



# Australia



# Australia

<https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-australia/>

State Dept. Notes

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## U.S.-AUSTRALIA RELATIONS

Australia is a vital ally, partner, and friend of the United States. Our two countries maintain a robust relationship underpinned by shared democratic values, common interests, and cultural affinities. Economic, academic, and people-to-people ties are vibrant and strong. Our partnership promotes peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world. The United States and Australia marked the 80th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2020.

Bilateral defense ties and cooperation are exceptionally close. U.S. and Australian forces have fought side-by-side for more than one hundred years, in every major conflict since World War I, beginning with the Battle of Hamel in 1918. In 2022, the United States and Australia marked the 80th anniversary of several key World War II battles, including the Battles of the Coral Sea, Midway, and Guadalcanal. Moreover, 2021 marked the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Australia, New Zealand, and United States (ANZUS) treaty, Australia's pre-eminent alliance, which enjoys broad bipartisan support. Australia invoked ANZUS for the first time in response to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Since then, the two countries have taken additional steps to pave the way for closer defense and security ties. These have included the annual rotation of Marines to Darwin, which completed a tenth year of exercises in 2021, and enhanced rotations of

U.S. Air Force aircraft to Australia. Additionally, they signed the U.S.-Australia Force Posture Agreement at the annual Australia-United States Ministerial Consultations (AUSMIN) in August 2014. In October 2015, the U.S. and Australian defense agencies also signed a Joint Statement on Defense Cooperation to guide future cooperation. Finally, in 2021, the United States and Australia led their ninth Talisman Saber, a biennial joint military exercise designed to ensure and demonstrate the ability of the two defense forces to work together with the highest levels of interoperability.

The United States and Australia share a strong interest in maintaining freedom of navigation, overflight, and other lawful uses of the sea, including in the South China Sea. Australia and the United States engage in a trilateral security dialogue and infrastructure partnership with Japan, and collaborate with Japan and India in the Quad, to solve the region's most pressing crises. In September 2021, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States announced an enhanced trilateral security partnership (AUKUS), further solidifying security cooperation between the partners. AUKUS aims to provide Australia with a conventionally armed, nuclear powered submarine capability as soon as possible, while upholding the highest non-proliferation standards. The partnership will develop and provide joint advanced military capabilities to promote security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Arms control and counter-proliferation is another area of close U.S.-Australia cooperation.

The United States and Australia share a long history of cooperation in other areas as well. In 1949, the United States and Australia signed an agreement that established the Fulbright program. Since then, more than 5,000 Australians and Americans have received Fulbright scholarships. The United States and Australia have concluded a mutual legal assistance treaty to enhance bilateral cooperation on legal and counter-narcotics issues. The two countries have also signed tax and defense trade cooperation treaties, as well as agreements on health cooperation,

space, science and technology, emergency management cooperation, and social security. Many U.S. institutions conduct cooperative scientific activities in Australia. The

United States and Australia responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the Quad Vaccine Partnership (Australia, India, Japan, and the United States) and the COVID-19 Global Action Plan. The United States and Australia have also worked together to support Global Health Security Agenda efforts to prepare for and respond to future pandemics and infectious disease threats.

### **U.S. Assistance to Australia**

The United States provides no development assistance to Australia but does coordinate closely on development assistance policy in the Indo-Pacific region and globally.

### **Bilateral Economic Relations**

The U.S.-Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA) entered into force on January 1, 2005. U.S. goods and services exports to Australia increased by almost 90 and 100 percent respectively since 2004 (pre-FTA) owing in large part to the FTA. In 2021, total U.S. goods and services trade with Australia totaled US \$61.1 billion, and the United States ran a trade surplus of US \$24.3 billion. According to U.S. Department of Commerce estimates, U.S. exports of goods and services to Australia supported more than 172,000 U.S. jobs in 2020. Leading U.S. goods exports are machinery, vehicles, and optical and medical instruments. Leading U.S. services exports are financial services; telecommunications, computer, and information services; and licenses for computer software. Top U.S. goods imports from Australia are meat, precious metals and stones, and optical and medical instruments. Top services imports from Australia include professional and management services, financial services, and technical and other services. Australia has proven to be an appealing and profitable market for U.S. companies for many years, owing to its low barriers to entry, familiar legal and corporate framework, and a sophisticated yet straightforward business culture.

Two-way foreign direct investment (FDI) cumulatively totals nearly \$261.5 billion. In 2020, Australia total stock of FDI into the United States was \$98.0 billion. Leading sectors for Australian investment into the United States are manufacturing, professional, scientific, and technical services, and finance and insurance. According to

Australian government statistics, the United States is Australia's largest foreign investor. In 2020, the U.S. FDI position in Australia (outward) was \$163.5 billion. U.S. FDI in Australia is led by nonbank holding companies, finance and insurance, and manufacturing. Considerable portfolio investment in both directions also contributes to a strong bilateral investment relationship. U.S. firms have operated in Australia for more than 100 years and according to Australian government estimates currently employ more than 300,000 Australians, many in high-paying sectors. U.S. firms are also the largest taxpayers, wage payers, and contributor to GDP of any foreign country companies operating in Australia.

According to IMF data, Australia is the world's 14th-largest economy by GDP and has the 10th-highest per capita income. In 2021, Australia was the world's largest coal exporter and in the top two LNG exporters, according to commercial trade monitoring services. According to Australian government data, almost 812,000 U.S. residents visited Australia in 2018, a three percent increase from 2017. According to U.S. statistics, 1.4 million Australians visited the United States in 2018, an increase of three percent from 2017.

### **Australia's Membership in International Organizations**

Australia and the United States belong to several the same international organizations and fora, including the United Nations, ASEAN Regional Forum, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), G-20, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Australia is a Partner for Cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), an Enhanced Opportunities Partner of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and a member of the Pacific Islands Forum.

### **Bilateral Representation**

Principal embassy officials are listed in the [Department's Key Officers List](#). Australia maintains an **embassy** in the United States at 1601 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036 (tel. 202-797-3000). The Embassy building is currently

under renovation; the Australian diplomatic mission is currently located at 1145 17th St NW, Washington DC, 20036-4707

More information about Australia is available from the Department of State and other sources, some of which are listed here:

**CIA World Factbook Australia Page**

**[U.S. Embassy](#)**

**[History of U.S. Relations With Australia](#)**

**Office of the U.S. Trade Representative Countries Page**

**U.S. Census Bureau Foreign Trade Statistics**

**Export.gov International Offices Page**

**[Travel Information](#)**



# The Overseas Security Advisory Council's Travel Safety Reference Guide

November 2011

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## Introduction

Globalization has made overseas travel – be it for business, academia, charity, personal, or mission work – quite common. International travelers are exposed to many new experiences and phenomena and among these, certain risks. This guide offers international travelers information, tactics, techniques, and procedures to mitigate risks inherent to international travel.

OSAC acknowledges that every destination is unique and that no one resource can address all eventualities. Therefore, we have developed this reference in coordination with our constituents to inform the private sector of best practices for personnel safety abroad. The risks of international travel are no longer just tied to local or transnational crime. It is our hope that the enclosed recommendations will both encourage individuals to seek overseas opportunities and provide greater comfort and confidence for those traveling internationally.

## Pre-Departure

### **Know Before You Go**

- Register with the U.S. State Department's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#).
- Review the U.S. State Department's [country specific information](#) and OSAC's [country crime and safety reports](#).
- Do your homework. Visit country-specific websites for important information on your destination country.
- Understand the laws and currency exchange rates in your destination country.
- Be culturally aware; learn a few common phrases in the local language and the basics of the cultural values and norms.
- Get a map and study it. Identify potential hazards and safe havens; learn several routes to key places you will be staying/living/visiting.

### **Packing**

- Pack your luggage wisely. Make sure to place any prohibited materials (scissors, files, other sharp objects) in your check-in luggage.
- Be sure to pack 2-3 day "survival items" in your carry-on bag. This includes: medicines and toiletries, an extra change of clothes (including undergarments), important documents, drinking water, snacks (e.g., Powerbars), and anything else you may want.
- Do not display company or other identifying logos on luggage. Place your pertinent contact information in a visible place inside each piece of luggage.
- Do not openly display your name tags on your luggage. Include only your name and contact number on your tags, and keep them covered or turn the paper over and write "see other side."
- Get a plain cover for your passport.

- Make out a will.
- Consider a privacy act waiver.
- Leave travel itinerary and contact information with family or friends; do not otherwise disclose.
- Consider getting a telephone calling card and a GSM (tri-band or “world”) cellular phone that allows access to most local cellular systems (and provides a single contact number). Depending on your situation, you may want to purchase a local phone or SIM card in country.
- Take out property insurance on necessary equipment (cameras, binoculars, laptops, etc.).
- Consider securing a new credit card with a low credit limit separate from existing credit cards; in the event of theft, your personal accounts will not be compromised.
- Notify your credit card company of your intent to travel; confirm credit limit and availability.

## **Health**

- Make sure health insurance covers foreign medical providers and medical evacuation expenses.
- Take an extra pair of glasses; depending on the destination, contact lenses can be problematic.
- Visit a travel clinic, inform them of destination(s), and get any needed inoculations and medications.
- Get a dental cleaning and checkup if you had not recently had one.
- Prep and pack a travel med kit; some items you may want to include:
  - Anti-diarrheal medication
  - Antibiotics
  - Anti-malaria (if applicable)
  - Antihistamine and decongestant
  - Antacid and laxative
  - Anti-fungal/anti-bacterial and hydrocortisone cream
  - Anti-bacterial hand wipes/ hand sanitizer
  - Pain reliever/fever reducer, sleep aid
  - Gauze, bandages, and medical tape
  - Insect repellent with DEET 35%
  - Shaving razor, tweezers, manicure kits
  - Sunscreen and aloe
  - Thermometer

## **During Your Trip**

### **Awareness**

Situational Awareness is very important domestically but becomes critically important overseas in unfamiliar environments. Keep your head up, eyes and ears open, and listen to your intuition! Situational awareness can and should be practiced and will improve the more you do so. Focus on seeing and remembering everything around you. It will seem extremely arduous and time-consuming at first but will become increasingly easier as time passes and proficiency is gained. Your goal should be for these efforts to become habitual and completed sub-consciously. Some important practices are:

- Trust your instinct; if a place does not feel right, move to a safer location – immediately.
- Assess your emotional and physical strengths and limitations.
- Be attentive to how others perceive you; behave in an unprovocative manner that discourages unwanted attention.
- Familiarize yourself with your neighborhood and work environment.
- Use common sense. Beware of EVERYONE, including pickpockets, scam artists, etc.
- Remove name tags or convention badges when outside the venue.
- Pay attention to local media for any activities or events that might affect you.
- Be aware of surroundings, including the people, cars, and alleys nearby.



- Keep alert to potential trouble, and choose to avoid when possible. Trust your instincts.
- Educate yourself of any pending events (elections, demonstrations, anniversaries) that may cause civil disturbance, and avoid unnecessary risks.
- Establish a support network among your colleagues and when possible, embassy personnel.
- Inform yourself of the availability and reliability of local support services (police, security, medical, emergency, fire).
- Confirm (with your embassy) the procedures for you and your family in the event of a crisis or evacuation.
- Politely decline offers of food or drink from strangers.
- Accept beverages only in sealed containers; make sure there has been no tampering.

### **Personal Conduct**

You can dress, behave, and move about in a manner that is respectful of local custom, but rest assured, YOU WILL NOT BLEND IN. Remember that whenever you travel anywhere, whether you realize it or not, you are representing yourself, your family, your organization, and your country. Your behavior and actions will be applied as a positive or negative impression of all that you represent. In many cultures, this will essentially make or break your ability to successfully function and interact in another culture. Always keep in mind the following:

- Behave maturely and in a manner befitting your status in the local society; insist on being treated with respect.
- Dress in a manner that is inoffensive to local cultural norms.
- Avoid clothing that shows your nationality or political views.
- Establish personal boundaries and act to protect them.
- Exercise additional caution when carrying and displaying valuable possessions (jewelry, phone, sunglasses, camera, etc.); what may be a simple, even disposable item to you, may be a sign of extreme affluence to another.
- Vary your patterns of life/behavior to be less predictable.
- Divide money among several pockets; if you carry a wallet, carry it in a front pocket.
- If you carry a purse, carry it close to your body. Do not set it down or leave it unattended.
- Take a patient and calm approach to ambiguity and conflict.
- Radiate confidence while walking in public places.
- Do not expect privacy, anywhere.
- Do not discuss personal, professional, or financial issues of your group or yourself; these can be used to exploit you and your group.
- Be cool when facing confrontation; focus on de-escalation and escape.
- Respect local sensitivities to photographing/videotaping, especially at airports, police, and government facilities.
- Carry required official identification with you at all times.
- Report any security incidents to your embassy or consulate (who will advise you of options including reporting to local authorities, prosecution, corrective measures, etc.).
- Maintain a low profile, especially in places where there may be hostility toward foreigners and/or citizens of your country; do not seek publicity.
- Avoid public expressions about local politics, religion, and other sensitive topics.
- Avoid being out alone late at night or after curfew.
- Stay alert.
- Be unpredictable.
- Carry yourself with confidence.
- Be aware of distractions.
- Watch for surveillance. If you see the same person/vehicle twice, it could be surveillance; if you see it three times, it probably is surveillance.

## Electronics Security

- First and foremost: if you don't NEED it, don't bring it!
- If you need to bring a laptop and/or phone and have "clean" ones available, use them.
- Back up and then wipe (sanitize) your laptop, phone, and any other electronics to ensure that no sensitive or personal data is on them while [traveling](#).
- Carry laptop in a protective sleeve in a backpack/purse/bag that does not shout "there's a computer in here."
- DO NOT EXPECT PRIVACY, ANYWHERE.
- Do not leave your electronic devices unattended.
- Do not use local computers to connect to your organization's secure network.
- Clear your temporary files, to include your temporary internet files, browser history, caches, and cookies after each use.
- Consider opening a new e-mail account (Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, AOL, etc.) for use during your trip.
- Ensure you update your computer's security software (antivirus, firewall, etc.) and download any outstanding security patches for your operating system and key programs.
- Upon return, change all of your passwords for devices and accounts (including voicemail) used while traveling.

## Logistics

### *Air Travel*

Air travel can be incredibly convenient and frustrating at the same time. While traveling you are extremely vulnerable and must bear this in mind that a distracted individual is a prime target for all kinds of nefarious actions. You must control what you can and readily adapt to, as well as what you cannot (i.e., flight schedules/delays and time to clear security). Here are some key considerations:

- Wear comfortable, loose fitting clothing.
- Arrive at the airport in plenty of time (1.5 – 2 hours before departure).
- Move through passenger security immediately after ticketing and locate your departure gate.
- Stay with your bags at all times.
- Set your watch to local time at destination upon take off.
- Be careful about how much of your personal/business information you share with fellow passengers; they are still strangers.
- Limit intake of alcohol in flight, and drink plenty of water to counteract "jet lag". This will help limit stress and increase alertness.
- If possible, pre-arrange transport from the airport to your hotel. Consider paying the additional room rate for a hotel that provides shuttle service to and from the airport.
- Have your immigration and customs documents in order and available. A durable folder secured by a buckle or elastic band may be useful.

### *Ground Travel*

Ground travel poses several risks to the traveler. Not only are you more vulnerable, but many places do not have the traffic laws, enforcement, infrastructure, or assistance that you are accustomed to. Be prepared. You will be in an unfamiliar environment and may have to contend with, among other things, dangerous road conditions; untrained or unlicensed drivers; drivers operating under the influence of alcohol and/or narcotics; vehicles that are poorly maintained and therefore hazardous, police and/or criminal checkpoints or roadblocks, and others with malicious intentions. Some recommendations for ground travel are:

- Use a common vehicle model (local taxis may be a good indicator). If you rent, remove any markings that identify vehicle as a rental.
- If you have to drive, always leave a path for escape when you stop (at a light, stop sign, cross-walk, etc.).
- Park in a manner that expedites your departure.
- Carry a cell phone, first aid kit, maps, flashlight, and official documents in your vehicle.
- Keep the vehicle windows rolled up and the doors locked.
- Use the seat belts.
- Be alert to scam artists and carjackers while stopped in traffic.
- Understand the proper local procedures should you be involved in or witness a traffic accident. In some locales, stopping for an accident can put your life at risk.
- Only take official, licensed taxis; note the license plate number of taxi and write it down.
- Avoid getting into a taxi already occupied by others. If necessary, pay extra for a single fare. Negotiate a price before getting in taxi. Have money ready to pay in appropriate denominations.
- Take a seat on a bus or train that allows you to observe fellow passengers but does not preclude options to change seats if necessary.

## **Lodging**

### *At the Hotel*

For most destinations you travel to (in addition to being an obvious foreigner), you will be considered wealthy and a prime target. You should not consider a hotel a complete safe haven, there are still many threats and you are potentially very vulnerable at them. Some important considerations:

- Use reputable hotels, hostels, or boarding houses; your safety is worth any added cost.
- Remind hotel staff to not give out your room number.
- Meet visitors in the lobby; avoid entertaining strangers in your room.
- Take a walk around the hotel facilities to familiarize yourself with your environment. Are hotel personnel located on each floor? Are they in uniform? Do they display any identification? Who else has access to your floor?
- Ensure the phone in your room works. Call the front desk.
- Inspect the room carefully; look under the bed, in the showers and closets.
- Ensure door and window locks are working. Do not forget the sliding glass door, if the room has one.
- Ensure the door has a peephole and chain lock.
- Avoid ground floor rooms at the hotel. Third through fifth floors are normally desirable (harder to break into, but still accessible to firefighting equipment – where available).
- Read the safety instructions in your hotel room. Familiarize yourself with hotel emergency exits and fire extinguishers.
- Count the doors between your room and nearest emergency exit (in case of fire or blackout). Rehearse your escape plan.
- Keep all hotel doors locked with a dead bolt or chain at all times (do not forget the sliding glass door and windows).
- Consider traveling with a rubber door stop, smoke detector, and motion detector.
- Identify your visitor before you open the door.
- If you doubt room delivery, check with the front desk before opening the door.
- If you are out of your room, leave television/radio on at high volume. Place a “do not disturb” sign outside door.
- Do not leave sensitive documents or valuables visible and unattended in the room.
- Keep your laptop out of sight, in a safe, or in a locked suitcase. You may wish to use a laptop cable lock to secure your laptop to a window frame or bathroom plumbing.

- Keep your room number to yourself. If your room key is numbered or has your room number on a key holder, keep it out of sight. If a hotel clerk announces your room number loud enough for others to hear, ask for a new room.
- If you leave the hotel, carry the hotel business card with you; it may come in handy with a taxi driver who does not speak your language.

### *Residential*

When residing overseas, it is critically important to understand the threat environment in which you will be living. Take the time to reach out to the resources available, including security professionals in your organization, the local embassy or consulate, and the appropriate crime and safety reports. Here are some security measures you might want to consider:

- Avoid housing on single-entry streets with a dead end or cul-de-sac.
- Housing near multiple intersections can be beneficial.
- Ensure the sound, secure structure of your residence.
- Strictly control access to and distribution of keys.
- Install adequate lighting, window grilles, alarm systems, and perimeter walls as necessary.
- Establish access procedures for strangers and visitors.
- Hire trained guards and night patrols; periodically check-up on guards.
- Set-up a safe room in your house; consider adding additional locks
- Establish rapport with neighbors. Is there a “neighborhood watch” program?
- Seek guidance from local colleagues or expatriates who have insight into local housing arrangements.
- Ensure adequate communications (telephone, radio, cell phone) with local colleagues, authorities, and your Embassy.
- Install a back-up generator and/or solar panels.
- Set aside emergency supplies (food, water, medicine, fuel, etc.).
- Install smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and carbon monoxide monitors, as appropriate.
- Avoid sleeping with the windows open or unlocked.
- Speak on the phone inside, somewhere that is and away from windows (through which you can be seen and heard).
- Ensure all windows have treatments that can prevent external observation.
- Lock up items, such as ladders and hand-tools, which could be used to facilitate forced entry.
- Store emergency funds in multiple places around the house.
- Keep a “go-bag” with clothes, water, and food (Powerbars, etc.) for three days packed and ready at all times. Keep copies of important documents and some emergency funds with the bag. Keep other necessary items (medications, etc.) in a centralized place for easy placement into bag. Key items include:
  - Documentation
    - Copies of all key documentation
    - Passport and/or national ID
    - Driver’s License
    - Health Insurance Card
  - Communication
    - Mobile phone – including a charger and extra battery
    - Work and emergency contact lists
    - Satellite Phone (if available)
    - GPS devise (if available)
  - Food and water
    - Water bottle
    - Purification tablets
    - Energy bars / dried fruit / nuts

- Other essentials
  - Cash (USD and local currency)
  - Full change of clothing
  - Rain jacket
  - Sweater
  - Walking shoes or boots (with heel and closed toe)
  - Insect repellent
  - Matches (ideally windproof and waterproof)
  - Flashlight (with extra batteries)
  - Medical/first aid kit
  - Sun screen
  - Sunglasses
  - Toiletries
  - Toilet paper
- Extended items
  - Sleeping bag or blanket
  - Mosquito net

### **Preparation for the “what if” scenarios**

#### *If You Become a Victim*

Despite all of your efforts to reduce exposure to risks and to avoid threats, you may still become the victim of a crime or critical event. Following are some general response strategies:

- Remain calm and alert.
- Carefully note details of the environment around you (license plate number, distinguishing features, accents, clothing, etc.).
- First, try to defuse the situation. Culturally appropriate greetings or humor may reduce tensions.
- If an assailant demands property, give it up.
- You can create a timely diversion by tossing your wallet, watch, etc. to the ground in the opposite direction you choose to flee.
- Against overwhelming odds (weapons, multiple assailants) try reasoning, cajoling, begging, or any psychological ploy.
- If someone tries to grab you, make a scene and fight; kick, punch, claw, scratch, and grab as if your life depends on it, it very well could.
- If you feel your life is endangered and you decide to physically resist, commit to the decision with every fiber of your being; turn fear into fury.
- Report any incident your embassy.
- Seek support for post-traumatic stress (even if you exhibit no symptoms).

#### *Hijacking/Kidnapping*

- You may be targeted for kidnapping. As discussed previously, when traveling, you represent yourself, your family, your organization, and your homeland (or perceived homeland). You may be targeted due to any of these affiliations, or you may simply just end up in the wrong place at the wrong time. Because abduction situations vary greatly, the following considerations should be applied based on one’s best judgment at the time:
  - Know the “ransom” policy of your government. The United States of America will not pay a ransom.
  - The greatest risk of physical harm exists at the point of capture and during a rescue attempt or upon release.

- If you are going to resist at the point of capture, do so as if your life depends on it; it most probably does.
- Remain calm and alert; exert control on your emotions and behavior.
- Humanize yourself, quickly and continually.
- Be passively cooperative, but maintain your dignity.
- Assume an inconspicuous posture and avoid direct eye contact with captors.
- Avoid resistance, belligerence, or threatening movements.
- Make reasonable, low-key requests for personal comforts (bathroom breaks, a blanket, exercise, books to read, etc.)
- If questioned, keep answers short; volunteer nothing.
- As a captive situation draws out, try to establish some rapport with your captors.
- Avoid discussing contentious issues (politics, religion, ethnicity, etc.)
- Establish a daily regimen to maintain your body physically and mentally.
- Eat what your captors provide. Avoid alcohol.
- Keep a positive, hopeful attitude.
- Attempt to escape only after weighing the risks and when you are certain to succeed.

## **Resources**

### **U.S. Department of State and OSAC**

- Overseas Security Advisory Council: [www.osac.gov](http://www.osac.gov)
  - Country Crime and Safety Reports: [www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReports.aspx?cid=2](http://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReports.aspx?cid=2)
- Visit [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) for security advisories and other travel guidance
  - Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP): [www.travel.state.gov/step](http://www.travel.state.gov/step)
  - Country Specific Information: [www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_4965.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html)
  - U.S. State Department's role in a crisis: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies\\_1212.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1212.html)

### **World Factbook**

- CIA World Factbook: [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html)

### **Study Abroad**

- To get the latest in education abroad security information and training, go to [www.globalscholar.us](http://www.globalscholar.us)
- U.S. State Department Students Abroad website: [www.studentsabroad.state.gov](http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov)
- NAFSA (Association of International Educators) and The Forum on Education Abroad: <http://nafsa.org/> <http://www.forumea.org/>

### **Weather**

- Review the climate and weather at your point of destination and/or any layover cities: [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)

### **Travel Medicine/Health**

- Centers for Disease Control: [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)
- World Health Organization: [www.who.int/ith](http://www.who.int/ith)

## **About OSAC**

### **OSAC's Commitment**

The Overseas Security Advisory Council is committed to providing the American private sector with customer service of the highest standard. As OSAC is a joint venture with the private sector, we strive to maintain standards equal to or surpassing those provided by private industry. OSAC activities directly correspond to requests from the private sector.

OSAC has received exceptional support for its initiatives from the chief executive officers and corporate security directors of many of the largest international corporations in the United States. The U.S. State Department and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security recognize the need in OSAC's goal to support the U.S. private sector by continuing to develop an effective and cost-efficient security information and communication network that will provide the private sector with the tools needed to cope with security-related issues in the foreign environment. OSAC's unique charter and continued success serve as an example of the benefits of mutual cooperation.

### **Mission**

The U.S. State Department's Overseas Security Advisory Council (Council) is established to promote security cooperation between American private sector interests worldwide (Private Sector) and the U.S. Department of State.

The objectives of the Council, as outlined in its Charter, are:

- To establish continuing liaison and to provide for operational security cooperation between State Department security functions and the Private Sector.
- To provide for regular and timely interchange of information between the Private Sector and the State Department concerning developments in the overseas security environment.
- To recommend methods and provide material for coordinating security planning and implementation of security programs.
- To recommend methods to protect the competitiveness of American businesses operating worldwide.

For more information and to join the Overseas Security Advisory Council, please visit [www.osac.gov](http://www.osac.gov).

*This document is a compilation of constituent and OSAC efforts and is meant to serve as a reference guide for private sector best practices. OSAC wishes to thank all of our constituents who generously provided their input and assistance. A special thank you to Michael O'Neil, Director of Global Safety and Security, Save the Children International, whose contributions were vital and provided the foundation for this reference guide.*



[www.osac.gov](http://www.osac.gov)



## TRAVEL SAFETY GUIDE FOR STUDY ABROAD

If you become the victim of a crime, seek medical help if necessary, then immediately contact:

- the local police,
- your home nation's diplomacy or consular office
- your International Programs Office Director

If you have a medical emergency, seek immediate care, then contact:

- your host family/program director/international office at host institution
- IPO
- your family

### PERSONAL SAFETY

- 🌐 Do - A thorough medical and dental check-up before departure.
- 🌐 Do - Travel with limited cash and one credit card keeping cash in more than one place.
- 🌐 Do - Use official currency outlets and use caution at ATM machines so as not to be a target for thieves. Make sure your card works abroad and notify your bank and credit card companies that you will be out of the country.
- 🌐 Do - Lock personal possessions and valuables in the hotel or room safe or use hotel security.
- 🌐 Do- Use a money belt rather than a purse. If you use a handbag, keep it close to the body. Wear backpacks in front.
- 🌐 Do - Maintain a security awareness of items on your person - i.e.: purse, wallet, keys, money and cell phones
- 🌐 Do - If you are sexually harassed, ignore the proposition and continue on your way.
- 🌐 Do not - Open your hotel room door for anyone not expected or known or does not have an official identification.
- 🌐 Do not - Wear expensive looking jewelry. Remember that thieves may not know the difference between pieces of real and costume jewelry.
- 🌐 Do not - Use ATM machines at night unless the area is open and well lit.
- 🌐 Do not - Walk in low-lighted areas without being surrounded by people and trust your instincts if something seems amiss, return to a safer surrounding, such as a hotel.
- 🌐 Do not - Walk, drive or travel alone and be aware of your surroundings when using public transportation, elevators or restrooms.

## Travel Safety Pocket Guide

***“Remember that no list can contemplate every possible “do” and “don’t” on safety issues. Every situation is unique. Be careful, don’t rush, think before you act, stay in a group whenever possible, and always use your own best judgment in any given circumstance.”***

### TRAVEL SAFETY

- 🌐 Do – Leave copy of travel itinerary with two or more known trusted people.
- 🌐 Do – Promise to call or email relatives or friends periodically.
- 🌐 Do – Dress according to the social and cultural norms in each country.
- 🌐 Do – Exclude titles, organization names or unnecessary data on luggage tags.
- 🌐 Do – Keep luggage near by and in view at all times and pack a small flashlight.
- 🌐 Do – Have alternative plans for unexpected events during traveling, keeping necessary items in your carry-on.
- 🌐 Do – Create and have handy detailed maps.
- 🌐 Do – Ask about surrounding and problem areas you may have to travel through. Check these sites:
  - **• U.S. State Department: <http://www.state.gov/travel/>**
  - **<https://step.state.gov/>**
  - **<http://www.traveldocs.com/>**
- 🌐 Do – Be aware of your surroundings – not to be lulled with a false sense of security.
- 🌐 Do – Keep advised, via local media, of the current security situations in the area.
- 🌐 Do – Use main entrance of hotels and other buildings.
- 🌐 Do – Use all security locking devices when in your room and keep your room key in your pocket.
- 🌐 Do – Know the emergency number to call where you will be.
- 🌐 Do – Figure out how you will communicate: SIM card? App? Current phone number? What will work in an emergency?
- 🌐 Do – Have a backup plan if relying on your phone for directions or information. Be prepared in case you lose it.
- 🌐 Do – Research and know the laws of your host country. Ignorance is not an excuse.  
Be aware of what transportation is official and if using ride shares (Uber/Lyft), verify your ride and driver before entering car.
- 🌐 Do – Consider buying RFID blockers to protect cards from identity theft.

### FIRE SAFETY

- **[www.firesafetyfoundation.org](http://www.firesafetyfoundation.org)**
- 🌐 Do – Acquaint yourself with all hotel/residence hall/ etc. emergency procedures and locate all emergency exits nearest you.
- 🌐 Do – Ask about safety measures such as, fire alarms, evacuation procedures and if windows will open.
- 🌐 Do – Call fire department direct if fire occurs then call hotel/residence hall management.
- 🌐 Do – Feel door with palm of hand, if hot don’t open if not try to escape to nearest stairway exit-not elevator.
- 🌐 Do – Stay in room and wait for help when in doubt on what to do and DO NOT PANIC or DO NOT JUMP.
- 🌐 Do – Keep everything wet if you stay in room stuffing door cracks with wet sheets and towels.
- 🌐 Do – Fill the tub with water and douse the door and walls if you stay in room.

## LINFIELD UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS IDST 031 SYLLABUS; 2024-25 Academic Year

IDST 031: Intercultural Communication: Pre-Departure, Experiences Abroad, and Re-entry (S/U; 1 credit)

**Note:** *Students do not register for this course. It will appear on your transcript after you return from your program and attend the re-entry session. IPO then submits the grades to the Registrar to post. Please read the information below which explains the details.*

### Course Objective:

This three-part course, required of all semester abroad participants, is designed to prepare you for your semester abroad program, reflect on your experiences while you are abroad and challenge you to think about your encounter with your own culture/country upon returning home. Studies have shown that students who undergo a well-designed orientation program tend to have a higher probability of success when they encounter a cross-cultural conflict or difficulty or experience culture shock. This applies both to international students who study in the United States and American students preparing to study abroad. Some may think that the term “culture shock” is overplayed in some circles, but rest assured that just about everyone will face some level of stress and anxiety when placed in a cultural environment different than their own. The objective is to be able to identify and recognize the symptoms and be ready to cope with the stress so that the experience abroad will turn out to be a rewarding one.

The International Programs Office (IPO) will provide you with cross-cultural material, specific assignments and readings in order to satisfactorily fulfill this one-credit course.

This companion course to the actual on-site study will allow you to identify, examine and explore your personal objectives for undertaking the study. Linfield University has also identified some of the objectives and learning outcomes expected of all students who study abroad.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES EXPECTED OF SEMESTER/YEAR ABROAD PARTICIPANTS:**

**At the end of the semester or year of participation in a Linfield-administered program, participants must be able to demonstrate the following:**

- Language acquisition: participants must meet a desired level of proficiency in their language of study. This will be determined through a pre and post test instrument specifically designed and administered by the Global Languages & Cultural Studies. In some cases, the GLCS faculty will also conduct mid-year evaluations of language proficiency for their majors.
- Ability to adapt and be successful in a culturally (and systemically) different educational environment.
- Ability to see and articulate similarities and differences between your own country/culture and the culture of your host country
- Ability to recognize, synthesize and articulate the cultural differences, norms, mores, habits and lifestyles of families in your host country compared with your own.

- Ability to utilize experiences abroad for (international) career building: participants should be able to write a succinct paragraph to this effect to be included in their revised resume.
- Have the skills to be more self-confident, more tolerant and flexible and less reliant on others.

### **Assessment tools:**

- Pre and post language tests, as well as mid-year evaluations **for year-long language majors.**
- Coursework and final grades
- Mid-Semester assignment
- Returnee questionnaire and evaluation
- Re-entry discussion and assignment

### **1. Pre-Departure Preparation:**

A pre and a post orientation assignment will accompany a day and a half of cross-cultural orientation session (normally held in mid-March of each year), required of all participants. The pre-orientation assignment will be emailed to you after you have been accepted into the program and 1-2 weeks before orientation. It will be due the first day of orientation. The mandatory day and a half orientation session will include general discussion and presentation of various cross-cultural topics as well as information about the specific country of your destination. A post orientation assignment will allow you to summarize your thoughts about what you have gained from the sessions.

### **2. Your Experiences Abroad:**

While you are abroad, we will send you a mid-semester assignment that is designed to reflect on your experience and to make comparisons across cultures, your own as well as the one you are experiencing in the host country. You are required to submit your reactions via email to ipo@linfield.edu. In completing this on-site mid-semester assessment, you should be aware that IPO will post select entries on the Linfield website so that others in the community would also benefit from your experience abroad.

### **Mid-Semester Assessment**

Please respond to the question/assignment below, with 2-3 thoughtful paragraphs.

- Identify someone from your host country (such as a roommate, a classmate, a member of your host family, a clerk at a local store, a program assistant at the study center, someone you met at the study center) and conduct an interview. Write 2-3 paragraphs to report your findings on these salient points (*make up your own questions to address these points*):
  - What surprised you the most about the lifestyles, mores, norms and habits of the person you interviewed compared to yours or people you encounter with back home?
  - What are (cultural) similarities and differences you observed or learned (their preferences, tastes, outlook, values) between the person you interviewed and you?
  - How did the interview experience and what you learned changed your initial perceptions of the host country?

- At the end of your report, include the name(first name only) of the person you interviewed, who they are and the date of the interview.

At the conclusion of your study abroad program, you will be asked to complete a “study abroad returnee” assessment of your learning experiences.

### 3. *Returning home:*

Studies have shown (and the Linfield experience has confirmed) that study abroad returnees often experience some level of anxiety about returning home and getting back to their normal routine after spending some time (semester or year) living in another culture. Most feel the value of sharing these feelings with fellow students who have had similar experiences. Hence, we have developed a re-entry workshop to provide for this discussion. For the final part of this course, you will be required to attend one re-entry session held each term. The estimated dates for this session are provided below, along with information about the class meeting.

### Grading:

You will receive a passing grade for this course once you have satisfactorily completed all assignments associated with the three segments to this course: pre-departure, experience abroad, returning home.

### Mandatory Semester Abroad Orientation

- ↗ Attend the **mandatory** study abroad orientation sessions listed below. **Absences for any reason are not allowed. For all students:**
  - Friday, March 15, 2024 (from 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm); Jonasson Hall
  - Saturday, March 16, 2024 (from 8:30 am – 2:00 pm); Jonasson Hall
  - Country specific sessions, various locations, will be arranged separately

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Due Dates</u> <u>Fall 2024 Programs</u>	<u>Due Dates</u> <u>Spring 2025 Programs</u>
Pre-orientation Assignments	March 15, 2024	March 15, 2024
Post-orientation Review	March 22, 2024	March 22, 2024
Mid-semester assignment: Experiences Abroad	Questions sent by our office for responses. Select entries will be posted on the IPO website and Linfield’s Digital Commons website.	
Returnee Assessment/Questionnaire	Within 2 weeks of the end of your program.	
Reentry Class	Feb./March, 2025	Sept./Oct, 2025

**Relevant texts:**

*These reference materials are available in Nicholson Library. Use these materials as a background to complete your assignments for this course.*

*Culture Shock* publication for all destinations, published by Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland Oregon. Similar publications are also available through Lonely Planet Publications.

Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodation, who have any emergency medical information of which IPO should be informed, or require special arrangements in order to **fully** participate in the abroad program or in the event of a necessary evacuation from the study abroad site, should meet with a staff member in IPO as early in the process as possible, no later than a week after receiving the acceptance letter.

Students who have been accepted to participate in a semester/year study abroad program are expected to adhere to the college policy on academic honesty, as published in the Linfield College catalogue, in fulfilling the requirements of this course and in all the courses they would be taking while abroad.

2/24

### IMPORTANT DATES SEM1

#### December 2024

- MON 16** Teaching Period 1 2025 Timetable Published
- WED 18** Early start Class Registration opens College of Healthcare Science selected courses only

#### February 2025

- MON 3** Credit/Course Transfer/Return to Study Applications close
- TUE 4** Class Registration opens
- MON 17-FRI 21** Orientation Week
- WED 19** International Orientation
- MON 24** Semester 1 begins

#### March 2025

- SUN 2** Enrolments close
- TUE 4** Class Registration closes
- MON 17** Payment Due Date
- THU 27** Census Date

#### April 2025

- MON 21** Public Holiday: Easter Monday
- FRI 18** Last Withdrawal without Academic Penalty
- FRI 18** Public Holiday: Good Friday
- MON 21-FRI 25** Lecture Recess
- FRI 25** Public Holiday: ANZAC Day

#### FEBRUARY

week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
4	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
5	24	25	26	27	28		

#### MAY

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	week
			1	2	3	4	9
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	10
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	11
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	12
26	27	28	29	30	31		13

#### MARCH

week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
4	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
5	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
6	31						

#### JUNE

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	week
						1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30							

#### APRIL

week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
6		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9	28	29	30				

#### JULY

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	week
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30	31				

#### May 2025

- MON 5** Public Holiday: Labour Day

#### June 2025

- MON 2-FRI 6** Study Vacation
- FRI 6** Last Date to Withdraw in eStudent
- SAT 7-FRI 20** Exam Period
- FRI 20** Semester 1 ends
- MON 30** Teaching Period 2 2025 Timetable Published

#### July 2025

- TUE 8** Results Published
- MON 14-FRI 25** Deferred & Supplementary Exams (subject to change)

#### Course application closing dates:

- Domestic students
- International students

This calendar shows Semester 1 dates only. For other academic calendars see: <https://www.jcu.edu.au/students/academic-calendars>

Trimester 1 Teaching	Orientation	Public Holiday	Results Publication	Lecture Recess/Study Vacation
Trimester 2 Teaching	Census Date	Exam Period	Class Registration opens	Deferred/Supplementary Exams
International Orientation	Payment Due Date	TP2 2025 Timetable Publication	Class Registration closes	
Applications Close	Teaching	Withdrawal/enrolment deadline		

## STUDENT BUDGET – AUSTRALIA 24-25

The following figures are estimates based on students' budgets from last year. They are only estimates and vary widely according to the individual. It is important to remember that not all expenses are included! Be prepared for some additional small expenses (i.e. photographs, photocopies) that will be necessary for various reasons.

Be aware of the exchange rate while you are there. Currently, 1 US Dollar = 1.52 Australian Dollars (as of March 2024).

### JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY (Cairns)

### DEAKIN UNIVERSITY (Melbourne)

Rent	\$2000-5000*	Rent	\$3402.74*
Food	\$1000*	Food	\$1005.5
Local Transport	\$50-400	Local Transport	\$94.38
Independent Travel	\$2000	Independent Travel	\$0
Books	\$200	Books	\$0
Postage	\$100	Postage	\$0
Phone	\$200	Phone	\$86.66
Gifts	\$500	Gifts	\$40
Entertainment	\$500	Entertainment	\$0
Other	\$500	Other	\$292.48
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>	<b>\$5,550-10,400</b>	<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>	<b>\$4921.76</b>

\*Rent and food can vary widely depending on whether the student selects catered or non-catered housing.

\*\*If you are on a tight budget, these items can be reduced considerably by concentrating on local travel and taking care with discretionary expenditures.

### **BANKING:**

Plan to exchange \$100 USD into your country's currency, preferably at the airport of departure or you can exchange currency at most airports of arrival, but often arrival is a hectic time plus you might be experiencing jet-lag.

The easiest method for obtaining funds is to use an internationally recognized ATM (Automatic Teller Machine) card – such as PLUS or CIRRUS –for cash withdrawals. You will need to get a pin number from your bank, and you will probably be able to withdraw money only from checking accounts, not savings accounts. **Be sure to check with your bank here at home. Have a back-up plan in case your card does not work. ATM's are not always available outside of cities.**

Another practical solution to international banking is a VISA credit card. You can use the card to charge expenses in most stores, restaurants, and hotels throughout Western Europe. You can also get cash advances at exchange



windows of many banks. Be aware, however, that there is often a fee for the advance plus interest charges that begin immediately after withdrawal.

It is also advisable to photocopy the backs of all your ATM/credit cards and keep that with a photocopy of your passport. If you lose any of your cards, you will have the phone numbers to call the companies.

## LINFIELD COLLEGE STUDENT GUIDE

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY: CAIRNS AND TOWNSVILLE, AUSTRALIA

By: Samantha O'Connor, Mikhale McCarrel, Rita Cohen, Larissa Wohlwend

### The University:

JCU has two campuses that, as a Linfield student, you have the option of attending either one. I (Samantha) attended the Cairns campus, but there is a significantly larger campus located in Townsville, just 4 hours south of Cairns. Townsville campus has about 11,500 students, compared to just 4,500 students at Cairns. I (Samantha) had the opportunity to visit the Townsville campus, and it has the feel of a public school, much like OSU or WOU. The Cairns campus is more intimate, and similar to Linfield. The student body has roughly 350 international students that attend JCU Cairns, and around 1,500 international students in Townsville. Cairns JCU campus is located literally right in the middle of the rainforest, and the land is still owned by the Indigenous people of the area. It is ranked in the top 5% of the world's universities attributed to its beautiful and unique location. If you're at all interested in tropical biology, I highly recommend this university. Additionally, Townsville is Australia's largest tropical city that is a thriving coastal city and port, and a stepping-off point for visiting the Great Barrier Reef. JCU in Townsville is the right school for you if you are interested in other subjects, like exercise science. Cairns contain the more touristy things that you may enjoy doing.

### Before You Leave:

There are many things that need to be taken care of before your departure. First and foremost, I would apply for your visa. This can be quite costly (around \$450-500 US dollars). It is also important for you to make copies of any debit/credit cards, your passport, your insurance card, drivers license, CoE (Confirmation of Enrolment), and the visa acceptance letter. Keep a couple copies for yourself, and give a copy to your parents as well just in case anything were to happen.

Exchanging US dollars for Australian dollars can be done at most banks, but check with your bank ahead of time. This is a lot cheaper to do than to wait until you're in the country or at the airport. I recommend not doing it at the airport as they have horrible rates. You don't need to do this more than 2 weeks in advanced.

To exchange money with little to no fees, I (Mikhale) used Paypal. I got a Commonwealth debit card in Australia and created a paypal account with that debit card information (instructions on how to do this can be found online). And then I created an account with my bank back in America. Then you can easily transfer/send money from your American bank to your Australian debit card using email. Little hassle and little fees!

I (Rita) used a Chase credit card that had no international transaction fees. I had a great exchange rate through my bank so there was not money wasted through that and other fees.

It is not necessary to have a phone when you travel abroad, but it can be nice when you are trying to stay connected with family abroad and friends from Oz. I recommend going to your cell phone carrier and asking to have your SIM card unlocked. This means that you can bring your cell phone with you and once you arrive you can purchase a SIM card from one of their carriers and put it in your phone. This will save you some money by not having to purchase a cell phone once you're there. A carrier I (Mikhale) would suggest is Yatango: their first month of service is free, and you can go online and change your plan to what fits your needs best. Howev-

er, if you choose not to do this (or your phone doesn't have a SIM card), the cheapest cell phones are around \$50, and the SIM cards are around \$30 per month.

I (Rita) had Optus in Cairns. They had great service and students get a discount. I ended up paying around \$30 per month with unlimited international texting and 3GBs of data.

Pack according to your location. Cairns is very humid and very warm. There is no need to pack a lot of warm clothes. I recommend a pair or two of jeans (girls), and one or two sweat-shirts. You can always purchase clothes there. Flip flops (or thongs) are a must! The only time that I wore closed-toed shoes was when I went on hikes (and if you're into that thing, there are plenty of hikes around Cairns and Townsville). Bring a raincoat – nothing too heavy. Just a shell will suffice. This is the tropics, so it will rain a couple days but it will still be very warm. In Townsville, there is not as much rain compared to Cairns, so no need to pack lots of jackets or warm clothes. Definitely leave some room when packing for souvenirs you will undoubtedly bring back!

### Class & Registration:

You pre-register for classes prior to your departure. I recommend registering for classes that are specific to Australia – Indigenous studies, Biodiversity of Tropical Australia, History of Australia, etc... Once you arrive then you will finish your registration during Orientation week. It is very simple, and all done on the computer. Like Linfield, if there is conflict then you have to obtain signatures of the professors of the class that you want to get in to. You have an entire week to register – plenty of time to finish and head to the beach!!!

Classes are generally once a week, and most people don't have class every day. Personally, I only had class Tuesday thru Thursday. There is a lecture portion, and then a tutorial portion (breaking lectures into smaller groups). Because of the two campuses, some classes are video lectures connecting the two schools. Whether or not you're on the receiving end of the lecture is completely random. I felt that the course load was much easier than Linfield. It is easy to procrastinate because the beach is a 10 minute bus ride away, but generally it's not a struggle to complete assignments. Each class only had between 3 and 4 assignments due (including the final), and most were papers. This equals to a more independent schooling system compared to Linfield. In addition to classes being more on an independent level, the finals are worth more of your total grade than at Linfield. They were all around 40-50% of my total grade, so definitely study hard and keep up with classes. It was a fairly different way to be taught and tested, however it allowed for much travelling time.

### Student ID & Organizations:

The week before the semester starts there is Orientation week for the international and new students. During O-week is when you sign up for clubs, obtain your student ID, get tours of the campus, and join any other student organizations that sound attractive. As an international student (in Cairns) you are automatically signed into The Walkabout Club which is a lot of fun. Every weekend there are different trips that are offered - some cheap, some expensive – that normally include meals, accommodations, transportation, and personal tour guides. Some include a trip to Johnstone Crocodile Farm, Cape Tribulation, The Daintree, and the Tablelands, just to name a few. In Townsville some events offered by JCU during Orientation week included Billabong Sanctuary, trips to night markets, exciting nightlife (a toga party to start the year off), etc.

### Email, Computers & Internet:

JCU emailing accounts are established during O-week. You will use this to receive and send emails to professors, as well as staying connected to any clubs or organizations that you signed up. There is a system similar to Blackboard that JCU uses to integrate online work into the classroom. You use this to look up grades, assignments, and many other things.

The campus has several computer labs – both mac and PC – which are opened by your student ID. Most of the buildings on the campus are Wifi and work with any laptop you bring.

Additionally, in Townsville, there is a computer room with both mac and PC computers. To print, make sure to have money on your account (which can be easily done through the library desk on the ground level). Then go to the printers, swipe your card, press ‘print jobs’ and then print your document! Wifi is generally reliable, however if there are any issues connecting, there is always help at the main desk in the library for technological issues such as Wifi.

### Accommodations:

I stayed at the Cairns Student Lodge. This is located across the highway from JCU and was only 400 meters from campus. It is very expensive, but quite convenient. They provide food, and even have a cleaning service. The set up of the Lodge is a suite, therefore you share a common area and bathroom with two other people, but you have your own bedrooms. There was roughly 50/50 Australian to International Students that lived in the lodge. There were positive and negative aspects about living in the lodge, but depending on what you’re looking for in your abroad trip, it can be tolerable.

There are several other accommodations available to international students – Oyster Court in Trinity Beach and The Beaches Apartments located across the highway from JCU. There are pros and cons to both options – Oyster Court is a 15-20 minute bus ride (you have to pay for bus fare) or a 40 minute bike ride. This is a cheaper option, but will probably even out after purchasing food and bus fare. The Beaches Apartments are equally close to JCU from Cairns Student Lodge, and cheaper as well. However, food is not provided (like Oyster Court), and there is no free internet access. The apartments are generally occupied by mid to late 20 year olds, but there are also many families that live there as well. There were also a few international students that used share housing. I’m not too sure how this worked but could be something to look into as you most likely would live with a local.

As for Townsville, JCU has seven on-campus colleges and halls offering accommodation to around 1,250 students. To apply for on-campus housing in Townsville, go to the Housing Portal on the JCU page online. It is important to look at location, how dorms are set up, air conditioning, etc. One example of how housing is set up is getting your own bedroom and sharing a common area with 2 other people (this is what I did!). Another example is getting your own bedroom, shower, sink, and bathroom to yourself. There are also options for off-campus accommodation as well. Prices will vary.

### City of Cairns (& Smithfield) and Townsville:

Cairns is located about 17 kilometers south of Smithfield (where JCU campus is located) and is known as one of the biggest tourist destinations in Australia. There are many hostels, bars, and restaurants to accommodate for the constant influx of domestic and international tourists. The city itself is not very large, but is located in one of the most beautiful places on earth – adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef, Tropical Rainforest, and just a drive away from the outback.

Smithfield is the suburb of Cairns where the campus is located. It is much smaller, but it’s nice to get away from the busy-ness of downtown. There is the Smithfield Shopping Centre

which has heaps of stores including: Woolworth's and Coles (grocery stores), K-mart, Tandy's (similar to a radioshack), and several chemists (pharmacy) for all of your needs. This is only a 30 minute walk, or a 5 minute bus ride from campus. There is a smaller shopping area near the student lodge which has an IGA, KFC, and a few restaurants for when you need something quick and don't want to walk to the Smithfield Shopping Center. If you're looking to get a job while you're abroad then first look at the small shopping area and then try your luck at Smithy's Shopping Center. Start your looking early because the jobs fill up fast, but the minimum wage is great!

James Cook University in Townsville (the largest campus of all the JCU locations) is located in the suburb of Douglas, in a 386-hectare natural bush and parkland setting, 13 kilometres (8 miles) from the central business district. Townsville in general is a city that is adjacent to the central section of the Great Barrier Reef, and is in the dry tropics region of Queensland. Popular attractions in Townsville include 'The Strand', Riverway, Museum of Tropical Queensland, and Magnetic Island. Shopping wise, there is a student mall on campus. Off campus (and about a 20 minute bus ride away), there is a Stocklands shopping centre. There is also Willows shopping centre that is a bit farther away but has a variety of stores. Between the two, it includes everything you would ever look for: food, clothes, technology, flight help, chemists, etc.

#### Getting Around Cairns (& Smithfield) and Townsville:

The (not so reliable) Sunbus is going to be your main source of transportation around Cairns, Smithfield and the Northern Beaches. It is important to budget a couple hundred dollars for bus tickets. As a JCU student you get half off the price, but over the 5 months you're there, it adds up very quickly.

There were several people who bought or borrowed bikes while they were there. This can be great for getting to and from school, as well as going to Smithy's Shopping Center. Brand new, bikes can cost between \$100 and \$150. Also, if you're not willing to spend a fair amount on a good bike lock, then don't be upset if your bike gets stolen. This happened quite frequently at the lodge, but if you have a decent bike lock then you have nothing to worry about. Bikes can be purchased from the student lodge, K-mart, and there are heaps of flyers posted at the school for bikes for sale. The sustainability club started a deal for uni students where you pay \$50 at the beginning of the semester and get \$20 back at the end. A good deal if you think you will need a bike, although I (Rita) did not need a bike as everything is pretty much within walking distance.

In Townsville, the Sunbus is the main source of transportation, and is fairly reliable. However, I would highly suggest a bike. Every shopping location is a maximum of 30 minutes away on bike. I had a bike that was provided to me through a mutual friend, and would definitely suggest getting one. There are many places in Townsville to get old bikes for cheap prices. My bike got stolen because I did not properly lock it up, so always make sure your bike is safe and locked if you do decide to get one!

#### Surrounding Places of Interest:

The Daintree Rainforest (Cairns) – this is a must! We camped next to the croc infested river and woke up to the sound of kookaburras. This is a World Heritage Rainforest that houses a huge percentage of Australia's biodiversity. If you don't go on a Walkabout trip, or have your own car, it can be expensive to bus here, but it's worth it. There are Daintree River cruises that run about \$20 per hour to go croc spotting.

Kuranda (Cairns) – this small hippy town is a perfect Saturday get-away. There are several markets that offer unique gifts. There is the beautiful Barron Falls and a great hike around the town. Every once and awhile there are concerts and shows that play in the amphitheatre. Also, if you like coffee this is a great place! There is a cute shop hidden away from the markets where they make delicious hot cocoa and a honey latte made from local honey.

Northern Beaches (Cairns) – these beaches are mostly secluded from all of the tourists and are great for laying out, skim boarding, throwing around a footy ball, or just going for a swim. Trinity Beach is the most visited, but one of the closest. Yorkey's Knob (I thought) was the best. At low tide there are many sand bars, and great seashells. This beach normally isn't very busy and there are great waves to have some fun in the water. Palm Cove is a nicer beach, but often occupied by some of the older tourists. Located on the other side of the rock pier is a nude beach. It's beautiful, and often not too busy. It's a must to visit at least once. However, it's about a 45 minute bus ride to get to, so plan your day accordingly.

Josephine Falls (Cairns)– this is only accessible via a car, but it's one of the most beautiful places I saw. It's a small hike in, but worth it. Stop at Murdering Point Winery for some delicious tropical fruit wine tasting and bring a bottle back for a great present.

Cascade Falls (Cairns) – several Walkabout trips go here, and there are also some classes that come here for field trips. This is a great water hole (very cold) and fun to hang out for a couple hours on a weekend. Watch out for the scorpions hiding under the rocks!

Whitsunday Islands and Airlie Beach – this is about an 8 hour drive south of Cairns but absolutely the most beautiful place I've ever been. You can get by train, renting a car, or flying, but flying is the most expensive. Take a sailing trip around the islands for a few days or camp on one of the smaller islands over night. If you have a lot of money to spend then take advantage of the party cruises. Airlie Beach is where you'll stay before you head out on the water. It has a great nightlife, a lot of hostels, and is catered for tourists. There is a fun lagoon and on Saturdays there is a market.

Atherton Tablelands – rent a car and drive an hour over the hills to enjoy the scenery on the Tablelands. Stop and get some coffee or mangoes for the drive. There are a couple crater lakes – Lake Eachem and Barrine – and some fun small towns that are good places to get out and walk around to stretch your legs.

The Strand (Townsville)- the Strand is a beautiful beach that has a view of the Port of Townsville and Magnetic Island, as well as Cape Cleveland. There is a rock pool, a recreational park, restaurants, and cafes that make the Strand one of my favorite places to venture. There are monthly markets at the Strand as well, which provide perfect souvenirs for family and friends!

Magnetic Island- this is a 25 minute ferry ride from Townsville. On Maggie Island are themed full moon parties that occur every month (go to the one at the beginning of the year!), snorkelling, swimming, relaxing at different beaches, and the fort walks. I recommend visiting Horeshoe Bay, it is beautiful!

Crystal Creek and Billabong Sanctuary- this is about an hour north of Townsville. Crystal creek has icy water that is extremely refreshing when it is humid and hot. I jumped from rocks and relaxed the day away. Not far from Crystal creek is Billabong Sanctuary- where you can pet roaming wallabies and kangaroos, see emus, crocodiles, and touch/hold a koala! Fun place I would highly suggest.

Although Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Perth are not close by, try to make it to at least one of these great cities. They are much larger than Cairns, and it's a good idea to use your school breaks to travel as much as possible. Melbourne is like a larger Portland, and Perth has

some of the most beautiful sunsets. Take advantage of the beautiful country that you're in. Flying is VERY reasonable compared to the States.

### Clubbing & Nightlife:

Australians know how to party, and they do a lot of it. Be careful about how much you drink because it can become an expensive habit. It is good to know the cheap nights to go out – Sunday sesh is two for one drinks at select bars, Tuesday is 5 drinks for 10 dollars, and Thursday is dollar drinks and ladies night at most places – free entry and free (nasty) champagne. There are a lot of fun (and trashy) bars located throughout town. Other fun bars include: The Heritage (\$5 teapots on Tuesdays), The Woolshed (be prepared for some dancing on tables and fun games), The Velvet Underground (located underneath the casino, very loud music, and the prime hangout of the newly 18 year olds), The Society (expensive, but classy), The Pier (located on the water, and a great Sunday Sesh), P.J. O'Briens (if you're in the mood for some Irish car bombs and meeting Irish people, this is the place to go). Cairns is a lot of fun at night, and it's a party every night.

In Townsville, definitely go out on cheap Tuesdays. Everything is cheap on Tuesdays: drinks, entrance fees, pizza, you name it! There are always deals on Tuesdays. The party scene in Townsville is on Flinders street: that is where all the nightclubs are. Some include Mad Cow and the Bank.

### Traveling & Safety:

Take full advantage of traveling while you're abroad. It's fun to get a small group of people together and just drive. During your lecture recess (equivalent to our spring break) make sure you go somewhere. Try to do it as cheaply as possible because it makes for some great stories and good bonding experiences with friends. Try to just eat PB & J sandwiches, fruit and veggies (best in the world) and sleep either in the car or in hostels. Australia is really travel-friendly.

Of course, no matter where you go, make sure you're being safe. I never had issues, but that doesn't mean something can't happen. To be honest, I was more afraid of animals than people hurting me. Be aware of where you are walking at night, especially on the grass! You'll learn more about snakes, spiders, and all other creatures throughout your studies there.

As a female, make sure that you always stay with someone – this applies to while you're traveling and in town at night. Don't bring any important documents with you while you're out unless you have to and always have a phone with you if possible, or at least know the numbers to your friends or where you're staying. Common sense is the most important thing, and if you are aware of your surroundings then you'll be fine.

### Last Words:

I had the best experience of my life while I was abroad and I hope that you will as well. Like I've said before, take advantage of where you are. Australia is an expensive country, so budget accordingly. Don't be shy and try to meet as many people as possible. Branch out and be outgoing because there are so many great people to get to know. Overall, I feel that Australians are some of the nicest and laid-back people in the world. It is important not to stress out because their culture is very carefree. After all, their national slogan is "No Worries, Mate!" Have fun!

# 4 Ways People Steal Your Passport

by [Katherine LaGrave](#)

Beware of these four occurrences when traveling with a passport.

Sometimes, a bump, nudge, or distraction is all it takes.

The stolen passport market is huge: There are more than 40 million passports listed as missing on a database created by Interpol in 2002, and according to the U.S. Department of State, more than 300,000 American passports are lost or stolen in the U.S. each year. And given that these are the most common ways thieves have been known to pilfer a passport, it pays to be aware.

## **The set-down**

It's easy enough to make a mistake with your documents when traveling—after all, how natural is it to put your passport on the table at a restaurant as you pull out a chair, or rest it on top of your suitcase as you check the departure board at an airport? I've done it, and I'm guessing you have, too. But take your eye off the document for a moment, and you open yourself up to the possibility of someone bumping your table (or bag) as a distraction—and walking away with your passport. Another one of the most common places for thieves to grab a passport is in a place where we actually need to produce it: checking in at a hotel overseas. Be wary of putting it to the left or right of you as you shuffle for your confirmation number or booking details, as someone could come along and create a distraction—think returning a key, or asking a question—and slip away with your document. Instead, place your passport on the counter in front of you, and immediately return it to its secure location after it is passed back to you.

## **The spill**

It sounds slightly out of a Charlie Chaplin movie: seemingly innocent passers-by "spilling" anything from ice cream to juice on people they



pass. Yet there are worldwide reports of such instances, wherein a distraction is created, and in the process of aiding and cleaning the hapless victim, the "spillers"—or their associates—lift a passport. If you have the misfortune of being spilled on, refuse attendance and instead, avoid contact with the offender by quickly walking away.

## [5 Ways to Keep Your Passport Safe When Traveling](#)

### **The pocket**

It's obvious, sure, but one of the easiest ways for people to snatch your passport is if it's carried in your pockets: All it takes is a crowded train and a nudge—or a coat that's been draped over the back of a chair, and a sleight of hand. If you need to carry your passport with you, look for a flat money belt, which can be worn around your waist and neck and concealed under your clothing. If you're in the market for something a bit more comfortable, try a travel wallet or passport cover. Both conceal your passport (and nationality), and the travel wallet also has room for other valuables, including credit cards and emergency cash. Avoid carrying your passport and spending money together if you can, as taking out cash will alert potential thieves.

### **The authorities**

In countries around the world, you'll most often be asked to produce your original passport at hotels and airports, or when crossing borders. Travelers have also reported instances in which policemen, plain-clothed or uniformed, approach them and ask to see their passports. Sometimes, the officials are actually as they say they are—numerous countries have plain-clothed officers asking for passports in order to catch illegal immigrants—but it's better to be safe than sorry. Signs that it probably isn't a scam: everyone else in your surrounding area is also being checked, security badges and patches are visible on the officer's uniform, and officials are not asking for anything but photo ID. If you feel you are being singled out and are still uncomfortable, agree to show your passport in the nearest police station or hotel lobby, where you can confirm with a clerk who speaks the native language.

## TRAVEL TIPS

# How to Make Sure You Travel with Medication Legally

Traveling with medication — even prescription drugs — isn't as simple as packing it. Here's how to stay on the right side of the law, anywhere you go.



**By Tanya Mohn**

Jan. 19, 2018

Travelers often pack medications when they go abroad, but some popular prescription and over-the-counter ones Americans use for things like pain relief, better sleep, allergies and even the common cold are illegal in some countries.

The United Arab Emirates and Japan, for example, are among the most restrictive nations, but many ban or restrict importing narcotics, sedatives, amphetamines and other common over-the-counter medications.

Most travelers won't run into problems for carrying small amounts for personal use, said Katherine L. Harmon, who oversees health analysis for [iJET International](#), a travel risk management company. But noncompliance can result in confiscation, (which could, in turn, have severe medical consequences), deportation, jail time, and even the death penalty. "Does it happen a lot? No. Could it? Yes," Ms. Harmon said. "Consumers need to understand this and how it might adversely impact them *before* they book that awesome trip to an exotic location."

She shared a few tips to keep you on the right side of the law, whatever you take and wherever you roam.

## Plan Ahead

Laws vary by country and there is no central, up-to date repository, so Ms. Harmon suggests consulting your physician, travel medical insurance company, or local pharmacist four to six weeks before traveling. "When you inquire about your shots, ask about medications. Odds are they may not know off the top of their head, but they have the resources to find out."

She also suggests checking with the embassy of your destination country. The [State Department](#) website lists foreign [embassies](#) in the United States, and their contact information. It also lists [insurance providers](#) that offer overseas health coverage. Comparison websites [Insure My Trip](#) and [SquareMouth](#) can help assess those insurance plans, if they're necessary.

## Label and Pack Your Medication Properly

Carry all of your medication — even vitamins and supplements — in their original, clearly marked containers or packaging in a clear plastic bag in carry on luggage. Make sure the name on the prescription, the medicine container and your passport (or one for the recipient of the medication) all match. If you lost the product information insert, ask the pharmacist to print a new one for you.

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[Here's more on our standards and practices.](#)

Also, check [the Transportation Security Administration's website](#) for up-to-date rules and regulations on packing and carrying your medication when you depart. The standard rules

for liquid carry-ons don't apply to medications in liquid or gel form, but you need to inform the T.S.A. when you pass through security so they don't confiscate it.

## Obtain and Carry Necessary Documentation

Keep copies of your original prescriptions, if you can. Better yet, obtain a letter on official letterhead from your physician that lists the medicines you need and why they were prescribed. Ideally, you would get this translated to the language of your destination country, so it's easy to read.

For some medication and specialized equipment used to administer them, some countries require documents to be submitted to government officials well in advance of your arrival. Ms. Harmon, for example, was questioned at the Singapore airport once for entering with an EpiPen, but she had prior authorization allowing its transport.

## Know the Names and Amounts of Active Ingredients

The documentation you carry should also indicate the generic and chemical names of the active ingredients, which determines permissibility, not brand names.

For example, the active ingredient in Benadryl, diphenhydramine, is banned in Zambia in over-the-counter products. In Japan, it is allowed only if the amount in a tablet or injection is limited. However, a typical 25 milligram tablet of Tylenol PM in the United States exceeds the 10 milligram maximum amount in a tablet you can bring into Japan. Some countries restrict the overall total amount of an active ingredient an individual traveler can legally import, which may impact longer stays.

## Reduce or Substitute Medication

In countries where a medication is allowed, but its amount is capped, reducing your dosage or switching to another available medication is the best way to stay compliant. Allow enough time beforehand to ensure the smaller dose or new medicine works effectively, and consider making the switch before your trip to give yourself time to adjust.

Some medications can be used for several diagnoses. Hormones used for birth control may also be used to treat excessive menstrual bleeding, Ms. Harmon said. "Doctors need to get creative sometimes. Substitutions can allow authorities to accept the drug as a medical need rather than going against the country's religious or moral code."

## Reassess Your Travel Plans

Parents with a child doing well on Adderall for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder who prefer not to make adjustments on the fly, or a student with bipolar disorder may want to

consider vacation or study abroad locations where the medications they rely on for mental health are not banned or restricted.

“Viewpoints on treatment and diagnoses can vary widely,” Ms. Harmon said. “Western Europe and North America understand that brain chemistry is often at the root of these problems. But some countries, like Russia, do not consider mental health challenges as medical problems and often treat them criminally.”



# Surviving a Protest

Product of the Research & Information Support Center (RISC)

The following report is based on open source reporting.

August 7, 2014

## Introduction

Travelers are regularly cautioned about protest activity when visiting a foreign country. The U.S. Department of State, for example, consistently encourages citizens to “avoid all demonstrations, since even peaceful gatherings can quickly turn violent” – a phrase common to many Consular messages. However, a deeper understanding of what motivates protest activity, and who or what the intended targets are, can be useful tools for educating travelers.

## The Nature of a Protest

According to a 2013 [report](#) by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, a German non-profit organization that promotes democracy and political education, the global number of protests has increased every year from 2006 (59) through the first half of 2013 (112). [Note: these were protests covered in online news media. The countries analyzed represent 92 percent of the world’s population] While protests take place throughout the world, where

Protests by Region – 2006-2013

	Total	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013*
High-Income (Region)	304	17	25	25	35	44	57	60	41
Latin America/Caribbean	141	14	12	15	12	21	22	25	20
East Asia/ Pacific	83	3	9	10	9	12	20	11	9
Sub-Saharan Africa	78	7	6	8	8	5	18	15	11
Middle East/North Africa	77	3	11	6	7	11	18	15	6
Global	70	7	5	8	8	8	10	14	10
Europe/Central Asia	47	3	4	4	4	7	6	11	8
South Asia	43	5	5	4	4	8	2	9	6
World Total	843	59	77	80	87	116	153	160	111

Data provided by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung  
\* As of July 2013

they occur is not always a good indicator of how they will proceed. A country with a peaceful tradition of rallying can experience violence, while another with a more acrimonious style can experience no incidents at all. For example, in Cambodia, generally known for a peaceful tradition, demonstrators and police have recently come to blows over anti-government sentiment as well as a demand for a higher minimum wage among garment workers. In South Africa, known as the “[protest capital of the world](#)” and where violence is not a rarity, most demonstrations end peacefully and without incident. Demonstrations can also take place in countries not known for having any protest tradition at all, such as in Iran during the 2009 Green Movement, or in Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and Libya during the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings.

By their nature, protests also attract attention. They can be exciting events, and for a foreigner, provide an up-close look at a country’s political landscape. But the advice to avoid them is not dispensed arbitrarily. An overzealous demonstrator can incite a crowd; individuals with ulterior motives can infiltrate an otherwise peaceful rally; a heavy-handed police response can provoke an aggressive reaction from gatherers. When this happens, onlookers can pay the price. This past May, a bystander was killed by a stray bullet during an anti-government protest in Istanbul, Turkey. Authorities in southern China acknowledged that police “may have accidentally injured...bystanders” during an April protest against a chemical plant in Guangdong province. During Egyptian riots in June 2013, an American college student was stabbed to death as he took photographs of the unfolding violence. What starts as simple curiosity can easily turn into a fight to stay out of harm’s way.

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.

## Indicators Can Help

There are indicators, however, that can be helpful to any traveler when assessing the probability for protests, and how they will play out. Anti-government protests, for instance, may not be as likely to target foreigners as they would police officers or nearby property (although the death of the American student referenced above shows this is not always true). Destroying property can be a way of not only displaying intense dissatisfaction with conditions in the country, but also attempting to undermine the government. This was the case in Thailand in 2010, when anti-government protesters targeted not only government buildings, but also commercial facilities. The same was true for 2010 anti-government/-austerity protests in Greece. In both cases, foreigners were not directly targeted, and in Thailand, they were actually greeted warmly if they happened to pass by the event.

A protest against another country, on the other hand, might not result in widespread violence, but particular people and properties could be vulnerable. This past May, [anti-Chinese protests in Vietnam](#) targeted what were perceived to be Chinese-affiliated companies and factories following a maritime dispute between the two countries. In July, [anti-Israeli protests in Germany and France](#) led to the attack of synagogues and Jewish businesses in those countries.

There are also a number of issues that seem to bring protesters to the street regardless of location. For example, citizens accustomed to government subsidies (fuel, transportation, etc.) can quickly mobilize if their entitlements are threatened in any way; violent clashes in the streets of Jakarta in 2013 following a reduction of fuel subsidies are a prime example. The suspicion of electoral fraud is another key catalyst, as was evident during protests in Russia following disputed 2011 legislative elections. Another major indicator pertains to infringements-- real or perceived-- on basic democratic rights. Residents of Hong Kong, for example, regularly take to the streets to demand greater democratic freedom.

## The Likeliest Scenario

More than likely, the biggest impact to travelers during a demonstration will be transportation difficulties, including blocked roads, crowded public transportation, and congested traffic. A lot of protests advertise in advance where and when they will take place, which makes a traveler's job of planning to get around them easier. Even for the ones that do not, it should become pretty clear what area(s) to avoid as numbers amass. Social media can be a great tool for collecting information; organizers and participants are likely to tweet about the event or post pictures to Facebook, Instagram, or a popular local social network (such as VKontakte in Russia). During past protests, OSAC constituents have allowed employees to work remotely or even take the day off when demonstration activity encroaches on work sites or precludes safe commuting. Over periods of sustained protest activity, employers have deferred travel, and in some cases, removed personnel from the city or country entirely. Each organization is responsible for its own plan, but understanding the fundamentals is a good start to making one.

## Additional Information

For recent OSAC analysis on other regional protests, please see the below reports:

[Middle East Conflict Fuels Europe Protests](#)  
[Haiti Opposition Protests](#)  
[Northern Ireland Orangemen Parade Volatility](#)  
[Royal Thai Army Invokes Martial Law](#)  
[May Day](#)

## For Further Information

Please direct any questions regarding this report to OSAC's [Cross Regional Analyst](#).

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## Don't Go Soft on Study Abroad: a Call for Academic Rigor

*The following is a guest post by **William G. Moseley**, chair and professor of geography at Macalester College. He has worked and conducted research in Africa for 25 years.*

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Study abroad can be a powerful experience for many students. A student's trip overseas can be one of those transformative educational periods after which a young person will never look at the world the same way again. Yet many students, faculty members, and college administrators don't take this education as seriously as they should.



Study-abroad students bird watching in Botswana's Okavango Delta.

Let's be frank, some students view study abroad as a vacation or at least a time when normal academic standards ought to be relaxed. But as an instructor and director on two different study-abroad programs for undergraduates in South Africa and Botswana, I have sought to expose participants to new cultures and provide academically rigorous courses.

Many students initially chafed at the large amount of reading and writing, in addition to original fieldwork, that I assigned during these programs. Not only did some start



the program with an educational holiday in mind, but they saw students in other study-abroad programs not working as hard. Knowing my interest in having them have cross-cultural experiences, my students would couch their concerns about the workload in terms of not having sufficient time to travel and interact with the local population. How could I deny them exploring southern Africa?, they asked.

Occasionally, a class of students confronts me directly about the workload. This happened a little over halfway through the term in my most recent study-abroad teaching experience in Botswana. Students asked me point-blank how my courses compared in difficulty to those I teach at my home institution. I indicated that the classes I offered in Africa were actually a little less challenging as I was trying to account for the added stress of unfamiliar surroundings and less reliable infrastructure. Their collective gasp was audible; they shook their heads in disbelief. However, in explaining why the academic requirements of the program could not be relaxed, we had one of the more interesting discussions of the term.

I shared my view that a successful study-abroad experience often means at least two things: 1) getting outside of your own cultural head space (that is, coming to understand that other cultures may have very different, yet equally valid, approaches to life); and 2) knowing enough background information about a place, its history, and connections to other parts of the world to really understand what you are seeing. Of course the two criteria are often linked; you can't set aside your own cultural prejudices until you understand why other people do things the way they do. Furthermore, learning enough to get a handle on what you are seeing requires hard work. That is, it means critically reading the academic publications about a place, discussing those insights with your peers, and synthesizing your understanding by writing.

Over time, my students began to value the rigor with which we explored this new area of the world, and the nuanced insights and deeper personal growth that it eventually yielded. For example, these students lived in a rural home for a time in the second half of the semester. This experience produced some beautiful reflections on what it meant to be with a local family. Gone were the shallow complaints about inefficient bureaucracy, the slow pace of life, or bad food from earlier in the term. Instead, the students showed a better ability to contextualize poverty, a greater appreciation for taking the time to get to know someone, or understanding Botswana on its own terms and in relation to the region, rather than just comparing it with American norms and practices.

Could we have done better? Yes, certainly. But I am also aware of the fact that we could have done a lot worse. It is expensive to have someone like me, a scholar of western and southern Africa, to relocate for a term (with his family no less) to teach a

course or two. It is far cheaper to subcontract study abroad to third-party providers. While many such organizations are excellent, some may be tempted to hire less-than-qualified teachers who were never (or are no longer) active scholars, and succumb to student pressure for less academic rigor because their business model demands it.

The reality is that the study-abroad experiences can be orchestrated quite poorly, potentially leaving students with a highly superficial, if not deeply flawed, understanding of another area of the world, not to mention a false sense of regional expertise.

So my hard advice is this: If you are a student looking for a study-abroad “vacation,” then either think about this opportunity anew and look for a rigorous program, or don’t go at all. If you are a faculty member looking to take a group of students overseas, get the necessary training and make sure you have the place-relevant research background to be a competent study-abroad instructor.

Finally, if you are an administrator that oversees study-abroad programs, then please treat this semester the same as you would the rest of an undergraduate’s career. If you are unwilling to compromise quality and provide education on the cheap at home, then a semester abroad should be no different.

[Photo courtesy of William G. Moseley]