

# global



## GLOBAL LEARNING GUIDE

GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE  
UI COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

*Last updated May 2019*

# health

# contact

## CONTACT INFORMATION

University of Iowa International Crisis Line  
*Available 24/7*

**(+001) 319-530-2540**

Global Public Health Contacts  
*Regular business hours only*

cph-global@uiowa.edu  
319-384-4136  
319-384-1500

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As you begin to prepare for your trip abroad, you will undoubtedly come up with all sorts of questions about the next steps for your experience. This guide is designed to help you navigate the questions you may have and to make your pre-departure process as easy as possible. As you read through the following pages, you will find basic information about traveling, living, and working abroad in the context of your academic studies and career goals.

Keep in mind that this information is general so it may not answer all of your questions. The needs, goals, and locations of every student trip are different so no written guide will ever have all the information you need. Instead, we encourage you to use this guide as a foundational resource and continue to stay in contact with faculty mentors and support staff at the University of Iowa prior to and during your time abroad.

We advise you to read this guide thoroughly before leaving and then take it with you while overseas in case questions arrive or you need emergency contact information.

We hope you enjoy your trip and look forward to hearing more about your adventures when you return to Iowa City.

- *The Global Public Health Team*

## INTRODUCTION



## PREPARATIONS CHECKLIST

- ☐ REGISTER YOUR TRAVEL WITH THE UI INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE AND PURCHASE MANDATORY TRAVEL INSURANCE.
- ☐ COMPLETE THE *EDUCATION ABROAD PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION* ONLINE ICON COURSE.
- ☐ REGISTER YOUR TRAVEL IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT STEP REGISTRY.
- ☐ PURCHASE YOUR AIRLINE TICKETS.
- ☐ SECURE HOUSING AND ARRANGE PAYMENT.
- ☐ REVIEW YOUR GRANT REPORTING AND EXPENSE TRACKING REQUIREMENTS.
- ☐ CHECK YOUR PASSPORT EXPIRATION DATES AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO GET A NEW ONE IF NECESSARY.
- ☐ OBTAIN VISA DOCUMENTATION.
- ☐ SECURE COURSE CREDIT APPROVAL.
- ☐ SCHEDULE A VISIT TO THE UI STUDENT TRAVEL CLINIC AND DOUBLE CHECK THAT YOUR IMMUNIZATIONS ARE CURRENT.
- ☐ NOTIFY YOUR BANK AND CREDIT CARD COMPANY OF YOUR TRAVEL DATES AND LOCATIONS.
- ☐ CONTACT YOUR COUNTRY PARTNER ABOUT WORK REQUIREMENTS, OFFICE DRESS, AND OTHER PROJECT NECESSITIES.

## BEFORE YOU DEPART

### PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Both U.S. and non-U.S. citizens are required to have a valid passport to leave the U.S. Obtaining a passport takes time, so you should start the process as soon as possible. U.S. passport applications are generally available at your local post office. If you have any questions about this process, please refer to the U.S. Department of State website or your post office.

NOTE: If you currently have a passport, it must be valid at least 6-9 months *after* your planned return date to the U.S. If it will expire within 6-9 months of your return, you must renew your passport before departure.

Visa requirements are different for each country and depend on your citizenship. U.S. citizens should refer to the visa guidelines listed for their intended host country at [travel.state.gov/destinations](https://travel.state.gov/destinations). Some countries may require a student or work visa while some will allow you to travel on a tourist visa. Many countries now offer visa applications online or on arrival as you pass through customs to your destination. However, some countries and visa types may still require in-person interviews at a consulate which can take several weeks to arrange. If you need to acquire a visa for your trip, we advise you to begin looking into the requirements and necessary documentation as early as possible.

Non-U.S. students should be aware that your visa requirements may differ from U.S. citizens. All University of

Iowa (UI) students can consult with CIBT Visas, an external visa assistance service, for specific questions regarding your visa needs. UI currently contracts with CIBT for visa support and students can access this resource at any time by going to [CIBTVisas.com/iowa](http://CIBTVisas.com/iowa).

Finally, all students should be aware that additional visas may be necessary to pass through connecting airports depending on the airport location, your destination, and your citizenship status. For example, even if you are flying to Lagos, you will likely need to connect to a flight in Amsterdam. Some students may need to acquire a Dutch visa, in addition to their Nigerian visa, in order to pass through the Amsterdam airport to connect to their flight to Lagos. Additionally, you should always consult with your host partners about the best airport to fly into as this can have visa implications as well. For example, most students traveling to Kabale, Uganda will actually fly into the airport in Kigale, Rwanda. If this is the case, you will need to check on the visa requirements for both Rwanda and Uganda.

### IMMUNIZATIONS & MEDICATION

As with visas, the need for specific immunizations will depend on your destination and country of origin. The U.S. State Department website and CIBT Visas can tell if there are any vaccines that are *required* for you to acquire a visa and enter your host country. Some countries may not require a vaccine for you depending on your country of origin, but will still strongly suggest that you receive certain vaccines for your own safety.

Even if there are no required immunizations for your host country, all students are encouraged to visit their doctor or the UI Student Travel Clinic to ensure all of their regular vaccinations are up to date and to receive any suggested doses, including this year's flu vaccine (if available).

NOTE: As of Spring 2019, the yellow fever vaccine (commonly required for tropical destinations) is experiencing an extreme shortage. Students who require or would like to receive the yellow fever vaccine will need to arrange travel to one of two clinics in either Davenport or Des Moines that has the vaccination available. The cost of this vaccine can be significant and is typically required out-of-pocket at the time of your visit.

If you take regular medications for allergies or pre-existing medical conditions, you should bring enough medication in its original packaging to last the duration of your trip. Some of the same treatments may be available in your host country, but many are not. Depending on the duration of your trip, you may need to get pre-approval from your insurance company and your doctor to fill an extended prescription.

Students are *not* advised to have their medications shipped to them overseas. Most medications will be held up in customs and can take weeks or months to arrive at their destination. Please remember that some medications and treatments that are legal to obtain in the U.S. may be illegal elsewhere.

### HEALTH INSURANCE

All UI students are required to carry supplemental international travel insurance when traveling abroad. This insurance is mandatory for any trips affiliated with or sanctioned by UI and cannot be waived. International insurance is provided by the Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) and is a group policy designated by the Iowa Board of Regents for all three state universities in Iowa.

When you register your travel through the Global Public Health or study abroad offices, you will be automatically enrolled in the CISI policy. The cost for this insurance is \$1.31 per day (as of Spring 2019) and is intended to be supplemental to

your existing insurance. (Students should NOT unenroll from their regular insurance policy while abroad.) You will receive your personal insurance card via your @uiowa.edu email 10 days prior to your departure date.

Some host institutions and partners may need your insurance policy information ahead of time. If this is the case, the Iowa Regents international insurance policy number is **18 GLM N04965085**.

The CISI plan is designed specifically for students traveling abroad. In addition to providing health insurance, the plan covers medical evacuation, repatriation, and security evacuations, if necessary. Unlike many domestic insurance plans, the CISI plan will pay 100% of covered expenses without requiring a deductible.

All students should be sure to print the CISI insurance card prior to departure as proof of insurance and keep it with you for the duration of your trip. It can also be accessed online. In addition to the above, the Team Assist Plan was designed by CISI in conjunction with the Assistance Company to provide travelers with a worldwide, 24-hour emergency telephone assistance service. Multi-lingual help and advice may be available in the event of an emergency during the term of coverage. For a more detailed description of benefits, or if you would like to purchase extended coverage for personal travel, visit the UI Study Abroad website at [international.uiowa.edu](http://international.uiowa.edu).

### **AIRFARE**

Before you purchase your plane tickets, you should have a rough idea of your travel and work plans, especially if you will be traveling between multiple locations or adding any personal travel before or after your work is complete.

Most students will fly in and out of the same airport, but

others may choose to arrive and depart from different airports, depending on pricing and logistics. Some students may also choose to add personal travel time in the country or region they are visiting, which may be possible depending on visa and funding restrictions. If you are receiving funding from the Global Public Health Initiative or any other funding source, you should communicate with the award coordinator to ensure the airfare is purchased within their guidelines. If you need assistance purchasing airfare or would like a price comparison, UI has a partnership with Meacham Travel in Iowa City.

NOTE: If you plan to travel using federal grant funds, all airfare purchases must be in compliance with the Fly America Act (FAA) which states that you are required to fly on a U.S.-based airline or its alliance affiliates whenever possible. Exceptions may be made to this policy in cases where no American airlines or affiliates are available or do not operate in a safe or reasonable time frame.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DATES**

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure their arrival and departure dates do not conflict with any academic, professional, or personal responsibilities at home. You should check any academic calendars, final exam schedules, or work requirements before purchasing your flights. Students should not miss class for an international experience and cannot expect that a reliable internet connection will always be available in their host country. Expectations of working remotely should be kept to a minimum.

### **HOUSING**

As you prepare to go abroad, you will also need to secure housing accommodations. If you are traveling with a structured program or study abroad provider (such as CFHI or SIT), housing will most likely be provided for you. You should

double check with your program coordinator that housing will be provided for you and what amenities will be included.

If you are traveling for an independent project or research, you will likely need to secure housing for yourself. Always check with your institutional host and/or contact for recommendations on safe and affordable housing. Some universities may be able to offer you on-campus guest housing or will have an agreement with a safe and vetted off-campus housing provider.

There are currently many housing scams and unsafe options around the world through apps like Airbnb. Please be careful when selecting your housing options and always go with the recommendation of a trusted source.

Depending on your funding source, there may be rules and specifications for your housing requirements. Recipients of the CPH Global Public Health Student Travel Grant should arrange to allow CPH to pay for their housing directly whenever possible.

## FUNDING

Several funding opportunities may be available to students to offset the cost of traveling abroad. Students are responsible for identifying and securing their own funding for all international travel. The following is a list of suggested funding sources, but *is not meant to be all-inclusive*. Students should continue to search for funding available outside of the resources listed below.

From UI-CPH:

- Global Public Health Student Travel Grant  
*Further information on page 32*

From UI International Programs:

- Stanley Awards for International Research
- Graduate College Internal Fellowships
- UI Study Abroad Scholarships

*Full list at <https://international.uiowa.edu/students/awards>*

From External Sources:

- Boren Scholarships and Fellowships
- U.S. Fulbright Student Programs
- Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship

For students studying with a structured program or study abroad provider (such as CFHI or SIT), some funding may be available for you through the provider. Students may also check with their departments of study if there are any additional funding options.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AT HOME

In addition to funding for international travel, you will still be responsible for any ongoing financial, professional, or personal obligations at home while you are abroad. You should consider the following items, among others, before committing to going abroad:

- Do you have any rent or related utilities that you will still need to pay while you are abroad?
- Do you have GRA and will you be able to maintain the status (and expect your regular salary) while you are abroad?
- Are you responsible for any UI tuition or fee payments during your time abroad?
- Are there other regular expenses that you will need to pay while you are abroad?

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### SAFETY CONCERNS

All UI students are required to have CISI supplemental international student travel insurance while abroad. For information on obtaining and using this insurance, please see page 11. All U.S. citizens should register themselves in the STEP registry through the U.S. Department of State at [step.state.gov](http://step.state.gov) and supply the CPH Global Public Health staff with emergency contact information.

### FOREIGN LAWS

It's important to remember that other countries have different laws and social codes than the U.S. While this may sound like obvious advice, it can be easy to forget that the same rights and privileges that we inherently understand here in the U.S. are not available everywhere. Rights like free speech, free assembly, and the right to an attorney should not be taken for granted and students should be careful not to overstep or assume legality in any situation. While U.S. embassies and consulates are there to help U.S. citizens abroad, their influence is limited by international law and students should not assume that they can break the law without repercussion.

You should also avoid political gatherings and other protests. While it may sound like an interesting cultural experience, not all assemblies will be friendly to Americans and these situations can quickly turn violent. If in doubt, err on the side of caution, trust your instincts, and excuse yourself from any situation that makes you uncomfortable as quickly as possible.

### ALCOHOL & DRUGS

Many injuries sustained by study abroad students are related to drunkenness and associated poor decision making. Additionally, international travel insurance does not usually cover accidents incurred while intoxicated or during high-risk activities. Although alcohol misuse may not carry the same legal penalties as the use of illegal drugs, it can create dire circumstances for you, your personal safety, and the safety and reputation of your host. Remember that your actions reflect on your reputation and that you are serving as an ambassador of the University of Iowa and your home country.

Although there may be no minimum or a lower drinking age in your host country, the customs regarding alcohol may be very different from those in the U.S. Alcohol misuse may occur for a variety of reasons: a mistaken impression of how alcohol is used in your new surroundings; cheaper costs in some countries; a lower minimum drinking age; more lenient laws against drunkenness; or a desire to experiment/fit in. Alcohol abuse and misuse are not tolerated globally and will not be tolerated by the University of Iowa. Violation of local laws and/or UI regulations or policies may result in:

1. Academic withdrawal from the program/experience in progress; and/or
2. Disciplinary action upon return to your Iowa.

Most countries, with the exception of those with religious prohibitions, tolerate social drinking. However, intoxication, public drunkenness, and inebriated behavior are seldom allowed under any circumstances. Alcohol misuse is defined as any use that is harmful or potentially harmful to oneself or to

others. Alcohol abuse is the planned, systematic misuse of alcohol. Alcohol misuse will not be tolerated on UI-affiliated or supported global projects and programs.

### **THEFT**

Students traveling and living abroad should be aware of their personal safety and surroundings at all times. Depending on your host country or city, the crime rates may be drastically different than those you are used to in your hometown and in the U.S. Generally, theft is the most commonly reported issue students run into. Pickpockets are extremely prevalent elsewhere in the world and tend to target individuals who appear to be foreigners or lost.

To avoid pickpockets, avoid wearing brightly colored clothing or items that stand out. Instead, wear plain, non-valuable items that allow you to blend in as best you can and walk with purpose. For women, we recommend using cross-body bags or purses when you're traveling and make sure to wear them in front of you. In the event that you are lost, ask individuals in authority for assistance.

Pickpockets often have developed strategies, such as working in pairs, asking for directions, etc so be alert when interacting with others. We generally recommend traveling with a friend and using the buddy system as there is safety in numbers.

If you are a victim of a crime while you are abroad, please inform the CPH Global Public Health staff so they can assist you.

### **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a medical emergency, you should go to the nearest hospital and seek medical attention. If you have an in-country host or contact, inform them immediately. You should

keep your CISI insurance card on you at all times so you can contact them from the hospital.

The University of Iowa has an international crisis hotline that is monitored 24/7. The phone number is **+001-319-530-2540**.

### **IDENTITY ABROAD**

Some students may struggle with their identity in this new global context. Depending on where you travel to, your host country may be more or less accepting of your identity markers than the U.S. Specifically, students from ethnic, racial, and religious minorities and students identifying as LGBTQ+ frequently report issues grappling with the different attitudes of their host culture.

Students seeking resources and support with identity issues while abroad are encouraged to contact the UI Center for Diversity and Enrichment and to consult the Diversity Abroad resources available at **[www.diversityabroad.com](http://www.diversityabroad.com)**. The University of Iowa is a member of the Diversity Abroad Network and is committed to supporting the needs of all students during international learning experiences.

# travel

## LIVE & TRAVEL ABROAD

### COMMUNICATION ABROAD

While you may be used to always being connected at home, phone and digital communication can be a little tricky when you're abroad. While most of the world uses a GSM mobile system, the U.S. primarily uses CDMA. The function of these systems isn't important, but it is important to know that your phone most likely won't work while you're traveling.

That being said, it is still a good idea to be minimally connected in case of emergency. If you'd like to be able to use a cellphone regularly while you're traveling, there are a few options.

1. You can check with your U.S. cellphone provider to see if they offer an international text and/or calling plan. These plans are usually about \$10-15 per day and only work in certain countries so you should specify where you'll be traveling. They typically do not include mobile data.
2. If you have an unlocked phone (check with your U.S. provider), you can purchase a SIM card in-country to insert into your phone while you're abroad. This will give you an international phone number but you can continue to use your same phone and the apps you've already downloaded.
3. You can purchase a cheap, disposable phone once you arrive in country and use a pre-paid or pay-as-you go calling plan through one of the local mobile phone providers.

For all of these options, there may be restrictions on calling

the U.S. from your host country. For non-emergency communication, apps that are not call-based, such as email, whatsapp, Facebook, etc., are typically your best option.

### APPS AND DIGITAL RESOURCES

In this day and age, there are quite a few phone apps and digital resources available to you to make your travel experience more convenient. The following are a few apps that have been recommended by students, faculty, and staff in the past.



**SmartTraveler:** This app is provided by the U.S. Department of State and allows travelers to update the U.S. embassy/consulate on their travel movements. It will also send you push notifications for safety risks and concerns in the area where you are living and traveling.



**Google Translate:** The Google translate app allows for language translation into almost any language you may encounter. Many languages can also be downloaded and used offline - either as text, voice or via the camera function on your phone.



**Venmo:** Many societies abroad are still strongly cash-based and credit cards will not be as readily accepted as they are in the U.S. Venmo or other cash sharing apps can make it easy to split meals with other travelers or cover other cash transactions.

# explore



**Mobile Passport:** (U.S. Citizens only) U.S. Customs and Border Patrol now offers an app when re-entering the U.S. to streamline the customs process. Download this app ahead of time to avoid the customs lines.



**Skype/Viber/WhatsApp:** In the event that you don't have mobile data abroad or to save on international calling costs, we recommend downloading a wi-fi based texting and calling app such as Skype, Viber, or WhatsApp. Be sure to login and verify your cellphone number with the app

*before* leaving the U.S. and ensure that anyone you want to contact also has the same app installed on their phone.



**Google Maps:** The Google maps app now allows users to download portions of maps for offline use. This function makes use of the location tracker on your phone for real-time guidance.

## ELECTRONICS

To use your electronics abroad you will need an outlet adapter and potentially a voltage converter as well. Outlet shapes are typically regional, so while the U.S., Mexico, and Canada use one shape, European outlets look completely different. You can now find compact universal adapters to bring with you for easy transportation. With the number of electronics most people now travel with, many students have also found it worthwhile to invest in a universal power strip, allowing them to charge multiple devices at once.

Voltage converters are used to convert the outlet voltage so it

does not overpower and burn out your device. While U.S. outlets are generally wired for 120v, most of the world uses 220v. Voltage converters are only necessary for items requiring high power voltage to operate. Items like phone and laptop chargers are fine to use without a voltage converter.

However, we generally do not recommend that students bring items requiring high power as voltage converters are not an exact science and you still risk frying your device or putting out the power to the building if used improperly. In particular, items requiring heat such as hair dryers and straighteners, electric razors, and plug-in alarm clocks should be left at home. If you can't live without these items, you can frequently purchase dual voltage items for cheap in the U.S. or purchase or borrow the item once you arrive in-country.

## TRANSPORTATION METHODS

In most countries, particularly in larger cities, public transportation is common and relatively affordable. You may encounter buses, trains, subways/metros, taxis etc. While you should check with your host and in-country contact on the relative safety of using any transportation options, most students find that they use some form of public transport while abroad.

If you do intend to use public transportation, it is important that you understand how it works and what it costs to avoid any scams or unnecessary fines. For example, in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, you must make sure to validate your ticket before boarding a city bus. Conductors will board the buses randomly to check for validation and the fine for not having a valid ticket can be \$150 or more. Most students have found that their in-country hosts are willing to show them how to navigate public transportation or they can find the information they need online through travel blogs and forums.

You should also remember that airfare between countries may be a lot cheaper and easier than driving. For instance, in Eastern Europe or sub-Saharan Africa, there are no interstate-style freeways that allow for easy driving. Thus, many regional airlines offer cheap travel options between cities that are quicker than driving. Students may want to consider airfare as a transportation option when traveling longer distances.

Students should not rent or drive cars while abroad unless they have been tested and certified for an international drivers license. Road rules and customs vary greatly between countries.

### **STUDENT DISCOUNTS**

Many museums, train tickets, and other travel related expenses can be discounted if you present your student ID. We recommend bringing your UI ID with you while traveling or using your host university ID (if studying at an international institution) so you can provide physical proof of student status and avoid overpaying.

### **PACKING**

All students should try to avoid overpacking as much as possible. Just remember that with the exception of some remote locations, most basic necessities like clothing and hygiene products will be available for purchase abroad.

To avoid overpacking, we recommend laying out everything you plan on bringing with you and then cutting it in half. Don't bring any items that won't be worn or used more than once. Instead, try to bring items that can be layered and customized to work in multiple different settings and different weather.

For safety reasons, students should also avoid wearing clothing that stands out (such as brightly colored items) and

should leave all valuables or items that cannot be replaced at home in the U.S. If you need specific instruments or materials to complete your research project or coursework that cannot be obtained in-country then you should pack those as well.

Many students find that a medium-sized suitcase and a small carry-on bag are sufficient for stays up to one academic year. In your carry-on bag, you should pack your passport, computer, other items of value or things you can't live without, and all your prescription medications (labeled and in their original packaging). You may also want to consider packing a toothbrush or change of clothes depending on the length of your flight.

Finally, you should check the weather before you depart to ensure you have clothing and shoes suitable for the weather. And don't forget to leave room for souvenirs you'd like to bring back.

### **MONEY AND FOREIGN CURRENCY**

As you know, currency and exchange rates differ between countries. The best methods for paying and exchanging money vary between countries so we recommend that all students do their own research prior to departing to find out what options would be best for them.

Most credit and debit cards are usable abroad, provided they have a chip. Some countries may require that you also have a pin number for your credit card in addition to the chip, which can be requested from your credit card company before you leave. We recommend that students use credit cards rather than debit cards whenever possible as credit cards offer some consumer protection in the event of theft, while debit cards do not.

To use your credit card abroad, you will need to inform your

credit card company of the dates you plan to be abroad and *all* locations you will be traveling to ahead of time. If you fail to let them know, they may shut down your card for suspicious activity, leaving you without access to your funds while you're overseas. You should be sure to inform them of all your intended locations, not just your primary destination, in case you'd like to make a purchase in a connecting airport or take a weekend trip to another city or country.

Many societies are still significantly more cash-based than the U.S. so you should be prepared to pay in cash more frequently. If you'd like to get your foreign cash ahead of time, you can order foreign currency from your local bank before you depart. (In Iowa City, both U.S. Bank and MidwestOne offer foreign currency exchange, even to non-customers.) Keep in mind that foreign currency oftentimes needs to be ordered so you should exchange your funds well in advance of your departure date. If you'd like to exchange your cash in-country, you can usually do so through an ATM using your regular bank card or by exchanging U.S. cash inside any bank.

With any currency exchange, there is always a service fee involved. You will find the best exchange rates and lowest fees at established banks. We do not recommend using any of the currency exchange kiosks in the airport as they typically will have the highest service fees. To avoid theft, we also recommend using ATMs inside the bank and avoiding locations on the street whenever possible.

We encourage you to remain aware of the exchange rate and keep approximate track in your head when making any purchase. It is easy to lose track of how much you're spending without a relative reference for the value of a new currency.

If you have received funding to go abroad, you may have specific expense reporting requirements. Please see page 32 for further information.

## CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is the personal disorientation of being in a foreign environment and the process of recognizing and understanding environmental changes. Most students will encounter culture shock at some point while they are abroad, but it will look and feel different for everyone.

While everyone experiences culture shock differently, most students will start to notice a slight discomfort in situations that would normally be very easy. Social cues that you would normally inherently understand can no longer be taken for granted. Simple things like how to greet an acquaintance, smiling at strangers, etc may no longer be naturally intuitive.

In these situations it is normal to begin to feel overwhelmed or irritated at the perceived disorganization of your new environment, especially in countries where the predominant language is not English. Be aware if you start to experience these feelings and recognize that they are normal when exploring a new culture. No culture is "right" or "wrong" and you should avoid the urge to either defend or apologize for your own culture.

There is no best way to cope with culture shock and you will have to understand that it is part of the international experience. However, reading up on the customs and daily life of your host culture as much as possible before you arrive can help you prepare. We also encourage you to make an effort to reach out to classmates and peers in your host country as a means of finding a "cultural tutor." Most individuals enjoy sharing their home cultures and customs with others.

# see the world

## WORKING ABROAD

### MAKE AN IMPRESSION

When you're abroad, you aren't just representing yourself. You are also representing the University of Iowa and your home country and culture. As such, your behavior as a professional will reflect on more than just you.

Whether you're going abroad with a structured program or study abroad provider or you're doing independent research abroad, it's important to recognize culturally-specific professional norms and respect the established work environment as much as possible. It may be a good idea to speak with your in-country host or contact before you depart to learn more about the in-office dress code, supervisory structure, and other work-related issues that may arise.

### PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

We also encourage you to take advantage of the new professional environment in which you'll find yourself. Aside from your professional dress and behavior, you should remember that this is a chance for you to expand your professional network beyond the University of Iowa and the U.S. Make an effort to make connections with peers and individuals from other countries, both in social and professional settings. Global experiences frequently have lasting impacts on a student's professional pursuits and a global network can help you achieve your future academic and professional goals.



## GLOBAL ETHICS

### ETHICS

All students in public health and the health sciences should be aware of ethics and ethical regulations at all time. While you're abroad, standard ethical practices don't change. However, you may find yourself in situations that you otherwise would never encounter and these can bring up ethical questions that need to be answered. While we can't prepare you for every ethical dilemma you may experience, it is important that you understand and prepare for global ethical issues a little differently.

While you're abroad, you should keep the following concepts in mind at all times:

1. We do not fix cultures. As students, you are going abroad to learn first and help second.
2. If you are not qualified to do it in the U.S., then you are not qualified to do it abroad.

We'll start with concept #1. You got into public health to help people and there is a temptation to go abroad in order to "fix" what you perceive as broken systems in other countries. While this is an admirable idea, the reality is that this attitude frequently results in imperialist mindsets and can end up doing more harm than good.

The systems, needs, and norms of western healthcare systems are not always easily transported to other countries due to different social, political, and cultural barriers. As a student, you are going abroad to learn and you should approach every

new situation as an opportunity to gain something new.

This doesn't mean you can't work on projects and contribute to the work being done. It just means that you should recognize that you may not have all the background information necessary to make an informed decision and that deferring to the in-country hosts as a lead will both empower them in their own endeavors and will likely be more beneficial for the community and you as well.

Concept #2 is more straightforward. If you're not qualified to do something in the U.S. then you are not qualified to do it abroad. This is particularly true for students with clinical backgrounds, but is important for public health students too. If you don't have the appropriate training and certification to properly administer a vaccine or deliver a baby, then you absolutely should not engage in that activity while abroad.

This line can be a little more unclear in public health situations. For example, while your host may invite you to observe a group counseling session for survivors of domestic violence, the attendees may not be comfortable having you there, even if they do not voice their discomfort. You wouldn't sit in on a counseling session as an unlicensed counselor in the U.S., so you should not agree to sit in abroad. This remains the case even if the counseling session is being offered in a language you do not speak.

Many countries have different ethical systems or are still developing a code of ethics. It will be up to you to excuse yourself politely but firmly from any situation that asks you to abandon your ethical training. We encourage you to trust your instincts on this issue and err on the side of caution if you're unsure about a specific situation.

## FURTHER READING

We recommend the following resources for further reading on global ethics training and issues.

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- Brown, P. J., & Closser, S. (Eds.). (2019). *Foundations of Global Health: An Interdisciplinary Reader*. Oxford University Press.
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## TRAVEL GRANT REPORTING

### ALL FUNDING

For recommendations on travel grants and scholarships to apply for, please visit page 12.

If you have received any sort of scholarship or grant to support your time abroad, you most likely will be required to submit some sort of progress report or final summary about your trip and how you used the funds. You should familiarize yourself with all the progress and post-trip reporting requirements *prior to your departure*. You may be required to collect documentation during your time abroad that will be difficult to obtain once you return from your trip.

### GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING

The following information is specific to students who are applying for or have received the CPH Global Public Health Student Travel Grant.

The Global Public Health Travel Grant is available for experiential learning opportunities outside the U.S. and applications are reviewed on a rolling monthly basis. The purpose of this travel grant is to provide new global opportunities for CPH students – specifically opportunities outside the student's home country and/or culture. Other non-U.S. travel opportunities that do not meet this criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

All grant recipients must prepare a final reflection of their time abroad using the guidelines below. The final reflection is due no later than 30 days following their return to the U.S. All

submissions should be sent to [cph-global@uiowa.edu](mailto:cph-global@uiowa.edu).

For students going abroad in a non-research capacity (internship, class, etc):

1. Prepare a 1-page cover page that includes the following items.
  - One paragraph summary of where you went and what you accomplished or participated in while you were abroad.
  - Answer the following question: Why did you choose to go abroad in a public health capacity?
  - Answer the following question: How did your time abroad shape the way you approach the field of public health?
  - Answer the following question: How has your time abroad influenced your future goals, interests, and ambitions in the field of public health?
  - Answer the following question: Based on what you learned during your time abroad, why should other CPH student consider an international experience?
2. Create a media journal (photos and text or video story) reflecting on or more of the following questions. This journal is meant to be both personally and professionally reflective and should demonstrate your thoughts on the benefits and experiences of your time abroad. Student are encouraged to be creative in how they choose to capture their reflection.
  - What are the cultural differences you encountered in public and environmental health practice and how did you adapt?
  - In what ways did you experience culture shock and how did you react?

- What personal interactions did you have with different health systems and how would these interactions impact your assessment of health systems in your home country or other global systems?
- Demonstrate how communication is different in international settings and how you adapted your professional/academic communication style to work with international peers.
- What are the social, political, and environmental determinants that impact health in the country you visited and how does it differ from your home country?
- How did your problem-solving skills evolve during your time abroad and what cultural aspects impacted that evolution?
- Did you experience an ethically-confusing situation? If so, how did you respond and how would you improve international collaboration to be more ethically beneficial for all countries and cultures involved?
- How do you plan to incorporate your global learning experience in your future career plans?
- How has globalization impacted determinants of health?
- Compare and contrast public health problems and responses in different countries.

3. Complete the global reflection assessment questionnaire.  
(Available online at [cph.uiowa.edu/global](http://cph.uiowa.edu/global))

Students going abroad in an independent research capacity should also complete the following:

1. Prepare a 2-3 page document that includes the following items.

- A summary of where you went and what you accomplished while you were abroad.
- A summary of the details and results of your research and how an international research experience has impacted your future research plans.
- Answer the following question: How did your time abroad shape the way you approach the field of public health (both academically and professionally)?

2. Provide a minimum of 10 photos and/or videos illustrating the nature of your global experience.

3. Complete the global reflection assessment questionnaire.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

All publications, articles, or other publicized media that result from or refer to an experience or project funded by the Global Public Health Student Travel Grant should include the following language: "This global [experience/practicum/research] was funded by the University of Iowa College of Public Health Global Student Travel Grant, supported by Dale and Linda Baker."

### **Can I still graduate on time if I go abroad?**

Most students are able to go abroad and still graduate on their intended timeline. However, this will depend on your degree program and when in your experience you plan to go abroad. You should let your academic or faculty advisor know that you are interested in going abroad as soon as possible so you can discuss how it will fit into your plan of study.

### **Do I need to know a foreign language?**

No. You do not necessarily need to know a foreign language to go abroad, although this will depend on the destination and country partners. However, it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the language of your host culture if English is not the dominant language. All UI students, faculty, and staff have access to Transparent Language Learning Online, which is an online language teaching database, through the UI Library website. Previous students have also recommended Duolingo.

### **Can I get course credit for my global experience?**

This will depend on the type of experience, length of stay, and your degree requirements. All students can register their global experiential learning for a 0 s.h. internship course through the UI Career Center. Undergraduate students will need to complete an experiential learning course approval form to register their time abroad for the experiential learning degree requirement (CPH:4750). Graduate students may be able to receive elective credit but it will depend on the degree program and trip purpose.

### **Where can I find travel funding?**

A short list of funding opportunities is available on page 12. This list is not all-inclusive and students should do their own research to find the funding opportunities that are most relevant for them.

### **Can I travel with a friend or faculty member?**

You are welcome to participate in global programs with other CPH or UI students. However, we typically recommend that students participate in programs that are the best fit for their needs and interests. When you choose your global experience, you should make sure it is the right experience for you and may be different than your friend's ideal program.

Students are welcome to accompany faculty on global research projects provided their travel is registered appropriately with the UI safety abroad office and they have secured funding to cover their expenses. The CPH Global Public Health Student Travel Grant is eligible to supplement student travel on a faculty grant.

### **When should I apply for my passport?**

The U.S. Department of State advises that passports typically take 6 weeks to process. Most students find that they will receive their passport sooner than 6 weeks, but it can take longer as well depending on current immigration law and backlog. You should allow yourself as much time as possible to receive your passport to avoid any travel issues. Rush passports may be available for a considerable fee.

### **Do I need a visa for my time abroad?**

Visa requirements will depend on your country of citizenship, your intended destination, your length of stay, and the purpose of your visit. U.S. citizens can consult [travel.state.gov/destinations](https://travel.state.gov/destinations) for an overview of visa requirements for their intended host country. All UI students can consult with CIBT Visas at [www.cibtvisas.com/iowa](https://www.cibtvisas.com/iowa) for more in-depth information on visa requirements.

### **What is the best way to stay in touch with my family and friends at home?**

The answer to this question will depend on your personal habits and needs, as well as the capacity of your host country. Some students may find that a WiFi-enabled device is sufficient for keeping in touch via email, Facebook, WhatsApp, or any number of digital apps. Other students may find they need a phone with mobile data, either due to responsibilities at home or because their intended destination does not have reliable WiFi available. For more information on phones, see page 18.

### **Do I have to purchase CISI insurance myself?**

No. This plan automatically covers all UI students, faculty, and staff traveling abroad for educational or business purposes. CPH staff will register all students for the CISI insurance once they are committed to studying with the program. The cost of insurance will be charged to your U-bill 10 days prior to your departure. If you are going abroad for more than 3-4 weeks, we strongly recommend that you take care of things like visiting your physician, dentist, eye doctor, etc. before you leave. The CDC travel website can provide you with supplemental information at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel).

### **How do I reach CISI Team Assist?**

If you require assistance, your ID number is the policy number. CISI Team Assist: (01-312) 935-1703 (outside U.S.) (855) 327-1411 (within U.S.)  
[medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us](mailto:medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us)

### **ONLINE TRAVEL RESOURCES**

U.S. Department of State country assessments, safety levels, and travel information for each country.

[travel.state.gov/destinations](http://travel.state.gov/destinations)

U.S. Department of State travel registry for U.S. citizens.

[step.state.gov](http://step.state.gov)

Visa support for University of Iowa students.

[cibtvisas.com/iowa](http://cibtvisas.com/iowa)

Vaccination and medical recommendations for international travel.

[cdc.gov/travel](http://cdc.gov/travel)

University of Iowa Student Clinic for International Travel

[studenthealth.uiowa.edu/services/international-travel/](http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/services/international-travel/)

Diversity Abroad Network Resources

[diversityabroad.com](http://diversityabroad.com)

## APPENDIX II

### ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL AGREEMENT

*The following is a copy of the CPH Academic and Behavioral Agreement required of all students going abroad in affiliation with the UI College of Public Health. Students should return their signed copies of the academic agreement to the Global Public Health Initiative staff prior to departure.*

As a UI College of Public Health student, I hereby agree to abide by the following rules and policies set forth by the UI College of Public Health (UI CPH) in consideration of fellow students, faculty, administration, and myself. I understand that failure to abide by these rules and policies set forth by UI CPH will lead to disciplinary action, and that such disciplinary action may include rescinding of any grants, scholarships, or other global funding options.

### BEHAVIOR POLICY

1. Conduct which is violent and/or disruptive to the global experience, offensive to the host culture, or which endangers students or others as well as sexual, racial, or ethnic harassment will not be tolerated. Conduct including, but not limited to, abuse of alcohol, intentional and deliberate antagonistic behavior, disruptive noise, and abusive language toward fellow participants, faculty, staff, or citizens of the host country will not be tolerated. Anyone who directs any deliberate and/or intimidating gestures toward another person or purposely humiliates, makes degrading comments, or disrupts the work of colleagues and peers in any manner will be subject to disciplinary action.

2. Participants agree to abide by all local laws and regulations

of the area in which they are living and working. Breaches of local law of the country in which you are residing may cause disciplinary action. Participants are expected to attend to any legal problems they encounter with foreign nationals or the government of the country. UI CPH is not responsible for providing any assistance under such circumstances. Manufacturing, possessing, selling, transmitting, using, or being party to any illegal drug, controlled substance, or drug paraphernalia is a violation of UI policy and students may be subject to the laws of the local government. Carrying or keeping weapons or items defined as a "weapon" is not allowed.

3. Cooperation with any UI or external staff member's reasonable request in the interest of a participant's safety, health, and welfare is expected of all participants and their guests. Participants are expected to resolve disputes or conflicts in a cooperative manner.

### ACADEMIC POLICY

1. Participants agree to adhere to high standards and behavior in all academic endeavors while abroad. Participants are responsible for abiding by U.S. and foreign guidelines regarding research regulations, data collection, academic integrity, and work ethics. Students requiring human subject testing data must obtain UI IRB and local research approval from the area in which they will be working.

2. UI CPH considers all instances of academic fraud, including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, and forgery, as serious academic misconduct and a major 41 violation of the UI CPH honor code.

### UI CPH ACADEMIC AND DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS AGREEMENT

I understand and I agree to abide by the behavioral and aca-

ademic policies and any other regulations set forth by UI CPH. My failure to follow these regulations and policies will result in disciplinary action, which may include my immediate dismissal from the global experience. I understand that the UI CPH Academic and Disciplinary regulations do not follow a progressive discipline framework. This means that I am not guaranteed a first warning before any disciplinary action is taken. I agree that UI CPH has the right to enforce these standards of conduct in its sole judgment and that it may impose sanctions for violating these standards or for any behavior detrimental to or incompatible with the interest, harmony, and welfare the University of Iowa, global experience participants, faculty, staff, students, and local citizenry. I waive and release all claims against UI CPH, its officers, employees, and agents that are caused by my failure to remain under such supervision or to comply with UI CPH regulations, policies, and/or instructions.

Name:

Date:

### SUGGESTED READINGS AND RESOURCES

We recommend the following resources for further reading on cultural humility.

- Brown, L. D. (2018). Foundations for Global Health Practice. John Wiley & Sons.
- Bui, T., Evert, J., McCarthy, V., Asokan, I., Mehta, A., Miller, K., & Wen, S. (2016). Reflection in Global Health: An Anthology. Lulu Press, Inc.
- Cushman, L. F., Delva, M., Franks, C. L., Jimenez-Bautista, A., Moon-Howard, J., Glover, J., & Begg, M. D. (2015). Cultural competency training for public health students: Integrating self, social, and global awareness into a master of public health curriculum. *American journal of public health*. 105(S1), S132-S140.
- Danso, R. (2016) Cultural competence and cultural humility: A critical reflection on key cultural diversity concepts. *Journal of Social Work*. 18(4):410-430.
- Expert Panel on Cultural Competence Education for Students in Medicine and Public Health (2012). Cultural competence education for students in medicine and public health: Report of an expert panel. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Medical Colleges and Association of Schools of Public Health.
- Foronda, C., Baptiste, D., and Reinholdt, M.M. (2015). Cultural humility: A concept analysis. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*. 27(3):210-217.
- Fisher-Borne, M., Montana, J., and Martin, S.L. (2014) From mastery to accountability: Cultural humility as an alternative to cultural competence. *Social Work Education*. 34(2):165-181
- Kools, S., Chimwaza, A., & Macha, S. (2015). Cultural humility and working with marginalized populations in developing countries. *Global health promotion*, 22(1), 52-59.
- Planetary Health Alliance Education Collection: <https://planetaryhealthalliance.org/education>
- The Lancet.(n.d.) Planetary Health. Retrieved from <https://www.thelancet.com/infographics/planetary-health>
- Whitmee, S., Haines, A., Beyrer, C., Boltz, F., Capon, A. G., de Souza Dias, B. F., ... & Horton, R. (2015). Safeguarding human health in the Anthropocene epoch: report of The Rockefeller Foundation–Lancet Commission on planetary health. *The Lancet*,

386(10007), 1973-2028.

For suggested readings on Global Ethics, please see page 30.



# around the globe

IMAGE: WORLD MAP





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