

think: study abroad

Study Abroad Survival Skills

For a successful experience, students need to be prepared academically and personally for their host country. Use these reflection prompts to do just that!

Health and Safety Reflection Questions

I am studying abroad in (country): _____ and I need to know:

- *Can I drink the water? Eat the ice?*
- *Do I need vaccinations before arriving? If yes, are those vaccinations single dose, a series of vaccines, available at a local pharmacy or only administered at certain clinics?*
- *If I am taking prescription medications, are they legal? Can I bring enough for the duration of my travel, or will I need to find a local doctor?*
- *What is my plan if any of my managed conditions become unmanageable while abroad?*
 - *Have I connected with my physicians (mental and physical) to ensure I have the resources necessary to handle exacerbated symptoms when abroad (should the arise)?*
 - *What resources does my program abroad offer for mental and physical health conditions?*

Choose which questions are the most salient and respond below.

Academic and Professional Reflection Questions

I am studying abroad in (country): _____ and I need to know:

- *What is my program's academic calendar, course time grid, and/or grading/exam timeline?*
- *Will my class(es) be more discussion-based or lecture style? How will I be assessed? Many countries grade only a few items: two exams and one project or paper. Now that I understand any differences, how will I manage the academic structure and expectations of my program?*
- *How do I get courses approved for transfer back to CWRU? What will I do if the information I provide is not detailed enough for the academic representative to grant a course transfer? What will I do if I do not hear back from the academic representative or if they don't respond with complete information for a course transfer (department code and number) or don't sign the form?*
- *How will my credits convert from the program abroad, if I'm transferring classes? If the credit conversion doesn't match the number of credits at CWRU, what will the impact of that be?*

Choose which questions are the most salient and respond below.

Social and Political Cultural Implications

I am studying abroad in (country): _____ and I need to know:

- *What is the political orientation of the country? Is it more or less religious, conservative, liberal? How does that affect the social norms and expectations of society such as:*
 - *acceptable dress and clothing, access to reproductive care, catcalling?*
 - *sexual activity and appropriateness of public displays of affection, use of pronouns?*
 - *should I consider adapting any behaviors? How do I ensure I'm fully safe and secure?*
- *What is the drinking culture: how accessible is alcohol? How is intoxication perceived by locals?*
- *What is the culture surrounding tipping and service? How much should I tip when dining, when my bags are carried, when buying a single drink or service? Is there a time when I should not tip?*
- *What is the culture of sustainability? Where/how can I recycle? How will I adapt to these norms?*
- *Are there times when businesses are typically closed? How do I need to adapt to those hours?*

Choose which questions are the most salient and respond below.

Geographical and Political Implications

I am studying abroad in (country): _____ and I need to know:

- *Which countries border my country and what is the relationship between those countries? How might their political and cultural norms affect my experience traveling and studying abroad?*
- *How do my home country's politics affect the politics and individuals of my host country? What might they want to know about my home country's politics or social norms? How will I answer those questions accurately and sensitively? Is there anything I should not mention or discuss? How will I avoid or change that topic if it arises? What else might locals be interested in about my home?*
- *Are there any famous tourist destinations (World Heritage Sites, etc.) nearby I intend to travel to? What lesser-known sites are nearer to where I'm studying that I could visit? How will I balance my time between international and local travel, school and tourism? How should I prepare?*
- *What will the weather be like when I am there? Do I need a raincoat, waterproof boots, swimwear?*

Choose which questions are the most salient and respond below.

These reflection questions will help you as you plan for your experience abroad. Please feel free to discuss your ideas, questions and concerns when you meet with your advisor and/or program leader.