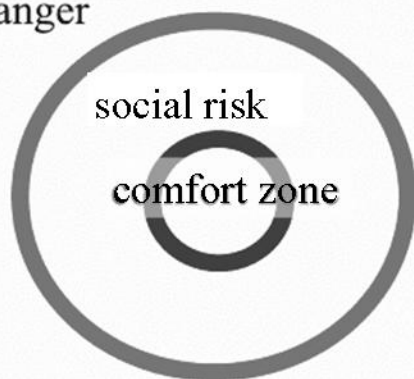
If you think back to your first year of college, you might remember both apprehension and anticipation. You were quickly hit with what you did not know—how to do your laundry, how to navigate the cafeteria, the necessity of having your I.D. card on you at all times, where to buy books, how to succeed in a new kind of study...the list goes on. What you were going through was a *process of cultural adjustment*. You were learning the rules of a very new game; it took time, patience, and a willingness to watch, listen and learn. What you are about to experience abroad is roughly comparable in character to the transition you went through coming to college, but it will be far more intense, challenging and rewarding. It's the next step. Congratulations on choosing it.

How long will you be abroad? About three months? That's really not all that much time to fit in what many returned students would call the most significant and amazing experience of their college careers (if not their lives). Although many students experience homesickness and/or culture shock and have good days and bad days, you want to try to maximize what little time you have abroad. This section will help you understand what *intercultural adjustment* is all about, what you should expect to experience, and how you can actively work to make this process a vibrant learning experience.

You are about to encounter a culture that is different from that with which you are familiar. The rules of the game will not be the same. Researchers of cross-cultural communication use several models to describe various aspects of the study abroad experience; this section will guide you through them. You may not think you need this information now, but many students who have crossed cultures—and come back again—say that they are glad they knew about these ideas beforehand. Take this handbook with you...our bet is that at some point in your time abroad, you'll pick it up again.

3.1 EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

danger



Much of the value of your study abroad program lies in the experiences of day-to-day living, the encounters and relationships you build with the people of your host country. The experiential learning model depicted to the left contains several key ideas that, if you keep them in mind, can help you get the most from your time abroad.

The experience of living within a new culture can be at turns exhilarating and frustrating. These frustrations can add up as you run into more and more differences between the culture you carry around with you and the host culture. One of the benefits of study abroad is this realization—that

you actually carry America around with you. It's your comfort zone, a set of values, ideas, expectations and manners, a language and a set of products. You've got to step out of this comfort zone if want to truly have a great experience.

There's no way around this: If you want to really learn, you'll have to go outside of your comfort zone. And going outside of your comfort zone means taking a social risk.

A good rule of thumb for students abroad; if you're not feeling *uncomfortable*, you're not in much of a position to learn anything. *You've felt too shy to go into that corner pub except with a big group of friends from the program. You're lost—but rather than ask someone for directions, you fumble with a map. You pass the town square and people are dancing in traditional costume—what's the occasion? Your host family invites you to a familiar gathering—but your American friends have planned a day away at the beach. You have lunch with your program classmates—again—instead of striking up a conversation with Australian students.*

Stepping up to these challenges involves social risk and possible feelings of discomfort. But they all offer opportunity as well. There's much to gain, so take a chance!

TOURISM VS. STUDY ABROAD

Most cities have their tourist attractions and these are great things to take in during your time abroad. But remember that most local people don't frequent these places. And remember too that the spaces where the local people live aren't frequented by tourists. There is a name for this: tourist infrastructure. Tourism is the largest economy on the planet. This infrastructure (with multi-lingual tour guides, menus in 12 languages, museums and historic sites and boutiques) is designed to do three things: make you feel comfortable, show you what most tourists want to see and separate you from your money.

If you understand the experiential foundation of tourism, then you realize that this is not the optimal space for students studying abroad to spend their time. Tourist infrastructures in fact insulate the traveler from the daily life of the country and this is exactly what you should want to experience while abroad. So, as a student abroad and not a tourist, take delight in the simple pleasures of daily existence and really get to know your neighborhood and your city. Find a local hangout. Become a regular. Go to restaurants without menus out front in five languages (they're also often less expensive). Get to know the merchants, waiters, and neighbors you bump into every day. Play basketball, rugby, cricket or football (soccer to us) with the local kids. These experiences often have as much (or maybe more) to say than every city's "tall thing to climb" or sanitized "attractions".

BREAKING AWAY

Hanging out all the time with other Americans will keep you from getting to know the real Australia. So too will missing out on activities because you have wait around for your boyfriend/girlfriend to call for the second time that week. And: did you really travel halfway around the world to spend *all your time* with people you already know or talking to people at home? So take advantage of invitations from your host family and new friends you meet. Go off exploring on your own or with one good friend.

It's okay to explore with an American buddy, but beware of the pack! Large groups of Americans (along with being immediately recognizable and off-putting) will keep you from really getting to know the local culture and people.

Going abroad is about *breaking away* from what you know, so make sure you actually do that and don't live abroad in "Island America". There are two other related things that will keep you from actually experiencing what is going on around you: one is the easy accessibility of internet cafes, and the other is cell phones. Technology allows us to be connected with people far away with great ease, but remember that is often at the expense of connections with those immediately around us (not to mention actual monetary expense!).

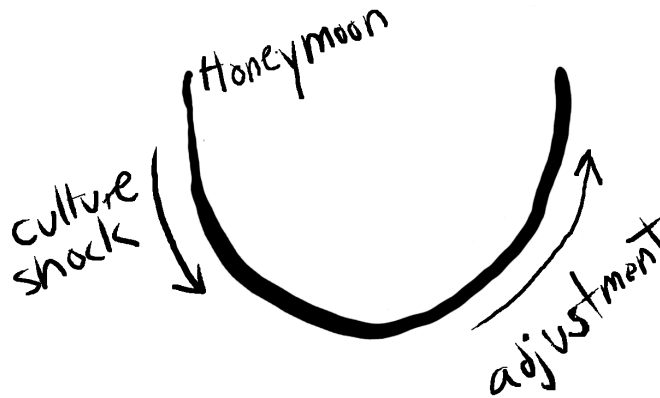
"OH YEAH, YOU BLEND"

It's a famous line from *My Cousin Vinny*, a film about culture clash right here in our own country. But blending is what the characters try to do, and it's what you should do. Why should you try to blend? First and foremost, it's a great way to learn about the culture. To blend in first requires you to actually look at the people around you. You must become an ardent and keen observer of people's behavior, language, etiquette, dress and, in more general terms, the way people carry themselves and treat each other. Local people will appreciate your efforts to understand and adopt some of these behaviors. It will show them that you respect and want to understand their customs and values. And therefore they'll trust you more, share more with you, and feel more of an immediate bond of commonality with you. You'll learn even more. Another reason you should try to blend in is safety. The reality is that foreigners are often the targets of petty crime or unwanted attention from the wrong kinds of people. Not sticking out in the crowd will keep you safer, and that bond of commonality will mean that local people will be more likely to look out for you.

3.2 ADJUSTING TO A NEW CULTURE

Just as you did when you entered college, you will go through a process of cultural adjustment abroad, where you will learn to operate in a different cultural system, with different signals, rules, meanings,

values and ideas. Your experience living in this host culture will change over time. Once the immediate sensations of excitement subside (*the honeymoon phase*), the experience of adjustment will likely be characterized by feelings of anxiety, stress, sadness, and fatigue, as things begin to seem very...*foreign*. In the Australia/New Zealand program, these feelings may be heightened by the simple intensity of the program: You are off to the field, constantly on the go, seemingly never in the same place for more than a few days at a time. This process of intercultural adjustment is often represented by the “u-curve”, plotted below:



Many students who study in English-speaking countries go abroad with the mistaken belief that they will have only minor cultural adjustments to make. Beware! Don't mistake the superficial similarities of the countries for *sameness*. While the differences may seem subtle at first glance, closer examination often reveals very different attitudes, values and “norms”. Unfamiliar social customs (etiquette), and colloquial expressions (“tube” for subway, “mate” for friend, “*craic*” for good conversation, “how are you going?” for “how are things?”) are just a few of the possible differences between countries that share the “same” language!

The truth is living in a culture different from your own is challenging and exhausting, especially early on in the process where almost everything is a mystery. What is happening is simple: you are realizing how different this new culture really is! And you are realizing that what you knew from before, what was familiar and comfortable to you, may not help you at all now. Some people call this “*culture shock*”.

You may react to “culture shock” in a number of ways: you may find yourself favoring time alone, preferring contact with friends or family at home over contact with foreigners or fellow students, and perhaps as a sense of rejection of the host culture (hopefully, for your sake, temporarily!). Don't let this phase of adjustment forfeit an amazing opportunity to learn and grow! It is important to bear in mind that the initial difficulties do wear off, and get much easier with active immersion in the culture that surrounds you. As shown on the U-curve, the initial low subsides as you become accustomed to the norms and custom of your host-country. This is called *adjustment*. Another note of good news: there are concrete strategies you can use to minimize emotional and social difficulties:

- * **Take time to re-energize with your friends.** Don't feel guilty about hanging out and comparing experiences...you can do a lot of processing in these sessions. Just don't isolate yourself from the culture in that group.
- * **Get out and explore.** Don't waste your time abroad in a mob of U.S. Americans! Strike off on your own, or pair up with a friend, be it another American on your program, your host brother or sister, or a local acquaintance you've cultivated. It's good to have someone to experience things with, bounce ideas off of—but it's also good to explore on your own and see what life throws your way.

- * **Narrow your world**—focus your efforts on a neighborhood, street or even a single place, and try to get to know that, using it as a window onto the rest of the culture.
- * **Widen your world**—wander around the city or take trips to places you’ve never really heard of. Be curious and open to the possibilities around you. View unfamiliar things as mysteries to be investigated.
- * **If you have a hobby or interest you pursued at home, pursue it abroad.** If you sang in a choir or played soccer, do those things abroad, too. You’ll meet local people who share that interest! One student we know of brought her tennis racket to France; every other day she’d play tennis at the nearby university, and this social sport became her doorway into French culture, introducing her to many local people she would never otherwise have encountered.
- * **Keep a journal.** Journals are powerful tools for becoming aware. You can focus on the changes going on within yourself, or you can focus your writing on what is going on around you, the weird and wonderful details of that culture. Or both.
- * **Write letters.** Letters can help you formulate your impressions and communicate your experience with others; just be careful, you could alarm family and friends unnecessarily if you write about your difficulties only and not your successes!
- * **Set small goals for yourself every day.** “Today I’m going to buy a newspaper and conduct the transaction in the local language” (not so difficult in Australia!). “This evening I’ll accompany my host parents to their relative’s home and see what happens.”
- * **Read.** . . .reading a book about the culture and civilization, be it a popular history or the musings of another traveler, can be relaxing and informative. It’s great when what you read sheds light on what you see or experience every day.
- * **Be open to invitations!** One student reported back to us that she never felt like she had successfully lived in a place unless she had had dinner in a family’s home and seen how normal people lived. In some countries inviting foreigners into one’s house is an honor—for both the guest and the hosts!

You may have your down moments, but if you persist in trying, eventually the daily victories—when you have successfully adapted to one or another aspect of the culture—will start to outweigh the setbacks and frustrations. Over time, as you gain confidence in your ability to navigate through a different cultural system, as your familiarity with local norms, values, and attitudes grows, and as you start to see things from different perspectives, your adjustment will enhance the exciting and happy time you originally anticipated your experience abroad to be.

One final note: everyone experiences cultural adjustment differently. This is just a general model to help you visualize the fact that you will go through a process of cultural adjustment, and that this process will include ups and downs, good days and bad, and moments of alternating homesickness and elation at the new culture that is all around you.

3.3 CULTURE LEARNING: CUSTOMS AND VALUES

Before you go abroad, it’s a good idea to start thinking about culture as being one part customs and one part values. As a person going abroad to immerse yourself in a different culture, you should be extremely flexible about your customs, that is, the little things that make up your daily routine, the way you do things, the level of service or quality of life you expect. You should, however, be more reserved about your values, that is, the core beliefs that are important to you. It won’t hurt you to eat a food you are not accustomed to (notice the word “accustomed”?) but say, for example, your host-father makes a racist comment about the recent wave of Asian immigrants. You shouldn’t feel like you have to agree with him just for the sake of fitting in. Be respectful, but be true to your values, too.

There's a connection between customs and values, however; the values of a culture are often expressed in its customs. The "mate" culture of Australia values a loyalty and depth of relationship that takes time to develop. Taking time to talk and listen over food and beverages illustrates that ones "mate" and oneself is more important than things or experiences. So as you adopt new customs, take time to reflect on the values that underlie them, and examine your own values as well. Is there something in this culture worth taking back with you, making part of your own core values? Perhaps the Australians can bequeath to you a daily appreciation of the good things in life without the stresses and urgencies of life in the States.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

EATING AND DRINKING

Food is one of the most important parts of any culture. Although we may have pushed eating aside in the United States, trying to make it fast and unobtrusive on the *real* concerns of our lives, for many cultures across the world, eating and food are still of central importance to family and social life. Be aware that many countries frown upon eating on-the-go and it is considered rude to eat food while you're walking across campus or down the street. Follow the examples of the locals: if you never see anyone else eating food as they walk, you can assume it is not appropriate. Following the logic above, a country's eating habits and customs suggest its values. In the café culture of the Mediterranean, a simple cup of coffee encodes the culture value of savoring each moment of life slowly. In Africa, to take another example, meals may be eaten with hands from a central bowl. Encoded in this is a statement about community, family and sharing. As a guest in another culture, you should be open to trying as many different new customs as you can, and this means kinds of food and modes of eating. But be realistic: don't expect yourself to eat beef if you're a vegetarian or down tripe soup for the fourth time if you really hate it. In your home stay, first and foremost, be honest on your application for housing. If you're a vegetarian, say so. If you can't handle cigarette smoke, write that. Our home stay coordinators will try to meet your needs as best as they can. But expect some compromises! Also, be honest and polite with your host families; probably not every family member likes the same kinds of food there, too. It should be a process of mutual discovery. Offer to shop with your host parent or share a favorite recipe from home as a way to broaden cultural exchange. But above all, try new foods. Experiment with menu items you can't necessarily identify. You never know what you'll discover. And in the spirit of cultural exchange, consider bringing your favorite recipe from home and offering to prepare it for your host family. Bon appetit!

While alcohol consumption varies in degree and social context from country to country, it is safe to say that, in general, few countries consider the kind of drinking prevalent on American college campuses to be socially acceptable. Many countries do not have strict drinking ages and therefore alcohol, not being illegal or taboo, isn't considered novel, and binge drinking is relatively rare. Many other cultures appear to have a much healthier relationship to alcohol than does society in the U.S.

Many English- and German-speaking nations, for example, including Australia and New Zealand, have lively pub scenes where people drink a lot; but the careful observer will note that 1) people drink more slowly than in the U.S., 2) people are expected to hold their liquor, 3) being loud and calling attention to oneself is taboo. To be seen stumbling drunk is embarrassing, not funny. Being a loud, obnoxious or destructive drunk is a good way get beaten up. In these cultures, you may also note that, with the exception of pubs that are explicitly for the student population, there is a broader mix of people who socialize together. It is quite common in England and Ireland, for example, for young adults to go to the pub with dad and grandma or even with a young sibling in tow. So, conduct yourself in a way that is appropriate for a mixed age crowd. You will find Australians and New Zealanders more like Americans than most other cultures when it comes to drinking habits. So, most of what you'll find will be pretty familiar. Please keep in mind, however, that you ARE a very

attractive target for crime when you are alcohol-impaired. REMEMBER THE QUICKEST AND EASIEST WAY TO MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF AND/OR GET IN A LOT OF TROUBLE IS TO DRINK EXCESSIVELY. USE MODERATION.

A common practice in Australia is to “buy rounds”. If you go to a pub with a group, one member of the group will ask everyone else what s/he is drinking and will then pay for all the drinks for everyone. Be prepared! If you accept the offer of a drink in such a scenario, YOU are expected to buy the next round for all. If your budget cannot handle this and/or if you know that you need to limit the total amount you consume, buy your own.

Mediterranean cultures value alcohol as a social lubricant and as an intrinsic part of meals. People will socialize in bars, but the careful observer will notice that the local people will space their drinking out over a long stretch of time, and eat small snacks in-between drinks. In this environment, it is not uncommon to leave drinks half-finished as there will be a lot of sampling over the course of the evening. If you finish everything, you’ll normally drink quite a bit more than you might here.

In a number of Asian countries, most notably Japan, you’ll probably be surprised by the quantity of alcohol consumed, especially within a short time-frame. You might even witness drunken behavior – within the confines of the bar or restaurant. But notice two important things: 1) this behavior ends when you cross the threshold from the bar to the street where drunkenness is NOT tolerated and 2) behavior that might be okay for a local is more likely to be disapproved of when displayed by a guest. Asians are very mindful of the differences between hosts and guests and each has explicit responsibilities to the other. In Japan you are likely to be showered with gifts and offers of hospitality by total strangers – which are okay for you to accept. In return, however, you must be certain that your own behavior is always seen as respectful.

Although you are all “legal” abroad, we strongly encourage you to drink responsibly and carefully. Drinking too much leaves you more vulnerable to pick-pocketing and other petty crime and, in excess, will lead you to display behavior that may fuel anti-American sentiment. If you choose to drink, be very aware of the quantities you consume. Also note that alcoholic drinks in other countries, beer and hard cider in particular, tend to have a higher alcohol content per volume than their U.S. counterparts. In Australia and New Zealand alcohol, including beer, is much more expensive than in the U.S., so drinking to excess can be a big drain on the budget.

SECTION 4: Safety and Health

4.1 SAFETY ABROAD: A FRAMEWORK

Take a look at the experiential learning model again. Notice that there’s “social discomfort”, and there’s **danger**. Taking social risks doesn’t mean putting yourself in harm’s way. What you “risk” should only be embarrassment and a wounded ego, temporary feelings that wear off. You can rely on your good judgment to tell the difference between risk and danger much of the time: for instance, there’s talking to the newspaper seller, and there’s wandering through a seedy part of town alone in the middle of the night. One poses the kind of social risk we’re encouraging, and one poses danger to your well-being.

Recognize, however, that there are instances when you **can’t** sense the line between social risk and danger simply because you don’t understand the culture. Sellers in the open market place follow you around. They seem aggressive. Are you in danger, or is this simply the normal way of doing things in your host country? Is there some kind of body language you can use to communicate that you’re

not interested? You can't know this unless you know the culture well. And to know the culture well, you need to get out there, learn, ask questions, and take social risks!

The best way to stay safe abroad is to be more aware, more alert and to learn as much as you can about your host-country.

Statistically the crime rate in most overseas locations where we send students is lower than the typical US city. However, because there is often a large student population in many of the locations, students can be lulled into a false sense of security. Remember that with your American accent and dress you will stand out and could be a target. Given that you will be in unfamiliar surroundings while you are abroad it is particularly important that you use your best judgment. Above all, be street smart: if you are going out at night try to go in groups and be aware of your surroundings. Look out for one another. You will be spending a lot of time in an urban environment so act accordingly. If something doesn't feel right, listen to your instincts.

Regarding your personal belongings, be sure to secure your important items (passports, traveler's checks, valuables) and to lock the door to your flats at all times.

DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR

The following is behavior you should avoid while abroad:

- 1.) Don't give out the names, numbers, and addresses of other program participants or your home stay.
- 2.) Don't invite new friends back to your quarters; meet in a public place until you know them better.
- 3.) Don't do drugs abroad (see below for why).
- 4.) Avoid American hang-outs (McDonald's, Hard Rock Cafes, etc.) and avoid being in large groups of Americans.
- 5.) Don't wander alone in an unfamiliar city where you don't know the good areas from the bad.
- 6.) Don't drink too much in public; it may make you look foolish and you will be more vulnerable.

4.2 HEALTHCARE AND INSURANCE

Standards of medical care are quite high in Australia and New Zealand: socialized medicine with universal coverage. We will have access to the UQ Infirmary. Should you need to seek treatment, the resident directors and local coordinators can assist you either through the university or elsewhere in Brisbane. Normally this is a reimbursement situation and you will need to pay up front and keep all receipts, prescriptions, and invoices for reimbursement. Be sure to ask for a copy of your medical records if you receive treatment abroad. These are important to continuity of care and also for insurance purposes.

For some of you, your parents' insurance policy will cover you. If this is not the case, all HWS students are covered by the Colleges' mandatory medical plan, which is provided through Excellus of Upstate New York. For Union students, if your parents' policy does not cover you, we strongly encourage you to purchase a supplemental plan for coverage abroad.

HWS students: Be sure that you bring your Excellus-issued ID card with you. On it is your name, the group policy number and info for medical providers. Note, that you will not be able to access the toll-free number on the card from overseas. So, if you need to speak with the insurance company, either have your parent(s) call the toll free number for you OR use the internationally accessible number: 1-585-325-3630. Normally, you will have to pay for each non-emergency office

visit and obtain an official and detailed receipt of the treatment you have received with the date of treatment. Then you must present that receipt to the insurance company for reimbursement. In case of emergency, you will be treated first and billed later. Every attempt will be made to contact your parents/emergency contacts if hospitalization or surgery is necessary. In the most extreme cases, the insurance provided by your International Student ID card will cover the cost of evacuating you to the U.S. or Europe for treatment if adequate care isn't available on site.

For more information about your student medical insurance plan, visit the plan's website: www.excellusbcbcs.com.

Please remember to get your ISIC card before you go, as it provides some insurance coverage that is very important to have. The coverage includes evacuation, repatriation and some additional medical/accident protection. (see section 1.5).

4.3 WOMEN'S ISSUES ABROAD

American girls are easy. A special word to women going abroad: the sad truth is that some foreign men believe this stereotype to be true. How they may have arrived at this conclusion is not hard to surmise if you watch a little TV. What this means for you is that certain behaviors in public (drunkenness being a big one) may get you unwanted attention from the worst kinds of people. Again, blend in by watching the behavior of those around you and adopting it as your way.

4.4 HIV

HIV is equally or more prevalent abroad and just as deadly as it is here. Sometimes Americans abroad lower their guard and engage in activities that they never would back at home, feeling somehow "immune" or "invincible". Resist these thoughts! Also, in a different context, many Americans are unsure of the cultural cues involved or are unsure of how (or whether it is appropriate) to talk about sex. Don't let this uncertainty get in the way of your safety: get to know your partners, use a condom, and be aware of safer sex practices.

4.5 DRUGS

Each year, 2,500 U.S. Americans are arrested abroad, 1/3 of these arrests for possession of illegal drugs. So here it is in simple terms: Don't do drugs abroad. If you get caught doing drugs in another country you are fully subject to their laws (which are often more stringent than our own) and chances are good that you will spend time in prison, or worse: Some nations have the death penalty for those found guilty of drug trafficking. Being a U.S. citizen gives you no special privileges. The U.S. embassy will not go out of its way to help you out. The Marines will not execute a daring amphibious landing to rescue you. And, HWS can do nothing to intervene other than to call your parents and advise them to hire an international lawyer – fast and at their own expense.

There are three key things to understand about this issue (drawn from a study of U.S. Americans in prison abroad by journalist Peter Laufer):

1. Most nations adhere to the Napoleonic code, which presumes the accused to be guilty until proven innocent.
2. Few nations grant bail between arrest and trial.
3. The State Department will rarely intervene to aid an accused or convicted American for fear of upsetting relations with the host country.

DON'T DO DRUGS ABROAD! Use of illegal drugs is, on top of everything noted above, grounds for being returned home to the US (to your parents' home – not to your college) at your own expense and normally at the forfeit of academic credit (and tuition dollars) for the term. If you are caught using drugs abroad by the authorities, the only assistance the Faculty Directors and your home campuses will provide is to refer you (and your parents) to legal counsel. We cannot and will not intervene in matters between you and the local authorities. Breaking the law there is simply unacceptable and could be a decision you will spend a lifetime regretting.

4.6 TRAFFIC

Traffic is a major health hazard for U.S. students in Australia and New Zealand! In both countries, traffic drives on the left and your “natural” instincts as a pedestrian will be dangerous habits you will need to break. **YOU MUST ALWAYS MAKE YOURSELF LOOK BOTH WAYS BEFORE STEPPING OFF ANY CURB!!!** Always cross in the cross-walks, and obey the right-of-way rules. Pedestrians don't have right of way in most circumstances and drivers will not expect to stop for you. Traffic safety and the roles of drivers and pedestrians are deeply engrained in a car-oriented culture such as the U.S. When going abroad, it's important—essential—to understand that like everything else, traffic rules differ from country to country. This takes some getting used to!

A final word about traffic: given the differences in the traffic rules but also patterns and driving customs, we strongly advise **AGAINST** ever renting a vehicle and driving yourself while abroad. Public transportation in most nations is far better and more accessible than it is here. Use it!

4.7 POLITICS

Don't read the newspaper? Unfamiliar with what's happening in Washington or New York, let alone the events shaking Paris or Moscow or Delhi? You're in the minority. People around the world, by and large, know a lot about politics and spend a lot of time talking about it. Not just their politics, *our* politics. So it is very important to read up on what's going on in the country you're going to, and what's going on here, too. We can pretty much guarantee you that people will press you for your opinion of the current U.S. administration or the next stop on the globe-trotting war on terror.

You can learn a lot from talking politics with surprisingly well-informed foreigners. Some of you might, however, be on the receiving end of angry talk against the United States. Second to the surprise over how knowledgeable people around the world are about politics is how angry many of them are over U.S. policies. In general people are very good at distinguishing between U.S. citizens and the U.S. government, but in some cases you might feel the need to remind them of this distinction and to diffuse some of the anger by saying that you might not necessarily agree with the policy either. It's an instance where you'll have to use your judgment. As you re-examine some of your values over time, you might also find yourself questioning some of your political beliefs. And you might change other's minds as well. Eventually people all around the world will have to come to the table and talk out their differences...you might as well be in on it early. A key to success is listen carefully and don't be reactionary. Listening is the first and most important step to real communication...on any topic.

One good way to learn about the political scene is to check out some local newspapers. Here is a link to the Sydney Morning Herald: <http://www.smh.com.au/>

SECTION 5: Coming Back

5.1 REGISTRATION & HOUSING

HWS Registration for Spring 2011

The Office of the Registrar will email instructions to you on how to register when you're abroad. You will be directed to the Registrar's webpage for the registration dates and course catalog, which is now only available online. You should not be at any registration disadvantage due to your off-campus status. Be aware of time differences and remember that there may only be a small window of time for you to register, so plan accordingly. If you will be on a required excursion or break during your registration dates, you may contact Linda Breese [breese@hws.edu] in the Registrar's office and she can register for you. **Also, be sure to check before you leave HWS that you do not have a financial or administrative hold on your account or you may be unable to register.**

Union Registration for Winter 2010

The Registrar will contact you during the 5th or 6th week of Union's term with instructions for registration. The word "Registration" will be in the subject line. Students will need to reply to the initial email before further instructions are sent.

If you have any questions please contact the Union College Registrar's Office at (518) 388-6109 or email: registrar@union.edu

HWS Housing for your return

Students going abroad in the fall will be invited to co-sign for a room with a student going abroad in the spring as soon as spring decisions are announced. If you are a fall abroad student who does not co-sign for a room, you will have to work directly with Res Ed on your housing assignment and should be aware that choices will be limited.

Please note that only rising seniors will be considered for off-campus housing status and you must apply for off-campus approval by the same process as students on campus. **DO NOT SIGN A LEASE UNTIL YOU RECEIVE WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION.**

5.2 REENTRY AND READJUSTMENT

This information is designed to help you prepare for the transition back "home". It is organized into two themes: *Closing the Circle* looks at a few things you can do now to prepare for the next phase of your international experience, coming home (or reentry). *Opening New Doors* suggests ways you can keep your international experience alive and relevant, including information about some of the programs the CGE offers for returning students.

CLOSING THE CIRCLE

Are you ready to leave this place? Have you wrapped up all your academics? Think back to all the times over the last few months (or in those months of planning and anticipation) that you said "before I leave I'd really like to..." Now's the time to review this list and see if there's any way to fit a few more of these things in before you go. We hope this will ignite a lifetime passion of travel and intercultural endeavor on your part, but although many students say they will return to their host

country again, in reality most do not. So get out there while you can and have as few regrets as possible.

Think about all the photographs you've taken over the last few months. Did you really photograph everything that's important to you? How about what you see on your walk to class every day? Or your host-family? Do you have a photograph of your favorite café or restaurant, or your host-country friends? Don't end up with a thousand pictures of churches, temples or castles and none of the things that make up your day-to-day life, because it's those commonplace details you'll think-and talk-about most when you're back.

An idea: do a "day in the life of" photo-shoot. Photograph your whole day from morning till night, so you can visually answer the question "what was a typical day like".

PACKING UP

Remember the airline weight limits you worried about before you left? They still apply. Check with your airline if you don't remember what they are. Now might be a good time to ship a box home—it will arrive just as you are returning from New Zealand. Remember that you'll likely be tired on the way back, and that jet-lag tends to be worse coming home than going away.

Now might also be a good time to pack up some things you wouldn't have thought about bringing home otherwise. Think of the food you've (hopefully) grown to love over the last couple of months. Is there anything you'd like to share with your family, or just have at home for a taste of your host-country on those days when you're missing it? Are there any recipes you'd like to have? Now's the time to ask about them and write them down.

Other things you might want to pack up include memories. If you've been keeping a journal, the last few weeks are a great time to reflect on your experience. The times in peoples' lives that are characterized by change often have a crisper quality to them; every experience seems to be imbued with a deeper meaning. Try to capture this in your writing. These entries will mean a lot to you years from now when you want to refresh your experience.

Ask yourself some questions:

- What did I accomplish while abroad?
- What did I learn about myself?
- What did I learn about this country?
- What friends did I make, and what did they teach me?
- What will I miss the most?
- What am I most looking forward to?
- What does this experience mean for my future? Will I live differently now?
- What did I learn about my own country and culture while abroad?
- Do I want to return to this place? What have I left undone?

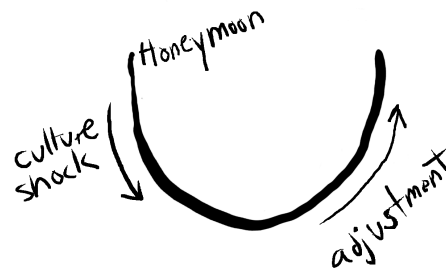
You'll want to ask yourself these questions again after you've been home for a while, but thinking about them now can be rewarding and can help you put a little closer on your experience.

COMING HOME

The first (and often surprising) thing to know about coming home is that in many ways you will feel like you did when you arrived in your host country a few months ago: exhausted and excited.

Probably it will feel as great to be home as it felt to be in your host country for the first few days, though for different reasons. You'll enjoy some home cooking, calls from old friends, and telling your family about your experiences. You may be thrilled to pull all those clothes you left behind from the drawer and put on something different for the first time in some weeks.

But, just as your initial elation at being in a new and excited place was tempered by a realization at how foreign and unfamiliar it felt, your honeymoon period at home may also start to not seem totally right. Things that you expected to be familiar may now seem quite alien. You might think your family throws too much away or uses way too much water. The produce in the supermarket may seem unfamiliar. You may be dismayed at how fast-paced and rushed US culture is, or frustrated at how little people actually want to hear about all your experiences (or look at all your pictures). You will also be returning from the bloom of late spring into the dark depth of winter. Just the colder temperatures and shorter days may throw you for an emotional loop. You may not experience every single one of these things, but most of you will experience some of them. The most important thing to realize is that this is totally normal, and the ups and downs you're experiencing is frequently called "reverse culture shock". It actually often gets mapped just like the U-curve:



The most important step in being ready for reverse culture shock is to expect it, and to realize that most of it is caused not by changes in home, but changes in you. You won't know how far you've come until you can reflect on the journey from the place you call(ed) home. This is actually a great time to not only learn about yourself and how you've grown while abroad, it's also a time to learn about home from a far more objective perspective than you've ever had before. Lots of students come back saying that they never felt more American than when they were abroad, and never more foreign than when they were back in the US.

The first thing to do is relax. Like culture shock the first time around, you'll get through this, and end up stronger for the experience. You'll have your ups and downs, good days and bad. Some of the same coping skills you used to get you through the low points while abroad will serve you well here—reflect in your journals, keep active, rest and eat well, explore your surroundings with new eyes. Soon you will have adjusted, though we hope that you've never quite the same as you were before your experience abroad!

OPENING NEW DOORS

While the last section dealt with things you needed to address while still abroad, this section examines your (new) life at home and back on campus. And while we encouraged you to put some closer on your experience abroad, now we're going to suggest you take the next step—figuring out what doors have opened to you as a result of your experiences.

DO YOU WANT TO STAY INVOLVED WITH STUDY ABROAD?

Get involved. Talk about your semester abroad in your classes. Make a zine about it. Come to Away Café and tell a story that crosses borders. The students who continue their international experiences often go on to international careers, or exciting opportunities like Peace Corps or the Fulbright Program. To start with,

consider becoming a *Global Ambassador*. Ambassadors help the CGE represent programs to prospective students at admissions events, general information sessions for study abroad programs, and general and program-specific orientations, as well as tabling, and talking to classes. Contact Doug Reilly at dreilly@hws.edu.

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE COUNTRY YOU STUDIED IN?

Talk to your advisor, the faculty director of the program or anyone at the CGE; we'll help you find courses that may build upon your experiences. You can also consider an independent study; talk to your academic advisor to find out more. Some students focus their honor's thesis on their country of study as well.

DO YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT INTERNATIONAL CAREERS?

Maybe you think you'd like to make travel a part of the rest of your life. Maybe you'd like to spend a few years after graduation traveling or working abroad before settling down. Career Services and the Center for Global Education present an International Career Workshop every semester. In addition, please visit Career Services and the CGE and learn about some of the many options!

DO YOU WANT TO PUBLISH YOUR WRITING, ART OR PHOTOGRAPHY?

There are several opportunities available to you. There's a yearly photo contest, usually held in the Spring semester, and the CGE curates a gallery space on the third floor of Trinity Hall called the *Global Visions Gallery*. *GVG* hosts individual and group shows, with the goal of opening a new show each semester. If you have an idea for a show, see Doug Reilly. There's also *The Aleph: a journal of global perspectives*, published every Spring by the Center for Global Education and an editorial board of students just like you. To submit your work to *The Aleph* or learn more about the editorial board, email Doug Reilly at the CGE at dreilly@hws.edu.

DO YOU WANT TO SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH FELLOW STUDENTS?

Learn about becoming a paid Programming Assistant (PA) with the CGE and help orient other students going abroad, help the CGE develop on-campus programs aimed at making HWS a more culturally-diverse place, and help us out with programs like the photo contest, *The Aleph*, and International Week.

DO YOU WANT TO MAKE A FILM ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE ABROAD?

Doug Reilly at The Center for Global Education has been regularly offering a Reader's College on digital storytelling. Students meet each week to eat, tell stories, learn about making films, and actually make their own three-minute digital story. This is a great way to both process your experience and also create a statement about it that you can share widely. Contact Doug Reilly at dreilly@hws.edu for more information.

DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOUR REENTRY EXPERIENCE?

The staff of the CGE love to talk about study abroad. Most of us have studied abroad ourselves—that's why we do the work we do today. Make an appointment with one of us or just drop in—if we're available, we'd be more than happy to hear about your experiences. It helps us learn how students perceive our programs, and it gives you a chance to talk to someone who understands.

Our hope is that you'll take advantage of one or more of these opportunities.

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