A STUDENT’S GUIDE TO STUDY ABROAD IN BUDAPEST
Prepared by the Center for Global Education

CONTENTS
Section 1: Nuts and Bolts
  1.1 Contact Information & Emergency Contact Information
  1.2 Program Participant List
  1.3 Term Calendar
  1.4 Passport & Visas
  1.5 Power of Attorney/Medical Release
  1.6 International Student Identity Card
  1.7 Register to Vote
  1.8 Travel Dates/Group Arrival
  1.9 Orientation
  1.10 What to Bring

Section 2: Studying & Living Abroad
  2.1 Academics Abroad
  2.2 Money and Banking
  2.3 Housing and Meals Abroad
  2.4 Language Basics
  2.5 Getting to know Budapest
  2.6 Eating Out
  2.7 Service Abroad
  2.8 Email Access
  2.9 Cell Phones and Communications Home
  2.10 Travel Tips

Section 3: All About Culture
  3.1 Experiential Learning: What it’s all about
  3.2 Adjusting to a New Culture
  3.3 Culture Learning: Customs and Values

Section 4: Health and Safety
  4.1 Safety Abroad: A Framework
  4.2 Health Care and Insurance
  4.3 Women’s Issues Abroad
  4.4 HIV
  4.5 Drugs
  4.6 Traffic
  4.7 Politics
  4.8 Voting by Absentee Ballot

Section 5: Coming Back
  5.1 Registration & Housing
  5.2 Reentry and Readjustment
SECTION 1: Nuts and Bolts

1.1 CONTACT INFORMATION FOR HOST INSTITUTION ABROAD

Dr. Elizabeth Simon, Resident Director
Corvinus University of Budapest
FBA - CIEE Study Center Room 140
Fővám tér 8
1093 Budapest
Hungary
T: 011 (36) 1-482-5369 (calling office from U.S.)
T: 482-5369 (calling from within Hungary)
Email: ESimon@ciee.org

Please use the CIEE address ABOVE (but with your name rather than Dr Simon’s) to receive mail. Do NOT use the dormitory address.

Orientation Location: and Address of the Residence Hall:
Corvinus University Foldes Ferenc Kollegium (dormitory)
Radat utca 43-45
9th district
1093 Budapest
Hungary
Tel: 011 (36) 1 482-7585

Or: CIEE contact in the U.S. for European programs:

Vanessa Bissell, Study Abroad Advisor
CIEE
300 Fore Street
Portland, ME 04101 USA
Tel: +1.207.553.4103
Fax: +1.207.553.5103
Email: vbissell@ciee.org
phone: 1-800-40-STUDY ext. 4079

CENTER FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION

EMERGENCY NUMBER AFTER HOURS/WEEKENDS: 315-781-3333

Thomas D’Agostino, Director
Center for Global Education
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
660 S Main St. Trinity Hall, 3rd Floor
Geneva, New York 14456
315-781-3307 (tel) 315-781-3023 (fax)
e-mail: tdagostino@hws.edu
Contact for: Emergencies and other critical issues

Amy S. Teel, Programs Operations Manager
(same address, tel, fax)
e-mail: teel@hws.edu
Contact for: Program details, flight information, academic credit, day to day operations abroad etc.

Doug Reilly, Programming Coordinator
(same address, phone and fax)
e-mail: dreilly@hws.edu
Contact for: Orientation questions, return issues, SIIF grants, the Aleph, etc.

Sharon Walsh, Short Term Programs Coordinator
(same address, phone and fax)
e-mail: walsh@hws.edu
Contact for: Info on short-term/summer programs

Sue Perry, Office Support Specialist
(same address, phone and fax)
e-mail: cgestaff@hws.edu
Contact for: Paperwork, general inquiries

1.2 PROGRAM PARTICIPANT LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budapest Fall 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush, Gabriella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casey, Shannon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hickey, Shannon Leah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O’Brien, Melissa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CIEE will provide you with a list of the names and contact info for your fellow study abroaders from other colleges and universities. The enrollment with CIEE tends to vary from 20-40 American students each semester in addition to the local students from Corvinus.

1.3 TERM CALENDAR

**Fall 2014**

- Online Pre-departure Orientation: TBA
- Student depart US: August 31, 2014
- Arrival in Budapest: September 1
- Program orientation: September 2-7
- Classes begin: September 8
- National Holiday, no classes: October 23
- Midterm exams: October 27-31
- Last day of teaching: December 12
- Final exams: December 15-19
- Students can depart: December 20 or December 21

Note: You MUST check out of the residence hall by December 21st at the latest.
*It is very important that you participate in the on-line orientation (OPDO)!* CIEE will communicate with you directly about this date and the procedure to follow. NOTE - for fall students, there is no fall break as Hungarian universities run straight through the semester, nor do Hungarians celebrate Thanksgiving. For spring students, there is no spring break. However, Budapest students will not have classes on Fridays so you will always have three day weekends if you would like to do some independent travel and exploration. You may also have some long weekends for national holidays. Excursions will be announced shortly before your departure and are likely to occur on weekends and/or during the orientation and language immersion period. Students who wish to travel more extensively are encouraged to do so at the end of the term.

### 1.4 PASSPORTS AND VISAS

By now you should have your passport and you will shortly be informed by CIEE about the process for obtaining a residency permit upon arrival into Hungary if you haven’t already. U.S. citizens **DO NOT NEED** a visa in advance to study in Budapest but will need to complete the residency permit process when you arrive in Hungary. **YOU WILL NEED TO BRING CERTAIN DOCUMENTS WITH YOU** to qualify for your residency permit. Please check your “My CIEE” online account for the complete list of documents that you must carry with you and present on arrival in Hungary and for the list of additional documents that CIEE will provide to you to facilitate the process. You will be responsible for paying the residence permit fees directly to the Hungarian ministry for foreigners. Presently the fee for U.S. citizens is 18,000 Hungarian Forint (or about $80 U.S. dollars). Citizens of other countries **MAY need** a visa and if so, CIEE will facilitate this. But you should be sure that you print out any correspondence or ID numbers that they have sent to you to support your permit application. Be sure to contact CIEE if you do not understand how to apply for your visa and need some assistance with the process. Amy Teel in Global Education can also assist you once you have received your formal letter of acceptance from the university in Hungary.

One rule, across programs; make copies of your passport’s identification page (with the photo on it) any pages with entry stamps, as well as your visa (if you are required to have one, it will be stamped in your passport). Put these copies in various locations. Leave one at home with your parents. Put them in different pieces of luggage/locations. Here’s why: if you lose your passport, having a copy of it will make getting a new one much, much easier.

### 1.5 iNEXT TRAVEL CARD

CIEE will purchase the iNext travel card for all program participants. This is included for all students as part of the program fees. This card will provide travel and medical insurance that covers you while you are abroad so be sure you have this card with you. Click here for more information: [http://www.ciee.org/study-abroad/parents/insurance/](http://www.ciee.org/study-abroad/parents/insurance/) Policy details can be found here: [https://www.ciee.org/enrollment/ftp/1NEXT.pdf](https://www.ciee.org/enrollment/ftp/1NEXT.pdf) This policy is limited to $100,000 of medical coverage.

The iNext card also allows you the option of getting a free international cell phone and Sim card rental through Piccell Wireless. Check out that deal here: [http://www.inext.com/travel-card-deals/free-cell-phone.aspx](http://www.inext.com/travel-card-deals/free-cell-phone.aspx) Note: while the phone is free, the calls are not. Expect to pay for incoming calls. Expect to pay for outgoing service (i.e. calls that you make). Outgoing calls are free.

### 1.6 POWER OF ATTORNEY/MEDICAL RELEASE

Sometimes, after students have departed the U.S., important issues arise that require legal signatures or procedures. An example is a student loan or financial aid document that requires a student signature – but you will be gone and generally a fax or photocopy is not considered “legal” in lieu of
an original signature. We recommend that you consider signing Power of Attorney over to your parent(s) to cover such eventuality. Since the form and process varies from state to state, we cannot cover all options here but you can easily find Power of Attorney information on the internet through search engines such as google or metacrawler.

In a similar vein, we encourage you to prepare and sign a general release giving permission for insurance companies and medical practitioners to speak with your parents in the case of emergencies and so that they can help you make medical decisions and/or file claims on your behalf. You can bring a copy of this with you and leave one with your parent(s). If you are uncomfortable with signing a general release, you can also sign more limited or specific releases to control or release specific sorts of information. Keep in mind that if you are over 18, medical providers may refuse to share any information at all about your condition without such written consent which will limit your parents’ ability to assist you.

### 1.7 VOTING FROM ABROAD

If you are not already registered as a voter in your home state (or in Geneva, NY), you can register before you leave the U.S. so that you are able to vote by absentee ballot while abroad. Most states now offer voter registration at the local Department of Motor Vehicles. You can register EVEN if you can’t drive! Please see section 4.8 of this guide for more information on obtaining an absentee ballot once you are a registered voter.

### 1.8 TRAVEL DATES/GROUP ARRIVAL

There are not enough HWS students for a “group flight” for this program but CIEE does have an airport meet and greet service as long as you arrive into Budapest on the designated arrival day. If you wish, we are happy to help you arrange your flight. But you are free to make any plans you prefer as long as you arrive into Budapest no later than arrival date mentioned above. If you would like a recommendation for a travel agent, we work with Advantage Travel of Central New York for most of our larger groups. Call 1-315-471-2222 if you would like assistance. Tell them you are a HWS student referred by Amy Teel. If you prefer booking online, there are two student travel agencies that we recommend for price and service. They are [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com) and [www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com).

You are responsible for providing the time/date and details of your flight to CIEE directly. Check with them to see what time-frame they will be meeting flights and where to find your ‘greeter’ upon arrival. We suggest that you arrive into Budapest no later than 4 pm on the arrival day to ensure that you are fresh and ready for orientation the next day.

### GENERAL TRAVEL SUGGESTIONS

You may want to contact your local travel agent about other travel information, especially if you are staying in your host country after the end of the program. The CGE’s agency is Advantage Travel of Central NY (1-800-788-1980). Also in Geneva, Destinations Travel at 315-789-4469 (Cynthia Cannon) or Jeff’s Travel Port at 315-781-0265 are convenient.

### 1.9 ORIENTATION

There are two mandatory orientation sessions, the first conducted online as a group to help prepare you for some immediate issues, and then a second more extensive program, conducted in Budapest at the beginning of the term, that introduces students to the country, the culture, the academic program, and provides practical information about living in Budapest. Tours of the city and its
vicinity and cultural programs are included. During the orientation period, students receive introductory language instruction in conversational Hungarian. Ongoing support is provided on an individual and group basis throughout the program.

1.10 WHAT TO BRING

CLIMATE
Autumns are cool, foggy and rainy. Winters are relatively short, moderately cold and usually dry, but sometimes brilliantly sunny. The little snow the city gets usually disappears after a few days. The average monthly temperatures in Budapest are printed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budapest temperatures</th>
<th>Average Temperature (°F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PACKING
How much to pack is our concern here, or rather: How little to pack! The rule of thumb is: pack light. Most students abroad do more walking than they do in several years in the United States, and often you are carrying your luggage, or a subset of it, around with you. Students who pack three suitcases are often sorry for it. There are several ideas out there about how not to overpack:

1. Pack up what you think you’ll need, and walk around the block with it. Chances are you will decide on taking about half of that.
2. Or, trust the experience behind the above piece of advice, put what you planned to take abroad on your bed, and then remove half of it.

WHAT TO BRING
Each individual will have her or his own tastes and habits, but the following is a suggested list of items to include:

- Warmish coat/jacket large enough to fit over sweater (December is COLD!)
- Light windbreaker or raincoat
- 1 heavy sweater or sweatshirt
1 fleece
Two medium-weight skirts, dress pants for formal events or clubs for women
One sport coat and tie for formal events or clubs for men
Jean/trousers (3-4)
Warmer shirts (4-5)
Light-weight shirts (4-5)
T-shirts (7)
Underwear/socks (7)
Sturdy walking shoes (most important item)
One pair of dressier shoes
Pajamas and slippers
Bathrobe
Bath towels/washcloths – The residence hall provides you with pillow, blanket and linens for your bed but no towels or washcloths.
Travel alarm clock (battery operated)
Earplugs (spongy ones are best)
Enough prescription medication for the term with your doctor’s prescription
An umbrella
An extra pair of glasses or contacts
Camera and film or extra memory card
Laptop computer (optional, but recommended – see below)
Money belt or pouch to wear under your clothes
Cosmetics, toothbrush, etc. (if you have brand favorites, bring them)
The essentials—passport and ISIC card (plus photocopies of these), ATM card/credit card, airline ticket
This handbook
A journal or diary

WHAT NOT TO BRING
More luggage than you can carry on your own
Expensive jewelry
Expensive electronics that you are afraid will be stolen (petty theft is the most common crime affecting students abroad.)

Other things to keep in mind:

Point 1: Most other countries have stores! Most other countries have stores that sell things like toothpaste and socks. The brands might be unfamiliar to you, but they will get the job done. Also, you’re going to want to do some shopping abroad for souvenirs, art, clothes, etc…so leave some empty space in your pack.

Point 2: Bring a day pack large enough for a weekend away but not so large you break your back. You’ll need a day pack to get your books/things back and forth around the city, and a 4000 cubic inch frame backpack is quite inconvenient for this! A lot of people forget this basic necessity. (If you do, see point 1!)

Point 3: Choose the form of your luggage carefully. Many students find the internal frame backpacks efficient for getting around since they can be worn instead of being dragged or wheeled (not nice on cobblestones or dirt roads!) But there are options for all kinds of people and all kinds of travel. You know what you like best…we really just want you to bring less.
Point 4: Bring some nice clothes. Check with the faculty director, a guidebook, or students, and they’ll all likely tell you U.S. Americans are some of the most informal folks around. That means that for most students going abroad, you’ll be diving into a more formal culture with a more formal standard of attire. Shorts are great for hot weather, but (in Europe and Latin America, for example) are reserved for sport and certainly not for visiting cathedrals! In general, bring at least some dressy clothes with you. It never hurts to look “good”—just remember that this is culturally defined. Danes do tend to dress more formally so you will probably stick out as an American if you wear sweats. (See the section on fitting in, as well.)

PRESCRIPTIONS
If you have any medication you must take while you are abroad, please be sure that you have enough for the entire time you are away as it may be difficult to have prescriptions filled. Be sure to bring the written prescription (no photocopies) and a signed statement from your doctor if you have a particular medical requirement. Also, please notify the Center for Global Education before departure if you haven’t done so already. Immigration authorities may question medications in your possession and you should have proper documentation. Finally, it would be advisable to verify that a particular drug is not restricted in the host country (or others that you may plan to visit). Some countries ban certain drugs, even when prescribed by a doctor (for example, the drug Ritalin cannot be legally brought into some countries). The best advice is to be prepared and check either through your personal physician or through official government sources (such as the US State Department www.state.gov/travel/ or the Center for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/travel/)

LAPTOPS AND ELECTRONICS
Students have access to email at the University, in the CIEE office, and in the dormitory, and receive an account shortly after arrival, free of charge. Students are encouraged to bring wireless-enabled laptops. Most laptops/tablets are dual voltage so they will work on European current. These only need a European plug adapter to allow you to plug them in.

Please note that petty theft is the most common crime affecting travelers. Please do not bring anything without first considering the impact of it getting stolen, or the reality of having to worry about the safety of these possessions all the time.

Two general rules for all electronics: 1) bring copies of your receipts. If your equipment looks new, upon return to the U.S., you may be asked to pay customs duties if you don’t have a receipt to prove that you didn’t purchase it abroad. 2) we recommend you investigate insurance coverage for your electronic devices and other expensive items. They might be covered by parents’ homeowners insurance policies.

JOURNALS
Have you thought about keeping a journal abroad? Many students write journals as a way of capturing and reflecting upon their experiences, even though some may have never kept a “diary” before. A journal (or diary) is a book of dated entries. The author can record experiences, dialogues, feelings, dreams, describe sights, make lists, take notes, whatever the writer wants to leave as documentation of his or her passage through time. Journals are tools for recording and interpreting the process of our lives.

Why should you keep a journal? Because a journal…

is a keepsake that will record memories that you’d otherwise forget.
is a keepsake that will record the person you are now—and how you’ll change abroad.
For more about keeping journals, download the CGE’s Writing to Explore Journal Handbook at http://www.hws.edu/academics/global/pdf/journal_writers.pdf

DON’T BOTHER BRINGING …
Expectations: “Don’t expect, accept,” is a good attitude for students crossing cultures to have. How you set your expectations now will impact how positive of an experience you will have abroad. This means that you can do a lot now to help ensure you will get the most out of your program. Simply put, examine your expectations and be realistic. You are going to a different country. Expect that things will be different. You have no idea how many things will differ or in what ways, and of course you may well be surprised at how many things are similar. But for now expect that everything will be different.

How you set your expectations now will impact how positive of an experience you will have abroad.

Believe it or not, notions of the “right way of doing things” are entirely cultural and relative. Efficiency, manners, punctuality, customer service and “the rules” do not mean the same thing in different countries. Germans might be meticulously punctual. Italians might operate under a different conception of time (and being “on-time”). The point here is not to draw national stereotypes but to understand that different countries organize things differently, and not all of them work well from the U.S. American's point of view. So don’t expect people in your host country to define these terms in the same way as you do. Expect to run into bureaucracy, but do look at how the people around you react to these things, and follow their lead. If they’re not throwing a temper tantrum and lecturing the mail clerk/waiter/train conductor, then neither should you.

You’d be surprised how ingrained our expectations are. We don’t see them as culturally-determined; rather, we see them as part of “the right way of doing things.” So you will get frustrated. Expect that too. But keep telling yourself that things are different, and remember that it’s not the local people’s duty to meet your expectations—it’s your duty to adjust yours to what is considered right and reasonable locally. “Don’t expect, accept.”

SECTION 2: Studying and Living Abroad

2.1 ACADEMICS ABROAD

There is much to learn outside of the classroom. Nevertheless, study abroad is also fundamentally an academic endeavor. No matter what your goals and expectations might be, the Colleges also have expectations of you. These include the expectation that you will take all of your academics abroad seriously and that you will come prepared, meet deadlines, read assignments, write papers or exams with care, etc. Having said that, as study abroad programs are uniquely well-suited to non-traditional learning (i.e. experiential learning such as field-trips, internships, or field research), you will likely find that you have never had so much “fun” working so hard. The key, however, is to realize that if the
fun comes at the expense of learning, you will likely be very dissatisfied with the final results. The sections that follow are designed to answer the most commonly asked questions about academics and study abroad.

COURSES
As part of your application to CIEE you were asked to select some classes. Everyone on the program is required to take Hungarian and then you will generally take three other classes plus an internship or four other classes, for a total of 5.0 HWS credits. You will get final instructions about choosing/confirming classes during the on-line orientation held prior to departure. You will be contacted if there are any major conflicts or problems with your requested courses. If you are planning to do an internship, you should already have put together a resume and general cover letter and you should bring multiple copies of these with you to Budapest. Internship placements are not guaranteed but are arranged whenever possible once you arrive on site in Hungary.

As on the home campus, you may request to take any course OUTSIDE your major or minor on a credit/no credit basis so long as you do so no later than two-thirds of the way into your course term abroad. Note that the deadlines for students abroad for exercising CR/NC are based on the “host” program’s calendar, not on the HWS calendar. You must contact the HWS Registrar's office no later than two-thirds through your term abroad if you wish to take a Budapest course CR/NC. Think hard before doing this for more than one class, however. It may well be that future graduate programs and employers will think worse of a semester of CR/NC than one poor grade in something really outside your element.

Remember that the courses will be recorded on your transcript the same as with any on-campus courses and grades will factor into your cumulative GPA. If a field trip is required for your class, there is no extra fee. If you take an “optional” study-tour, there is normally a surcharge and this can range from $50 to several hundred dollars depending upon the length of the trip, the destination, the mode of transport and the level of amenities provided.

Please note that HWS will not permit you to stay for an extra semester in Budapest due to our commitment to allowing other students a first experience before granting any student a second one.

GRADES AND CREDITS
If you are studying on any HWS program at any destination, you will be required to carry a full course-load and you will receive letter grades for your work which WILL be computed into your HWS grade point average and will be posted on your permanent transcript. CIEE counts credits by ‘semester hour’ with most of their courses being worth “3” semester credits. For each 3 or 4 credit course you take at CIEE, you will earn 1.0 HWS credit. If you take any class worth only 1 or 2 semester hours, this will be considered much like a Reader’s College and count only for 0.5 HWS credits. You may not take fewer than 12 credits under any circumstance (4.0 HWS credits). Students will not be permitted to exceed a standard course load of 5.0 credits in Hungary. You may NOT opt out of or withdraw from the Hungarian language course as it helps facilitate your cultural experience. If you are struggling with it, however, within the CR/NC period you can contact the CGE and ask to have it counted on a CR/NC basis.

We encourage you to undertake coursework in areas that would be unavailable to you here on campus as that is one of the joys of study at a foreign institution. However, if you have any concerns that this could unduly affect your GPA, be aware that you may select any course outside your major on a credit/no credit basis, simply by notifying the Registrar at HWS during the first eight weeks of class.
WITHDRAWAL FROM A PROGRAM
A student participating in an HWS off-campus program who withdraws from that program after
arrival at the program site may not return to campus to take classes that semester except under
extraordinary circumstances, as determined by the student’s dean’s office, the Center for Global
Education and the Vice President for Student Affairs.

ACADEMIC CULTURE AND STANDARDS
As is the case on campus, there is no single “standard” or classroom culture abroad; each professor
will run his/her own classroom his/her own way and your job, as the student, is to adapt to his/her
expectations and teaching style. This having been said, there are some general statements that can
be applied to most classroom settings outside the United States. Here are some of the most
prevalent and most pressing that are likely to affect the classroom “culture” you will experience and
to which you must adapt if you will have any professors from the host country.

1) Learning is YOUR responsibility, not your professor’s. It is much less common abroad for
a faculty member to seek you out if your work is deficient, your attendance is unsatisfactory
or your understanding of content inadequate. Faculty abroad expect that you will ask for
help if you need it – and if you don’t then you should be prepared for the consequences.
2) Assessment (i.e. graded papers or exams) is less frequent and therefore each grade counts – a
lot. In the U.S., we’re accustomed to frequent assessment and feedback. You normally
receive a paper back with lots of comments. A first exam is usually returned before the
second exam is given. This is NOT always true abroad. If you feel uncertain about how you
are doing, make a point of sitting down with the professor to ask where you stand. For some
classes the ONLY assessment may be in the form of a final paper or exam. Be sure you are
prepared!
3) Unlike here where assigned readings are often discussed in class, faculty abroad frequently
provide students with a list of required readings and also some supplemental
“recommended” readings to further illuminate some of the themes emerging in class.
However, these readings may never be discussed explicitly nor are you assigned homework
designed to demonstrate your understanding of the readings. Be forewarned: whether or not
readings are discussed, if they are assigned they are fair game for exams. You are expected to
do the readings, to understand them and to incorporate them into your thinking about a
particular topic. If you feel that you’re not “getting” something, ask questions.
4) Grading standards may vary from those you’ve experienced in the U.S. In some countries,
an “A” is reserved for only the most outstanding or original work with “B”s or “C”s being
more of the norm for students who have clearly learned the material but aren’t going the
extra mile. Similarly, you may find that you are rewarded or penalized for different skills
than are normally measured here. Some cultures place a higher premium than others on rote
memorization, others want you to think independently, and in others you might be expected
to draw upon a basic factual foundation that is assumed rather than explicitly taught. If you
aren’t certain what a professor expects of you or what you can expect from him or her, ask
for clarification. The Center for Global Education and its staff CANNOT change a grade
once it’s been assigned nor intervene in its determination.
5) In most societies, classrooms are run more formally than in the U.S. (there are a handful of
exceptions) and the division between student and professor is more marked. Unless/until
you are told otherwise, here are a few basic “don’ts” about classroom etiquette:
   • Don’t eat or drink in class.
   • Don’t dress more casually than is acceptable for the culture.
   • Don’t shout out an answer without being called upon.
   • Do not interrupt another student while s/he is talking, even if you disagree.
   • Don’t put your feet up on desks or other chairs.
• Don’t enter a faculty member’s classroom or office (other than for the scheduled class time) without knocking first.
• Don’t challenge a professor’s grade or assignment. (You can and should ask for an explanation of how a grade was determined and what you can do to improve your performance.)
• Don’t assume that “dissenting” or original opinions are equally rewarded on exams and papers. Find out whether you are free to develop your own ideas or if you must demonstrate understanding and ability to apply the faculty member’s own ideas or themes.
• In Hungary in particular, there tends to be less discussion and more memorization of material than you might find in a typical American classroom.

STUDENTS WITH LEARNING OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES
Both the law and the custom abroad with regard to accommodation for special student needs are different than the law and custom here. If you have a physical or learning difference that requires accommodation, you should: 1) disclose this prior to embarking on the program abroad to find out about the accommodation that is available and how to gain access and 2) be prepared to find arrangements more ad hoc than they would be here on campus. If you are attending a program led by an HWS faculty member, you can normally expect to receive similar accommodations as you would here for his/her particular class(es) (such as extended time on exams or access to a note-taker, etc.) but may not receive the same accommodation from host country faculty unless this is arranged and agreed to in advance.

2.2 MONEY AND BANKING
While Hungary is hoping and planning to convert its national currency, the Forint, to the Euro, this change will not occur during your time abroad so you will still be dealing in Forints. The current exchange rate (June 2014) is 224 Forints to the U.S. dollar. So you will see price tags with lots of zeros and initially will think everything is terribly expensive. You will definitely find that your division and multiplication skills improve as you quickly mentally convert currencies. For the most part, real prices in Hungary are not that different than prices in the U.S. You do not need to open a bank account in Hungary but will rely primarily on U.S. bank cards as your primary source of funds.

The most important general advice we have regarding money is to make sure you can access money in several different forms. That way, if for some reason your debit card doesn’t work at a particular ATM, you can use a credit card or traveler’s checks.

We recommend that you carry a credit card as a source of emergency cash and credit. Visa is the most widely used although Master Card is also pretty easily accepted. You may also use your ATM card or Visa/MC debit card if it has the Cirrus or Plus logos–don’t forget that you will need your PIN number. In Europe, only FOUR digit number PINS can be used in ATM machines. If you have an alpha PIN or a PIN with 5 or more digits, please speak with your bank about changing the number to a four digit PIN.

CREDIT CARDS
Credit cards are useful in many countries now, and one of the advantages is that by using them, you’ll be getting a competitive exchange rate. But, if you’re going to be using a credit card abroad, make sure your card company knows about your trip. It’s possible that they may cancel your card if they see lots of foreign charges all of a sudden. While you’ve got them on the phone, ask about any fees for using the card abroad for purchases or cash advances. Also, make sure you have your pin number memorized before you go…this will enable you to get a cash advance from many ATM machines.
NOTE: You can often get a credit card cash advance inside a bank, though they may wonder why you are not using the machine outside. Just make sure you have your passport for identification purposes. This process may take a while, but can be a saving grace in a financial pinch.

**Important new development!** Many European countries have been transitioning to chip and PIN technology in their credit and debit cards. This means the bank card has a computer chip embedded into it and it also has a PIN (personal identification number). It also means that credit cards are no longer “swiped” on a magnetic strip as we do in the USA, the card goes through a chip reader instead and the cardholder must enter his or her PIN to complete the sale. This technology does not have to be in place in the USA until 2015, and US banks are adapting to the change very slowly. As of this writing, few Americans have such a card in their possession.

It may be worth getting a chip and pin credit card before your departure – be sure to ask your own bank as well or consider opening an account through one of the methods recommended below.

Below are a few articles to help you begin your research:


Unfortunately, as quickly as banks and financial service offices develop new technologies to minimize theft and fraud, crooks and hackers find new ways around these. The latest scam which is reported in Europe and to some extent in Asia is an “RFID” (radio frequency ID reader) that a crook points at your wallet when you are in a crowd to pull the data from your credit/debit card. You can purchase an RFID guard card or scanner guard card to put in your wallet. These are metal cards that you put in the front and back of your wallet, protecting the cards in between them. Or you can consider purchasing a stainless steel wallet.

**DEBIT CARDS**

Make sure your card is on one or both of the big international ATM systems, Cirrus or Plus, by looking at the back of the card. Make sure you contact your bank to let them know you’ll be abroad and ask about any fees for using ATMs overseas. In the past, we recommended using Debit/ATM cards as the best way to get your money abroad. Recently however, a lot of banks have begun levying hefty fees each time a card is used at an ATM abroad – one student told us of fees of $25 per transaction! We strongly recommend that you ask about the fees and see if there is any way to have these reduced or waived. If your bank is charging more than $5 per transaction, consider shopping around and changing your bank. Small banks, credit unions, and savings and loans tend to be (but not always) less punitive than the large commercials banks. Wherever you bank, please be aware of your surroundings when you take out money from an ATM. This is a common place for theft so stay alert.

Some students have found it useful to sign up for online banking before they leave home so they can keep track of their balance and the fees charged for overseas transactions – and to help ensure that they don’t go overdrawn.

**TRAVELER’S CHECKS**

These are used less and less as credit and debit cards become more popular, but they are still useful in some countries and are far safer than carrying cash. You should be aware, however, that the fees to cash them and convert to the local currency can be high. On the other hand, traveler’s checks have
tracking numbers on them that will allow you to easily cancel them and recoup your losses in case they are lost or stolen. You must keep these tracking numbers separate from the checks and several copies in different locations are recommended. You can sometimes pay establishments directly with these checks, but most often you must change them at a change office or bank. There is often a fee involved in cashing them, expressed as a percentage of the total or a flat fee.

We really recommend traveler’s checks ONLY as a backup source of funds in the event that international money networks are down or your cash/credit card is lost or stolen. You will find them inconvenient to use on a regular basis. However, it’s not a bad idea to bring along about $200 (in relatively small denominations) in traveler’s checks – just in case. If you don’t use them while abroad, they’re still “good” here in the U.S. upon your return.

HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU NEED?
Students and families always ask us to estimate the amount of funds that they’ll need for personal spending while abroad. This is VERY difficult for us to estimate as “typical” student spending ranges vary so widely depending upon resources available and personal spending habits. Given the fact that all your basic needs are provided for and/or should have been pre-budgeted (see meals, housing below) and that the program pays for the organized excursions, you actually NEED (as opposed to will want) very little personal spending money. Thus, in addition to the $1850 you should plan to bring for food, and about $75-100 to use Hungarian public transportation, for most students an extra $1500-2,500 for personal/discretionary spending should be adequate. This sum should still buy you that occasional night out or one or two extra weekend trips. Be forewarned, however! If you are a power shopper, expect to jet off to a new country every weekend, or tend to consume large amounts of alcohol or food at night, you will certainly spend a lot more. You’ll also need more if you expect to stay on in Europe through much of the summer. Most students tend to spend however much they have (we seldom hear of students bringing money back home with them), whether this is $1,000 or $5,000 or even more; our best advice is for you to sit down as a family and decide what you can afford and what you think is reasonable. Given that it is very easy to get money to you quickly if you underestimate (mom or dad make a deposit at the ATM in the U.S.; you have access to the funds within 24 hours), it’s better to bring less and ask for more in a pinch than to remortgage the home up front. If you’re on a tight budget and need tips, ASK us!

Note about financial aid

Many students manage the cost of their education through grants, scholarships and loans. If the total of these items exceed the total amount that HWS bills you for your term abroad, you will be eligible for a refund. You can use this refund to pay for room, board, travel or any other educationally related expenses while abroad. You can determine the amount of your refund by referring to your student bill for the abroad term. If the balance due is preceded by a minus sign, this indicates a credit owed back to you. To arrange for your refund check, contact the Student Accounts Office at 315-781-3343. If the refund is not enough to cover your expenses, be sure to contact the Financial Aid Office to explore your options in terms of additional loans or grants. The Student Accounts Office can also help you and your family plan for an expected refund before the term bills are generated. However, before making the call, please be sure to educate yourself regarding the costs of your program including things like airfare, how much money you think you’ll need to take with you and your current financial aid package in order to gain the most information from the conversation. Applicable e-mail addresses are Finaid@hws.edu and studentaccounts@hws.edu.
2.3 HOUSING AND MEALS ABROAD

U.S. Americans are used to large living spaces, lots of privacy, endless hot water and access to the telephone. Most people in the world do not have the same expectations and get by with (sometimes much) smaller spaces, have less privacy, take very quick showers, often turning off the water between getting wet and rinsing off, and use the telephone for only very brief communications. Often there are economic and ecological reasons for these differences.

Students are housed in Corvinus University’s Ráday dormitory located within walking distance of the University. Each student shares a double or triple room with Corvinus University or other CIEE student(s). The dormitory has communal kitchens and laundry facilities, and Internet is available throughout the facility. It is located in a popular shopping district with cafés, small restaurants, schools, and a supermarket.

Meals are not included and HWS has not billed you for them so you should bring money with you to cover the cost of your meals. Students can prepare meals in the communal kitchen in the dormitory, and there are many restaurants nearby and on the University campus. If you do prepare your own meals or eat mainly on campus, you will find you actually save money compared to the HWS board plan in Geneva. A typical student eating at the residence will spend around $1850 for food. If you choose to dine out, particularly at more upscale establishments, you can easily spend $1000 more than this over the course of a semester.

As would be the case at HWS or on any program abroad, you are responsible for maintaining your dorm to a reasonable degree of cleanliness and in keeping with local fire-safety standards and health codes. If you damage your room, your common area or the building due to carelessness, neglect or worse, you WILL be held accountable financially and charges will be placed by the program onto your student bill. Housing is inspected before students move in, but in the unlikely event that you find something broken or damaged upon your arrival, be sure to report this immediately to ensure that you are not held responsible later.

2.4 LANGUAGE BASICS

The language spoken in Hungary is called Magyar. However, many young people speak English and older Hungarians involved in tourism understand English to some extent.

A free wallet-sized printable phrase book is available here: http://www.singleserving.com/Hungarian/print.php

Here are a few basic words to know while in Hungary.

**Greeting people**

**Tip:** If you meet someone of the opposite sex for the first time, it’s not unusual to kiss each other on the cheek instead of shaking hands as a greeting.

**Yes**= igen (ee-gen - hard G like in gate)

**No** = nem

**Hello or goodbye (informal)** = szia (see-ah) (similar to saying Ciao)

**Good morning** = Jó reggelt (yo reh-gelt)

**Good day** = Jó napot (yo na-pot)
**2.5 GETTING TO KNOW BUDAPEST**

**Tourist Information**

The city's best source of visitor information is **Tourinform**, the official Budapest Tourism offices. They have three offices in the city. The office at V. Liszt Ferenc tér 11, in Pest (tel. 1/322-4098; www.tourinform.hu; metro: Opera, Yellow line; tram: Oktogon, no. 4-6) is open daily from 10am to 6pm. The office at V. Süt street 2 (Deák Square; metro: Deák tér) is open from 8am to 8pm daily. The office at Buda Palace on Castle Hill (bus no. 10) is open Monday through Sunday 9am to 8pm. Be sure to pick up the excellent free map of the city. The staff in all offices speak English.

**Publications about Budapest**

For English-language articles on current events and politics in Hungary, pick up the **Budapest Sun** or the **Budapest Times**, both weeklies and free at many restaurants, hotels, and the Tourinform offices. The free bimonthly **Funzine** and the monthly **Visitors' Guide** provide listings of cultural events, as does **Where** magazine. All of these publications are widely available.

**Taxis**

Make sure you only use a taxi that has a company logo and phone number posted on the cab as well as an official yellow license plate. There should be a visible table of fares. All cabs are required to have working meters so make sure the taxi has one and that the driver resets it. Taxis can cost 20% more late at night. Some reliable companies include City Taxi, Volantaxi, Radio Taxi, Fo Taxi and Budataxi. Avoid privately owned taxis and stick to the big companies.
**Restrooms**

The word for toilet in Hungarian is *WC* (pronounced vay-tsay), *mosdó*, or *toalett*. *Női* means "women's"; *férfi* means "men's." Note that many American-type fast-food restaurants are charging for the use of their bathrooms unless you have your receipt from a purchase made that day. You may want to carry tissues with you as often toilet paper is not frequently replenished.

**2.6 EATING OUT**

**Drinking Water**

Tap water is considered safe to drink in Hungary, although many Hungarians prefer bottled water. Mineral water is called *ásványvíz*. Purified bottled water (*szénsav mentes*) is sold in delicatessens, convenience stores, fast-food restaurants, and grocery stores all over the city. As a rule, all brands that have a pink label are non-carbonated, blue means carbonated, and yellow means minimal carbonation.

If you ask for water in a restaurant, you will be given bottled water. If you want to avoid the cost of bottled water, ask for tap water specifically, stating "not bottled."

**The bill**

The bill will not normally be brought to you - you need to ask for it. Meals may take longer than you're used to. Check the menu prices when you order then check the bill carefully to make sure you have been charged correctly.

**Tipping**

If the restaurant bill includes a charge for service (as some do – but be sure to ask), then you don’t need to leave an additional tip. It may say on the menu. If no service is included than a 10% tip is sufficient. **Don’t leave the tip on the table – include it when you pay the bill.**

**Vegetarians and Vegans**

You will not have too much trouble finding vegetarian and vegan foods in Budapest. There are plenty of vegetarian and vegan restaurants, and a lots of health food stores that offer all sorts of vegetarian/vegan products. Also, in recent years, Italian food has become a lot more popular, so as long as you don't mind a pasta heavy diet as a vegetarian you will find a wider choice. It may be harder in an ordinary Hungarian restaurant, as many of the main dishes contain meat but you should be able to find something that will work.

**Customs to be aware of in restaurants**

- Talking loudly is generally considered rude. You will notice how most Hungarians tend to keep their voices down in public places.
- Your glass of water or soft drink will not be served with ice unless specifically requested.
- Typically, each food item is ordered (and charged for) individually, right down to the bread and butter. If you don't want bread, say so or it will be brought to your table and added to your bill.
Hungarian Cuisine

Soups

- Gulyásleves (goulash soup)
- Halászlé (a famous hot and spicy fish soup with hot paprika)
- Húsleves (clear chicken or veal meat soup with soup vegetables and thin soup pasta called csipetke)
- Vadgombaleves (wild mushroom soup)

Main courses

- Töltött káposzta (stuffed cabbage)
- Töltött paprika (Stuffed peppers - ground meat, rice and spices are used for the filling)
- Főzelék (thick vegetable stew)
- Lecsó (mixed vegetable stew)
- Pecsenye (thin pork steak served with cabbage or the dish fatányéros, a Hungarian mixed grill on wooden platter)
- Stefánia szelet or Stefania slices (Hungarian meatloaf with hard boiled eggs in the middle.)
- Túrós csusza. (dumplings called galuska baked with quark cheese called túró - served savory with bacon or sweet)
- Székelygulyás (Goulash stew, made with three kinds of meat)
- Pörkölt (meat stew - similar to ragú)
- Chicken Paprikash called Csirkepaprikás (a stew with a lot of sweet paprika, cream or sour cream called tejföl)
- Paprikás krumpli (paprika-based stew with spicy sausage and potatoes)
- Rakott Krumpli (potato casserole)
- Rakott káposzta (layered cabbage)
- Rántott sajt. (flat cheese croquette, cheese rolled in breadcrumbs and, deep fried)

Menu items to know

- water = víz
- mineral water = ásványvíz
- beer = sör
- wine = bor
- coffee = kávé
- tea = tea
- bread = kenyér
- butter = vaj
- pork = sertéshús
- beef = marhahús
- chicken = csirke
- fish = hal
- vegetable = zöldség
2.7 SERVICE ABROAD

U.S. Americans live in a service-oriented economy. We expect a certain level of service for our money. Many other countries have no similar service culture. Store clerks don’t have to be polite and warm. Wait-staff in most European countries do not make their money from tips and so therefore do not feel the need to give you a lot of attention or deference. Remember that you expect what is normal, and what is normal for you is not necessarily normal for the local culture. The good side to this different definition of service is that you can often stay for as long as you would like at a café and the waiter won’t bother you too often or urge you to leave. Europeans are clearly okay with the quality of service at cafes and restaurants—they would have a different system if they were not. So accept it, and look to the local people to help you figure out how to get your check.

2.8 EMAIL ACCESS

Students have access to email at the University, in the CIEE office, and in the dormitory, and receive an account shortly after arrival, free of charge. Students are encouraged to bring wireless-enabled laptops.

Be sure to check your HWS email regularly because that is how we will be in touch with you. Make sure you clean out your mailbox before you go – otherwise it could fill up and you would be unable to receive any new mail.

2.9 CELL PHONES AND COMMUNICATIONS HOME

There are various options for students to communicate with family and friends at home.

To make calls

1) CHEAPEST OPTION - Use Skype from your laptop if you bring one (as long as the software is set up beforehand at both ends). The cost is a few cents a minute.

2) Check out the free international cell phone deal through the iNext card – CIEE will purchase this card for all students. Here is the info about the free cell phone: http://www.inext.com/travel-card-deals/free-cell-phone.aspx

3) Use coins or purchase a phone card in Budapest to use with public telephones. Pay phones are distinguished by their pink booths or pink phones if they are on the wall of a metro station underground. The charges are varying amounts for local calls depending on the time of day that you place your call. It’s cheapest to call late in the evenings and on weekends. Public phones operate with 20, 50, and 100 Ft coins or with phone cards (in 50 or 120 units), which can be purchased from post offices, convenience stores or magazine kiosks.

4) Purchase a pay-as-you-go cell phone in Budapest (or in the U.S. before you leave). There are many companies from whom you can purchase pay-as-you-go cell phones before you leave the U.S. These types of phones involve 1) buying a SIM card 2) renting or buying a phone and 3) buying pre-paid minutes (some SIM cards come with some pre-paid minutes). You can check out rates at one company here: http://www.cellularabroad.com/hungaryRcell.php. This is not an endorsement and we have no affiliation with this company - it’s just an example of the type of option that exists. Do your own research if you plan to get a cell phone in order to find the best deal.
5) It may be possible to bring your own cell phone from home IF it is a quad-band or universal or satellite phone. You must have an unlocked phone and buy a SIM card that would work abroad or purchase a local SIM when you arrive in Hungary. Call your own carrier for details and prices.

To call to Hungary from the U.S.

Dial the international code (011 from the U.S.), then dial 36 (Hungary country code), followed by 1 (Budapest city code) followed by the six- or seven-digit telephone number (omit any initial zeros in the number).

To call the U.S. from Hungary

To make international calls from Hungary, first dial 00 and then the country code (1 for the U.S.). Next dial the area code and number.

To receive calls

Parents who wish to call may want to purchase a phone card that has cheap international rates. They can use this from a home phone and they dial a special access code to get the rates quoted. For $5.00 they can purchase a phone card that will give them 5 hours and 30 minutes of talk time to Hungary (which works out at 1.5 cents a minute). Check out this website for some options on phone cards (it's searchable by country): http://www.phones-cards.com/. If your family and friends in the U.S. download a free program called skype, they can call you on your laptop and/or on your cell phone and talk as long as you'd like for FREE.

A word about communicating too frequently

Please note that the CGE and other study abroad offices have noticed a marked increase in the numbers of students who have prolonged periods of homesickness or cultural maladjustment that seems to correlate with their excessive use of phone and/or internet. While it may seem counter-intuitive that it is not helpful to call home daily (or more than once daily) when you are lonely, stressed or frightened, in fact doing so ensures that you connect ONLY with home and not with all the wonderful new people around you. In fact it is these people on site who are the ones who can help you explore the city, discover new cultural delights, and help you realize that, while they may be different, they are very interesting people to know. Consider limiting your time communicating home to pre-scheduled calls, say twice a week at a particular time. Your family will know you are available and waiting to speak with them at that time and you will have something to help ground you if you are feeling at sea. But then, in the interim, you should get out of your residence hall, away from the phone or internet and into the city of Budapest!

2.10 TRAVEL TIPS

For some of you, your term abroad represents your first excursion out of the country and your first real travel experience. Some of you are already seasoned travelers, or, at least, seasoned tourists. A term abroad will open up to you many opportunities for further travel. Sometimes there are so many choices it can be difficult to make decisions. It’s worth thinking about what you’d like to do, and how you’d like to do it, before you go. Develop a strategy or philosophy to guide your travels. Perhaps you have two weeks to travel after your program. Do you plan a whirl-wind tour of 10 countries? Or do you choose one or two places to get to know well? Do you put the well-known cities and sites on your itinerary, or do you choose lesser-known, out of the way places? This is a good time to do some homework, too, reading guidebooks about the country you are going to and the surrounding region. Consider what is important to you, what kinds of things you think would make the best memories later on. You might want to make a list of things you hope to see and experience while abroad, or
maybe you even want to make a detailed plan; or maybe you want to leave it entirely open and be spontaneous. But thinking about how you want to explore now will enable you to make better use of your time.

AROUND THE CITY
The city you are studying in is your major entry-point into the study of the nation as a whole. This is one of the reasons we tend to name programs by both city and country (Bath, England; Hanoi, Vietnam). Students abroad can choose between two extremes, spending a lot of time getting to know every corner and nook the city has to offer, or traveling most weekends to other cities or even other countries. These trips will not offer the level of in-depth access you will get by regularly exploring the city you live in while abroad. One of the writers of this guide was struck when, at the end of his study abroad term in Seville, Spain, a fellow student asked him “what’s there to do in this town?”

FAMILIARITY AND TIME
Remember that around the world, most people don’t move as often as U.S. Americans do. We’re a very mobile society. Globally it is much more common for a person to spend his/her entire life in one city of one country. A result of this difference in mobility is that in general, people abroad spend much more time building relationships and friendships than U.S. Americans do. What this means for you abroad is that you might need to spend more time getting to know a place and its people before you become a “regular” at a café or life-long friends with your host family or local classmates.

AROUND THE COUNTRY
If you do travel during weekends outside of the excursions may be built into your program, consider limiting yourself to your country, especially if you’re on a language immersion program. Taking a break entirely from the language for a weekend will delay or even push back the progress you’ve already made. Traveling around a country and visiting its different regions and cities can give you a fascinating comparative view and a sense of the diversity of the place. Also, traveling in a country where you speak the language (even not very well) will always be a more in-depth experience than traveling through countries where you speak none of the language.

SECTION 3: All About Culture
If you think back to your first year of college, you might remember both apprehension and anticipation. You were quickly hit with what you did not know—how to do your laundry, how to navigate the cafeteria, the necessity of having your I.D. card on you at all times, where to buy books, how to succeed in a new kind of study…the list goes on. What you were going through was a process of cultural adjustment. You were learning the rules of a very new game; it took time, patience, and a willingness to watch, listen and learn. What you are about to experience abroad is roughly comparable in character to the transition you went through coming to HWS, but it will be far more intense, challenging and rewarding. It’s the next step. Congratulations on choosing it.

How long will you be abroad? About four months? That’s really not all that much time to fit in what many returned students would call the most significant and amazing experience of their college careers (if not their lives). Although many students experience homesickness and/or culture shock and have good days and bad days, you want to try to maximize what little time you have abroad. This section will help you understand what intercultural adjustment is all about, what you should expect to experience, and how you can actively work to make this process a vibrant learning experience.

You are about to encounter a culture that is typically much different from that with which you are familiar. The rules of the game will not be the same. Researchers of cross-cultural communication use several models to describe various aspects of the study abroad experience; this packet will guide
you through them. You may not think you need this information now, but many students who have crossed cultures—and come back again—say that they are glad they knew about these ideas beforehand. Take this packet with you...our bet is that at some point in your time abroad, you'll pick it up again.

3.1 EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Much of the value of your study abroad program lies in the experiences of day-to-day living, the encounters and relationships you build with the people of your host country. The experiential learning model depicted to the left contains several key ideas that, if you keep them in mind, can help you get the most from your time abroad.

The experience of living amidst a totally new culture can be at turns exhilarating and frustrating. These frustrations can add up as you run into more and more differences between the culture you carry around with you and the host culture. One of the benefits of study abroad is this realization—that you actually carry America around with you. It’s your comfort zone, a set of values, ideas, and manners, a language and a set of products. You’ve got to step out of this comfort zone if you want to truly have a great experience.

There’s no way around this: If you want to really learn, you’ll have to go outside of your comfort zone. And going outside of your comfort zone means taking a social risk.

A good rule of thumb for students abroad; if you’re not feeling uncomfortable, you’re not in much of a position to learn anything. You haven’t felt confident enough in your language to talk to the newspaper seller you pass every day, even though he looks like a character. You’ve felt too shy to go into that corner pub. You’re lost—but rather than ask someone for directions, you fumble with a map. You pass the town square and people are dancing in traditional costume—what’s the occasion? Your host family invites you to a familiar gathering—but your American friends have planned a day away at the beach. You’re in class all day with foreign students and many of them look very interesting but they haven’t introduced themselves to you.

Stepping up to these challenges involves social risk and possible feelings of discomfort. But they all offer opportunity as well. There’s much to gain, so take a chance!

TOURISM VS. STUDY ABROAD

Most cities have their tourist attractions and these are great things to take in during your time abroad. But remember that most local people don’t frequent these places. And remember too that the spaces where the local people live aren’t frequented by tourists. There is a name for this: tourist infrastructure. Tourism is the largest economy on the planet. This infrastructure (with multi-lingual tour guides, menus in 12 languages, museums and historic sites, and boutiques) is designed to do three things: make you feel comfortable, show you what most tourists want to see, and separate you from your money.

If you understand the experiential foundation of study abroad, then you realize that this is not the optimal space for students studying abroad to spend their time. Tourist infrastructures in fact insulate
the traveler from the daily life of the country (and the citizens that don’t speak the tourist’s language) and this is exactly what you should want to experience while abroad. So, as a student abroad and not a tourist, take delight in the simple pleasures of daily existence and really get to know your neighborhood and your city. Find a local hangout. Become a regular. Go to restaurants without menus out front in five languages (they’re also often less expensive). Get to know the merchants, waiters, and neighbors you bump into every day. Play basketball or football (soccer to us) with the local kids. These experiences often have as much (or maybe more) to say than every city’s “tall thing to climb” or sanitized “attractions”.

BREAKING AWAY
If you’re abroad for a language immersion experience, hanging out all the time with other U.S. Americans will keep you from advancing your language skills. So too will missing out on activities because you have to wait around for your boyfriend/girlfriend to call for the second time that week. And: did you really travel halfway around the world to spend all your time with people you already know or talking to people at home? So take advantage of invitations from your host family, your language partner, or a foreign classmate. Go off exploring on your own or with one good friend.

It’s okay to explore with an American buddy, but beware of the pack! Large groups of U.S. Americans (along with being immediately recognizable and off-putting) will keep you from really getting to know the local culture and people.

Going abroad is about breaking away from what you know, so make sure you actually do that and don’t live abroad in “Island America”. There are two other related things that will keep you from actually experiencing what is going on around you: one is the easy accessibility of internet cafes, and the other is cell phones. Technology allows us to be connected with people far away with great ease, but remember that is often at the expense of connections with those immediately around us (not to mention actual monetary expense!)

“OH YEAH, YOU BLEND”
It’s a famous line from My Cousin Vinny, a film about culture clash right here in our own country. But blending is what the characters try to do, and it’s what you should do. Why should you try to blend? First and foremost, it’s a great way to learn about the culture. To blend in first requires you to actually look at the people around you. You must become an ardent and keen observer of people’s behavior, language, etiquette, dress and, in more general terms, the way people carry themselves and treat each other. Local people will appreciate your efforts to understand and adopt some of these behaviors. It will show them that you respect and want to understand their customs and values. And therefore they’ll trust you more, share more with you, and feel more of an immediate bond of commonality with you. You’ll learn even more. Another reason you should try to blend in is safety. The reality is that foreigners are often the targets of petty crime or unwanted attention from the wrong kinds of people. Not sticking out in the crowd will keep you safer, and that bond of commonality will mean that local people will be more likely to look out for you.

3.2 ADJUSTING TO A NEW CULTURE
Just as you did when you entered college, you will go through a process of cultural adjustment abroad where you will learn to operate in a different cultural system, with different signals, rules, meanings, values and ideas. Your experience living in this host culture will change over time. Once the immediate sensations of excitement subside (the honeymoon phase), the experience of adjustment will likely be characterized by feelings of anxiety, stress, sadness, and fatigue, as things begin to seem
very…foreign. This process of intercultural adjustment is often represented by the “u-curve”, plotted below:

If you’re studying in a non-English speaking country, your language skills will be quickly tested to their limit. You might not understand the local accent even though everyone speaks English. You may not understand (or be understood by) the bus driver. Your roommate’s behavior may be difficult to fathom, making you wonder whether they like you. You will certainly feel fatigued at times by the challenge of having to work so hard at connecting with people.

The truth is living in a culture different from your own is challenging and exhausting, especially early on in the process where almost everything is a mystery. What is happening is simple: you are realizing how different this new culture really is! And you are realizing that what you knew from before, what was familiar and comfortable to you, may not help you at all now. Some people call this “culture shock”.

You may react to “culture shock” in a number of ways: you may find yourself favoring time alone, preferring contact with friends or family at home over contact with foreigners or fellow students, and perhaps as a sense of rejection of the host culture (hopefully, for your sake, temporarily!). Don’t let this phase of adjustment forfeit an amazing opportunity to learn and grow! It is important to bear in mind that the initial difficulties do wear off, and get much easier with active immersion in the culture that surrounds you. As shown on the U-curve, the initial low subsides as you become accustomed to the norms and custom of your host-country. This is called adjustment. Another note of good news: there are concrete strategies you can use to minimize emotional and social difficulties:

* Take time to re-energize with your friends. Don’t feel guilty about hanging out and comparing experiences…you can do a lot of processing in these sessions. Just don’t isolate yourself from the culture in that group.
* Get out and explore. Don’t waste your time abroad in a mob of U.S. Americans! Strike off on your own, or pair up with a friend, be it another American on your program, your host brother or sister, or a local acquaintance you’ve cultivated. It’s good to have someone to experience things with, bounce ideas off of, help out with language—but it’s also good to explore on your own and see what life throws your way.
* Narrow your world—focus your efforts on a neighborhood, street or even a single place, and try to get to know that, using it as a window onto the rest of the culture.
* Widen your world—wander around the city or take trips to places you’ve never really heard of. Be curious and open to the possibilities around you. View unfamiliar things as mysteries to be investigated.
* If you have a hobby or interest you pursued at home, pursue it abroad. If you sang in a choir or played soccer, do those things abroad, too. You’ll meet local people who share that interest! One student we know of brought her tennis racket to France; every other day she’d
play tennis at the nearby university, and this social sport became her doorway into French culture, introducing her to many local people she would never otherwise have encountered.

- **Keep a journal.** Journals are powerful tools for becoming aware. You can focus on the changes going on within yourself, or you can focus your writing on what is going on around you, the weird and wonderful details of that culture, or both.

- **Write letters.** Letters can help you formulate your impressions and communicate your experience with others; just be careful, you could alarm family and friends unnecessarily if you write about your difficulties only and not your successes!

- **Set small goals for yourself every day.** “Today I’m going to buy a newspaper and conduct the transaction in the local language.” “This evening I’ll accompany my host parents to their relative’s home and see what happens.”

- **Read…** reading a book about the culture and civilization, be it a popular history or the musings of another traveler, can be relaxing and informative. It’s great when what you read sheds light on what you see or experience every day.

- **Find a conversation partner.** In non-English speaking countries, many local people are seeking to practice their English. Set up meetings and spend half the time conversing in English and the local language. In English-speaking countries, take advantage of the shared language to really engage people in dialogue about local history and contemporary issues.

- **Be open to invitations!** One student reported back to us that she never felt like she had successfully lived in a place unless she had had dinner in a family’s home and seen how normal people lived. In some countries inviting foreigners into one’s house is an honor—for both the guest and the hosts!

You may have your down moments, but if you persist in trying, eventually the daily victories—when you have successfully adapted to one or another aspect of the culture—will start to outweigh the setbacks and frustrations. Over time, as you gain confidence in your ability to navigate through a different cultural system, as your familiarity with local norms, values, and attitudes grows, and as you start to see things from different perspectives, your adjustment will enhance the exciting and happy time you originally anticipated your experience abroad to be.

One final note: everyone experiences cultural adjustment differently. This is just a general model to help you visualize the fact that you will go through a process of cultural adjustment, and that this process will include ups and downs, good days and bad, and moments of alternating homesickness and elation at the new culture that is all around you.

### 3.3 CULTURE LEARNING: CUSTOMS AND VALUES

Before you go abroad, it’s a good idea to start thinking about culture as being one part customs and one part values. As a person going abroad to immerse yourself in a different culture, you should be extremely flexible about your customs, that is, the little things that make up your daily routine, the way you do things, the level of service or quality of life you expect. You should, however, be more reserved about your values, that is, the core beliefs that are important to you. It won’t hurt you to eat a food you are not accustomed to (notice the word “accustomed”?) but say, for example, your host-father makes a racist comment about the recent wave of North African immigrants. You shouldn’t feel like you have to agree with him just for the sake of fitting in. Be respectful, but be true to your values, too.

There’s a connection between customs and values, however; the values of a culture are often expressed in its customs. The café society of many Mediterranean countries suggests a certain value for comfortable social interaction, a relaxed view of time, and the idea that life should be savored teaspoon by teaspoon. So as you adopt new customs, take time to reflect on the values that underlie
them, and examine your own values as well. Is there something in this culture worth taking back with you, making part of your own core values?

LOCAL CUSTOMS

EATING AND DRINKING

Food is one of the most important parts of any culture. Although we may have pushed eating aside in the United States, trying to make it fast and unobtrusive on the real concerns of our lives, for many cultures across the world, eating and food are still of central importance to family and social life. Be aware that many countries frown upon eating on-the-go and it is considered rude to eat food while you’re walking across campus or down the street. Follow the examples of the locals: if you never see anyone else eating food as they walk, you can assume it is not appropriate. Following the logic above, a country’s eating habits and customs suggest its values. Note the café example above; a simple cup of coffee has many facets of Mediterranean culture encoded in it. In Africa, to take another example, meals may be eaten with hands from a central bowl. Encoded in this is a statement about community, family and sharing. As a guest in another culture, you should be open to trying as many different new customs as you can, and this means kinds of food and modes of eating. But be realistic: don’t expect yourself to eat beef if you’re a vegetarian or down tripe soup for the fourth time if you really hate it. If you’re in a home-stay, first and foremost, be honest on your application for housing. If you’re a vegetarian, say so. If you can’t handle cigarette smoke, write that. The programs we work with abroad will try to meet your needs as best as they can. But expect some compromises! Also, be honest and polite with your host families; probably not every family member likes the same kinds of food there, too. It should be a process of mutual discovery. But also try new foods. Experiment with menu items you can’t necessarily identify. You never know what you’ll discover. Bon appétit!

While alcohol consumption varies in degree and social context from country to country, it is safe to say that, in general, few countries consider the kind of drinking prevalent on American college campuses to be socially acceptable. Many countries do not have strict drinking ages and therefore alcohol, not being illegal or taboo, isn’t considered novel, and binge drinking is relatively rare. Many other cultures appear to have a much healthier relationship to alcohol than does society in the U.S..

Many English, Germanic and Central European nations, for example, have lively pub/bar scenes where people drink quite a bit; but the careful observer will note that 1) people drink more slowly than in the U.S. and 2) people are expected to hold their liquor. To be seen stumbling drunk is embarrassing, not funny. In these cultures, you may also note that, with the exception of pubs that are explicitly for the student population, there is a broader mix of people who socialize together. It is quite common in Hungary and the Czech Republic for example, for young adults to go to the pub with dad and grandma or even with a young sibling in tow. So, conduct yourself in a way that is appropriate for a mixed age crowd.

A common practice in Britain and Ireland is to “buy rounds”. If you go to a pub with a group, one member of the group will ask everyone else what s/he is drinking and will then pay for all the drinks for everyone. Be prepared! If you accept the offer of a drink in such a scenario, YOU are expected to buy the next round for all. If your budget cannot handle this and/or if you know that you need to limit the total amount you consume, buy your own.

Mediterranean cultures and definitely Hungarian culture values alcohol as a social lubricant and as an intrinsic part of meals. People will socialize in bars, but the careful observer will notice that the local people will space their drinking out over a large stretch of time, and eat small snacks in-between drinks. In this environment, it is not uncommon to leave drinks half-finished as there will be a lot of sampling over the course of the evening. If you finish everything, you’ll normally drink quite a bit more than you might here.
In a number of Asian countries, most notably Japan, you’ll probably be surprised by the quantity of alcohol consumed, especially within a short time-frame. You might even witness drunken behavior – within the confines of the bar or restaurant. But notice two important things: 1) this behavior ends when you cross the threshold from the bar to the street where drunkenness is NOT tolerated and 2) behavior that might be okay for a local is more likely to be disapproved of when displayed by a guest. Asians are very mindful of the differences between hosts and guests and each has explicit responsibilities to the other. In Japan you are likely to be showered with gifts and offers of hospitality by total strangers – which are okay for you to accept. In return, however, you must be certain that your own behavior is always seen as respectful.

Although you are all “legal” abroad, we strongly encourage you to drink responsibly and carefully abroad. Drinking too much leaves you more vulnerable to pick-pocketing and other petty crime and, in excess, will lead you to display behavior that may fuel anti-American sentiment. If you choose to drink, be very aware of the quantities you consume. Also note that alcoholic drinks in other countries, beer and hard cider in particular, tend to have a higher alcohol content per volume than their U.S. counterparts.

SPEAKING UP

One central European trait that most U.S. students come to appreciate over time but that is somewhat difficult at first is the very frank manner in which they speak with one another (and with you). U.S. speakers, in an effort to be polite, often couch complaints, concerns or criticisms in fairly neutral language, often raising an unpleasant issue but implying it is not a big deal or that the speaker understands that maybe there is a different viewpoint. This works here – other U.S. listeners still ‘get’ that you have a problem and are asking for help or a change in procedure. In Hungary this may not be the case. If you have a problem (a concern about how one of your classes is going, a feeling of discomfort with your roommate, a sense that you are not being treated fairly) speak out directly. Instead of saying “everything with my roommate is very nice but I wonder if we could work out our schedules better”, come right out and say “my roommate seems okay but I’m not getting enough sleep, or some of her habits are making me very uncomfortable.” You will be pleasantly surprised that Hungarians are NOT offended by direct, candid speech and any issue or misunderstanding you might have will be much more quickly resolved if you use this approach. Similarly, expect your roommate, your Hungarian professors and any new local friends you meet to speak candidly to you. “My, you are very loud at night and it is hard to sleep.” This is NOT to offend you but to let you know how they see things and to enlist you in resolving the problem.

“IMMERSION” EXPERIENCES

Keep in mind that CIEE is NOT a Hungarian cultural immersion program. Because none of you speak Hungarian, there is no way to completely immerse you into local university life. Hungarian students study in English when they can to hone skills that they believe will help them with their careers in an Anglophone world, but they still prefer to speak Hungarian at their leisure and when they relax. Similarly, when you travel on CIEE-organized excursions you will be travelling with your local professor but the other students will all be from the U.S. or other English-speaking nations. So, if you want to make the most of opportunities to get to know the Hungarians, YOU will really need to make the extra effort.

The BEST option for cultural immersion is to undertake an internship and/or to join clubs and student organizations at Corvinus University. Please take advantage of these opportunities to learn about their way of life. You’ll find it very rewarding. Meeting people takes TIME and it takes EFFORT. We encourage you to make the time and effort as you’ll find the result very rewarding. It has to be one of your priorities, however. If you do nothing but travel every weekend or go to
clubs with your American friends, surely you should not be surprised that you aren’t meeting Hungarians.

**SECTION 4: Safety and Health**

**4.1 SAFETY ABROAD: A FRAMEWORK**

Take a look at the experiential learning model again. Notice that there’s “social discomfort”, and there’s **danger**. Taking social risks doesn’t mean putting yourself in harm’s way. What you “risk” should only be embarrassment and a wounded ego, temporary feelings that wear off. You can rely on your good judgment to tell the difference between risk and danger much of the time: for instance, there’s talking to the newspaper seller, and there’s wandering through a seedy part of town alone in the middle of the night. One poses the kind of social risk we’re encouraging, and one poses danger to your well-being.

Recognize, however, that there are instances when you **can’t** sense the line between social risk and danger simply because you don’t understand the culture. Sellers in the open market place follow you around. They seem aggressive. Are you in danger, or is this simply the normal way of doing things in your host country? Is there some kind of body language you can use to communicate that you’re not interested? You can’t know this unless you know the culture well. And to know the culture well, you need to get out there, learn, ask questions, and take social risks!

The best way to stay safe abroad is to be more aware and learn as much as you can about your host-country.

Statistically the crime rate in most overseas locations where we send students is lower than the typical US city. However, because there is often a large student population in many of the locations, students can be lulled into a false sense of security. Remember that with your American accent you will stand out and could be a target. Given that you will be in unfamiliar surroundings while you are abroad it is particularly important that you use your best judgment. Above all, be street smart: if you are going out at night try to go in groups and be aware of your surroundings. Look out for one another. You will be spending a lot of time in an urban environment so act accordingly. If something doesn’t feel right, listen to your instincts.

Regarding your personal belongings, be sure to secure your important items (passports, travelers checks, valuables) and to lock the door to your flats at all times.

**DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR**

The following is behavior you should avoid while abroad:

1.) Don’t give out the names, numbers, and addresses of other program participants.
2.) Don’t invite new friends back to your quarters; meet in a public place until you know them better.
3.) Don’t do drugs abroad (see below for why).
4.) Avoid American hang-outs (McDonald’s, Hard Rock Cafes, etc.) and avoid being in large groups of Americans.
5.) Don’t wander alone in an unfamiliar city where you don’t know the good areas from the bad.
6.) Don’t drink too much in public; it may make you look foolish and you be more susceptible.
If things go wrong

Despite all preparations and precautions that you might take, sometimes things just go wrong. You could become ill while abroad, get hurt in an accident, be the victim of an assault or other crime, or become overwhelmed by a personal or academic problem. Should this happen to you, please ask for help!

The first page of this handbook provides emergency contact information. Your program director and/or 24-hour on call number that you are given during orientation on your arrival should be the first call that you make in an emergency situation. Keep that phone number in your wallet or on your person at all times. In small programs, the director may be the only person to provide support. In larger programs, usually those based at a foreign university, you may be given multiple phone numbers (i.e. call this number for a medical emergency, that one for the police or a security issue, and a third for academic issues).

But whatever the case, please use the staff on site when you are ill, vulnerable or upset. Your emergency contact will either be able to help you directly or can and will connect you to outside local services (such as the police, a therapist or medical provider, a legal advisor, etc) and will deal with the matter competently, professionally and with discretion. We also encourage you to reach out via phone or email to the staff at CGE. Amy Teel is the point person for semester or year-long programs and Sharon Walsh for short-term programs. While CGE staff cannot deliver services immediately when an incident happens (i.e. we cannot accompany you to the hospital or police abroad), we can be helpful in coordinating services between you, the host institution, your parents (with your permission) and various HWS offices.

4.2 HEALTHCARE AND INSURANCE

You can anticipate that health care will be of high quality in Hungary. The directors and the staff of CIEE will assist you in case you need to seek medical care. They have retained an English speaking doctor for routine office visits, minor illnesses and prescriptions.

Students on the Budapest program will be provided with health and travel insurance by CIEE as part of the program. The policy, as part of the iNext card, also covers evacuation and repatriation. This means that you are not required to buy the insurance through HWS. We suggest that you check the coverage of the CIEE policy at this link: https://www.ciee.org/enrollment/ftp/INEXT.pdf to determine that you are satisfied with the coverage. This policy is limited to $100,000 of medical coverage. Note that this policy is considered secondary to any policy you may already have that covers you abroad.

You will be sent information by HWS this summer about the year-long medical policy available through HWS. Since you already have coverage through CIEE, you do not need to purchase this coverage. If you do not purchase the year-long HWS policy through Gallagher, then you need to waive this coverage on the Gallagher website at: https://www.gallagherstudent.com/students/student-home.php?idField=1192 and click on “student waive/enroll”. If you do not waive the coverage, then the year-long policy will be purchased for you automatically and will appear on your tuition bill. Students who are abroad during the fall semester who waive the general student policy during their term abroad WILL be given the opportunity to purchase it later for the spring term only.
4.3 WOMEN’S ISSUES ABROAD

American girls are easy. A special word to women going abroad: the sad truth is that some foreign men believe this stereotype to be true. How they may have arrived at this conclusion is not hard to surmise if you watch a little TV. What this means for you is that certain behaviors in public (drunkenness being a big one) may get you unwanted attention from the worst kinds of people. Again, blend in by watching the behavior of those around you and adopting it as your way.

4.4 HIV

HIV is equally or more prevalent abroad and just as deadly as it is here. Sometimes Americans abroad lower their guard and engage in activities that they never would back at home, feeling somehow “immune” or “invincible”. Resist these thoughts! Also, in a different context, many Americans are unsure of the cultural cues involved or are unsure of how (or whether it is appropriate) to talk about sex. Don’t let this uncertainty get in the way of your safety: get to know your partners, use a condom, and be aware of safer sex practices.

4.5 DRUGS

Each year, 2,500 U.S. Americans are arrested abroad, 1/3 of these arrests for possession of illegal drugs. So here it is in simple terms: don’t do drugs abroad. If you get caught doing drugs in another country you are fully subject to their laws (which are often more stringent than our own) and chances are good that you will spend time in prison, or worse: some nations have the death penalty for those found guilty of drug trafficking. Being a U.S. citizen gives you no special privileges. The U.S. embassy will not go out of its way to help you out. The Marines will not execute a daring amphibious landing to rescue you. And, HWS can do nothing to intervene other than to call your parents and advise them to hire an international lawyer – fast and at their own expense.

There are three key things to understand about this issue (drawn from a study of U.S. Americans in prison abroad by journalist Peter Laufer):

1. Most nations adhere to the Napoleonic code, which presumes the accused to be guilty until proven innocent.
2. Few nations grant bail between arrest and trial.
3. The State Department will rarely intervene to aid an accused or convicted American for fear of upsetting relations with the host country.

DON’T DO DRUGS ABROAD! Use of illegal drugs is, on top of everything noted above, grounds for being returned home to the US (to your parents’ home – not to your college) at your own expense and normally at the forfeit of academic credit (and tuition dollars) for the term. If you are caught using drugs abroad by the authorities, the only assistance the Faculty Directors and your home campuses will provide is to refer you (and your parents) to legal counsel. We cannot and will not intervene in matters between you and the local authorities. Breaking the law there is simply unacceptable and could be a decision you will spend a lifetime regretting.

4.6 TRAFFIC

Look both ways before you cross, cross in the cross-walk, obey the right-of-way rules. Traffic safety and the roles of drivers and pedestrians are deeply engrained in a car-oriented culture such as the U.S. When going abroad, it’s important—essential—to understand that like everything else, traffic rules differ from country to country. For students studying in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Japan, Australia or New Zealand or South Africa, you have to remember to look right first because that's
where the cars are coming from. This takes some getting used to! For students studying in Central Europe (such as Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic), you have to understand that people in general follow the rules. Pedestrians do not jay-walk; they wait for the walk signal—even if there isn’t a car in sight. In contrast to this are Italy, Spain, and France where general chaos often rules and pedestrians are expected to make way for cars—in the crosswalk, in the middle of the street, even sometimes on the sidewalk. And remember, in all countries, look out for bike traffic!

A final word about traffic: given the differences in the traffic rules but also patterns and driving customs, we strongly advise AGAINST ever renting a vehicle and driving yourself while abroad. Public transportation in most nations is far better and more accessible than it is here. Use it!

4.7 POLITICS

Don’t read the newspaper? Unfamiliar with what’s happening in Washington or New York, let alone the events shaking Paris or Moscow or Delhi? You’re in the minority. People around the world, by and large, know a lot about politics and spend a lot of time talking about it. Not just their politics, our politics. So it is very important to read up on what’s going on in the country you’re going to, and what’s going on here, too. We can pretty much guarantee you that people will press you for your opinion of the current U.S. administration or the next stop on the globe-trotting war on terror.

You can learn a lot from talking politics with surprisingly well-informed foreigners. Some of you might, however, be on the receiving end of angry talk against the United States. Second to the surprise over how knowledgeable people around the world are about politics is how angry many of them are over U.S. policies. In general people are very good at distinguishing between U.S. Americans and the U.S. government, but in some cases you might feel the need to remind them of this distinction and to diffuse some of the anger by saying that you might not necessarily agree with the policy either. It’s an instance where you’ll have to use your judgment. As you re-examine some of your values over time, you might also find yourself questioning some of your political beliefs. And you might change other’s minds as well. Eventually people all around the world will have to come to the table and talk out their differences…you might as well be in on it early.

4.8 NOTE TO STUDENTS ABROAD DURING AN ELECTION YEAR

It is easy to forget about your own country when you are abroad but you will find that the people in your local city and country are quite interested in following the U.S. national elections, particularly the election of the President. For many of you, this will be the first time when you are ‘legal’ to vote so it would be a shame to miss out on exercising your rights of citizenship. To obtain an absentee ballot and ensure that you have a voice in the election go to: www.longdistancevoter.org. Please note that procedures, deadlines, forms and instructions vary by State. To ensure that you do not miss the deadlines for your own state, we recommend that you start the process of requesting a ballot by September 1 at the latest.

SECTION 5: Coming Back

5.1 REGISTRATION & HOUSING

HWS Registration for the Spring semester

The Office of the Registrar will email instructions to you on how to register when you’re abroad. You will be directed to the Registrar’s webpage for the registration dates and course catalog, which is available online. You should not be at any registration disadvantage due to your off-campus status.
Be aware of time differences and remember that there may only be a small window of time for you to register, so plan accordingly. If you will be on a required excursion or break during your registration dates and will not have access to email, you may contact Chris Fitzgerald fitzgerald@hws.edu in the Registrar's office in advance and she can register for you but this option is ONLY for those who will not have internet access. Keep in mind that you can only register you for classes for which you have met the pre-requisite(s), are open to students in your class year, and do not require special permission of instructor. If special permissions are required, you can email the instructor BEFORE registration day, tell him/her you are abroad, state your case and ask him/her to issue the permit. Also, be sure to check before you leave HWS that you do not have a financial or administrative hold on your account or you may be unable to register.

HWS Housing Preferences

Fall students
Students who will be abroad for Fall do not participate in the general room selection process. They do not pre-select a space. Instead, they have two options:

- **Co-sign with a student who will be abroad for the following Spring**: This is a formal contract allowing them to swap spaces when the other goes/returns from abroad.
- **Participate in the online selection process in November of the semester they will be away**: For students returning to the colleges for the following Spring, an online room selection process takes place in November. Students abroad participate in this process.

There are some exceptions where Fall abroad students are allowed to participate:

- If the student wishes to live off-campus for the Spring semester, they should participate in the off-campus approval process which occurs in the semester before they leave.
- If the student wishes to be considered for a theme house opening when they return, they may participate in the theme house selection process. If they are accepted into the house, they will automatically be waitlisted and invited into the house if a space becomes available. They may also attend the house’s room selection meeting and try to identify someone to co-sign with at the meeting.

**Spring students**

Students who will be abroad for the Spring will be sent, electronically, all pertinent information about opportunities and procedures for the following Fall. Before you depart for your term abroad, you will be sent an email from Residential Education spelling out the housing selection process for rooms on campus (or off-campus approvals) for the fall. Room selection will be done online and you will be able to participate in the process exactly at the same time and through the same medium as everyone else on campus.

Please note that only rising seniors will be considered for off-campus housing status and you must apply for off-campus approval by the same process as students on campus. DO NOT SIGN A LEASE UNTIL YOU RECEIVE WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION

5.2 REENTRY AND READJUSTMENT

This information is designed to help you prepare for the transition back “home”. It is organized into two themes: *Closing the Circle* looks at a few things you can do now to prepare for the next phase of your international experience, coming home (or reentry). *Opening New Doors* suggests ways you can
keep your international experience alive and relevant, including information about some of the programs the CGE offers for returning students.

**CLOSING THE CIRCLE**
Are you ready to leave this place? Have you wrapped up all your academic work? Think back to all the times over the last few months (or in those months of planning and anticipation) that you said “before I leave I’d really like to…” Now’s the time to review this list and see if there’s any way to fit a few more of these things in before you go. We hope this will ignite a lifetime passion of travel and intercultural endeavor on your part, but although many students say they will return to their host country again, in reality most do not. So get out there while you can and have as few regrets as possible.

Think about all the photographs you’ve taken over the last few months. Did you really photograph everything that’s important to you? How about what you see on your walk to class every day? Or your host-family? Do you have a photograph of your favorite café or restaurant, or your host-country friends? Don’t end up with a thousand pictures of churches, temples or castles and none of the things that make up your day-to-day life, because it’s those commonplace details you’ll think-and talk-about most when you’re back.

**An idea: do a “day in the life of” photo-shoot. Photograph your whole day from morning till night, so you can visually answer the question “what was a typical day like?”**

**PACKING UP**
Remember the airline weight limits you worried about before you left? They still apply. Check with your airline if you don’t remember what they are. Now might also be a good time to pack up some things you wouldn’t have thought about bringing home otherwise. Think of the food you’ve (hopefully) grown to love over the last couple of months. Is there anything you’d like to share with your family, or just have at home for a taste of your host-country on those days when you’re missing it? (Remember you can only bring back dry or canned/jarred food, not fresh meat, agricultural products or cheese.) Are there any recipes you’d like to have? Now’s the time to ask about them and write them down.

Other things you might want to pack up include memories. If you’ve been keeping a journal, the last few weeks are a great time to reflect on your experience. The times in peoples’ lives that are characterized by change often have a crisper quality to them; every experience seems to be imbued with a deeper meaning. Try to capture this in your writing.

Ask yourself some questions:

- What did I accomplish while abroad?
- What did I learn about myself?
- What did I learn about this country?
- What friends did I make, and what did they teach me?
- What will I miss the most?
- What am I most looking forward to?
- What does this experience mean for my future? Will I live differently now?
- What did I learn about my own country and culture while abroad?
- Do I want to return to this place? What have I left undone?
You’ll want to ask yourself these questions again after you’ve been home for a while, but thinking about them now can be rewarding and can help you put a little closure on your experience.

COMING HOME
The first (and often surprising) thing to know about coming home is that in many ways you will feel like you did when you arrived in your host country a few months ago: exhausted and excited. Probably it will feel as great to be home as it felt to be in your host country for the first few days, though for different reasons. You’ll enjoy some home cooking, calls from old friends, and telling your family about your experiences.

But, just as your initial elation at being in a new and excited place was tempered by a realization at how foreign and unfamiliar it felt, your honeymoon period at home may also start to not seem totally right. Things that you expected to be familiar may now seem quite alien. Your ears might find it weird to hear English being spoken everywhere. You might think your family throws too much away. You may balk at spending $50 for a meal out when you know your host family lived off that much for a month. The abundance in the supermarket may stop you in your tracks, as you have become used to getting by with less. You may be dismayed at how fast-paced US culture is, or frustrated at how little people actually want to hear about all your experiences (or look at all your pictures). You may not experience every single one of these things, but most of you will experience some of them. The most important thing to realize is that this is totally normal, and the ups and downs you’re experiencing constitute what is frequently called “reverse culture shock”. It actually often gets mapped just like the U-curve:

The most important step in being ready for reverse culture shock is to expect it, and to realize that most of it is caused not by changes in home, but changes in you. You won’t know how far you’ve come until you can reflect on the journey from the place you call(ed) home. This is actually a great time to not only learn about yourself and how you’ve grown while abroad, it’s also a great time to learn about home from a far more objective perspective than you’ve ever had before. Lots of students come back saying that they never felt more American than when they were abroad, and never more foreign than when they were back in the US.

The first thing to do is relax. Like culture shock the first time around, you’ll get through this, and end up stronger for the experience. You’ll have your ups and downs, good days and bad. Some of the same coping skills you used to get yourself through the low points while abroad will serve you well here—reflect in your journals, keep active, rest and eat well, explore your surroundings with new eyes. Soon you will have adjusted, though we hope that you’re never quite the same as you were before your experience abroad!

OPENING NEW DOORS
While the last section dealt with things you needed to address while still abroad, this section examines your (new) life at home and back on campus. And while we encouraged you to put some closure on
your experience abroad, now we’re going to suggest you take the next step—figuring out what doors have opened to you as a result of your experiences. We’ve posed a series of questions below with some information as well as suggestions where you can find out more.

**DO YOU WANT TO STAY INVOLVED WITH STUDY ABROAD?**
Get involved. Talk about your semester abroad in your classes. Make a zine about it. Come to Away Café and tell a story that crosses borders. The students who continue their international experiences often go on to international careers, or exciting opportunities like Peace Corps or the Fulbright Program. To start with, consider becoming a *Global Ambassador*. Ambassadors help the CGE represent programs to prospective students at admissions events, general information sessions for study abroad programs, and general and program-specific orientations, as well as tabling, and talking to classes. Contact Doug Reilly at dreilly@hws.edu.

**DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE COUNTRY YOU STUDIED IN?**
Talk to your advisor, the faculty director of the program or anyone at the CGE; we'll help you find courses that may build upon your experiences. You can also consider an independent study; talk to your academic advisor to find out more. Some students focus their honor’s thesis on their country of study as well.

**DO YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT INTERNATIONAL CAREERS?**
Maybe you think you’d like to make travel a part of the rest of your life. Maybe you’d like to spend a few years after graduation traveling or working abroad before settling down. Career Services and the Center for Global Education present an International Career Workshop every semester. In addition, please visit Career Services and the CGE and learn about some of the many options!

**DO YOU WANT TO PUBLISH YOUR WRITING, ART OR PHOTOGRAPHY?**
There are several opportunities available to you. There’s a yearly photo contest, usually held in the Spring semester, and the CGE curates a gallery space on the third floor of Trinity Hall called the *Global Visions Gallery*. *GVG* hosts individual and group shows, with the goal of opening a new show each semester. If you have an idea for a show, see Doug Reilly. There’s also *The Aleph: a journal of global perspectives*, published every Spring by the Center for Global Education and an editorial board of students just like you. To submit your work to the Aleph or learn more about the editorial board, email Doug Reilly at the CGE at dreilly@hws.edu.

**DO YOU WANT TO SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH FELLOW STUDENTS?**
Learn about becoming a paid Programming Assistant (PA) with the CGE and help orient other students going abroad, help the CGE develop on-campus programs aimed at making HWS a more culturally-diverse place, and help us out with programs like the photo contest, *The Aleph*, and International Week.

**DO YOU WANT TO MAKE A FILM ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE ABROAD?**
Doug Reilly at The Center for Global Education has been regularly offering a Reader's College on digital storytelling. Students meet each week to eat, tell stories, learn about making films, and actually make their own three-minute digital story. This is a great way to both process your experience and also create a statement about it that you can share widely. Contact Doug Reilly at dreilly@hws.edu for more information.

**DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOUR REENTRY EXPERIENCE?**
The staff of the CGE love to talk about study abroad. Most of us have studied abroad ourselves - that’s why we do the work we do today. Make an appointment with one of us or just drop in - if we’re available, we’d be more than happy to hear about your experiences. It helps us learn how students perceive our programs, and it gives you a chance to talk to someone who understands.

Our hope is that you’ll take advantage of one or more of these opportunities.