UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Pre-Trip Guide for Participants on USF Sponsored International Short Term and Immersion Programs

Advanced planning is key to a successful study abroad experience. *Please read this Pre-Trip Guide carefully, including visiting the various web links for important advice*. Your faculty/staff coordinator may also provide additional advice or instructions.

We highly recommend the following websites to review a checklist of things to prepare for in addition to the guidelines outlined in this document:

- http://learn.internationalsos.com/UniversitySanFrancisco
- **https://www.internationalsos.com/**
  -> For member Log-In enter member #: 11BCAS665075 (you must use your USF email address to register)
- https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/students.html
- http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/

IMPORTANT ADVISORY: PROGRAM CANCELLATION

There is a reasonable chance that your travel abroad could be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.

USF travelers are advised to plan accordingly to include booking refundable airfare or consider purchasing Trip Cancellation and Trip Interruption for Any Reason insurance if you are unable to participate, for any reason, such as family emergencies, illness, or any other extenuating circumstances beyond your control. Such Trip Cancellation Protection plans must typically be purchased within 10 - 21 days of making your initial trip payment. *For quotes or to purchase a Trip Cancellation Protection Plan, you may use a provider of your choice. One option can be found at InsureMyTrip or call 1-877-266-0741.*

Know Your Destination: Safety, Security, and Local Laws

- ☐ Learn more about your destination, including the nearest U.S. Embassy/Consulate information, Travel Advisories, Entry and Exit Requirements, Safety and Security, and Local Laws and Special Circumstances: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html

- ☐ Please review your destination country's security and travel advice: https://www.internationalsos.com/

-> For member Log In enter member #: 11BCAS665075 (you must use your USF email address to register)

☐ Know your host country's laws and customs. It is important to know what is legal and what is not. If you break local laws while abroad, U.S. officials cannot get you released from jail nor represent you in court, or pay legal your fees.

☐ **MANDATORY:** Register your international travel with the U.S State Department Smart Travel Enrollment Program (STEP): https://step.state.gov/step/ (Primarily for U.S. citizens but other nationals can receive important information).

- If an emergency arises, such as you lose your passport or become a victim of crime, or if a natural disaster, terrorism, or civil unrest occurs during your trip, the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate can be your source of assistance and information.
- Your family members can get in touch with you in an emergency.
- STEP Enrollment is free of charge. Non-U.S. citizens can sign up to receive information only. Services such as replacement for lost or stolen passport is for U.S. citizens only.

Passport, Visas, and Entry Requirements

☐ Apply for a passport or renew your passport as early as possible, as this can take up to 10 weeks to process. https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html

Note: If you are traveling by air, you must have a passport BOOK. Know the difference between a U.S. Passport Book versus a Passport Card: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/apply-renew-passport/card.html

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS:

- There are some countries that enforce a **3- to 6 Month Passport Validity Requirement,** which means your passport must be valid for an extended period of time beyond your intended travel. Find out if your host country requires this: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html

- Additionally, some countries require that you have two to four blank visa stamp pages. Some airlines will not allow you to board if this requirement is not met.

- **Regarding Gender X on passports:** On February 11, 2025, the State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs issued an update stating that issued passports bearing the Gender X marker remain valid until expiration. Some destinations may restrict your travel if your passport contains an X marker.

☐ Find out if a visa is required to enter the host country. Check with the host country's Embassy/Consulate for further information.

- **It is <u>your responsibility</u> to know the entry and exit requirements of your host country before you go. <u>If a visa is required, please apply promptly.</u>**
  If you're visiting more than one country on your trip, be sure to look at the entry and exit requirements for all of your destinations – especially if you have connecting flights into countries on your way to your final destination. If you don't have the right documentation, you may not be allowed to board your connecting flight: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html

☐ **If you are an international student, consult with the ISSS office to obtain a Travel Signature before leaving the U.S: call 415-422-2654 or email isss@usfca.edu or visit UC 5th Floor.**

Staying Healthy, Vaccinations, and Medications

Participants are advised to voluntarily disclose any disabilities, medical or psychological issues that may need to be accommodated during the trip. Confidentiality will be assured, and participants' disclosure will help to facilitate a safe experience abroad. Participants are urged to discuss travel plans and the impact of extended travel with their physician and/or mental health practitioner, and strategies for managing their conditions and handling of medication while abroad. For example:

- The program will be better able to serve the needs of participants who disclose they have food or drug allergies, or are asthmatic or diabetic.
- *In some cases, students will be required to obtain medical clearance in writing from your physician allowing you to travel.*
- Travelers with specific needs: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2018/advising-travelers-with-specific-needs/study-abroad-other-international-student-travel

☐ Schedule/begin vaccinations. Visit your doctor or hospital's travel clinic as some vaccinations are required to enter some countries. Otherwise, make sure your routine vaccinations are current.

- Review your destination country's medical advice and precautions:
  https://www.internationalsos.com/
  -> For member Log In enter member #: <u>11BCAS665075 (you must use your USF email address to register)</u>
- For a list of current health issues and vaccines related to your destination visit:
  http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel
  http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices
  https://www.iamat.org/

☐ **If bringing any prescriptions or medications:**

- Traveling with medication: http://www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/medications

- Travel Health Kit: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2018/the-pre-travel-consultation/travel-health-kits
- Pack enough to last your trip; carry your meds in their original container and pack them in your carry-on in case your luggage is lost or delayed.
- Get proper documentation from your doctor in case you are questioned at customs. **There are certain prescription drugs and OTC medication that are considered illegal in some countries so verify with the host country's Embassy or Consulate.**

Practice enhanced precautions such as:

- avoid drinking tap water and eating food from street vendors as you don't know how the food was prepared
- wash hands often and/or use hand sanitizer
- bring insect repellent to prevent bug or mosquito bites that spread various viruses including Zika, malaria and yellow fever
- use sunscreen to avoid exposure to harmful UV rays
- extra face masks

Health Insurance and Emergency Medical/Travel Assist

All participants are required to have personal health insurance before travel. Please consult with your primary U.S. based health insurance provider about any limitations to coverage overseas and information on filing a claim for any non-emergency medical services incurred abroad.

By participating in a USF-sponsored program, you have automatic supplemental emergency medical and travel assistance coverage free of charge (INTERNATIONAL SOS). It is to be used if you become seriously ill or injured abroad. Coverage includes repatriation and medical evacuation services (See INTERNATIONAL SOS document for further details). INTERNATIONAL SOS is meant to supplement your primary health insurance not replace it.

****HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:** Visit https://www.internationalsos.com/ or download the ISOS app to your mobile device. **For member Log In enter member #: 11BCAS665075. You must use your USF email address to register and you will be identified as a covered member.**
USF students have access to view risk, safety, pre-travel and medical advice in your host country. We also encourage students to sign up for email alerts notifying you of any pertinent travel information before and during your travel to your destination.

****NOTE LIMITATION IN COVERAGE:** If you plan to arrive before your program officially starts and/or intend to stay after your program officially ends, you are strongly advised to purchase your own Travel Insurance to protect you in case of medical emergency.

- **USF's INTERNATIONAL SOS coverage is only restricted to university-approved activities.**
- **INTERNATIONAL SOS coverage will NOT be extended for personal vacation or at any time before your program officially starts and after your program ends.**
- **INTERNATIONAL SOS does not include Lost Baggage or Trip Cancellation Insurance so you can purchase additional coverage if you wish.**

To find travel insurance for your personal travel before your program officially starts and/or after your program officially ends you can choose a provider of your choice. Here are some options to consider:

- https://www.insuremytrip.com/
- https://www.squaremouth.com/

Packing Essentials, Money Matters and Staying in Touch

- ☐ Leave valuables at home and don't carry everything in one place. Put essential items like your cash, passport, medicine – anything you would regret losing – in your carry-on in case your checked luggage is lost or delayed. Upon arrival store your passport in a locked safe if possible.
- ☐ Research if you need an adapter and/or converter for your electronic devices.
- ☐ Call or visit your bank to arrange ATM or credit card use abroad. Establish a budget. Know the exchange rate.
- ☐ Make copies of your passport, ATM, important bank telephone numbers to call in case of loss or theft. Keep in a safe place or store online (email).
- ☐ Provide your family members with your program's onsite contact information (i.e. rented cell phone, hotel name and telephone, onsite coordinator telephone, etc.) to call in case of emergency.
    - Upon arrival at the program site, we strongly suggest that you check-in with family back at home to inform them of your safe arrival. If needed, maintain open and regular communication with your family members back home via telephone, email or direct messaging apps.

Program Rules, Student Safety and Travel Tips

Here are some Do's and Don'ts and safety tips to consider as participants in the program. By following these program rules and safety suggestions, you can minimize your exposure to unsafe situations:

Do's:

- **Learn about your host country or city, including local laws and customs.**
- **Always exercise caution with regard to your personal safety and property at all times.**
- **Always travel as a group or with another student (Buddy-System).**
- **Always tell Faculty/Staff your whereabouts and the time of your return.**
- **Always follow ground rules as set by Faculty or Onsite Staff. This may include curfew hour, zero alcohol policy, and advising you to avoid certain areas in your host city.**
- **Make an effort to know some basic words in your host country's language such as *Hello, Thank You, and Excuse me.***

Don'ts:

- **NEVER travel alone or stray away from the group.**

- **NEVER invite strangers to your hotel room nor leave with a stranger. No overnight guests allowed and no cohabitation is allowed in the hotel rooms.**
- **Don't leave your hotel room unlocked.**
- **Don't divulge information to strangers about your study abroad program and your fellow students – use common sense.**
- **Don't carry on your person more money than you need for a day.**
- **Don't draw attention to yourself through inappropriate dress, personal accessories (jewelry, cell phone, ipad) or careless behavior.**
- **Don't impair your judgment through excessive alcohol consumption.**
- **Alcoholic beverages cannot be consumed in the hotel rooms used to house students during the program.**
- **NEVER do illegal drugs including marijuana edibles or vape pens (which is legal in California). Punishment can be severe from long jail sentences, heavy fines, and the death penalty in some countries.**
- **Do not accept packages from anyone nor deliver packages for someone who you just met.**
- **Avoid large crowds especially political demonstrations as they can easily turn violent.**
- **Don't participate in extreme sports (i.e. sky-diving, bungee jumping).**
- **Don't drink water from the faucet including ice cubes, and be wary of eating food from street vendors as you do not know how the food was prepared.**

Additional traveler security tips for women and LGBTQI+ travelers

While there are certain safety rules all travelers should follow, female and LBGT travelers may face unique security situations when abroad. Women are often viewed as vulnerable targets, and will generally face a higher level of risk than their male counterparts. The risks faced by LGBT identified students may vary based on the destinations to which they travel, influenced by factors including the legal status of LGBTQ relationships and the levels of social tolerance as there are countries, for example, where same-sex activities are illegal and in some countries where it is punishable by death**. For security tips for women and LGBTQ travelers:**

https://sites.google.com/usfca.edu/stprogramfacultystaffresources/off-campus-and-international-st-programs/traveler-security-tips

https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/women-travelers.html

https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/lgbtqi.html

Mandatory Pre-Departure Compliance Requirements and Payment Due

Complete the mandatory compliance requirements for your specific sponsored program. Requirements can be found and must be uploaded to the Terra Dotta system according to your chosen travel program or immersion.

- Disciplinary Clearance Form - mandatory for **undergraduate** students only
- Signed Waiver of Liability form
- Signed Trip Cancellation form
- Participant Information
- Emergency Contact Information
- Confirmation of Enrollment
- Domestic Health Insurance Information
- Behavior Contract
- Travel Intent
- Copy of flight itinerary

**Students who willfully refuse to comply with the above requirements will have their registration dropped and cannot participate in the program.

- ☐ Make sure you are registered for the program and/or pay any required program fees prior to departure.
- ☐ Attend mandatory pre-trip meetings or orientation sessions as scheduled by your faculty or staff coordinator.

Student Conduct Expectations

By participating in the USF-sponsored international program, you agree to abide by the following conduct expectations and university policies for the duration of the program.

As such you acknowledge that the USF sponsored program is a learning opportunity not personal vacation. You are representing the university and are expected to conduct yourself in a manner appropriate to that of a student and a guest in the host program or activities.

By registering in the USF sponsored program you have agreed to abide by and conduct yourself in accordance with:

- **USF's policies and procedures, including the "Standards of Nonacademic Conduct", which appear in the Fogcutter Student Handbook;**
- **All instructions presented by the class instructor, whether written or oral;**
- **All ground rules as established in your pre-departure meetings and on-arrival orientation;**
- **Local laws governing the host country and city.**

Failure to comply with established program rules and what is outlined in the Behavior Contract may result in disciplinary action and consequences including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Immediate dismissal** for reasons of unacceptable behavior and serious offenses such as:
    - illegal drug use
    - failure to attend classes regularly
    - endangering the health and safety of others
    - alcohol use that impairs judgment and/or leads to improper social behavior including endangering oneself and others

    - disruption or obstruction of teaching
- **Such dismissal will be without refund** and any expenses incurred for your return home will be your responsibility.
- **Dismissal from the program will result in further academic and/or disciplinary consequences upon your return to USF.**

Title IX and Other Forms of Discrimination

The University of San Francisco is committed to providing an environment free from gender-based discrimination or harassment. As such, USF does not tolerate any such behavior, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment.

In addition to gender-based misconduct, the University takes other forms of bias-related harassment and discrimination very seriously. Misconduct based on race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic-related), sexual orientation, gender and gender identity, sex, age, or any other protected status under federal, state or local law, ordinance or regulation applicable to the university, will not be tolerated and should be reported.

Anyone who believes they have been subject to any form of discrimination or harassment is encouraged to report these incidents. Upon receiving a report, the university will respond promptly, equitably, and thoroughly. In addition, the university will take steps to prevent the recurrence of the discrimination or harassment and correct its effects, as appropriate.

For Further Assistance

USF Center for Global Education – Lone Mountain 340
Office Hours: 9am – 5pm Monday through Friday
Main office: 415-422-6848
Contact: Shawn Dillard, Program Director Email: sdillard1@usfca.edu

USF 24-hour Emergency Mobile: 415-994-4330
Mobile will be operational during Spring Break, Summer (end of May to mid-August), Intersession (January) and on approved times outside of these parameters.

USF Public Safety at +1 415-422-2911 **for emergencies** or dial +1 415-422-4201 for **non-emergencies**. These phone lines are monitored 24/7.

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Sponsored International Programs
Health Insurance Requirement
Frequently Asked Questions

As a condition of enrollment, USF requires students to have health insurance plan while participating in USF-sponsored international programs including short-term programs, degree required research, and/or fieldwork taking place outside the U.S. during the January intersession, spring break, and/or summer.

INTERNATIONAL SOS Supplemental Insurance:
USF provides USF students with a free travel, major accident, emergency medical assistance and security assistance program called INTERNATIONAL SOS (ISOS) because most domestic health insurance plans have limitations or no coverage for overseas regular medical care, emergency medical evacuation, and repatriation services.

ISOS provides covered USF staff, faculty, and students with:

- Live services including 24-hour access while traveling worldwide
- Emergency medical, personal, legal and travel services
- Emergency medical evacuation or repatriation services
- ISOS complement international insurance policies

Why is it necessary to have health insurance plan when I go abroad?

1. USF wants students to be protected in the event they become ill and need to see a medical doctor overseas.
2. ISOS does NOT cover non-emergency medical services such doctor visits, prescription medications, routine checkups, dental care, vaccinations, physical exams, etc.
3. Major injuries or illness sustained abroad may require long-term care or follow up medical treatment upon your return home.

My university-sponsored trip is only for a few weeks. Do I still need to have health insurance?

Yes. You will be required to get short-term health insurance for the duration of your program. Consult with the USF Health Promotion Services office staff (www.usfca.edu/hps) in choosing and reviewing any short-term insurance plan that you wish to purchase.

I'm an international student and I am conducting field research back in my home country. Do I need health insurance?

No. You don't need to have health insurance if your country has socialist medicine. Remember to waive the school health insurance plan because it will not provide you with coverage in your home country.

How much does ISOS cost and how do I sign up?

ISOS is free of charge and enrollment is automatic once the required pre-departure documents are filed with the Center for Global Education. Remember to carry an ISOS card and your insurance card at all times.

Can I use ISOS when I'm on personal vacation?

No. ISOS coverage is only restricted to university-approved activities. Furthermore, ISOS will not cover accidents involving high-risk activities such as extreme sports like skydiving or bungee jumping.

Does ISOS help with personal belongings, lost baggage or trip cancellation/interruption?

No. INTERNATIONAL SOS Assistance is not travel insurance. This type of insurance can be purchased through the airlines or travel agencies.

What happens if I choose to not get a health insurance plan or purchase short-term insurance?

Students that willfully refuse to comply with university health insurance policy will have all their academic credits dropped.

HPS/*November 2014*