

**Approved Semester Programs
Pre-departure Guidebook**

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Emergencies

- IT'S ALWAYS BETTER TO FIRST CONTACT SOMEONE ON-SITE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY. This may be the appropriate emergency services (police, ambulance, etc.), the program contact or your program faculty-staff leader on-site, or the insurance company EIA/Europe Assistance.
- Be aware of the clinics and hospitals near your program location and if you are abroad, make sure you know the equivalent of "911" in your host country and your insurance contact number. For all programs, make sure you know how to contact your program contacts if you encounter an emergency situation.
- **Rollins College Emergency contact**
 - Emergency Line and Immediate Assistance Campus Security 24/7 at 407-646-2999
 - For emergencies that occur when students are away from campus (i.e. serious illness, injury or accident, missing student, sexual or violent assault, criminal arrest of a student, natural disaster, terrorist attack, etc.)
 - And for situations requiring IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE outside of regular business
 - If the line is not picked up, leave a message with your contact information
 - If your situation requires immediate assistance, IP staff will follow-up with you within 90 minutes
 - If your situation does not require immediate assistance, your request will be addressed during regular office hours
- IF YOU NEED IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE IT IS USUALLY BETTER TO CONTACT SOMEONE ON-SITE - YOUR PROGRAM DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATOR, FACULTY MEMBER, ETC.

Appeals to International Programs Policies

- The Office of International Programs has a number of student policies governing application and acceptance; program payments, scholarships, withdrawals and refunds; transfer and approval of grades and credits from partners; and student conduct for study away and program dismissals.
- All of these policies for students are published on the website and/or in the written pre-departure materials provided to all outbound study away students.

- Appeals to any Office of International Programs policy must be made in writing to the Director of International Programs.
 - Appeals will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the Director of International Programs may request additional information and/or request an interview with the complainant.
 - All policy appeals must be addressed within one year of the original incident or action that prompts the complaint.

Academics

- **Registering for Courses Off-Campus:** Every program will have a different process for course registration. You may select and confirm courses ahead of time, or select courses ahead of time and then finalize them when you arrive, or select and confirm when you arrive. The important thing to remember is: DON'T PANIC AND MAKE SURE YOU ARE PREPARED TO BE FLEXIBLE. In other words, don't count on a particular course: select first choices, and back-ups. Just like here at Rollins, classes can get cancelled or may be full, you may have time-tabling conflicts, and just like here, foreign institutions may give preference to their own students who are majors/minors in the field.
- **Getting Off-Campus Courses Approved for Credit:** All students must complete a *Request for Permission to Study Outside the College* **before** departure in order to receive credit for courses taken on any program. You will need to have courses approved by the relevant department in order to count them towards major or minor requirements. The same form is used for approvals for General Education Requirements. You can download the form at the Student Records website: https://www.rollins.edu/student-records/forms/Permission_to_Study_Outside_Interactive.pdf. It is an excellent idea to have more courses approved than you will actually take: select first choices, and back-ups, and have them all pre-approved. This may seem like a lot of work, but it will be worth it once you are away. In order to have courses approved, Student Records will require course descriptions and may need to see syllabi, and other information as well; your Department Chair may also need to see the same documentation if requesting major or minor credit. You can often find this information on the website, but if not, staff at International Programs can assist you. Occasionally, your Department Chair might tell you that he or she will need to review more details about the course before approving: don't worry—either International Programs can assist you in gathering more information *or* once you get to your program site and receive further course details, you can email the information to your Department Chair.
- If your courses change once you are away, and you need to seek approvals from afar, don't worry. It's a pain, but not impossible. You will need to download the *Request for Permission to Study Outside the College* from the Student Records Site. Complete your portions of the form and email it to International Programs or straight to your advisor or the relevant Department Chair with the relevant course information. We will ask your advisor (and Department Chair if asking for major and/or minor credit) to review your requests and we will make sure any changes and approvals are recorded at Student Records.
- Please note that Student Records reserves the right to charge a \$50 late fee per course for accepting credits that were not pre-approved, so if you wait until you return from your semester away, you may incur additional charges or may risk not receiving credit for the course
- Courses will generally not be approved to transfer back at Rollins if they do not align with any academic department or program within CLA, OR if you have already taken a course with the same course title or number. In other words, since Rollins does not have a fashion design program, Student Records may not approve a fashion design course for credit and if you already took International Marketing at Rollins, you may not be able to get credit for it again in London since it would be considered a duplicate course. This is why it is critical to get courses reviewed and pre-approved.

- **Holt Students** will be registered for courses taken on CLA study away programs through CLA and will be responsible for the full CLA program cost (the comprehensive fee equivalent to standard tuition, and on-campus room and board) and should consult with advisors and staff in the Hamilton Holt school regarding questions about credit approvals and other academic matters.
- **Adding/Dropping Courses While Away:** you must follow your host institution, program sponsor or study abroad provider's policies regarding adding and dropping courses. This includes the policies for course registration, course withdrawals, registration deadlines and policies regarding late withdrawals.
- **Financial Aid:** Don't forget to verify financial aid when adding and dropping courses, as the number of credits you are enrolled in can affect aid amounts.
- **Credit/No Credit:** If you wish to take a course abroad for Credit/No Credit, you have the following options. In all three cases, you still need to have the course pre-approved and the course *won't count towards major/minor requirements and won't count towards Gen. Eds.* You can use the C/NC course only as general credits towards graduation.
 - If your program allows you to take one or more courses for credit/no credit, you can opt to do so. Note that many programs do NOT allow this option. If you pass those courses (as defined by the program sponsor), Rollins will receive a transcript showing the C/NC grade and the course will transfer back to Rollins with just the credits, and no grade.
 - You may choose to transfer *one* course abroad back as Credit/No credit *within the first 10 class days of the beginning of the semester according to the program calendar.* You must follow Rollins policy to do this—the completed CR/NC declaration form (available on the Student Records website) must be received in Student Records within the above timeframe and IP should be copied on the request in order to verify the program calendar for Records. You MUST receive the equivalent of a C- or better to receive academic credit.
 - You may choose to use your one-time, late Credit/No Credit. *You must submit this request by the last day of classes according to the program calendar.* You MUST receive the equivalent of a C- or better to receive academic credit.
- **Academic Appeals:** Note that Rollins College will NOT accept appeals for the following:
 - Grade appeal for courses taken on an Approved Program for which you earn transfer credit. These are courses offered at another institution and Rollins cannot fairly evaluate the student work outside of the context of the full course. You may, however, choose to pursue a grade appeal through your host institution. If you do this, staff and faculty at Rollins College can review the process at the host institution to insure that it meets Rollins expectations for a fair and ethical grade appeal process.
 - Adjustments to the grade and credit translation for your program. When study away programs are approved, the curriculum committees on campus review and approve a fair and acceptable translation for grades and credits for all programs where the credit and grading scales used at the host institution are not comparable to standard US scales.
- **Registering for Courses Back at Rollins:** During your semester away, you will receive a reminder from International Programs about registering for courses for the semester you return to Rollins. This will be sent to your Rollins email account—so be sure to check that account regularly! You will be able to pre-register in a manner similar to what you do on campus.

- **Processing Grades & Credits When You Return:** IP will not release your grades and credits to Student Records until you have completed a program evaluation form. IP will email a survey or survey link to you at the end of your semester away. You will need to complete the survey as soon possible.
 - BE WARNED: It can take a long time for credits and grades (up to 3 months) to come back from a study away program. Be patient, and work with staff at IP to insure that the process goes as smoothly as possible. If you had your courses pre-approved as you should have, that will help speed up the process. Also, completing your evaluation form will insure that IP processes your grades and credits as soon as they arrive.
 - Your transcript should be sent DIRECTLY TO INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS. We will review the transcript and make translations to account for different grading and credit systems before sending it to Student Records.
 - Courses will appear in the transfer credit section of your transcript. Refer to program-specific information to determine whether your courses are Rollins credits or transfer credits. Transfer credits earned on Rollins Approved programs will display in the transfer credit section of your transcript with the actual, letter grades, which will be factored into your Rollins GPA.

Financial Information

- **Program Payment:** Students on Approved Semester Programs are billed standard Rollins tuition and room. The meal costs will vary by program. If your program does not include meals, then those costs will be your responsibility to budget out for. The room fee and board fee (if applicable) actually covers all the additional costs included in the semester program including the accommodation, administration of the program itself— at Rollins and abroad, emergency insurance, program orientation at Rollins and abroad, and any included program activities and excursions. As a result, this additional fee does not break down the same way it would on campus. The tuition and the additional fee will be billed to students as per usual via Student Account Services and can be paid by any standard means. In general, these fees do not include airfare, personal expenses, course materials, passport & visa, souvenirs, entertainment, independent travel and travel/property insurance. **For further details about what is covered program by program, review the program details on the website.**
- **Tuition Remission:** Students who receive tuition remission at Rollins may apply that remission to one Rollins study away program during their academic career at the College. Tuition remission applies to any Rollins Approved Summer or Approved Semester program or any Rollins Field Study. For Approved Semester Programs, tuition remission applies to the full Rollins College tuition charge less any funding from the Florida Resident Access Grant. For Approved Summer programs, tuition charges range from \$600 to \$3,000 depending on the program. For Field Studies, tuition remission applies only to the embedded Course Credit and Administrative Fee, which ranges from \$400-\$800 depending on the number of credits earned on a specific Field Study. Rollins students receiving tuition remission at the College may participate in multiple study away programs, however, the actual tuition remission can only be applied to one study away program.
- **Financial Aid & Scholarships:** If you plan to use financial aid to support your program costs, you will need to make the necessary arrangements. Speak to the Financial Aid office as soon as possible. You will be charged for full CLA tuition and an additional fee that is equivalent to a standard double room plus meals (if applicable).. Don't assume that you will be able to receive enough aid to cover all costs associated with your study away experience: do your homework so that you aren't surprised with bills you can't pay!

- If you currently live off-campus, you'll need to have your aid recalculated because the comprehensive fee for all approved semester study away programs is equivalent to CLA tuition and double room on campus. Meal plan costs vary from program to program.
- Most of the aid and scholarships you receive from Rollins will transfer directly to your study away program. The only exceptions are work study programs, some athletic grants, and some merit scholarships offered by academic departments, which may not be able to be applied to a study away program. Please inform IP as soon as possible of any conditions that are required by your coach or department. in exchange for keeping the grant or scholarship.
- **Bright Futures:** If you are a recipient of Florida Bright Futures funds, you must plan very carefully as the amount of aid you receive depends on the number of credits you complete during the course of the semester. Since courses may not be confirmed until you arrive at your program location, be certain to communicate with International Programs and Financial Aid to confirm your final number of credits once all your class changes have been finalized. Once you know the exact number of credits you are enrolled in—contact IP and Financial Aid to let us know. IP submits an estimate of credits to financial aid based on past experience: it is your responsibility to let us know if you are taking a different number of credits. Be aware that if you overestimate, you will owe money back at the end of the semester. If you do not communicate with IP and Financial Aid and are taking more than the estimated number of credits, you won't receive the funds you are expecting. Also, you must complete all your courses and have them approved for transfer credit in order to receive your allotted aid.

Withdrawals & Refunds

A student who wishes to withdraw from a Rollins or Rollins-Approved Study Away Program must notify the Office of International Programs (IP) of the intent to withdraw in writing. Students considering a leave from a Rollins or Rollins-Approved Study Away Program should consider the following.

Refund & Cancellation Policy:

- Payment of all program fees must be made by the communicated deadline. The IP will retain \$500 in all cases of withdrawal; beyond that, IP will retain all non-recoverable expenses committed to or incurred on the student's behalf. Any remaining portion of the program fee will be returned to the student.
- Should the program be cancelled due to circumstances at Rollins and/or a decision made by the IP, every attempt will be made to recuperate all possible funds on behalf of the student. However, there is no guarantee all funds can be recovered.
- If a student has received a scholarship through the IP for participation in a Rollins or Rollins Approved Study Away Program, the scholarship will be rescinded.
- In cases of withdrawal from a semester-long Rollins-Approved Study Away Program, Rollins will calculate any pro-rated amounts of financial aid based on the date of withdrawal and the program's academic calendar for the relevant term.

Transcript Notation:

- Students who withdraw from a semester-long Rollins-Approved Study Away Program prior to the program start date will receive no notation on the transcript. Students who withdraw from a semester-long Rollins-Approved Study Away Program after the program start date must adhere to the partner's policies for transcript notations in the case of withdrawals. If the partner issues a transcript for the term of the withdrawal, Rollins will receive the transcript and record grades, including 'W' (withdrawn) grades, as they appear on the partner transcript.

Student Conduct & Study Away Rules

- We have very reasonable behavior expectations for the students participating on our programs. First of all, you must remember that you will be a guest at another institution/organization and, in the case of international programs, in another country and that you will be representing Rollins College.
- **Rollins College Regulations:** Students participating in an Approved program are still bound by the Rollins College Code of Community Standards and that violations to that Code may result in specific sanctions, a full hearing process upon return to Rollins College, and/or expulsion from the program. Follow this link for the full Rollins Code of Community Standards: <https://www.rollins.edu/community-standards-responsibility/documents/rollins-college-code-of-community-standards.pdf>
- **Host Institution/Organization Regulations & Host Country Laws:** Participants must abide by all rules and regulations as set by the host institution/organization, as well as all local laws, especially those pertaining to the student's legal status in the host country for programs abroad.
- **Good Standing:** All students are required to maintain good college standing after they are accepted by a program. This means that they must maintain good academic standing as well as good social standing. Students who violate the Rollins judicial code or the Rollins academic honor code after they are accepted may be withdrawn from the program.
- **Appropriate Behavior:** Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible and mature manner at all times. This includes being sensitive to cultural dress, norms and behavior in the sites visited as well as avoiding behavior that is disruptive to the program and being respectful of all other program participants, faculty and staff.
- **Visitors:** Visits to participants by family members or friends must first be approved by the program staff and students must follow the rules of the host institution or provider in this regard. All visitors must make their own arrangements for travel, housing and food.
- **Motor Vehicle Policy for International Programs:** Students on Rollins Approved Programs may not, under any circumstances operate any motorized vehicle. The operation of a motorized vehicle by a student will result in dismissal from the program.
- **Alcohol Policy:** In regards to the consumption of alcohol, we expect you to follow local laws, so if you are over the local, legal drinking age and choose to drink, that is fine. However, we cannot tolerate any behavior associated with alcohol that endangers you or others around you. We also strongly caution you to avoid drinking to excess or to the point where you are no longer using the good judgment you need to stay safe and healthy during your term away. If you are abusing alcohol or engaging in alcohol-associated behaviors that endanger yourself or others, you risk immediate dismissal from the program.
- **Use of Illegal Drugs:** Rollins College has a zero tolerance policy for students using illegal drugs during an Approved Semester Program. Any student who uses, buys, or sells illegal drugs will be expelled from the program and immediately returned home at his/her own expense. One violation will be cause for removal from the program. Separation from the program will result in loss of academic credit. The cost of legal advice, fines and return travel must be borne by the violator. Furthermore, Rollins prohibits the unlawful possession, distribution, or use of illicit drugs and/or controlled substances on any property owned by the college or in any program or activity sponsored by the college in any location.

Alcohol & Drug Use Abroad: Alcohol and drug use is the major cause of health problems and death overseas, particularly in study abroad programs. This includes serious injuries, assault, date rape and drowning. Alcohol and drug use abroad affects the ability to comprehend dangerous situations and impairs judgment are also connected in many instances to cases of lost or stolen property. Foreign visitors in countries abroad are particularly vulnerable when it concerns violations--intentional or unintentional--of local rules and regulations concerning alcohol and, in particular, drugs. The process of law and punishment is far more arbitrary than within the US and more often than not may lead to prolonged imprisonment under substandard conditions. Consequently, it is of utmost importance for the welfare of the individual that extreme caution and prudence be applied when it concerns these matters. The use, purchase, or sale of illegal drugs (hallucinogens, narcotics, stimulants, or depressants) is a critical issue for health and safety.

The following sections in this guidebook are designed for international programs but still contain useful information for students doing any program, regardless of whether it is in the US or abroad

International Insurance

- All students who have registered for a study abroad program or travel experience through International Programs have coverage through EIIA and Europ Assistance for *emergency* medical expenses, medical evacuation and repatriation, security and natural disaster evacuation, trip cancellation/interruption, and lost/stolen checked baggage. This coverage applies during the dates of the Rollins-sponsored or affiliated travel outside your home country as well as during personal travel directly preceding or following the dates of the Rollins-sponsored or affiliated travel. You may also have additional coverage or access to healthcare through your specific program provider or host country/institution.
- Most countries require proof of emergency insurance coverage when applying for a visa—IP can provide this proof for you upon request.
- **Group ID:** C2EII
- **Contact Information:**
 - Toll free in the US or Canada: +1 (855) 901-6712
 - Collect outside of the US: +1 (240) 330-1551
 - Mention that your coverage is through EIIA and Rollins College
 - Write down your claim number
 - Email: ops@europassistance-usa.com
 - Website: <https://eservices.europassistance-usa.com/sites/EIIA>
 - To register use Group ID: C2EII and Activation Code: 150424
 - You can open a case on the website and have a representative call you back
- **Website Resources:** The website has a LOT of helpful resources and information
 - Print ID cards and access plan information – the International Plan FAQs are really helpful!
 - Sign up for health and safety alerts for your destination
 - Get information about your destination including travel basics, location-specific health and security information, emergency numbers, currency and current exchange rate, etc.
 - Get translations for branded medicines and medical terms and phrases
 - Find out whether you need a visa or vaccinations for your destination

- Find healthcare providers in your destination
- **Plan Overview:**
 - Emergency Medical up to \$100,000 with zero deductible
 - Medical Evacuation/Repatriation up to \$1,000,000
 - Accident Death or Dismemberment up to \$200,000
 - Trip Interruption/Cancellation up to \$2000
 - Lost or stolen checked baggage up to \$500 with some items excluded
 - Natural Disaster Evacuation up to \$100,000
 - Security Evacuation 100% of usual and customary charges
 - *This information is intended as an overview ONLY - please see the website for further information on coverage and limitations/exclusions*
- **Exclusions Overview:**
 - Routine and ongoing care is generally NOT covered
 - Mental healthcare outside of a crisis or emergency is generally NOT covered
 - Excluded athletic activities: Football, Boxing, Gymnastics, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Martial Arts, Rodeo, Skiing (water or snow), Swimming, Diving, Wrestling, Basketball, Baseball, and Equestrian when participating in the event professionally or when representing the institution's athletic program. Pick-up games are covered.
 - Excluded activities: skydiving/parachuting; hang gliding; bungee jumping; mountain climbing; pot-holing; zip-lining; and motorcycle riding. Scuba diving, snorkeling and skiing are ONLY covered if part of the curriculum for course credit.
 - *This information is intended as an overview ONLY - please see the website for further information on coverage and limitations/exclusions*
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If you require routine and/or ongoing care, or will be participating in competitive or intramural athletics for a sport that is not covered, please contact International Programs to discuss options for coverage during your time abroad*
- **Paying for Covered Medical Expenses and Submitting Claims:**
 - If you have used one of the medical facilities within the Europ Assistance network (available on the website), they have agreements in place for the faculties to accept the guaranteed payments. In these cases, Europ Assistance will pay directly for the services. Some locations will only accept local currency (cash) and if possible, Europ Assistance will send a local agent to take care of the bill. If the local agent is not available (or local) or if the facility is out of network, you will have to pay for the services and then be reimbursed through Europ Assistance.
 - If you paid for emergency medical services out of your pocket, you can be reimbursed by submitting the Medical Expense Claim Form on the Europ Assistance site. Send the the claim form and receipts showing proof of payment. to the address listed on the claim form. Reimbursement is generally provided within 30 days of completing a submission.
- **Other Assistance Provided through Europ Assistance:**
 - Emergency Telephone Translation Assistance: multilingual counselors are available for telephone translation services in all major languages.
 - Assistance in cases of trip interruption/cancellation, lost baggage, lost documents, etc.
 - Information about the legality of prescription medications in your destination country
 - Assistance for other issues including legal concerns, emergency travel, etc.
- **Property Insurance:** It is an excellent idea to purchase insurance to cover, at least partially, theft of personal belongings while traveling. Many homeowners' insurance policies contain a clause that extends this coverage worldwide, however, you should verify this with your parents or insurance agent before you depart. The

insurance company usually requires a copy of the police report filed at the time of the theft. **Theft is not an altogether uncommon occurrence and you would be well-advised to take preventive measures.**

Health Considerations

- **Before You Go:** It is best to do as much preventive health maintenance as possible before going abroad. You should have complete physical, dental and eye exams, and consider any flare-ups that may come up while you are away. Write any medical conditions or allergies, and emergency contact names in the front of your passport. We strongly recommend bringing a small first aid kit with basic supplies, including medication for pain relief, band-aids, diarrhea, constipation or other stomach problems, motion sickness, sunscreen and insect repellent. Sometimes specific over-the-counter medications can be difficult to find or expensive to purchase abroad. Also, some prescription drugs (most commonly those prescribed for ADD & ADHD) are illegal in certain countries. Make sure to discuss this with your prescribing doctor to plan for alternatives during your time abroad.
- **Immunizations & Centers for Disease Control Travel Information:** An excellent source of general health and immunizations information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Visit their website at www.cdc.gov. For their Travelers' Hotline, call toll free 1-877-FYI-TRIP. International Programs will provide you with specific information regarding immunizations and CDC advice for your host country.
- **Prescriptions:** If you take any prescription medications (even if they are seasonal as with allergies), we **strongly encourage** you to bring enough of the medication to cover the entire time you are abroad as it may be **extremely difficult** or **impossible** to procure certain medications overseas (especially ADD & ADHD medications). Remember that some prescription drugs (most commonly those prescribed for ADD & ADHD) are illegal in certain countries so you may need to discuss a plan for alternatives with your prescribing doctor before you go abroad. For any and all prescription medications, bring a copy of the prescription written with the generic name of the drug. This makes it much easier to fill the prescription should you need to while you are abroad. If you need to carry your prescriptions on the plane with you in your carry-on baggage, make sure the medication is in the original container and is prescribed directly to you. Liquid medications over 3 ounces are allowed—they are an exception to the liquid regulations. Be aware that prescription drugs that are illegal in the country you are traveling to could be confiscated upon arrival during standard luggage checks. Again, you may want to discuss options with your prescribing physician before you depart.
- **Health Care Abroad:** Your program should provide information about nearby physicians, clinics, and hospitals. You may also want to search for in-network providers on the EIIA/Europ Assistance insurance website.. In countries where English is not the official language, there may be facilities where English-speaking staff are available or your program officials/leaders will make every effort to provide you with the assistance of a translator. If you have a condition for which you anticipate care, we strongly recommend you let the International Programs office know before you leave, particularly since routine or ongoing care is NOT covered under the standard insurance policy. Medical or mental health services will be much easier to plan for if International Programs and the on-site program coordinator knows your needs in advance. In addition, International Programs will assist you in reviewing and considering coverage options and associated costs. Your privacy will be protected, and you can work with us to be sure that only those who need to know are involved in any communication. Keep in mind that health care and medical practice can be different in other countries, even those where English is spoken and we perceive there to be fewer cultural differences.
- **Mental Health:** Whether or not you have had issues with mental health in the past, study abroad does involve a number of factors that can trigger or aggravate mental health conditions. For example, you will be adjusting

to a new environment and new routine; you won't have your normal support systems, including family and friends; the excitement and challenge of adjusting to a new country can cause dramatic changes in your emotions and state of mind; and your everyday behaviors might shift due to a different schedule or issues as simple as jetlag. If you have any concerns, you can speak with a counselor at CAPS before your departure. The counselor may be able to assist you in decreasing the stress associated with travel, provide tips for how to manage issues such as depression or anxiety, and secure any desired releases of information, at student's request and consent, to inform others about how they may assist you in managing any acute or chronic issues.

- Participants under the care of a psychologist or psychiatrist will want to discuss their study abroad plans in advance with the therapist and assess their readiness to handle the changes and stresses of living abroad for a period to time. You may wish to speak with a Counselor at the Wellness Center on campus before your departure; (407) 628-6340. This service is free to Rollins students. As with other health issues it is advisable to let IP know if treatment should continue abroad, particularly since this treatment will not be covered by the standard insurance policy. In most program locations, a range of psychological health services are available and International Programs can assist in reviewing and considering coverage options and associated costs. It is particularly useful for students to work with us to help us anticipate the care that can be provided and to be sure arrangements are made shortly after arrival. Participants' privacy will be protected.
- While abroad, you have access to a mental health counselor at Well Connect 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Well Connect is an excellent resource to talk to in order to work through a mental health crisis. Reach Well Connect by calling 833-848-1761. You can also use the online resource Well Track at www.welltrack.com while abroad to maintain your mental health. To login to Well Track, use your Rollins login.
- There are also several steps you can take to prepare for your time abroad. Find out (if you don't already know) how alcohol might interact with any medications you are taking. Take some time to make a medical plan, with help from your family and doctor. This plan might include ways to manage your medication while traveling, a plan for support systems, and a plan for continuous care if needed. Make sure to confirm the availability and legality of medications: Adderall, for example, is illegal in many countries.

Safety and Security

- **Protecting Your Documents:** Your passport is your most important document by far and you will want to make two complete copies of the entire passport (every page) before you depart. Leave one copy with someone here, and bring one with you. Having the copy makes it much easier for the US Embassy to process a replacement if your passport is lost or stolen. Day-to-day, leave your passport somewhere safe and tucked away. You can make a copy of the information page to carry in your wallet or you may want a different form of picture ID for everyday use. You should carry your passport with you when you are traveling, even if you are traveling within your host country. We recommend simply creating a folder where you will keep your passport copy, information about your credit and ATM cards, prescription copies, insurance information and any other important documents. You may never even open the folder, but if you do have a problem, all of the crucial information you need will be together and easy to find!
- **Protecting Your Valuables - Theft & Pickpockets:** The issue of theft and pickpockets is one of the most common safety concerns that study abroad students face. Think about where you typically keep your valuables and how you typically carry your valuables. You may need to change your habits while you are abroad. Money belts that lie flat against your body under clothing, pouches that hang around your neck, and other hidden locations close to your body are the safest route to go. If you are using a regular bag, make sure

it can be zipped closed and that your valuables are in an inside pocket as close to your body as possible. Plus, get in the habit of holding your bag across your chest or keeping your hand on your bag. If you typically carry your wallet in your back pocket, switch to a front pocket. Be aware of yourself and the space around you. Pickpockets work in crowded areas, at tourist attractions and on public transportation. Be particularly careful when traveling (on trains and buses) and when staying at youth hostels. Also, you should be aware that pickpockets can be quite sophisticated and can use scams to distract you (like spilling something on you or asking you a question) and will also sometimes slash bags or bag straps. If you stay aware and alert, you will cut down on your chances of being robbed.

- **Traffic:** A common safety issue that is often overlooked is traffic, especially when visiting large cities. This may seem silly, but traffic in other countries can be quite dangerous. For example, in the UK they drive on the opposite side, which means our instincts about where to look are backwards, and in China or India the sheer numbers of cars and the lack of familiar traffic laws can be overwhelming. Pay particular attention to traffic and be sure to look both ways when crossing streets.
- **Local Laws & Penalties for Drug Possession:** Make sure you understand the basics about local laws for your host country. The below US State Department resources are an excellent place to research local laws and regulations. In many countries penalties for possession or trafficking of illegal drugs are the same. According to the State Department, if you are arrested, you can expect the following:
 - Few countries provide a jury trial,
 - Most countries do not accept bail,
 - Pre-trial detention, often in solitary confinement, may last months,
 - Prisons may lack even minimal comforts such as bed, toilet, and washbasin,
 - Diets are often inadequate and require supplements from relatives and friends,
 - Officials may not speak English,
 - Physical abuse, confiscations of personal property, inhumane treatment, and extortions are possible,
 - If you are convicted, you may face one of the following sentences:
 - Two to ten years in most countries,
 - A minimum of six years of hard labor and a stiff fine,
 - The death sentence in some countries.
- **US Embassies & Consulates; US State Department:** If you are a US citizen, it is a great idea to register with the US Embassy in the location where you will be living—the embassy can provide assistance in a variety of situations. To register:
 - Go to <https://travelregistration.state.gov/>.
 - Create an account by clicking on the "Create an Account" link and following the instructions.
 - Then view your profile and add trips or overseas residences to register with a specific US Embassy or Consulate. Click on the "Add Trip" button or "Add Overseas Residence" buttons to add this information. Follow through the pages, and complete as much information as you have available.
 - You will receive a confirmation email to ensure that you are registered correctly.
- The State Department provides excellent travel and safety information—you have received the State Department information for your host country already. However, you can monitor the State Department website yourself, and even sign up for updates and notices for your destination country. Be sure to utilize this excellent resource if you are traveling to other countries as well.
 - US State Department Safety Abroad Publication:

- <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-checklist.html>
- US State Department Travel Warnings & Consular Information:
 - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/worldwide-caution.html>
- US State Department Information for Students Traveling Abroad:
 - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/students.html>
- US State Department Country Information:
 - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>
- Rollins College follows the US State Department and Embassy policy for evacuation from locations outside the US.

Sexual Assault and Harassment

Sexual assault and sexual harassment can happen anywhere, to men and to women, and unfortunately study abroad is no exception. In order to ensure your safety, there are a number of factors to consider and proactive steps to take while you are abroad.

- **Being Aware of Legal and Cultural Differences**
 - Different countries have different laws and cultural norms for sexual harassment and even for sexual assault. There may be a higher tolerance for certain behaviors that we would find unacceptable.
 - For example, in some Mediterranean countries, catcalling is fairly common and generally tolerated. This can be pretty disconcerting or even upsetting for someone from a country like the US where this behavior is generally considered harassment. Similarly, for LGBTI travelers to Uganda, the laws and cultural attitudes towards homosexuality are very different from the United States, and in Morocco, women travelers should be aware that they may encounter higher risks for assault when walking alone in certain parts of cities or in rural areas.
 - Keep in mind that dating norms and acceptable dress and behavior can also vary country to country, or even within countries. Remember that what you wear or how you behave can be easily misread or misunderstood.
 - For example, in some cultures women would not normally approach a man in a bar. If you are in a country where women mostly wear long skirts and long sleeves, and you are in a tank top and shorts, you'll stand out. Conceptions of personal space can vary widely, as can senses of humor, and norms for what is considered flirtatious.
 - Given all of this, be more cautious and take your time to observe and become aware of the cultural norms. Notice how people interact, how they dress, how they engage in social situations. You should learn a bit about your host country and culture and the resources provided here are a great place to start.
- **How to Maintain a Safe Environment** Given these challenges, you should have an “if you wouldn't do it at home, don't do it abroad” mentality. It is important to:
 - Know your surroundings
 - Trust your instincts
 - Know where you are and where you are going and how you will return
 - Stay in contact with friends – let them know where you are
 - Use the buddy system

- Drink responsibly
 - Respect the cultural norms and customs of the country in which you are traveling
 - Learn the local emergency contact number for medical and law enforcement help
- Remember that just like here in the US, risks of sexual assault and harassment are increased with use of alcohol. If your program allows you to drink, drink responsibly and use the buddy system when out at night. And don't forget that date-rape drugs are used abroad too, so keep a close eye on your drink and don't allow others to purchase drinks for you.
 - Just like you would here, be a good bystander. Intervene if a fellow student is engaging in risky behavior and you can do so safely.
 - Essentially, use common sense and follow the same precautions as in the US with added awareness since you may not know the new surroundings and/or cultural norms.
 - Follow your intuition. Many victims have a "feeling" that something isn't right just before an assault takes place. So trust your gut.
- Behaviors that call attention to you as an individual or as a foreigner can be risky. When you are out and about, conducting yourself in a modest way will protect you from theft and undesirable encounters with strangers. Ways to avoid unwanted attention include:
 - Conservative dress or clothing that is not provocative and extreme,
 - Avoiding boisterous behavior,
 - Conversing with your travel companions quietly,
 - Using the foreign language you know or are studying,
 - Not being free with information about yourself or other students with strangers,
 - Not giving out addresses or telephone numbers to strangers,
 - Keeping your daily travel schedules private,
 - Being street wise and aware of your immediate surroundings,
 - Appearing confident, even if you are unsure of your surroundings,
 - Avoiding deserted areas and exercising caution in crowds,
 - Learning which areas are considered unsafe by local residents and staying away from them,
 - Avoiding to impair your judgment with drugs or excessive consumption of alcohol,
 - Not leaving valuables unattended,
 - Refraining from civil disturbances,
 - Avoiding demonstration because of the risk of unexpected violence.
 - **LGBTQ+ Safety:** Members of the LGBTQ+ community can face unique challenges when traveling abroad. Local laws, penalties, and attitudes may affect safety and ease of travel in some countries. Legal protections vary from country to country and you should know and understand the basics for the country or countries you will travel in and to. The US State Department's site is an excellent resource and they also have specific country information. <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/lgbti.html>.
 - **In Case of an Incident** While you are abroad, it is important to remember that you have access to a variety of resources and support networks in case of an emergency and/or incident. Because there are so many options open to you, there are multiple avenues possible for seeking help, all depending on your personal needs.
 1. The first step is to get to a safe space. Remember, if you are in immediate need of help/are in a dangerous situation call your program specific emergency contacts and/or the local authorities.

2. What happened was not your fault. Something happened to you that you didn't want to happen—and that's not OK.
3. If you need any immediate medical attention, your program offers health services and/or has provided you with names of local clinics and hospitals. You can also contact your international health insurance company (see the insurance section in this handbook) for help finding local resources. You can notify program leaders or staff at any time that you need to go to a clinic or hospital. It is not necessary to elaborate on your reasons. However, be aware that laws regarding medical intervention for sexual assault can vary country to country, so if you don't need immediate medical attention, you may want to discuss options before seeking help.
4. If you want to speak to someone in confidence after the incident about your options and possible steps to take, there are a number of resources available to you, including mental health professionals or clergy members, as well as victim advocates through CAPS at Rollins, who are reachable by phone from abroad (see the resources and support section below).
5. If you disclose an incident of sexual harassment or sexual assault to a Rollins faculty or staff member or a member of your program staff, he or she is required to inform the IP Director and the Title IX Coordinator at Rollins College. This doesn't mean you have to do anything you don't want to do, it just means that we need to make sure you have the support you need and want, and that we may need to gather some information from you to help keep you and other students safe. Keep in mind that program staff are likely best positioned to provide you with detailed information about any local laws and cultural norms that you should be aware of in regards to medical intervention, legal options, etc.
6. It is your decision whether or not to press charges through local law enforcement. If you are interested in pursuing legal action, please keep in mind that laws also differ country to country; check the State Department website (<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/emergencies/crime.html>) for more information about a country's criminal justice system. Please remember that if you choose not to report the crime immediately, but change your mind later, forensic and other evidence may be lost. If you have physical injuries, seek medical help right away.
7. Once you have gotten any immediate help you need, you may want to speak with a mental health counselor, once or on an ongoing basis. Your international health insurance covers you for mental health services and your program or the insurance company can help you find local resources. Remember that you don't need to disclose your reason for needing support.

- **Resources and Support**

- The State Department: the State Department websites for travel information provide helpful tips about some of the cultural and legal differences related to sexual assault and harassment.
- Rollins sexual misconduct and harassment policy: <http://www.rollins.edu/sexualmisconduct/policies.html>
- Rollins Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
 - CAPS at Rollins offers an atmosphere where personal concerns of any nature (including incidences of rape/sexual assault, physical assault, verbal and sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, stalking, hate crimes, etc.) can be examined and discussed freely and confidentially. Even while

you are abroad, the professionals at CAPS can provide support, access to necessary resources, and assist in weighing options.

- The on-call victim advocate can be reached from abroad by calling **1-407-500-4325**. Due to the logistical difficulties in providing these services to a student who is traveling, most of the services will be coordinated through a combination of phone sessions and linking to local referral options for medical and/or psychological care in your location, if desired. Once you return to Rollins, CAPS can provide you with continued counseling services to assist you further.
- CAPS Crisis Counseling After-Hours: For after-hours crisis counseling while abroad, you may also call Well Connect toll free 833-848-1761. You will be directed to a licensed counselor who will provide in-the-moment crisis counseling.
- Pathways to Safety: is an organization that provides information and support related to interpersonal and gender-based violence abroad. They have a crisis line and other resources available through their website: <https://pathwaystosafety.org>.

Preparations for International Travel

- **Passports and Visas:** You need a valid passport in order to travel abroad; in fact, you won't even be able to board the plane without one. If you don't have a passport, it's time to apply for one. Please visit this link to learn more: http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_830.html. If you already have a passport, check the expiration date; if your passport expires within six months of the end of your program you need to renew it: http://travel.state.gov/passport/renew/renew_833.html. For US passports, you should submit your new application or renewal application as soon as possible and no later than 10-12 weeks before your departure. Depending on where you are going, your citizenship, and the length of your stay, you may need a visa as well. You may also need to provide proof of health insurance for your visa application.
- **Non US Citizens, Dual Citizens, Permanent Residents, Green Card Holders:** If you are not a US citizen, are a dual citizen, or reside in the US but do not yet have US citizenship, you may need to follow different regulations regarding visas. Visit the US consulate website of the country you will be visiting to determine specific entrance requirements based on your citizenship. You may need to apply for your visa from your country of citizenship and may need to visit your destination country consulate's website in your home country. For example, if you are a Brazilian citizen traveling to Spain, you should go to the website of the Spanish consulate in Brazil for further information.
- **International Students:** Please confer with the Office of International Student and Scholar Services as soon as possible to discuss your travel plans. If you do not obtain the needed information and signatures, you may face significant immigration problems that could interfere with your degree program at Rollins.
- **Flights:** Rollins does not arrange or book flights for any semester programs. Students will need to book their own flights. If you are participating in a semester program and you are concerned about booking your own flight, please contact IP for assistance.
- **Tips for Booking Your Own Flight:** You must plan to arrive on the specific date the program begins and within a specific timeframe, depending on whether your program provides transportation from the airport. There are excellent resources to use when searching for competitively-priced flights and you may also be able to use airline miles if you belong to an airline mileage program. Make sure to leave yourself plenty of time between flights if you have international connections—keep in mind that when you first enter a country (or in the case of Europe, wherever you enter the EU), you will need to go through immigration and customs, which can be a

lengthy process. Read carefully the airline policies regarding cancellation and flight changes; sometimes changes aren't allowed, or incur high fees, so this is something to consider if you want flexibility.

- We strongly advise students to purchase airline tickets that permit a change of date or cancellation of the flight; current airline guidelines indicate this is normally allowed with a penalty. *Students should not purchase non-refundable airline tickets* even though they may be less expensive. Non-refundable tickets do not provide adequate protection for unforeseen circumstances. Be sure to read all of the provisions associated with any airline ticket purchase.
- These websites may be helpful for booking flights:
 - www.studentuniverse.com
 - www.kayak.com
 - www.statravel.com (need an ISIC, see below, in order to book with them)
 - www.expedia.com, www.orbitz.com, etc.
 - When reviewing flight prices on sites like these, it's also helpful to double-check directly with the airline as sometimes the fare is actually cheaper through the airline. In other words, use the search engines to compare prices, but then you may want to book through the airline.
- **Airline Rules & Regulations:** Whatever airline or flight you select, make sure you know your airline's baggage allowances—airlines are strict these days and fees for going over the allowance are hefty. Checked baggage can be lost or delayed on international flights so put any crucial items in your carry-on bag. Before you leave for the airport, make sure you have any important documents, like your passport and flight confirmation, with you! You should arrive at the airport 3 hours before your scheduled departure time for an international flight, and 1.5 hours before the scheduled departure time for a domestic flight.
- When you arrive at the airport you will check-in at your airline counter, receive your boarding pass, and check your baggage. Once you are done, proceed immediately through security, since the lines can be quite long. Make sure you are comfortable with the security rules and you know what you can and can't carry on the plane. Liquids and gels must be carried in containers 3 ounces or smaller and must go through security in a clear, 1 quart plastic bag. Be careful to avoid any items that could be used as weapons, for example nail scissors or metal nail files.
- Once you have cleared security, check the departure monitors in the airport to verify your departure gate and make sure to be at your gate an hour before the scheduled departure time. Boarding for international flights typically begins 45 minutes to an hour before departure.
- **Immigration & Customs:** While you are on the plane, the flight attendants will distribute any necessary passport control and customs documents. Usually these ask for your passport information, the dates of your stay in-country and your contact information in-country (address and phone number), so make sure you have this information on hand. The documents may also ask if you have anything to declare for customs. Most study abroad students should not have anything to declare: items that need to be declared include large amounts of cash or goods, plants and soil, animals, and foods like meats, fruits and vegetables.
- Once you de-plane, follow the signs to passport control. Make sure you get in the correct line; there are usually separate lines for citizens of the host country and visitors to the host country. You will need to show the border agent your passport and the documents you completed on the plane. You may also be asked to show additional documentation. If you are prepared and answer questions honestly, you should pass through

without any problems. After having your passport stamped at passport control, you will go to pick up your checked baggage. Once you have your bags, proceed through customs—following signs for “nothing to declare.” Hopefully you won’t be stopped, but be aware that they can stop you and search your baggage. After customs, you will find yourself in the arrivals lobby of the airport.

- **Packing Advice:** Packing for study abroad can be a real challenge. As much as possible pack smart and pack light. Clothing that can be layered or mixed-and-matched is one way to do both. You can also bring clothing that is a bit older so that you can wear it during your time abroad and then throw it away before your return, creating room for gifts and souvenirs. Take the time to research the weather for your destination, and consider your host culture as well—what might be typical clothing for an American student to wear to class, might be quite odd on a European campus. Also think about your own habits and preferences—for example, a student planning on going out at night to upscale clubs and restaurants has different packing needs than a student who plans to do a lot of hiking. Toiletries (shampoo, toothpaste, shaving gel, etc.) are heavy and take up a lot of room. You can generally buy them on-site, though if you have a favorite brand or product it might be quite expensive or hard to find. Don’t bring any really valuable items with you—what you don’t have can’t be lost or stolen!
 - Many other countries have different plugs and different voltages so you will need a plug adaptor and voltage converter for any electronics (digital cameras, cell phones, etc.). You can buy them at any big store like Wal-Mart or Target or any electronics store. Be aware that appliances that heat up, like hair dryers, will generally break, even with the voltage converter. You can do without, or buy a version made for travel that has a built-in voltage converter.
 - We would recommend bringing an umbrella and/or a rain jacket, clothing you can wear in layers for different temperatures, and older clothing/shoes you can leave behind at the end of the term to create room for souvenirs!
 - Comfortable walking shoes are a MUST for pretty much every location. You will be walking more day-to-day and traveling and exploring.
 - Basic toiletries are available in most locations, however, we recommend bringing any favorite toiletry products or brands that you can't live without since not all are available abroad. This is also true of more high-end brands.
 - Bring some basic first aid supplies including basic over-the-counter drugs such as cold medicine, Tylenol, or Advil, digestive aids such as Pepto-Bismol and Tums, band-aids, etc.
 - Bring your contact lenses and your contact lens solution with you as it may be difficult to find your brand abroad.
 - Heating in buildings in many countries abroad is more limited so it’s a great idea to bring warm clothes for sleeping and/or hanging out at home/in your room.
 - Laptop - if you are able to bring one, you’ll find it useful for classes and for communicating with friends and family at home. However, keep in mind that laptops are expensive and can be easily lost/stolen.
 - Other items past students have found helpful are: a stain remover (such as Tide to Go); reusable shopping bags (many countries charge you for plastic or paper bags at the store); a mid-sized backpack or smaller bag that is easy to haul around for weekend travels; ear plugs, an eye mask, and headphones (useful during long trips by bus & train); a guidebook; small gifts for your host family, roommate or language partner; and basic school supplies (i.e. pens, notebooks, etc.), particularly for more expensive program locations.
 - Although you’re packing for a full semester, try to pack only what you can carry comfortably. Remember you’ll need to carry whatever you’ve brought with you.

Communicating with Home

- **Cell Phones & Landline Telephones:** Increasingly, students wish to have a cell phone while abroad. One option is to bring your phone from the US and add the option of international usage to your existing service plan. This may or may not be possible or affordable, depending on your service provider (Verizon, Sprint, etc.) and your phone itself. You should start by contacting your service provider and asking about the ability and cost for doing so. Your phone should be tri-band or quad-band so that it can connect to cellular networks outside of the US. You should also be aware of the cost for adding international voice, text, and data services to your existing plan. It may be very high!
- The second option is to use your US cell phone on a cellular network in your destination country. To do this, your phone must have a removable SIM-card – a tiny, removable chip that connects the phone to a specific cellular network. First you should call your US service provider and ask for the “unlocking code.” This code will enable the phone to disconnect from the US network so that it can connect to other networks. Once you arrive to your destination country, you can then purchase a new SIM-card and swap it out for your US SIM-card. Now you are connected to the other network and will pay local rates for voice, text, and data. If your phone is capable of doing this, it is usually the most inexpensive option.
- A third option is to buy a cheap, pay-as-you-go phone once you arrive to your destination. If you do so, be aware that only some phones you purchase abroad can work on US networks. Shop around for a phone with these thoughts in mind:
 - Rates on local and long distance calls,
 - Roaming rates if you will be traveling around the country or out of the country,
 - The cost of incoming calls (in many countries they are free)
- Increasingly, students are bringing their US cell phone to use as a WiFi device with the cellular data turned off. This gives you access to WiFi services with no extra charges. However, different programs have different WiFi availability which will impact how useful it is to have a device for WiFi only.
- Of course, you can always use an international calling card for calls back to the US. These cards can be purchased in many convenience stores and will work on both cell phones and landlines.
- **Internet:** Your program-specific materials will provide information about computer and internet access and advice about bringing a laptop. In general, laptops are valuable and can be lost or stolen, so consider all angles before deciding to bring one, especially if it is not required by your program. Most laptops have built in voltage converters, but you would still need a plug adaptor to plug your laptop in. Using a laptop, or any other computer, is one way to communicate with friends and family via email and services like Skype, which allow you to call other computers and phones through your computer. That said, be aware that internet access outside of the US is often much more limited, and much slower than what we are used to! You may be charged for usage or may have limits placed on your internet use. While this may seem frustrating and inconvenient, remind yourself that being less dependent on the internet can be a learning experience and that you shouldn't spend your time abroad chatting with friends back home and visiting the same sites (Facebook/YouTube/ etc.) that you frequent while at Rollins.

Managing Your Money While You Are Away

- While you are abroad, you will need to have access to money. You'll need to think about your location and your host culture. In some countries cash will be used for everything, even for very large purchases. In other places, you may be able to use a credit card frequently. Availability of ATMs will vary from location to location.
- **Exchange Rates & Currency Exchange:** You should become familiar with the exchange rate for the local currency of your destination. Knowing the exchange rate will help you budget while abroad. www.oanda.com is an excellent resource for exchange rates. You may decide you want to change some money before you depart—that's fine, but you won't get as good of an exchange rate here as you will at your destination, so we recommend changing only a small amount before leaving.
- **ATMs:** ATMs are generally the most convenient way to access local currency while abroad. ATMs are convenient and generally offer good exchange rates. Contact your bank to find out more about using your ATM card abroad. Some banks charge fees for using ATMs abroad, and not all ATM cards will work internationally. If your bank charges a fee, you will want to limit the number of your ATM withdrawals so as not to incur excessive fees. Typically your card must be on an international bank network and have a 4-digit pin. Plus and Cirrus, associated with Visa and MasterCard, are the most common international bank networks. Make sure to let your bank know you will be using the card abroad so they don't block your account due to suspicious activity. Finally, make sure to bring with you the instructions about what to do if your card (or pin number) is lost or stolen. One way to avoid ATM fees is to find out whether your destination country has any US or international banks (i.e. HSBC, Citibank, etc.), or banks that have relationships with US banks (i.e. Bank of America and Barclays).
- **Credit Cards:** Credit cards are another good financial resource abroad, especially for online purchases (like plane or train tickets) and for unexpected emergencies (like a medical situation where you might need to pay out of pocket and then submit an insurance claim to be reimbursed). Generally MasterCard and Visa are much more widely accepted abroad than American Express or Discover. The same rules apply for credit cards as for ATM cards: you'll need to contact your credit card company to find out about usage fees and to let them know you will be using the card abroad. Credit cards with cash advance privileges are particularly useful for accessing cash if you have a problem with your ATM card/account. While credit cards are useful, keep in mind that they may not be widely accepted in some locations. In many locations such as Europe and Australia and New Zealand a chip on a credit or debit card is needed to make purchases. Talk to your bank about getting a card with a chip on in before you go abroad and also about setting up a 4 digit pin number with the chip.
- **Budgeting:** Make sure you know your own limits and have discussed your budget and spending plans with anyone who will be providing funding or assistance. Give yourself a budget before you leave for the trip, and take the exchange rate into consideration when setting this budget. It may help to commit to only spending a certain amount of money per day. Save any important receipts, and remember that you will want to purchase souvenirs and travel on holidays/weekends, so factor that into your budget. You can often get student discounts by using a student ID). Most students travel while they are abroad, and you can definitely be a budget traveler. Guidebooks and student-oriented websites are great places to start. Youth hostels are inexpensive and these days have reviews posted online so you can compare prices and amenities.

Cultural Adjustment

- **First Level of Adjustment:** This is the type of adjustment you have probably already experienced—adjusting to a new situation. For example, you started college and had to meet people, make friends, learn your way around campus, figure out your classes, etc. You can probably think of many other examples of times that you have been the stranger and had to figure out what was going on. You can draw on your own past experiences to help you with this first level of adjustment.

- **Second Level of Adjustment:** The second level of adjustment involves acclimating to a different culture and possibly a different language. Unless you have lived abroad before, you will not be able to truly understand the impact of living abroad until you get there. There are things that we each take for granted on a day-to-day basis that are actually specific to the United States and American culture. Studying abroad is a wake-up call and you may reconsider what you took for granted before. Getting used to these day-to-day differences will be stressful, no matter how prepared you think you are, but the difficult process of adjustment is an integral part of the incredible study abroad experience.

- **Stages of Adjustment:** While each student will adjust in different ways, there is a basic pattern of adjustment that most people experience, regardless of past travel experience!
 - Initial Excitement and Fascination: After you are accepted to a study abroad program, you will experience feelings of excitement and anticipation as you count down the days until departure. Your expectations are probably very high during this stage, though you may also experience some anxiety about the impending trip. This combination of exhilaration and anxiety usually continues into the beginning of your time abroad. You may find yourself running on adrenalin and trying to cram in as much as possible.
 - Initial Discomfort: After the initial fascination and excitement, you will begin to feel the stress of living outside your comfort zone. The constant differences, especially as they pertain to daily life, will start to wear on you and you may feel tired, anxious and frustrated. You may experience changes in your sleeping habits, difficulties dealing with others, language struggles, and mental fatigue. Everything seems new and you might long for the comforts and familiarity of home (this is why this stage is often connected to feeling homesick). To help get through this stage, you should force yourself to stay engaged with your host country and program. Spend time with others—new friends or old friends—and try to find places in your new home that do feel comfortable.
 - Surface Adjustment: After a few weeks, you will begin to adjust to the new environment and the small differences that felt so inconvenient and frustrating may start to feel normal. What you had thought of as new and strange begins to feel familiar. You’ve had time to explore your surroundings and may find it begins to feel like home. A big part of this stage is developing a connection to the country and people. If you are studying somewhere where the language is not your native language, you will find that using the foreign language will get easier.
 - Mental Isolation: After you have passed the first hurdle and adjusted to the surface differences, you will begin to encounter deeper challenges, which can become very frustrating. Some students take this frustration and apply it to the whole experience: “I hate it here. This place is awful.” This can be a very lonely period as the frustration and negativity can wear on you and everyday struggles might snowball into larger issues. Moving through this stage successfully is very similar to how you helped yourself move through the initial culture shock.
 - Integration and Acceptance: As you begin to explore the country and culture on a deeper level, you will move past the negative feelings and frustrations. As you learn more and explore more, you start to feel

more at ease with your surroundings. Cultural and practical differences become understandable and you enjoy the challenge of living with difference. You feel at home.

- **Return Anxiety:** Your time abroad comes to an end just as you have adjusted to your life abroad. You are faced with the reality of leaving your new friends and new home. You begin to process the experience and realize your own internal changes and growth. You are torn between wanting to go home and wanting to stay abroad. You may feel guilty about your desire to remain abroad.
- **Reintegration:** Believe it or not, it can be hard to return home. You might miss your friends and feel nostalgic about your experiences abroad. You might feel isolated because your friends and family just don't understand what you went through. After your adventure abroad, home (and Rollins) might seem boring. You may actually go through some of the stages that you went through when you first were abroad. These feelings will pass as you begin to integrate your experiences abroad into your life at home. Rollins International Programs will invite you to participate in some re-entry programs to help with this transition—take advantage of what we offer! You can also help ease this reverse culture shock while you are abroad by maintaining connections to home while you are away and keeping a journal or blog and taking many photos (to help you remember your experiences later). You might think you'll remember every moment, but you won't, so document your adventures!
- **Managing Homesickness, Loneliness, Off-Days and Other Likely Problems:** You are probably looking forward to an amazing time abroad and your excitement may be creating unrealistic expectations. Remember that your experiences abroad will encompass good and bad moments, cranky mornings, amazing experiences, bad luck, loneliness, incredible connections, annoyances, life-changing moments, frustrations, laughter... you get the idea. Basically, your time abroad will be like any other time in your life—filled with ups and downs, complications and surprises. DO NOT expect a perfect time, or you will be disappointed.
- When you are abroad, and you encounter all the ordinary ups and downs of life, they will likely feel more challenging than normal because you are handling them *in addition to* the stages of cultural adjustment discussed above. Even the most experienced traveler encounters bumps in the road (literally and figuratively). So how do you handle it when you are having a bad minute/hour/day/week? Everyone is different, but here are some suggestions:
 - Let yourself feel down/cranky/frustrated etc. Don't beat yourself up if you have negative feelings. It's part of the ride. If, however, you feel overwhelmed by these feelings, find yourself withdrawing completely, or just can't shake the negativity after a couple weeks, ask for help! You aren't the first person to go through this, and won't be the last. Don't suffer in silence.
 - Write about it: really! It helps to write through your feelings. Do it by hand, in a Parisian coffee shop, via a blog, in an email to a friend, whatever—just do it!
 - Don't forget your security blanket. Okay, we know you don't actually have a security blanket, but you probably have things you do when you are feeling down back home, things that help make you feel better—comfort food, a favorite song, prayer or meditation, a TV show or movie that never fails to make you laugh, taking a long bike ride, wearing your lucky socks, etc. Can you recreate your security blanket abroad? If so, do it.
 - Go out and do something on your own. It can be intimidating to go out on your own abroad, but if you can get up the guts to do it, you'll develop confidence and feel more comfortable in your new environment. It may seem counter-intuitive, but it works, and it can be as simple as just running an errand or having a meal on your own.
 - Seek out the familiar. Find somewhere that feels comfortable and not so alien--a library, coffee shop, church, park, beach or forest, or even an American restaurant/ fast food chain).

- Connect with home. You'll be far away, but not out of touch. Email, chat, call, Skype, and text family and friends back home.
- Focus on the big picture: create a Bucket List; a list of what you want to do during your life. You may find your experiences abroad have shifted or influenced your goals and desires, and drawing back to see your list will help you move past the small challenges of the moment.
- Focus on your immediate goals. Being abroad is a unique experience that you should take advantage of. Create a list of things you want to do before you leave, and start doing them!
- Share the experience. You aren't the only one experiencing ups and downs, so share your thoughts with another student or even a faculty member. It can help to vent and you may be able to give each other advice.
- Stay busy! The busier you are, the less time you have to dwell on your challenges. If you stay busy enough, you'll forget that you ever felt down at all!

Letters to America Blog

Journaling is an excellent way to keep track of all your adventures abroad, so why not do it online? Post pictures and videos, tell stories, and keep friends and family updated on your experiences with our Letters to America Blog! Using Wordpress, a free blogging platform, you can record all your exciting moments in a fun and easy way.

▪ **Here's how to do it!**

1. Go to: <http://blogs.rollins.edu/letters/>
 2. Log into Letters to America *using your Rollins email and password*.
 3. Begin posting by clicking on Posts> Add New, and inputting text or visuals. Here you have some of the same functionality as you do in Microsoft Word, as well as the option to include pictures, movies or music! You can also include a Location and Tags that allow viewers to search blogs by subject/keyword.
 4. Under the 'Categories' tab on the right, click the box that applies to your program of study (Ex. TEAN at the University of Sydney). This option keeps all of the blog posts from the same program together.
 5. When you are done your post, click 'Preview' to see what it will look like when published, then click 'Submit for Review' to send it on for publishing!
 6. Wordpress offers a variety of phone and tablet apps for blogging on the go-make sure to download one so you can keep your blog updated!
- Blogging Requirements for Students on Scholarship: Students who have received a study abroad scholarship from our office **must** complete the following requirements:
- 1 pre-departure post
 - 3 while abroad – at least two by the end of November for fall programs or by the end of March for spring programs
 - 1 post made within 2 weeks of returning
 - Each post must have at least 350 words
- The requirements and schedule must be adhered to or the scholarship **will be** rescinded for non-completion. Any questions regarding blogging requirements can be directed to the Office of International Programs at globalengagement@rollins.edu. Thanks, and happy blogging!

While significant effort is made to keep the information in this handbook accurate, this handbook is not intended to be a binding document and all information contained herein is subject to change.