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**GETTING STARTED****Why Study Abroad?**

There are a lot of benefits from studying abroad. Below are some great reasons to go:

- Experience a different culture
- Improve foreign language skills
- Meet people from around the world
- Sharpen your resume & be competitive in an increasingly global economy
- Prove yourself to be self-sufficient by living and studying in a foreign place
- Experience history, art, and world events not available in Canada
- Ability to explore places you have only read about
- Enhance your education experience
- Bring unique perspectives back with you

If you are interested in gaining a competitive and compassionate edge as well as distinct advantages in the classroom, in the workforce and in life, we encourage you to participate in international educational exchange.

It is also imperative that you think hard about the reasons for going. Is the time or the destination you've chosen is the right one for you at this time? Are you equipped to go overseas, or can you identify potential barriers to your success?

For more details, complete the Self Audit in Appendix A.

**Who can Study Abroad?**

While anyone who wants to study abroad is allowed, there are some requirements that the student has to fill.

First, you must maintain a C+ grade point average at UFV for the semester prior to your departure.

Secondly, space is limited so spots will be awarded on a competitive basis and are subject to availability, so do your best.

Thirdly, you will be required to return to UFV for one semester when you return from your study abroad.

For more details see Appendix B.

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### **When is it Available?**

You can participate in studying abroad after you have successfully completed 30 credits at UFV.

### **How to Apply**

If you are interested in the study abroad experience at an institution that UFV has a partnership with, then you should set up a meeting with an International Education Advisor. Next, you have to meet with your program advisor to review your course work, general electives, and to arrange your schedule so you can study abroad without losing time in your program. After that, you need to explore the program opportunities.

Consider the language requirements, program location, courses offered, price, length of study, and other program components such as excursions, internships, integration in classroom, and living arrangements. After you have chosen your top three choices, you need to fill out all the appropriate application forms and other paperwork.

For the Application Form, see Appendix B.

### **What to Expect**

In the excitement of living in a new place, you may find your schoolwork is not getting done. Be aware that this may occur. If it does, take the time to re-direct your attitude to ensure that your schooling comes first. Get a weekly and monthly time planner to keep your schedule on track.

Remember that you must follow the rules and regulations of the host institution, as well as the laws of the host country. Plan to participate in whatever orientation programs are held at the host institution. This will give you a great head start and help you learn your way around campus, make new friends, learn about the university, school clubs, etc.

## **TRANSFER OF EXCHANGE CREDIT**

### **Your Academic Exchange Record**

Make sure you talk to an advisor in your department before leaving about the courses you have selected at your host institution. You will have to make a request for a “Letter of Permission” which will guarantee transfer credit when you return. The department will also assist you regarding the quality of the exchange course content and how it relates to your UFV academic program.

For more information see Appendix C.

### **Assigned Exchange Credit**

Assigned exchange credit is given when the Faculty approves a course as an equivalent to a specific UFV course. You can check with your international advisor or the program head to see if the courses you are taking have an Assigned Exchange Credit. Please note that one course at a host institution may be assigned as a different UFV course, depending on if it meets certain course criterion.

### **Unassigned Exchange Credit**

Unassigned exchange credit will be given if:

- There is no course-to-course equivalent at UFV, or
- Your UFV degree requirements are not course specific, i.e. 6 credits upper year History

### **Receiving credit**

After you have completed your studies overseas, but before you return to Canada, obtain an Official Transcript from your Host Institution.

To confirm validation, it is important that the Official Transcript is sent by your Host Institution directly to UFV!

Once you return to UFV, you will need to process a Request for Transfer Credit form, that is available through the Admissions and Records Department, or can be downloaded through UFV's website:  
[www.UFV.ca/ar/Forms/RequestforTransferCredit.pdf](http://www.UFV.ca/ar/Forms/RequestforTransferCredit.pdf)

Please give a copy of the authorized Request for Transfer Credit form to the Study Abroad advisers so that they can be consistent when other students go abroad.

## **FINANCING YOUR TRIP**

It is difficult to predict the actual cost of studying abroad. Ideally, the cost is roughly the same as the cost of studying away from home in Canada, and is financed the same way. This is not always the case, especially if you are organizing making your own plans to go abroad.

Costs will vary greatly by country. The cost of living normally will be higher in Europe and Japan than in China.

Different locations within a country will incur different expenses. Expect to spend more if you are living in a major urban centre like the capital city than if you are living in a rural community. Some programs will be more expensive than others, depending on added features, such as support services, tours and excursions. Some institutions will charge higher student fees or room and board fees. Any additional traveling you may wish to do will increase your total costs.

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In addition to asking your Study Abroad Coordinator and past participants for information, you will need to conduct some research yourself. Be sure to remember student discounts and any special rates that may be available.

See Budgeting Tips sub-section in the Finance section of this handbook

Based on your research, begin to estimate the costs associated with going overseas.

Use the budget worksheet on page 5 of the “UFV Study Abroad Application & Information Sheet” to determine potential sources of income.

See the Budget Sheet in Appendix B.

### **Sources of funding:**

Below are some sources of funding you might find helpful:

- Personal: job, parents, relatives, friends, bank, etc.
- School: student association, Alumni, Faculty Deans, on-campus student groups and clubs, etc.
- Community: charitable clubs, local businesses, churches, banks, media (i.e. local media, or voluntary groups like Rotary International)
- Government organizations: your MP and MPP as well as other political parties, ministries, municipal government
- Businesses: local and national corporations that may do business with the country you are visiting or are part of your community (i.e. Chambers of Commerce)
- Charitable organizations: refer to the *Canadian Directory to Foundations and Grants* for a list of requirements

### **Other considerations**

Going abroad may have financial implications beyond raising enough money to live abroad. If you have student loans, you may want to consider registering for courses while you are overseas in order to maintain your interest-free status.

For guidelines and current information, go to the BC Student Loan Service Bureau at <https://www.bcslservicebureau.com> or phone the British Columbia Student Services Branch at 1-800-561-1818. Note that they have an automated voicemail system, so press 1, 1, 0 to get a live representative.

**GETTING READY TO GO****Guidebooks**

The best advice you can receive is to buy a guidebook a few months before you go. A good guidebook will give you country-specific information. Most will cover the history, environment, culture, language, economy, government, food, and arts of the exchange country, and give concrete advice on visas, getting there, health and safety, packing, local transportation, currency, and shopping. Note that the world keeps on changing so make sure you remember that when reading the guidebook. Don't pick the first one that you see, take a few out from your local library and see what guidebook was best for you. Lonely Planet guide books are excellent ([www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)) and include information on the country (history, geography, politics) as well as information for visitors.

If you are going to a country where you are not familiar with the language, a language phrase book can be almost as important as a good guidebook. Make sure that the phrase book you use is relevant to you, and covers the things you are likely to say ("Where is the bathroom?"), and does not focus on situations you won't encounter ("Tell the maid to clean my room.").

Also, ensure you access information *from* the host country and culture, not just *about* it. Look for foreign newspapers in the library or on the web. Visit your video store's foreign film section for movies or documentaries about the country.

The government of Canada has a number of publications available for travellers. The following are particularly helpful:

Bon Voyage, But... Information for the Canadian Traveller

[http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/pubs/bon\\_voyage\\_but-en.asp](http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/pubs/bon_voyage_but-en.asp)

Her Own Way: Advice for the Woman Traveller

[http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/pubs/her\\_own\\_way-en.asp](http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/pubs/her_own_way-en.asp)

**TRAVEL DOCUMENTS****Passports**

If you are a Canadian citizen, you must have a passport to travel to all countries. Your passport is your official identification that you are a Canadian citizen. Applications for Canadian passports may be obtained at travel agencies, passport offices and Canadian embassies and consulates. Allow at least three weeks for delivery of the application.

If you apply for a passport in person at a passport office, you can normally expect it within ten working days.

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If you need to apply for visas, you should start the application process for a passport extra early, since you will need your passport.

For general information on Canadian passports, visit the Passport Office's website at [http://www.ppt.gc.ca/menu\\_e.asp](http://www.ppt.gc.ca/menu_e.asp). This site contains information about obtaining a passport and what to do if your passport is lost or stolen.

Most countries will not let you in if your passport is close to its expiry date. So, if your passport will expire within six months of your return to Canada, check with your destination's embassy or consulate in Canada for their rules regarding passport validity and expiration. Additionally, you may want to check with your local passport office regarding possible complications resulting from obtaining a new passport in your destination country. (For example, Guatemala has a high rate of passport forgeries, so if the expiration date is too close to your return, you may wish to consider getting a new Canadian passport issued in Canada, rather than overseas.)

Be sure to make a photocopy of your passport's identification page and keep the photocopy and the original in separate places. This will speed up the replacement process should you lose your passport. For added security, you can leave a photocopy with a friend or relative at home.

If your passport gets lost or stolen, you need to contact the nearest Canadian mission, or the mission of your country of citizenship, immediately for a replacement and report the theft to the police. Be sure to get a copy of the police report or the report number. To replace your Canadian passport you will need to complete an application form, produce written evidence of your Canadian citizenship (for example a birth or citizenship certificate), produce a copy of the police report or number, present new photographs and pay the required fee.

Remember, your passport is your most important legal document while travelling. In some countries it is required that foreigners have their passports with them at all times. That said, it may be possible to simply carry a photocopy of the main page, while keeping your passport in a safe place. Guard your passport carefully and do not travel anywhere without it.

**Visas**

Visas give official permission from a foreign government for you to enter their country and stay for a particular amount of time. Visa formats can vary widely from a stamp in your passport at the time you enter the country to an official document with your photograph attached.

Visas can take a few hours to a few months to obtain. If you are applying for your visa by mail, use registered mail or a courier, since you need to

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send your passport with it in the package. Make sure you include all relevant items. Forgetting any important documents could delay your visa by weeks or even months, which may cause problems for you (e.g., may not receive your visa in time for your planned departure).

Visa rules vary from country to country and can also change depending on the purpose of travel. Are you going for to simply travel, study or work overseas? Will you need a Visa? Find out quickly by checking Visa Connection's database on <http://www.visaconnection.com>

Be aware of the country's rules and regulations on visas, what you are allowed do and how long you can stay. It can be exceptionally difficult if you stay after your visa expires or if you participate in activities that are not permitted by your visa. You could be fined, arrested, deported, or worse.

### **Legal Matters**

Your Canadian citizenship does not offer any additional protection, preferential treatment or immunity if you break the law while overseas. Canadian officials can only provide assistance and support for Canadians in jail abroad. They can also try to ensure that you are treated as locals in jail would be treated. Unfortunately, jail conditions may not be very good for locals either!

If you break the law in another country, you are subject to that country's judicial system, which may be vastly different. For example, a person may be presumed guilty until proven innocent. Some activities that are not prosecuted in Canada may be punishable with heavy fines or worse. As in Canada, ignorance of the law is no excuse.

Some countries may have a very active black market for foreign (especially US) currency. Canadians engaged in illegal activities such as this risk deportation.

The potential availability and use of drugs could lead you to forget the possible consequences. Some countries, despite having seemingly "relaxed" attitudes towards drugs may offer severe penalties for possession or use of drugs.

Currently there are thousands of Canadians are in jail abroad— many of them for drug-related offences. Use your common sense and always weigh the risks involved. The government of Canada has the following publication that may be helpful:

Drugs and Travel: Why They Don't Mix  
[http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/pubs/drugs\\_travel-en.asp](http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/pubs/drugs_travel-en.asp)

### Arrival, Travel, & Flight Tickets

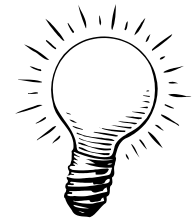
When planning your arrival at your host institution, plan to arrive early enough to give yourself time to settle into your accommodation and environment before the beginning of classes.

If you can afford one, purchase a flexible ticket to make changes in planning easier to accommodate. Be sure to check that all ticket details are correct. Be sure to confirm your flight 72 hours before you leave.

Try to print a map of the terminal you will arrive in. This will help you find your way around when you arrive, especially if you are trying to get from one terminal to the other for a connecting flight.

You are in charge of your transportation from the airport to the host institution. So, plan how you will get from the airport to your host institution or place of accommodation, and make sure that you have enough local currency with you to cover the costs.

**Do-it-yourself.** Most airlines now offer self-service ticketing kiosks, or even at-home check-in, that will allow you to skip winding lines if you're low maintenance and in a hurry.



Source: Trippler, Terry. "Ten tips for smoother travel in the new year"  
Vancouver Sun. Saturday, January 07, 2006

## FINANCE

Do not carry large amounts of cash with you. Traveller's cheques are the safest and most suitable way to carry your money as they can be easily refunded if they are lost or stolen. Traveller's cheques come in different denominations, in different currencies, and can be obtained at most banks. If the local currency you need is unavailable, American dollars are the easiest to exchangeable overseas.

### Banking

Before you depart, you will need to arrange how you are going to manage your banking and finances in Canada. Inform your bank of your exchange plans, the timing of events, and your needs. If you are receiving a government student loan while you are abroad, arrange for deposit of your funds when the documents arrive.

Discuss the following with your bank:

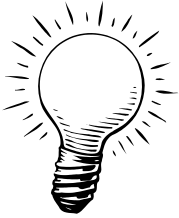
- Does your bank have a branch or an affiliated with another bank in your exchange country?
- What is the easiest bank to use in the partner country for transferring funds?

- Do you want Canadian dollars or do you want to exchange the money in Canada before it is sent to your foreign bank account?
- How do cash advances work on your credit card?
- How do you replace debit or credit cards while you are abroad?
- What is the best way to communicate with your bank while you are abroad?

### **Budgeting Tips**

Once you've planned how much money you will need, it is important to budget your money so that you do not run out while you are abroad. Here are some suggestions to help you live within a sensible budget for the duration of your stay.

- Make weekly and daily budgets and be sure to stick to them.
- Expect to spend more money in your first week abroad than during any other week there. Budget for this.
- Learn the worth of the local currency in relation to Canadian dollars as soon as possible.
- Watch for student rates and other discount wherever you go.
- Take advantage of cheaper alternatives. Cook for yourself when possible, eat in student cafeterias rather than restaurants, and watch for lunch specials. Depending on the country, some pubs offer cheaper fare than regular restaurants.
- Buy transportation passes that offer discounts on multiple-day travel.
- Stay in youth hostels rather than hotels.
- If it is safe, travel overnight and sleep on the train.
- Pick-pocketing is common anywhere you go, so take care of your belongings.
- Save on long distance by using local phone cards, or pay Canadian long distance rates by using the Canada Direct service. (Check [www.infocanadadirect.com](http://www.infocanadadirect.com) and order free copies of the Canada Direct Wallet Guide, at 1-800-561-8868)
- Seek out discounts specifically available for students (See: [www.isic-canada.com](http://www.isic-canada.com) and [www.isecard.com](http://www.isecard.com))



**Red alert!** It's becoming harder and harder to guess who is offering the most airline inexpensive tickets. If you know where you're going, but are flexible on dates, sign up for e-alerts that will give you the head's up on fare specials such as OneTravel.com's "Farebeater Ultra" ([www.onetravel.com](http://www.onetravel.com))

Source: Tripler, Terry. "Ten tips for smoother travel in the new year" Vancouver Sun. Saturday, January 07, 2006

## HEALTH CARE

### Medical Examinations

Some countries require a medical examination for entry. If this applies you, call your doctor for an appointment. Medical exams can usually be done within two weeks but plan well in advance.

### Vaccinations

Check with your doctor, a public health clinic or a travel clinic to figure out which vaccinations you will need for your trip. If you require vaccinations, have each type of Vaccination recorded on and International Vaccination Certificate, available at the Public Health Clinic. Be sure to start this early since some vaccinations have to be done with a series of shots over several weeks or months.

As of January 2006, the closest travel clinic closest to UFV is in Langley. Visit the International Travel Health and Vaccination Clinic site at <http://www.doctortravel.ca>

For complete lists of other travel clinics across Canada, check the Public Agency of Canada's website at: [http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/tmp-pmv/travel/clinic\\_e.html#bc](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/tmp-pmv/travel/clinic_e.html#bc)

### Prescriptions and Pre-existing Health Conditions

If you have to take any medication regularly you should take an adequate amount of it to last for the entire period abroad, providing it is not perishable. Keep your medications in containers that clearly show the prescription number on the label. This helps with Customs clearance in and out of countries, and makes it easier to refill prescriptions by mail.

If your doctor advises against taking a large supply of medication, he or she should provide a description of the diagnosis and the medication so that an overseas physician can fill out the prescription properly. In some cases a local physician may be required or wish to do an examination to confirm the diagnosis before filling your prescription. Make sure your prescription includes the medical name, not simply the brand name.

Drug companies sometimes manufacture the same drug under different brand names in other parts of the world.

If you have any pre-existing medical conditions, be sure to discuss your travel plans, including your choice of destination with your family doctor. He/She will be able to advise you on the risks involved and any special precautions you can take.

### **Eyeglasses**

Students who wear glasses or contacts should take an extra pair and their written prescription abroad. Students who need to get their glasses or contacts replaced while abroad should write to or fax their Canadian eye doctor and have a new pair sent to them. Students should take sufficient amounts of the contact lens solution that they normally use, since the required brand is not always available in other countries.



**Protect your assets.** Whether traveling to a sunny or snowy location, be sure to pack a pair of shades.

Source: Trippler, Terry. "Ten tips for smoother travel in the new year"  
Vancouver Sun. Saturday, January 07, 2006

## HEALTH INSURANCE

### **Mandatory Insurance**

While you are on exchange, you are required to have health insurance. You are responsible for determining and acquiring international health coverage before you go. Without health insurance you may be held accountable for medical costs and left stranded without any support in your exchange country. If you are already covered by BC Medical Services Plan (MSP), you are still required to purchase additional medical insurance from a private insurance company for the duration of your exchange outside Canada. The cost of medical care outside Canada can be much higher than the amounts payable by MSP. Most travel agencies and the BCAA and CAA can provide information on affordable short term travel insurance. In many cases your host institution can provide information about long term health insurance.

## Types of Health Insurance

	MANDATORY	OPTIONAL
Basic	BC MSP or similar plan.  You must be covered by MSP or a provincial equivalent to be eligible for another health plan or other extended plans	
Extended		A private plan that covers dental, vision, prescription drugs, etc.
Emergency	If you are covered only by MSP or another provincial plan, you must purchase additional medical insurance from a private company.	A private plan that includes some emergency benefits.

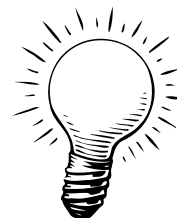
## TRANSPORTATION & LUGGAGE

### Packing

Take only as much as you need. You do not want to be weighed down in an airport with two suitcases, and a backpack. Make sure you are able to carry whatever you take for long distances by yourself. Pack at least one week before you leave. This will give you time to decide what you really need and what you still need to buy. When packing, make a pile of everything you think you might need. Then get rid of at least half of the pile. Then get rid of another half. You will probably still have too much stuff, but it is a place to start.

In today's global market, there are few places in the world where you cannot find what you want, unless you are in a very remote location. It is probably not necessary to take enough toilet paper or water to last the entire trip. If you forget something, you can either buy it there or do without. However, some things may be difficult to find. Ask someone, who has been to your host country before, if there is anything special that you should take.

**Lighten your load.** If you're planning to bargain hunt, only pack half a suitcase of the bare essentials, to leave room for tchotchkes from abroad. Or, consider picking up an oversized tote bag from a local market.



Source: Trippler, Terry. "Ten tips for smoother travel in the new year"  
Vancouver Sun. Saturday, January 07, 2006

Below is a list of items you might need on your trip. This is in no way a comprehensive list. Use it and your judgment to add personal items:

- Addresses of friends at home
- Airplane tickets
- Camera & film
- Clothing appropriate to the climate
- Contact info for campus people and offices
- Extra visa photos
- First Aid items (aspirin, band aids, diarrhoea medication)
- Guidebooks, language books
- Insurance (health, accident, baggage etc.)
- International driver's permit, if needed
- International Student Identity Card (ISIC)
- Letter of admission to the host institution
- Luggage and small backpack
- Medication/prescriptions
- Money (local, US and Canadian)
- One set of formal clothing
- Passport
- Personal items
- Photocopies of important documents
- Telephone calling card
- Toiletries
- Transportation pass
- Traveller's cheques and/or credit card
- Vaccination Certificate
- Visa(s)



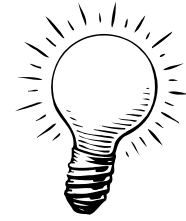
**Love for analog.** If you're still using film, you may want to consider buying a special carrying case designed to protect it.

Source: Tripler, Terry. "Ten tips for smoother travel in the new year"  
Vancouver Sun. Saturday, January 07, 2006

### **Transportation to and from the University**

You are entirely responsible for arranging your own transportation to and from the host institution. Depending on the service and availability of public transportation, you may consider living relatively close to the host institution.

**Get a head start.** Gone are the days when you could slip into JFK or LAX a half hour before boarding. The rules have changed, and most airline attendants won't even look at you less than an hour before take-off.



Source: Trippler, Terry. "Ten tips for smoother travel in the new year"  
Vancouver Sun. Saturday, January 07, 2006

### **International Driver's License (IDP)**

Traffic laws and driving habits vary extensively around the world and even across Canada. If the driving style is very different from home, you may also want to closely observe the locals driving for at least one week before getting behind the wheel. Driving etiquette, the "language" behind the honking of car horns and general attitude on the road can really highlight some cultural differences.

Once you've decided you are ready, be sure you know the rules and regulations before you get behind the wheel of a car in another country or province. An International Driving Permit (IDP) allows you to drive in most countries. Check with the country you are planning to visit to make sure that the IDP is accepted. When using your IDP you must also carry a valid driver's license from your country of citizenship. Contact a British Columbia Automobile Association (BCAA) office for information on getting a hold of an IDP.

However, most countries will require you to get a local driver's license within a certain period of living there (usually around 3 to 6 months). Also, if you plan to take your car or buy one there, it would be good to contact the local department of motor vehicles within the first 30 days concerning vehicle registration procedures.

### **Baggage Restrictions**

For baggage restrictions check with the airline or your travel agent before you start packing. These restrictions vary with the airline and the destination. Sometimes you are only allowed exactly 20 kilograms and may not even have the option to pay for excess baggage.

Some countries may also have restrictions on what you can bring into the country. Find out from your airline the cost of bringing a bag for excess baggage opposed to the cost of shipping things to or from your exchange country. Make sure you pack your most important items in your carry-on bag to minimize the loss if your baggage is misplaced.

## Personal Items

Local alternatives for your individual needs, such as deodorant, contact lens solution, creams, etc. may be different from those you are used to using. If you are not willing to adjust, pack a good supply of the items you need.

**Ziplock.** Put any containers that could leak into resealable bags -- even within a vanity kit, which is not always foolproof.

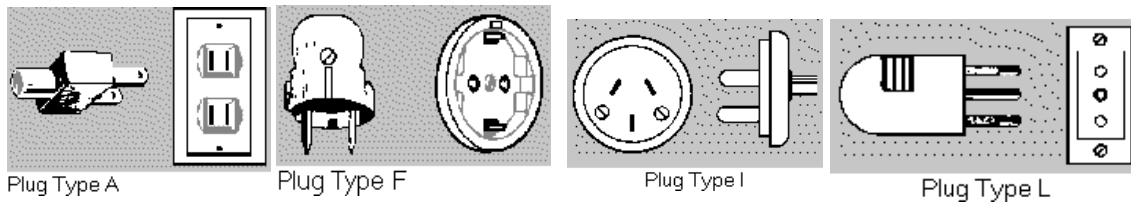
Source: Tripler, Terry. "Ten tips for smoother travel in the new year"  
Vancouver Sun. Saturday, January 07, 2006



## Electrical Appliances

Look up the voltage of your host country and find out about the prong combinations for electrical outlets. Canada uses an electrical current of 60 cycles AC and the standard voltage is 120-volts.

Below we've included images of the "American" Type A plug, as well as some of the ones used in Japan, Italy and China.



You may need to buy an adapter plug or transformer in advance to be able to use your usual appliances in a different country.

## Duty and Customs

Ship only used goods to avoid duty, keep the declared value low and be sure to label all parcels "Used Personal Belongings". Declare all unaccompanied baggage when you enter the exchange country. Depending on your partner country, this may exempt you from expensive duty charges.

Generally, you may take in cameras, cassette recorders, personal computers, radios, typewriters, and other similar items duty free, given that they accompany you or are declared at the time of entry. Although wildlife items can be easily acquired abroad, items made from hides, shells, feathers or teeth of endangered species risk seizure by Canada Customs and the possibility of substantial fines.

## International Student Identity Card (ISIC)

While on exchange, the ISIC (available from Travel Cuts) is a great idea for all UFV students. This card includes a travel assistance service that can be reached by calling collect from anywhere, anytime. The number is

on the back of the card. You can call and speak to an operator who can refer you to an appropriate legal, medical or travel advisor.

The ISIC is commonly accepted as proof of student status. With this card you are entitled to discounts on air, train, bus travel, and at some student restaurants, theatres, concert halls, shops, museums and travel agencies. For more on the ISIC card, see: <http://www.isic-canada.com>

### PREPARING YOURSELF FOR LIFE ABROAD

#### **Attitudes and Behaviours**

Find out as much as you can about the local customs and culture, and be considerate of them. Attitudes and behaviours that are appropriate in Canada may be offensive or even illegal in other countries.

Culture-specific information can be found at libraries, travel agencies and consulates. Learn about local attitudes toward dress, public displays of affection, drugs, political activism, etc. You will also benefit from knowing about the local political situation. Learn what is going on in the country you plan to visit.

#### **Working**

If you plan to work during or after your exchange, you must first check with the country's consulate or embassy. Be sure to arrange this before you leave since your visa may need to include work authorization. You should know that working conditions and attitudes might be different than those in Canada. In some cultures, colleagues socialize after business hours are finished. This seemingly "free" time may be vital in creating team spirit within the workplace.

You may want to research the following:

- Number of hours in a regular work day;
- Number of days in a normal work week;
- How many and how long are the normal breaks taken;
- Nature and amount of social interaction among coworkers.

#### **Dress Code**

Take suitable clothes for your destination and climate. Consider their customs, social functions you may attend and the baggage restrictions. Generally you will want to take comfortable and durable clothes that you can wear for a long time. Make sure your clothes cover a range of weather conditions and occasions.

In some countries, restrictions on clothing still exist and swimsuits may be a controversial subject. Some religious sites may require that arms, legs, or heads be covered.

Although many countries may be more formal and conservative than Canada, you do not need to buy a new wardrobe before going overseas! Simply be sure to remember that you are a guest in a foreign country. Respect for their values and dress will be appreciated.

### **Education System**

Do some research regarding the type of education system that exists at your host institution. Some of the information might be obtained from the university's catalogue or calendar. If you have any questions, some can be answered by visiting exchange students from the host country you will be going to and other questions can only be answered when you arrive and experience it for yourself. Below are some questions you might want to ask or think about:

- What is the philosophy of the university you will be going to? Focus on any political or religious philosophies of the university.
- What are the standards of etiquette and respect?
- Do they have a dress code? If so, what is appropriate?
- Are students allowed to ask questions during a class?
- Are students allowed to make appointments with teachers?
- What is the appropriate behaviour during such an appointment with a teacher?
- Are students allowed to eat in class?

## **FOOD, DRINK, AND HYGIENE**

Making good choices about what to eat overseas can be difficult depending on your destination. If possible, try to prepare food yourself but do try to eat as locals do. You may have a chance to learn some new simple dishes.

Sometimes a slightly upset stomach within the first two weeks of your arrival may be an indication of adapting to new time zones, sleep patterns and spices. However undercooked food, problems with refrigeration, or inadequate access to purified water may lead to problems ranging from an upset stomach, E coli infection, salmonella poisoning or even liver damage due to Hepatitis. So you do need to be careful and be aware of how you are feeling.

By following these guidelines, when in doubt, eating abroad can be easy:

- Eat food that has been freshly cooked or boiled
- Eat fruit and vegetables that are easily peeled or sliced without contamination (e.g. bananas, oranges, melon, papaya, avocado etc.)

- Eat food from sealed containers
- Try to eat freshly baked bread
- Choose local dishes that can be prepared properly over western food that can't be prepared correctly
- Make sure plates and utensils are washed with detergent, rinsed with clean water, and protected from flies. If this is not possible, rinse dishes yourself with hot tea, whiskey, an alcohol swab, or flame cutlery with a candle or cigarette lighter
- Keep your hands clean

### **Avoid Eating**

- Salads, since they have been washed with tap water
- Food that you don't know how fresh it is, i.e. buffet food
- Food that flies have settled on
- Complicated dishes requiring a lot of handling
- Ices and ice cream
- Dairy products made from unpasteurized milk
- Fruit that cannot be peeled (e.g. berries, grapes etc.)
- Unwashed fruit
- Food that has been handled with dirty hands
- Sauces that are left out on table
- Food with a lot of mayonnaise, especially if refrigeration may be an issue.

### **Drinks**

- Depending on where you are, do not use tap water, not even to brush your teeth. Keep mouth closed when showering
- Do drink bottled drinks opened in front of you
- Do drink bottled, boiled or sterilized water
- Do wet, then dry cans or bottles before opening them
- Don't drink fruit juices from street vendors
- Don't use ice. Freezing does not kill all the parasites

**SAFETY**

**Personal Safety**

UFV exchange students need to expand their view of what it means to be safe. A situation or location that you would not question in Canada is not necessarily safe in the host country.

In addition to normal concerns over appropriate vaccination, clean/safe drinking water, and safer sex, other dangers must be considered. Among these are alcohol-related injuries, car accidents on both public and private transportation, local diseases, and even common dangers such as dog bites. Startlingly, the greatest cause of death is from traffic accidents. Bad roads, vehicles, and drivers remain the greatest dangers.

Before you go, familiarize yourself with your host country and city.

- Read about the host country in guidebooks and newspapers
- Learn which areas of the city are considered safe
- Become familiar with the best way to travel and well-traveled routes
- Memorize or keep a list of local emergency numbers with you
- Learn to ask for help in local language
- Do what it takes to achieve independence concerning money, access to transit, housing, etc.

Once you arrive, ask friends and contacts at the host institution for tips regarding “safe” areas. Try to steer clear of places that locals find unsafe.

**Copy yourself.** What's a safe place to stow your papers? Cyberspace. Email your critical information—e-tickets, hotel reservation numbers, passport ID—to an e-mail account you can check from anywhere on the planet.



**Air your dirty laundry.** Never put valuables in the outside pockets of your luggage. Instead, cocoon pricier items in the centre of your suitcase, and put your dirty undies in the outside flaps. That'll ward off any pickpockets!

Source: Tripler, Terry. “Ten tips for smoother travel in the new year”  
Vancouver Sun. Saturday, January 07, 2006

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### Registration of Canadians Abroad Service (ROCA)

The Department of Foreign Affairs offers a service in which they register Canadians living abroad for three, or more, months. However Canadians traveling to countries that may experience civil unrest, or other security issues, should also register.

The service makes it possible to offer urgent advice during a period of natural disaster, or civil unrest. They may also inform them of a family emergency back home in Canada.

You can either register online, or download a registration form to be mailed or handed in at their website at

<http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/sos/rocapage-en.asp>

Another reason to register is that once you are overseas you may wish to periodically socialize with other Canadians. If you wish to be contacted for social events, you should note that since registration information is protected under the Privacy Act, you need to advise DFAIT that they may use your information to contact you.

## STAYING IN TOUCH

Before you go, make sure that you have the email addresses for your friends, family and UFV contacts— especially the Study Abroad Advisor. You might find that part of your adaptation process might include being in touch with your friends and family more at first. Some people create blogs, posting pictures and writing about their experience.

**Make labels.** If you plan to send postcards from afar, create labels in advance of your trip.

Source: Tripler, Terry. "Ten tips for smoother travel in the new year"  
Vancouver Sun. Saturday, January 07, 2006



## RETURNING TO UFV

Returning is a big part of the student exchange experience. Make sure you plan your departure from the host country to allow sufficient time and energy for administrative details, travel arrangements, departure protocol and farewell parties. When you return, give yourself at least a few days to recover before starting school or work.

Once back, try to plan to share your experience with others. This may reduce some re-entry shock you may be experiencing.

We know that coming home can be difficult. So we are happy to help.

### UFV Passport Tales

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Drop by the International Department once you have returned from your exchange. We'd love to hear about your experience.

Sharing your experience can be helpful as you make your transition back home and can help other students as they plan to travel overseas.

Which resources (films, books, travel guides) did you find to be especially helpful? We would like to build a resource for every country and institution visited. We would like to include your recommendations on:

- Was there a local newspaper, or publication that was useful in getting you "connected?"
- Was there a great restaurant just off-campus that you'd like to recommend?
- Was there a book, website, or film that you found especially helpful in understanding the country, the people or its history? (What about famous novelists from the country you visited)
- Popular artists (folk songs)
- Are there specific tips that you'd like to share with others about the Country/Region? ("Best Practices")
- Are there useful warnings (etiquette tips and cultural differences) that you'd like to share with others about the Country/Region?

Lastly, perhaps you'd like to share some of your photos with us. Organize a slide show and we can share it with students who are going to the same destination, or students who just wish to be armchair travelers!