



MOUNT HOLYOKE.
CENTER FOR GLOBAL INITIATIVES

Know Before You Go: Handbook for Education Abroad

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Congratulations on having made the decision to study, research or intern abroad! You are about to embark on an experience that will be deeply rewarding and life-changing, sometimes in unexpected ways.

This handbook is meant to provide some practical information and advice to help you plan ahead for your transition to another culture and for a smooth return to Mount Holyoke. The first section includes information relevant to all students going abroad (such as travel documents, health and safety, cultural adaptation, etc.); there are separate sections designed to cover the particular needs of students going abroad for a year or semester, and those going abroad for summer or other short-term projects. A checklist at the back should help you keep track of the variety of procedures, forms, and other documents you may need to complete. Please note that some of the information included here (passports, visas, etc.) is written specifically for US citizens; those of you who are citizens of other countries will need to obtain the relevant details from the consulate or embassy of your country or the country to which you will be going, as appropriate.

Please take a few minutes to look through the booklet before you leave campus so that you can follow up on any questions you may have.

We look forward to hearing from you while you are abroad, and offer you our very best wishes for a successful and rewarding experience!

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FOR ALL STUDENTS GOING ABROAD

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH MOUNT HOLYOKE

- Send your **overseas mailing address** to the McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives, particularly if you will be away for a semester or year. You can submit your address on-line at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/global/16084.shtml>. If you will be away for a semester or year, we will automatically enter your address abroad into the main student data base, unless you specifically ask us not to do so. Individual College offices may send mail to your leave address or your home address. Also be sure to leave a **forwarding address with Mail Services** (only first-class mail will be forwarded, everything else will be discarded).
- Arrange for someone at home to **screen your mail** there and forward important items to you.
- **Keep in touch with your adviser** and keep him or her informed about your courses, research or work abroad.
- MCGI and other college departments will send important information to your MHC e-mail account. Be sure to check that account regularly and keep it clear of any quota limits; forward your MHC e-mail to whatever other account you may use more regularly while you are away.
- Remember that you can find all kinds of useful information on **Mount Holyoke's web site**; the "Predeparture and Return" section of the MCGI web site includes information and links that may be of particular use to you while you are abroad (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/global/11255.shtml>).
- By the time you come back and report on your experiences, other students may already be settled in at the place where you studied or worked. We appreciate hearing from you **while** you are away, whether to help out with a question or problem or just to know that things are going well. Your experiences will help us advise other students. (In addition to these practical matters, we are interested in knowing how you are doing and eager to hear from you!)
- When you return to Mount Holyoke you will be asked to complete an **evaluation form** or **final report** about your learning abroad program. This evaluation is an integral part of the learning abroad experience and it is a very useful source of information for us and for other students. Please get it done as soon as possible after your program, while your memories are still fresh.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Passport

- As soon as you know you will be going abroad, you should apply for a passport. Information about requirements and procedures is available on the web at http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html. Applications may be picked up (and must be signed) at either a Passport Agency or US Post Office authorized to accept passport applications.

The Post Offices in South Hadley, Holyoke, and Northampton accept passport applications at designated hours.

Note that:

- Recent changes in passport requirements have created processing backlogs that have forced some students and other travelers to postpone or cancel their plans because they did not receive their passports in time. You must have a valid passport in order to apply for a visa. **Apply early!**
- Make two copies of your passport ID page and all your other important documents (one to leave at home, one to carry separately with you), which will help you replace anything if it is lost or stolen.

Visa

A visa is a stamped notarization in a passport authorizing entry to a foreign country for a stated purpose and a stated period of time. Visa requirements, application procedures, and application timing will vary depending on your citizenship, the country to which you are going, what you will be doing, and where you will be at the time you apply. It is your responsibility to find out what is required and to apply for a visa; Mount Holyoke cannot do this on your behalf.

For information on tourist visa requirements, see "**Foreign Entry Requirements**," available free on the web (<http://travel.state.gov/foreignentryreqs.html>). It is your responsibility to obtain the appropriate visa in a timely manner.

Note that:

- Usually you must **apply in advance** for a visa to enter a particular country; contact the appropriate Embassy in Washington (or a Consulate in Boston or New York) for details. You may or may not be able to apply by mail. Many countries now have strict requirements and procedures, so follow instructions carefully and allow plenty of time (six to eight weeks).
- **If you must mail your passport** with your visa application, be sure to send it by certified return receipt mail, along with the appropriate pre-paid forms for return certified mail.
- Many countries require **photographs** before granting visas, so it is a good idea to get extra copies made when you have your passport photograph taken. (In fact, you may want to have several extra photos made, as you probably will need them for registration forms, university identification cards, etc.)

International Student ID Cards

Several organizations offer international ID cards certifying that you are a full-time student. ID cards may entitle you to student discounts on airfare and admission to museums and theatres, limited health and accident insurance, and other services. Benefits vary.

The Career Development Center at MHC issues the International Student Identity Card (ISIC), which is a product of STA Travel (<http://www.statravel.com/cps/rde/xchg/SID-0A536D8E->

BBBF86A5/us_division_web_live/hs.xsl/id_discount_cards.htm). The ISIC offers access to student discounts on travel, as well as **limited accident and sickness insurance (including up to \$300,000 for medical evacuation and up to \$25,000 for repatriation of remains, which alone are well worth the price of the card)**. We strongly recommend that every student going abroad obtain an ISIC card.

Applications are available from Janice Kane in the CDC, from STA Travel offices, and from the STA website. You will need:

- One passport-size photo with your name, in pencil, on the back;
- \$22 card fee;
- Proof of full-time student status (your Mount Holyoke ID will suffice).

Note that:

- The ISIC validity period usually runs from late summer of each year to December 31 of the following year; if your card expires while you are abroad, you can apply for a new one. **However, note that cards bought outside of the US do not include the accident and sickness insurance coverage.**

Other international ID cards are also available. CIEE has recently launched the iNext Travel Card (<http://www.inext.com/inextweb/guestpages/index.html>), which offers a wide range of benefits for health care, medical evacuation, emergency assistance, and repatriation of remains; it can also work as a global phone card. The iNext Basic card costs \$25, the iNext Premium package is \$45.

International Driver's License

If you are planning to drive a lot while you are abroad, you may need an International Driver's License, available via the web at <http://www.idl-international.com/>. Not all countries require an International Driver's License; check the web site or ask a travel agent for details. Check with your insurance company to see if your US liability insurance is valid abroad.

OTHER TRAVEL RESOURCES

- Transitions Abroad magazine specializes in budget and socially responsible travel abroad. Copies are available for your review in the Center for Global Initiatives. Also see the website at <http://www.transitionsabroad.com/>.
- STA Travel (<http://www.statravel.com>), which specializes in budget travel for students. In addition to offering the ISIC card, STA Travel also offers student discounts, tips on traveling, various types of insurance coverage, etc.
- Student Universe (<http://www.studentuniverse.com/>), another organization specializing in budget travel for students, along with insurance, travel tips, etc.
- Survival Kit for Overseas Living, by L. Robert Kohls, is an excellent, brief, introduction to a cross-cultural experience; a copy is available in the Center for Global Initiatives.

- Many **travel guides** are available on specific countries or areas of the world, often written for students on a budget; visit any good bookstore or library.
- **Returned students** are an excellent source of information; see the list in the Center for Global Initiatives.
- Many good **web sites** are available to help you plan for study and travel abroad, including these two that were started by returned study abroad students; both web sites publish articles, creative work, photographs, artwork, etc., submitted by students studying abroad or recently returned from study abroad. These publications are good resources for students planning for their time abroad, and you may want to consider submitting materials yourself while you are abroad:

Abroad View (<http://www.abroadviewmagazine.com/>)

Glimpse (<http://www.theglimpse.com/>)

Other useful web sites include:

Journeywoman (<http://www.journeywoman.com/>), a resource for **women travelers**

University of Michigan International Center

(http://www.umich.edu/~icenter/overseas/study/women_abroad.html), a resource for **women abroad**

University of Michigan International Center

(http://www.umich.edu/~icenter/overseas/work/americans_of_color.html) a resource for **Americans of color abroad**

Mobility International (<http://www.miusa.org>), a resource for **individuals with disabilities**

Cornell University (<http://www.cuabroad.cornell.edu/abroad/gay.asp>), resources for **gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgendered students abroad**

NAFSA: Association of International Educators (<http://www.indiana.edu/%7Eoverseas/lesbigay/>),

Rainbow Special Interests Group, for **gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgendered students abroad**

The US Department of State website on International Travel

(http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html) includes a wealth of information about individual countries, health and safety, studying abroad, living abroad, etc. Resources on the web include a series of publications with tips for students, persons with disabilities, women traveling alone, individuals traveling to specific regions, etc. Although the website is designed for US citizens, much of the information is relevant to anyone planning to travel abroad.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Please pay particular attention to these notices and reminders about health and safety. Remember that it is **your responsibility** to research conditions in the country or region to which you will be going, to take care of any health concerns you may have, and to keep up to date on changes that may occur while you are away.

We expect that students will inform themselves and make their own decisions about where they feel comfortable living and traveling. If a potentially dangerous situation develops while you are abroad, we will gladly help you contact appropriate resources, on site and elsewhere, to ensure that you have adequate information about the situation to take precautions to protect yourself and to decide whether the situation is sufficiently serious to warrant an early return. In such cases we would also work with you on any credit issues that may arise as a result of an early closing of a study abroad program, or an individual decision to return early for reasons of health and safety. We hope that your time abroad will be free of any such concerns, but obviously it is best to be prepared.

Please note these tips and reminders:

- No matter where you are planning to study, research or intern, it is a good idea to have a **physical and dental exam** before you leave the US and when you return. If you see any type of health care professional on a regular basis (**physician, counselor, psychiatrist, etc.**), be sure to discuss your plans thoroughly with him/her.
- If you have a **chronic or recurring health problem**, you might want to arrange to bring adequate supplies of the appropriate medication with you. Be sure that any medication is identified by its generic name (not the brand name) and that you carry a copy of the prescription with you; check also to verify that it is permissible to bring the medication into your host country, as requirements vary. If you wear **glasses or contact lenses**, take an extra pair (or at least a copy of the prescription). Consider carefully what information about health conditions you should share with those helping to coordinate your program abroad, and those who will be hosting you (medical conditions, therapeutic needs, allergies, medications, etc.).
- Specific information on required and recommended **vaccinations** and other preventive measures for travelers is available from the Health Center (see their web site at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/offices/health/6101.shtml>), your local Health Department, your study abroad program sponsor, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>, and the World Health Organization (<http://www.who.int/en/>). Find out what medical concerns may be specific to your destination country and prepare yourself accordingly (i.e. mosquito nets, water purifier, etc.). The CDC sponsors an International Travelers Hotline (877-FYI-TRIP), through which you may listen to recorded information or order written materials. The CDC also publishes a booklet "Health Information for International Travel," available on the web at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/reference.htm>. If you do need inoculations, do some comparison shopping (among your own physician, local clinics, hospitals, etc.), as costs can vary widely. The Yellow fever vaccination, if needed, is available from the University of Massachusetts Health Center (Western Massachusetts Yellow Fever Center), or the travel clinics at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield and Noble Hospital in Westfield. Plan ahead, as some inoculations cannot be given concurrently, and some are ideally administered over a period of three to six months.
- Check the appropriate websites (Centers for Disease Control, World Health Organization, State Department, etc.) regularly for updated information about **avian flu and pandemic planning**. Know how infectious diseases are spread, and whether there is any particular reason for concern in the areas to which you will be traveling. Follow the advice provided by public health agencies, your program sponsor, and other knowledgeable sources about how to minimize your risk of exposure and what preventive measures you can take to safeguard your health.

- Based on recommendations from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Medical Advisory Committee for the Elimination of **Tuberculosis**, the staff of College Health Services strongly recommends that all who have traveled or lived for more than one month in one or more of the countries listed by the World Health Organization as having high rates of Tuberculosis should have a tuberculin skin test for latent tuberculosis. For information on countries with high incidence rates, see <http://health.rutgers.edu/Immunizations/TB.htm#Incidence>. Skin testing for TB can be done at College Health Services. For most reliable testing this should be done at least 3 months after the possible exposure. There is a fee of \$15.00. For more information on incidence, transmission and treatment of tuberculosis see (<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs104/en/>).
- If applicable, please think through arrangements for **birth control** ahead of time. You should also know that **AIDS** and other **sexually transmitted diseases** are as common as in the US, or more so, in many other countries. Whatever sorts of precautions (in terms of both careful behavior with respect to relationships and actual prophylactic measures) you would take at home should be taken abroad as well. Exercise the same prudence, good judgment, high standards, and caution that you would at home. Be careful, in every way possible.
- If you expect to need **medical care or special accommodations** (whether for a physical condition, mental health counseling, learning disability, etc.), you should notify your program sponsor or foreign university immediately, if you have not already done so. Your program/host institution can advise you about appropriate resources and help you link up with health care providers, support groups, etc. You should also talk with your current health care providers/counselors here to help clarify your needs and identify resources abroad.
- Whether or not you expect to need medical care while abroad, **identify a doctor or clinic** where you would feel comfortable as soon as possible after your arrival. Your program or sponsor may have recommendations, and US Embassies often can provide lists of English-speaking doctors. Don't wait until you are sick to check into these resources and learn how the medical bureaucracy works.
- Take basic common-sense health precautions, and **avoid activities that may put you at particular risk** (such as tattooing or body piercing).
- Take along your own **Traveler's First Aid Kit**. For suggestions on contents, see: http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/UVAHealth/adult_travel/firstaid.cfm.
- Be aware that **road accidents** are the single greatest risk to Americans traveling abroad in many parts of the world. In many areas, safety features that we take for granted (such as guardrails, traffic signals, good lighting, well-maintained vehicles, etc.) do not meet the standards to which we may be accustomed. Animal traffic may share the roads with pedestrians and motorized vehicles. Know the traffic patterns, standards of driving behavior, and rules of the road so that you can keep yourself safe as a pedestrian. Know the safety records of local and other means of transportation so that you can make smart choices. The Consular Information Sheets on the State Department website (see the section on "General Safety and Responsibility" on page 12) generally include information about particular issues and risks. Also see the Association for Safe International Road Travel website (<http://www.asirt.org/>) for additional information and resources.

Other resources on health and safety include:

- **Health Check for Study, Work, and Travel Abroad**, published by the Council on International Educational Exchange, and available on their web site (http://www.ciee.org/program_resources/knowledge/health.aspx?type=part).
- **Health Information for International Travel**, available from the US Government Printing Office
- **Staying Healthy in Asia, Africa, and Latin America** (available from Volunteers in Asia, Box 5453, Stanford, CA 94309)
- **Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad** (available on-line at http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/drugs/drugs_1237.html)
- **International Travel Health Guide** by Dr. Stuart R. Rose, published by Travel Medicine, Inc., 351 Pleasant St., Suite 312, Northampton, MA 01060, tel. 584-0381. This comprehensive guide to pre-departure planning includes information on immunization requirements, how to prevent common (and not-so-common) health problems, and detailed information on health hazards and necessary precautions for more than 100 countries, plus regional summaries.
- **"Travel Safe: AIDS and International Travel"** offers a useful summary of how AIDS is and is not transmitted and the precautions one should take to minimize risk. It is available on line at http://www.ciee.org/health_safety/health/AIDS_intl_travel.aspx. Some countries now require an HIV antibody test as part of the visa application. Note in particular that not all countries have the facilities to screen adequately the blood used in transfusions; the use of sterile/disposable syringes is not standard around the world; and not all countries have adequate facilities to treat individuals who test HIV-positive. Country-specific details are available from your program sponsor and:

CDC web site (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases.htm#AIDS>)

CDC National HIV/AIDS Hotline: 1-800-342-AIDS

For the Hearing Impaired: 1-800-243-7889

CDC National Clearing House: 1-800-458-5231

World Health Organization: 1-202-861-3200

In particular, the CDC web site cautions against the following kinds of activities and behaviors:

- sexual intercourse or other sexual activity (heterosexual or homosexual) with an infected person or a person whose HIV status is unknown
- use of contaminated or unsterilized syringes or needles for injections or other skin-piercing procedures (such as acupuncture, use of illicit drugs, medical/dental procedures, ear or body piercing, tattooing, etc.)

Investigate these issues before you leave the US so that you will be able to make an informed decision about treatment if you require emergency care. **When you arrive abroad, check with your program director, the Red Cross, or the US Consulate about appropriate medical facilities in your host city or region.** Inform them early on of any special health concerns or needs that you have. Do not wait for an emergency, in which case you may not have the time to research your options. We strongly

recommend that you inform yourself of the potential problems in the country or countries to which you plan to travel so that you may make informed decisions about appropriate precautions to take.

Medical Insurance

- We strongly recommend that you have **adequate health insurance coverage** while you are abroad, including emergency medical evacuation and repatriation of remains. The insurance provided with the ISIC ID Card includes basic coverage of some of these areas, and you can add coverage for it to your Mount Holyoke policy; coverage is also available from other carriers. See the website InsureMyTrip (<http://www.insuremytrip.com>) for comparative information on insurance policies offered by a wide range of companies.
- If you are on the **Mount Holyoke student health insurance plan**, it will cover you through the summer (the plan year runs from August 15 to August 14). You will automatically be billed for the plan, just as if you were remaining here; you will have to request a waiver on-line if you have other health insurance. If you have been receiving medical care for any chronic or recurring condition, it is important for you to maintain health insurance coverage, either under the same policy or under different policies, with any gap in coverage being no more than 60 days. Ideally, you do not want to have any gap at all, as you would not be covered during that period. But if there is a gap of more than 60 days, any condition for which you previously received treatment, or that developed during the gap period, will be designated as a “pre-existing condition” and will have a six-month waiting period before you become eligible for coverage upon your return to the Mount Holyoke student health plan.
- You may want to consider obtaining **additional insurance** through your program (if available) or your parents that is designed specifically for coverage abroad. A good insurance plan for travel abroad should include benefits for medical evacuation (in case of accident or illness that requires treatment elsewhere) and repatriation of remains.

General Safety And Responsibility

Most of you will be living abroad in cities considerably larger than South Hadley; some of you will be living in a major city for the first time; most of you will be doing at least some traveling during vacations. Whatever your circumstances, a few basic precautions may be useful to keep in mind; there is much that you can do, through your own behavior and choices that you make, to protect your health and well-being. The vast majority of travelers abroad encounter few problems, but it is always wise to use the same care and common sense that you would in any US city:

- **Get to know your city** and/or campus and avoid areas that are potentially unsafe. When you travel to other cities or countries, be informed about what is going on there. Take a map when you are in an unfamiliar place, and ask directions, in advance, of a trustworthy person. Find out what safety precautions the locals take.
- Carry **emergency funds** and/or a **phone card** with you when you travel.
- **Be cautious** in elevators and stairwells; if you feel uncomfortable about getting into an elevator, wait for the next one.
- **Travel with a partner**, particularly at night; stay in brightly-lighted areas where other people are around.

- **Be careful of your personal possessions**, particularly in public areas such as train stations, airports, markets, etc.; leave valuables or items that cannot be replaced at home.
- **Be alert** to what is going on around you, and be especially wary of any commotion that centers on you; someone could be going through your backpack while you're distracted by something else.
- Consider some of the **security pouches** that enable you to stow away your passport, money, and other important papers under your clothes.
- **Dress conservatively**, especially when traveling to new and unfamiliar areas. Shorts and tank tops are not considered appropriate dress in many parts of the world, and may make you feel particularly uncomfortable if you run into unexpected problems (losing a wallet and having to report it to police, dealing with unwanted advances, etc.).
- The State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs (<http://travel.state.gov/>) provides a wealth of information on safety and other issues for Americans traveling abroad. A **Consular Information Sheet** for each country includes information on the location of the U.S. Embassy or Consulate, immigration practices, health conditions, political disturbances, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security information, and drug penalties. **Travel Warnings** are issued when the State Department decides that conditions warrant a recommendation that Americans avoid travel to a particular country. Information from the Consular Information Sheets is also available at Passport Agencies, through travel agents' computer reservation systems, and from U.S. Consulates abroad. For emergency services abroad, call the Overseas Citizens Services line at 202-647-5225. **Because situations abroad may change rapidly and because we have no way of knowing where students' travel plans may take them, Mount Holyoke assumes no responsibility for informing students about the content of these advisories.**
- For another perspective on safety and travel, see the **travel information provided by the Canadian and British governments**: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca>, and <http://www.fco.gov.uk>, respectively.
- The State Department strongly recommends that Americans **register with the consulate or embassy** in the country in which they are studying or visiting. In the event of a natural disaster or other emergency, registration facilitates the State Department contacting Americans to verify their safety or help ensure that they receive needed assistance. Your program or host university will probably be able to advise or assist you in registering, but you can also find information on the Embassy's web site (in many places, you can register on-line).
- Keep your **emergency contacts** up-to-date, and always make sure someone knows where you are going, and when you expect to be back.
- You are expected to **abide by the laws of your host country and the regulations of your program/university**. The US government (or other government, if you are not a US citizen) has no power to interfere if you are fined or arrested for violation of a local law.

- Your country's **Embassy or Consulate** abroad can help you if you lose your passport. Officials may also be able to assist you in obtaining funds from home, should you run out of money; they will not, however, actually provide any financial assistance.

In recent years, we have all become more aware of the potential threat of terrorist activity, both at home and abroad. You and your family may find it helpful to know that students are rarely the specific targets of terrorist acts. Terrorist acts are by definition unpredictable, but there are certain basic precautions you can take to minimize your risks:

- **Remain alert** in public places.
- **Avoid unattended parcels**, suitcases, etc., in public places.
- Limit the time you spend in the public areas of facilities that may be **potential targets** (e.g., US Consulates and Embassies, airports, public transportation facilities, offices and branches of US banks and other companies, including fast-food restaurants).
- If you are from the US, **avoid calling attention to yourself as an American**.

Alcohol And Other Drug Use Abroad

- Mount Holyoke College expects all of its students traveling abroad to respect and **abide by the laws of their host countries** regarding the use of alcohol and other drugs. Alcohol use and abuse can get students into serious trouble abroad; students can be arrested for being intoxicated in public areas, for example, and for drunk driving. Every traveler is subject to all laws in the countries they visit, and those who break laws may face severe penalties.
- What may be considered **acceptable alcohol usage** in this country or your home country may be considered rude in another. If you are going to a country with a lower legal age for drinking, or no age limit-- be cautious. If you drink to the point of intoxication you are at increased risk for injury, unprotected or unsafe sex, sexual assault or other health related consequences. Students usually will not offend their hosts if they are honest about their alcohol limits. In many cases, hosts are more offended by their guests' irresponsible drinking than by their guests' not drinking or limiting their alcohol.
- Depending on where you might be traveling, some other drugs may be easily and readily available, but **penalties for illegal use** may be very strict, often much more so than in the US. Each year more than 2,500 American citizens are arrested abroad, about half of them on drug-related charges, with the majority of those cases involving marijuana. If you are arrested for buying, selling, carrying, or using any type of illegal drug, the US Embassy or Consulate cannot demand your immediate release, get you out of jail or out of the country, represent you at trial, provide legal counsel, or pay legal fees and fines with US government funds. Never travel with contraband drugs; remember, being in a foreign jail is not an educational experience that you want to have!
- Please be aware that, according to the Higher Education Act of 1998, "...any student who has been convicted of any offense under federal or state law involving the possession or sale of a controlled substance shall not be eligible for federal financial assistance for a period beginning on the date of the conviction and ending after the interval specified in the amendment."

- **Students in recovery** might benefit from information about supports and contact with others in recovery in their host country:

Alcoholics Anonymous
AA World Services, Inc.
475 Riverside Dr.
New York, NY 10115
Tel: (212) 870-3400
Fax: (212) 870-3003
<http://www.aa.org>

AL-ANON
Al-Anon Family Groups World Service
Headquarters
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway
Virginia Beach, VA 23454
Tel: (757) 563-1600 or 1-800-344-2666, x3
<http://www.al-anon.org>

Narcotics Anonymous
P.O. Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91311
Tel: (818) 773-9999
<http://www.na.org>

- The **Alcohol and Drug Awareness Project (ADAP)** on campus may be able to connect you with an alumna in recovery who is a participant in the ADAP Alumnae Network. These alumnae are available to provide you with support and information about recovery resources. The Project can provide you with recovery tapes and literature that can support your recovery. All information is confidential.

If you would like further information about this issue, please contact:

Susan McCarthy
Director and Counselor
Alcohol and Drug Awareness Project
Room 110, Health Center

Karen Jacobus
Coordinator
Health Education
309 Blanchard/131 Health Center

MONEY MATTERS

- Check with your bank to see if you can use your **ATM card** in your destination country.
- Use **traveler's checks or debit cards** instead of carrying large amounts of cash. (Traveler's checks are pre-paid checks issued by financial institutions such as American Express, VISA, Thomas Cooke, etc., and can be used like cash in many countries, or easily cashed in at a bank or currency exchange office.) They can be replaced if lost or stolen (but be sure to keep a list of serial numbers separate from the wallet of checks or debit card so that you can file your claim). You can change your dollars into foreign currency and purchase traveler's checks at the same time by purchasing checks in a foreign currency while still in the US. However, watch exchange rates, as it may be advantageous to exchange currency abroad.
- National banks, American Express offices, airports, railway stations, large hotels, and travel agencies all **exchange currency** abroad. Usually a large bank will offer the best rate of exchange

with the lowest service charge. Remember to have your passport with you when exchanging currency.

- International **credit cards** (such as VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover, etc.) are also useful and may be especially important in the event of an emergency. Be sure to let your credit card company know that you will be abroad, and where, as any unusual activity may be identified as potentially fraudulent and result in the suspension of your account.
- Depending on where you are studying, it may be difficult or impossible to cash **personal checks** and bank checks sent from the US. Consult with your program sponsor, host university, supervisor, or local bank officials about the best way to have money sent to you. Be aware that while it is possible to **wire money** abroad (through agencies like Western Union, for example), it can be three to five days, or longer, before the funds are actually released to you.
- Scholarships and other awards given by Mount Holyoke for study, research, or internships abroad may be **taxable**, depending on your citizenship or residence status in the US:
 - If you are a **US citizen or permanent resident**, the College is required to report to the IRS the amount of any scholarship or other award given to you. Any portion of your award spent on expenses defined by the IRS as essential (books, tuition, fees, equipment, supplies) is not taxable; any portion spent on expenses considered non-essential to a course (room and board, travel), is taxable. Either way, you must include any such awards when you file your tax return.
 - If you are an **international student** on a non-immigrant visa (for example, F-1), any awards given solely for activities abroad (outside the US) are not taxable, do not have to be reported by the College to the IRS, and do not have to be listed on your income tax return.

CULTURAL ADAPTATION

The experience of going to a new country is rich with opportunities to learn about your new home and to reflect upon the US or your home country, but it is not without stress as you meet new people and learn new ways of living. Expect that things, both large and small, will be different; understanding why they are different can be a helpful way of learning about your new environment. Consider keeping a journal, which will not only prompt you to think about your experiences, but will be a welcome record of your time abroad in the years to come.

Mount Holyoke students typically are distributed among 35 to 40 countries each year, so this handbook cannot provide country-specific information on cultural values and social mores. You may receive some information from your university or program sponsor, and we urge you to seek other resources (including returned students and the travel resources listed above under “Other Travel Resources”). However, here are a few general suggestions to help you anticipate differences that you may encounter abroad.

- **Men and women** may interact with each other in ways that are different from what you are used to. Body language and words themselves may have different meanings; standards of dress for women may be more conservative (especially in churches, museums, and other public places);

what we perceive as sexual harassment (whistles, cat-calls, even touching) may be considered the ordinary and acceptable standard of behavior. Learn and observe how other women your age dress and behave, and follow those standards, at least until you can more comfortably understand how and when it is appropriate to be different.

- People in some places may know the US only from movies, television, music videos, and other media, and may have **stereotypical views of the US**, including the belief that all American women are promiscuous. It may take some time for some people to understand that that stereotype does not apply to all women, nor to you personally.
- In the US, despite problems that still exist, we tend to expect (and laws often require) that individuals are entitled to **fair and equal treatment** without regard to gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc. In other countries, these expectations may not apply. (See the web sites listed under “Other Travel Resources” for more information.)
- Depending on where you plan to study and travel, you may find that **women are not accorded equality** under the law, and/or in practice. Inform yourself about what to expect. You may learn more about the position of women by respecting and observing such differences than by arguing or intruding into places or activities considered inappropriate for women.
- **Persons of color** may experience more or less overt discrimination or racism than they typically expect to encounter here.
- Attitudes toward **lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered** people may be more or less tolerant than here or in your home community. NAFSA: The Association of International Educators supports a web site with an extensive bibliography of resources on travel, some of a general nature and some that is country/region specific: <http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/biblio.html>. Several of the resources listed here also address issues relevant to women travelers in general.
- Some feelings of discomfort are inherent in any experience abroad as you cross the boundaries between your own values and attitudes and those that you encounter in a new and different cultural context. However, if you feel **unsafe or uncomfortable** as a result of attitudes or actions that you think are directed at you because of your gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc., it is critical that you speak to your program sponsor or host, or that you contact the Center for Global Initiatives. Your program or host can help you understand what is happening, respond appropriately, and access local sources of support, as well as take any action that may be necessary to ensure your safety. But remember that no one can know what you are experiencing or how to help you if you don't speak up.

Culture Shock

(This section is adapted from Participant's Handbook 1981-82 United States of America, published by ISEP, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, p. 34.)

If you are going abroad (or going to a particular country) for the first time, you probably will experience what is commonly referred to as **culture shock**. Dr. Kalervo Oberg, one of the first writers on culture shock as a phenomenon, has described culture shock as a series of stages which proceed from entry into the host culture to re-entry into the home culture. These stages will vary in length (the entire cycle may last for a few weeks or a few months) and may overlap with one another; many

people will experience Stages 2 and 3 in repeated cycles as they adapt to their new environment. The process overall may result in up and down cycles and mood swings; it's helpful to be aware of what to expect so that you will be better able to understand what is happening and why you are responding to certain situations in ways that may be unlike your customary behavior. It may also be helpful to remind yourself at such times that you chose to go abroad because you wanted to embrace difference, and that getting out and doing things will help you get through the adjustment and make the most of your time abroad.

- **Stage 1** is a period of incubation. You probably will be very positive about everything, since it is all a new experience.
- **Stage 2** is a period of crisis. In the settling-in process you may encounter genuine difficulties. Situations may arise which you did not expect. You may become critical or negative toward the host culture and even think that people are out to make life difficult.
- **Stage 3** is a period of recovery. You will begin to realize that different cultures have different ways of doing things. You will even begin at times to react to certain situations the way a person from your host country might. It is at this time that you will begin to laugh at your earlier fears.
- **Stage 4** will be the time that you begin to adjust more positively to your host country's way of life while objectively recognizing its inadequacies (relative to your home country). When you return, you probably will experience some culture shock in reverse, though not as severe as before.

Another view of culture shock is described by writer Peter Adler as "the very heart of the cross-cultural learning experience." The culture shock process forces you to reflect upon yourself and your own culture. The net result is a new understanding of your own values, beliefs, and behaviors.

One of the most important skills to be developed when traveling to a new culture is tolerance for the values, beliefs, and behaviors of others. You must know your own culture: the value system, artistic traditions, technological achievements, philosophical concepts, and communicative techniques used. If you are comfortable with who you are, you will be willing to accept others as they are; then living in another country will be a wonderful learning experience both for you and for those you meet.

Be conscious not to **isolate**. An honest conversation with someone who cares about you can make a world of difference and significantly deepen a relationship.

FOR STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD FOR A YEAR/SEMESTER

ACADEMIC CONSIDERATIONS

Declaring A Major

- If you are currently a sophomore and you have not already declared a major, you must do so before you leave campus. Remember that you can always change your major later, provided that you can still complete requirements on time.

Credit Transfer

- **Academic credit** is granted only after you return from abroad and only for liberal arts courses completed with grades of C- or better. **Mount Holyoke does not give credit for internships, orientation courses or programs, on-line courses, or non-liberal arts courses (such as business, marketing, nursing, etc.).**
- You must arrange to have an **official transcript** (or other official evaluation, if no transcript is available) of your work sent to the Registrar's Office after the completion of your studies abroad. No credit will be granted until the transcript is received. Note that we cannot provide copies of that transcript to you or to anyone else, and that we will keep it for a limited period of time and then destroy it. Be sure to obtain extra copies for yourself in case you cannot get them later directly from your program or foreign university.
- **Grades** for work done abroad are not posted on your Mount Holyoke transcript and are not figured into your cumulative average.
- Remember, however, that **you must complete your work satisfactorily (the equivalent of C- or better) in order to receive credit.** In addition, be aware that graduate schools and employers may require you to submit copies of the transcript for your year or semester abroad, and therefore the grades you earn will remain an important part of your educational record.
- **Specific credit** for specific courses (e.g., 300-level, Distribution, etc.) must be approved by the appropriate department chair at Mount Holyoke, with whom you should consult before you leave campus.
- **Bring your work (reading lists, syllabi, papers, etc.) back with you** in case there are questions about credit or the level of the work you have done.
- We recognize that students have many varied (and valid) reasons for choosing to study abroad and that because of the experiential nature of studying and living in another culture, many of your most meaningful learning experiences will take place outside of the classroom. But remember that it is the work you will do in the classroom that will determine how much credit you will receive for your time away.

AVOID THIS COMMON MISTAKE:

- You must complete what your program or host institution defines as a **full-time standard course load** to receive a full semester or year of credit at Mount Holyoke. A full-time standard course load is usually expressed as 15 or 16 semester credits (not by the number of courses). **If your program/university advises you to take fewer than 15 or 16 credits, or to take 4 courses because that's what you would do here, be cautious: check with Mount Holyoke to clarify how those credits will transfer back.** Your program sponsor may not know our policy, and Mount Holyoke cannot adjust your credits after the fact because you received poor advice abroad. Check with the Center for Global Initiatives or the Registrar's Office if you have any questions at all about what constitutes a normal full-time course load.

Planning Ahead For Independent Study

- If you plan to undertake an independent study (thesis) your senior year, and will be away in the spring of your junior year, check with your adviser or department chair for guidelines. In some departments, students must make arrangements before the end of junior year to sign up for senior independent study.

Planning Ahead For The Health Professions (Medical School, Vet School, Etc.)

- If you plan to apply to **medical or other health professional school**, it is essential that you consult with your Health Professions Adviser before you leave campus.

Higher Education Abroad

Many of you will be taking all or some of your courses at a foreign university next year, and you will find that many other countries approach higher education very differently than does the US. Learning about another country's educational system is one of the reasons for studying abroad, but these differences can take some time to assimilate, and thus may interfere with the unprepared student's ability to benefit fully from the experience. Your program/host university will provide additional information, but here are some common areas of difference that may help you anticipate what will be expected of you, and what questions to ask:

- In many countries, students complete 13 years of education (instead of 12) before entering university, and a broad-based liberal-arts type of program exists only at the high school level. Students often begin their major in their first year at university, and they may be more advanced in their studies than a typical first-year student here; in addition, they generally study only one subject (or two, if they are doing a "joint degree" or interdisciplinary program).
- Students often are expected to take much more responsibility for shaping their academic program, and instructors provide relatively little guidance (for example, students may be expected to read widely from a long list of resources, with no specific assignments, and faculty may not be readily accessible outside of the classroom). Your program of study abroad may feel more like an American graduate program than an undergraduate one.
- Expectations about the style and form of essays may be different from what you are used to.
- Students' progress toward a degree often depends on exams given at the end of each year, or at the end of their program, rather than on work completed for individual classes. Degree candidates therefore may put less emphasis on attendance at lectures and more on the work they are doing

outside of class to prepare for exams. As a non-degree student, your work may be assessed differently, perhaps with more emphasis on class essays and attendance.

End-Of-Year Exams

In some countries (for example, the UK and Ireland), exams given at the end of the year may be the primary or only basis on which grades are determined. We require students who enroll in a foreign university to undertake a course of study equivalent to that which a degree student would take, and we expect them to complete all of the readings, papers, exams, and other work required. We also expect that faculty will assess students' work according to their usual methods and standards. **Therefore, students must take all exams, including end-of-year or sessional exams, that the university will permit them to take; a student will not receive credit for a course in which she chooses not to take an examination that she is permitted to write.** (Students will not be expected to take degree exams that cover more than one year's work; and students abroad for the fall semester only will not be expected to return in June to take exams.)

- Note that while many universities require visiting students to take exams, some do not; and some US colleges do not require their students to take exams. You may hear conflicting information, so remember that you must follow Mount Holyoke's policy, regardless of what other institutions may require, in order to receive credit here.
- The only exceptions to this policy are if an exam is optional for all students (including degree students) and not just for junior year abroad students; and for some Scottish universities, which offer exemption from exams to students who achieve a high standard in their coursework. In cases such as these, in which exams are optional for all students, they are also optional for you. **If an exam is optional only for junior year abroad students, it is not optional for you and you must take the exam.**
- Many students find this end-of-year exam system daunting because it differs so much from what they are accustomed to here. Don't hesitate to ask your tutors or other advisers for advice about how to prepare for them (sometimes you may be able to review exams from previous years, which will help give you an idea of the approach taken and the kinds of questions asked). The vast majority of students do well on the exams, but returning students advise that you take them seriously and keep up with your work throughout the year.

Summer Research Fellowship Opportunities

- Mount Holyoke sponsors summer research fellowship programs that are open to first-year students, sophomores, juniors, and Frances Perkins students who wish to pursue research or certain other kinds of projects during the summer. Some awards are given for work in specific countries or disciplines, others are unrestricted. Students have successfully applied from abroad, but **advance planning is helpful.** Details about awards and application procedures are available on the Career Development Center website. The universal application process enables you to be considered for all awards for which you may be eligible; the deadline is usually in February or March each year.

Major Scholarships And Fellowships For Juniors And Seniors

Students who are currently sophomores should note that there are several scholarship programs in which Mount Holyoke participates for which students must apply during their junior year. Students may apply from outside the country, but must make arrangements to do so well in advance of the deadlines. A sampling of awards is listed below; more information is available from the Career

Development website (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/offices/cdc/5165.shtml>); Katerina King (kpking@mtholyoke.edu), Associate Director for Fellowships and Scholarships, coordinates Mount Holyoke applications and nominations.

- **Barry Goldwater Scholarship.** For sophomores and juniors, US citizens or permanent residents in the top quarter of their class, who are preparing for graduate work and careers in mathematics or the natural sciences, for a \$7,500 renewable scholarship.
- **Harry S. Truman Scholarship.** For juniors who are preparing for a career in government or public service (including teaching and research), for up to \$27,000 scholarships for senior year and graduate study. Applicants must be US citizens or permanent residents, and in the top quarter of their class.
- **All USA Today Academic Teams.** For undergraduates who have completed or who are working on an outstanding academic, artistic, or public service project that has been started during the student's college career and has received some type of public recognition or achieved tangible results. Cash prizes.
- **Beinecke Memorial Scholarships.** Open to juniors who are US citizens for \$32,000 scholarship for graduate study in the arts, humanities or social sciences.
- **Udall Scholarships.** Open to sophomores and juniors, in two categories: those who are US citizens or permanent residents preparing for a career in environmental public policy; OR who are Native American or Alaska Native students who intend to pursue a career in health care or tribal policy. Up to \$5,000 renewable stipend.
- **UNCF-Merck Science Research Scholarships.** Open to African-American students majoring in the life or physical sciences, who are US citizens or permanent residents with a minimum cumulative and major gpa of 3.3 for a \$25,000 Scholarship and two \$5,000 internships at a Merck research facility.

Students who think they might be interested in applying for any of the **major fellowships for graduate study** should look into the requirements and application procedures for these awards before they leave campus. Most application deadlines for the awards for study abroad will be early in the fall semester of senior year, and we encourage students interested in any of these awards to begin the application process during the junior year, or the summer between junior and senior years, at the latest. Some of the more prominent awards are listed below; see the Career Development Center website for additional information.

For study abroad:

- **DAAD Annual Grant.** For one year of study in Germany, open to US and Canadian citizens and US permanent residents.
- **Fulbright Scholarship.** For one year of study abroad, available in many countries, open to US citizens.
- **Gates Cambridge Scholarships.** Open to applicants from every country of the world except the United Kingdom, normally under 30 years of age, for study at the University of Cambridge.
- **Luce Scholars Program.** For a one-year professional internship in Asia for individuals with no background in Asian studies, open to US citizens.
- **Marshall Scholarship.** For two years of study at any British university, open to US citizens.
- **Mitchell Scholarship.** For one year of study in Ireland or Northern Ireland, open to US citizens.
- **Rhodes Scholarship.** For two years of study at Oxford University, open to US citizens. (Citizens of other eligible countries must apply in their home countries.)

- **Rotary Scholarship.** For three or six months, one year, or up to three years of study abroad; note that students who wish to apply for a Rotary Scholarship for study abroad in the year immediately following their graduation must apply in the spring of junior year. Open to all students who are citizens of countries in which there is a Rotary Foundation.
- **Winston Churchill Foundation Scholarship.** For one year of graduate study at Churchill College, Cambridge, in engineering, math, or science. Open to US citizens between 19 and 26.

For study in the US:

- **Jack Kent Cooke Graduate Scholarship.** \$50,000/year for graduate study in any field. Open to U.S. and international students
- **Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowships for Minorities.** For US citizens or nationals who are members of a designated minority group for graduate work in the behavioral and social sciences, humanities, and sciences.
- **Mellon Fellowships.** For US citizens, nationals, and permanent residents for a first year of graduate work in the humanities.
- **Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships For New Americans.** For green card holders, naturalized citizens, or children of two naturalized citizen parents for graduate study in any subject.

For public service:

- **Echoing Green.** \$60,000 for two years of funding of a public service project anywhere in the world. There are no restrictions of age, citizenship, or grade point average.
- **Samuel Huntington Public Service Award.** Open to all graduating students, for a \$10,000 stipend for a public service project anywhere in the world.

Use your semester or year abroad to investigate graduate programs if you want to return to the same country; it's a lot easier to do this while you are there than it will be after you return to Mount Holyoke.

FINANCIAL AID

- You should have received a separate packet regarding the use of **Mount Holyoke and/or federal and other outside aid for study abroad.** If you have been awarded a Laurel Fellowship and/or you will be using a federal or state loan or grant, check with the Office of Student Financial Services well before you leave campus to make sure that you have submitted all of the necessary information and forms. In particular, all students who expect to use any kind of funds (including federal aid) processed by Mount Holyoke and who will be attending a program not formally affiliated with Mount Holyoke must complete a "Consortium Agreement" to enable Mount Holyoke to process the funds. Further information and forms are available on the web at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/global/12044.shtml>.
- If a student receives **financial aid from the host or sponsoring institution**, that institution, not Mount Holyoke, must process all loans and other aid for which she is eligible. Note that federal financial aid guidelines prohibit a student from receiving duplicate financial aid for the same period of time from more than one institution.

INCOME TAXES

Remember that you will need to file an **income tax return** for the previous year (2007) even if you are abroad in the spring semester. If you worked on campus or received a scholarship/award in 2007, you will receive a W-2 form and/or a 1042S form from Financial Services in January, 2008; you will need these forms to file your tax return. The forms will be sent to your campus box, and, unless you have provided Mail Services with a forwarding address, the forms will eventually be sent to your home address. To avoid any delays in receiving these important documents, please complete the online forwarding address form and submit it to Mail Services as soon as possible (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/offices/postal/forms/forwardingform.shtml>). (Note that the address you provide will be used for forwarding all first-class mail that comes to your campus box.) If you worked elsewhere, that employer probably will send your W-2 form to your home address; contact your employer directly if you would like the form sent to a different address.

- **If you are a US Citizen, Permanent Resident (“green card” holder), or a Permanent Resident for tax purposes**, you may file your tax return electronically, at no cost to you; see <https://www.taxactonline.com/>. (You are considered a permanent resident for tax purposes if you have lived for 5 years or more in the US but are not a US citizen or “green card” holder.)
- **If you are a non-immigrant student (not a US citizen or permanent resident, and have not lived in the US for five years or more)**, you are obligated to file Form 8843, even if you did not work in the US. If you did work in the US in 2006, you must also file an income tax return. Detailed information for non-US citizens on filing a tax return can be found at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/programs/global/is/taxes.html>.
- **International students may not file taxes online:** after you complete the return, you must mail it to the IRS. We recommend that you keep a photocopy of your return, and send it by registered mail. This way you will have a receipt to prove that you mailed in your tax return just in case it gets lost in the mail. If you have any questions, please email Donna Van Handle (dvanhand@mtholyoke.edu), Dean of International Students.

SPECIAL NOTES TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ON F-1 VISAS

- If you will be outside the US for five months or more, you will need a new I-20 to re-enter the US at the end of your studies abroad, even if your current I-20 appears to still be valid. If you will be away for less than five months, we can sign your old I-20; send it to the Center for Global Initiatives at least a couple of months before you expect to return.
- Students who are on academic leave of absence for study abroad maintain their eligibility for Optional Practical Training. However, applications for OPT can only be filed by students who are in the U.S., and processing takes two to three months; therefore, you should not expect to apply for OPT for the summer after a year or spring semester abroad. You are eligible, however, to take an unpaid internship in the US, or a paid position on campus, or a paid (or unpaid) internship abroad.
- If you plan to make a brief visit to the US during your time abroad (during December break, for example), you may enter with your current I-20 and valid F-1 visa.

- If you will need to apply for a new F-1 visa prior to your return here, please let us know so that we can write a letter of support in addition to signing your old I-20 or preparing a new one, as appropriate. In addition, we recommend that when you apply, bring with you an official copy of your Mount Holyoke transcript, a letter from your program confirming that you have been enrolled full-time, and evidence of your financial support.

INTERNSHIPS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Finding an Internship

It is not unusual for students who study abroad to use contacts and resources in their host country to obtain internships for the following summer (or January Term), or to search from abroad for an internship in the U.S. Both the Career Development and the Center for Global Initiatives websites contain a wealth of information to assist you, including information on previous internships held by Mount Holyoke students, how to use the available alumnae contacts, how to apply for transcript notation, etc. See the CDC (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/offices/cdc/5167.shtml>) and the MCGI website (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/global/11950.shtml>) for details. Students who fill out a CareerNet Card or who sign up for the MCGI Internship list serve will receive e-mail announcements about specific internship opportunities as they arise.

Planning Ahead for Graduate Applications and/or Job Search

Students who will be away for all or part of their junior year, particularly in the spring, should look ahead for information about graduate school and employment application procedures and cycles so that they will know what to expect during their senior year.

RETURNING TO MOUNT HOLYOKE

Right now, your primary concern is preparing to go abroad, and it is hard to think about preparing for your return to Mount Holyoke. You may have noticed, however, that this booklet is dedicated nearly as much to helping you make a smooth transition back to Mount Holyoke as to helping you plan your time away. Careful planning now will make your return to South Hadley that much easier and will better enable you to integrate your experience abroad with your academic and co-curricular life here.

- Be prepared for a major adjustment when you return to the US. During your time away, you will have grown and changed in ways that many of your friends and family will not have. You may have new political or cultural sensitivities, as a result of coming to know a place very different from home (perhaps with a different standard of living, a different political outlook, etc.). You likely will have a new perspective on the US, perhaps one very different from that of your friends and family. You may find that you feel comfortable in your host country and that the US (and Mount Holyoke in particular) now seems strange. You will find physical changes on campus, see new faces among faculty and students, and note the absence of others. Nearly all students experience some return anxiety, or "**re-entry shock**," as it is sometimes called; talking with others who have studied abroad will help. Many students have found that maintaining some contact with Mount Holyoke and thus keeping informed about changes and events on campus make the return easier; they recommend that you subscribe to the Mount Holyoke News or check out the website periodically. Also keep in touch with campus organizations in which you have been active so that

you can more easily rejoin those groups when you return. If you experience any difficulty contacting people or have general questions while you are away, please call the Office of Student Programs at (413) 538-2478 or e-mail jlaprade@mtholyoke.edu.

- We strongly encourage students to find ways to **share their experiences** abroad with different audiences on campus. The Center for Global Initiatives will arrange several opportunities, including departmental presentations, information sessions for education abroad, and Family Weekend events. If you're interested in learning more about these opportunities, contact Joanne Picard or Jale Okay. Also, consider submitting your reflective writings and/or photos to Abroadview (<http://www.abroadviewmagazine.com/>) or Glimpse (<http://www.theglimpse.com/>) magazines for competitions and publication.
- You will be able to **pre-register** from abroad for courses in the semester that you return to Mount Holyoke. Details will be sent to you by e-mail in November (for students returning in the spring) and April (for students returning in the fall). Pre-registration information will also be posted to the Registrar's web page. You may need to e-mail faculty for permission to enroll in courses with limited enrollment or prerequisites; be persistent, and let MCGI or your adviser know if we can help.
- Students who are away in the spring semester will receive a letter (in February or March) from the Office of Residential Life asking them to name a proxy for **room choosing** for the following year. When arranging for a proxy, be sure to choose someone you trust to follow your instructions, and be sure to spell out exactly what housing arrangements are and are not acceptable to you. Students who will be away only for the fall semester should choose a room number in the spring and indicate their housing preferences for the following spring; the numbers will be used to establish priority. The Office of Residential Life will do its best to accommodate students' preferences, though obviously there are fewer choices available for students returning in the middle of the year. Note that students away for fall semester only cannot return to campus housing until the beginning of spring semester; rooms are not available for January Term.
- **Caps and gowns** for senior year are typically ordered in the spring of junior year. You may order yours from abroad by contacting the Campus Store; they will need your height and hat size.
- **Senior portraits for the yearbook** are taken each year by McGrath Studios, the official MHC yearbook photographer, at no charge to students (additional photo packages beyond the portrait for the yearbook itself are available for purchase). Portraits are usually taken in the fall, and are due to the LLamarada Yearbook staff by the end of October each year. If you will be away in the fall of your senior year, you may have your photo taken in the previous spring; you may also submit a high-quality digital image directly to the LLamarada office. Digital photos should be a head and shoulder shot of just the senior (no friends, pets, etc). Check out <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/org/yearbk/> or www.mcgrathstudios.com for more information.
- Graduating seniors receive a free **yearbook** in the fall semester after their graduation. Undergraduates may pick up a copy of the yearbook each fall from Blanchard Campus Center. Students who are away from Mount Holyoke for the full year and thus do not pay the SGA Student Activities Fee do not automatically receive a copy of the yearbook. If you would like a copy for the year you are away, get in touch with the LLamarada office or with Student Programs to find out the cost and place an order.

- Voting for both **Class Board Officers** and **elected SGA positions** now occurs at one time, during All Campus Elections in early April. While running a campaign from off-campus can be challenging, it is still possible to run for these leadership positions while you are away. Please contact Student Programs as early as possible for more information. **Election procedures and timelines for other student organizations** vary from group to group, though all organizations are encouraged to hold their elections in the spring. Contact someone involved with the particular group in which you may be interested for more information.

- If you expect to have a **car** on campus when you return, be in touch in advance with the Parking Office to find out what policies and restrictions will be in force.

FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN SUMMER OR J-TERM PROJECTS ABROAD

Academic Considerations

Remember that Mount Holyoke does not directly award credit for internships or summer research. You may, however, register for an independent study (295 or 395) in the semester you return, and thereby receive credit for academic work based on your work experience or research abroad. If you wish to do this, find out what the requirements and procedures in your major department are before you confirm your plans.

Disbursal of Funding for International Internships & Research in the Summer

The offices that support international research or internships each disburse funds differently. Most likely, you will be required to sign a form or contract before they can authorize your check, so be sure to find out what the procedure for your award is, and when you can expect to receive your check. If you will be off campus at the time of disbursal, leave detailed mailing instructions with the appropriate office so that your check will get to you in time. Remember that award money may be taxable; for details, see the “Money Matters” section on page 14.

Appropriate Dress & Behavior

As an intern or researcher abroad, you will be entering into a foreign professional world, where you will represent- and be a part- of much more than just yourself and your individual experience. Non-verbal communication through dress and behavior is an important part of how you represent yourself and the College. You will need to make a conscious effort to learn about your host country’s professional culture, and be aware of what non-verbal message you may be sending. Find out what kind of dress is appropriate for your workplace before you get there, and prepare accordingly. Once you arrive, continue to observe how people interact and address each other at work. Don’t hesitate to ask for feedback from your supervisor.

Alumnae Hosts or Host Families

If you are fortunate enough to find affordable or free housing at the home of an alumna or a local family, be careful to respect them, their culture, their family, and their space. Sharing living space is a very generous gift, and even if you are asked for some kind of contribution in exchange for housing, keep in mind that you are in someone’s private *residence*, and not in a rented apartment. Find out what is and is not acceptable to them before you arrive, and observe subtleties once you arrive. A Housing Questionnaire is available on-line to help prevent misunderstandings:

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/global/15430.shtml>. You can forward this link to your hosts, and request their response from Jale Okay at jokay@mtholyoke.edu.

Returning to Campus

Even though you may only have been away for three weeks or three months, the “**re-entry shock**” that affects many students who go abroad for a semester or year can still be a real issue for you. Returning to the routines and stresses of a college semester after your exciting and dynamic experiences abroad can be very challenging. Look for opportunities to incorporate what you learned abroad into your life

on campus, so that you can cultivate your new knowledge. Write about your thoughts and experiences from your perspective as a returned student (if you are interested in publishing them, see the third bullet in the “Returning to Mount Holyoke” section on page 24); join a cultural club or language table; look for opportunities to present your experiences in your department, classes, or residence hall; and find people to talk to who are interested and can relate. It can be difficult for even the best of friends to relate to and converse at length about what you went through.

- Depending on which office you arranged your opportunity abroad with, **requirements** for returning students will vary. Your **evaluation** of and comments about your experience are most valuable when they are fresh, so please take care of any paperwork as soon as you get back, before the semester takes over.
 - For MHC International Internships, see <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/global/15430.shtml>
 - All others, consult your supporting office.

Going on to Study Abroad

If you plan to study abroad after your international internship, make sure you complete your final report before you begin your next program. Memories will soon blur with the next set of experiences. Also, be sure that all visa requirements and paperwork necessary for your travel and enrollment into the study abroad program are arranged and confirmed **before** you leave the States. It can be much more arduous to get things like that done in a country where you don't have as much support, or immediate access to the necessary resources.

CHECKLIST

FOR ALL STUDENTS GOING ABROAD

- Submit your snail mail and e-mail addresses to the Center for Global Initiatives as soon as you know them. Send in changes as they occur. (Use the form available at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/global/16084.shtml>.)
- Review your plans with your academic adviser, particularly in regard to any courses that you wish to use to fulfill requirements.
- Obtain passport and visa, as necessary.
- Review State Department travel information (<http://travel.state.gov/>).
- Review health and safety information as recommended by your program and the Centers for Disease Control (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>).
- Make sure that you have adequate health insurance and that you know the procedures for accessing benefits while you are outside the US (or your home country).
- Set your MHC e-mail account to forward mail to whatever other account you will be using.
- Arrange with Mail Services to have mail forwarded to you while you are away.
- Ascertain that your emergency contact information is up to date and has been clearly communicated to your family and to the appropriate offices and departments. Have a plan about how you will contact your family in the event of an emergency abroad or at home.

FOR STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD FOR A YEAR/SEMESTER

- Turn in your academic status notification form confirming that you will be going abroad, for what period of time, and on which program. Deadline: **May 15** (for fall or full year), **December 1** (for spring).
- Review your plan of study with your academic adviser, particularly in regard to any courses that you wish to use to fulfill requirements.
- Declare your major (if you have not already done so!).

If you have been awarded a Laurel Fellowship and/or expect to use any federal, state, or other outside aid, or parent loan or payment plans, toward your program abroad:

- Send the Consortium Agreement to your program or university. Completed Consortium Agreement forms are due in Student Financial Services by **June 1** (for fall and full-year programs), or **December 1** (for spring).
- Check with Student Financial Services before you leave campus to ensure that your file there is complete (if applicable).
- Submit the Disbursement Form to Student Financial Services to authorize Mount Holyoke to release funds to you (same deadlines as for the Consortium Agreement).

FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN SUMMER OR J-TERM PROJECTS

- Find and confirm your housing well in advance of your departure. If applicable, ask your host to fill out the Housing Questionnaire at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/global/15431.shtml>
- Complete all pre-departure forms and make sure you understand what is required before, during and after your program to ensure your funding.
- If you plan to do an independent study based on your project abroad, make arrangements with your major department before you leave.
- Clarify your arrival and departure times with your supervisor, as well as your responsibilities during your project, to the extent possible.
- Establish other local contacts (through other students, alumnae, faculty, family, etc.).