



Royal Roads  
UNIVERSITY

# PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

**Office of International Collaboration and Development**

**T** 1-250.391.2600 | **F** 1-250.391.2623

2005 Sooke Road, Victoria, BC Canada V9B 5Y2 | [royalroads.ca](http://royalroads.ca)

**#royalroads** | **FB** [Royal Roads Intl](#) | **IN** [RRU](#) |

**YouTube** [RoyalRoadsUni](#) | **Weibo** [RRU](#)

**LIFE.CHANGING**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	4
TIMELINE .....	5
FOUR MONTHS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE .....	5
TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE .....	5
ONE MONTH PRIOR TO DEPARTURE .....	5
ONE WEEK PRIOR TO DEPARTURE.....	5
TRAVEL DOCUMENTS.....	5
AIRLINE TICKETS .....	5
PASSPORT AND VISAS .....	5
CANADIAN CUSTOMS CERTIFICATES .....	6
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARD (ISIC) .....	6
HEALTH AND MEDICAL.....	7
HEALTH HABITS .....	7
PRECAUTIONS.....	7
PRESCRIPTIONS .....	7
MEDICAL SERVICES AT DESTINATION INSTITUTION .....	7
IMMUNIZATIONS .....	7
MEDICAL INSURANCE .....	7
SAFETY.....	9
PERSONAL SAFETY .....	9
HARASSMENT .....	10
EMERGENCIES.....	10
<i>PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES:</i> .....	10
CONSULAR ASSISTANCE.....	11
INSURANCE.....	11
WILL .....	11
DUPLICATION OF DOCUMENTS .....	11
RISK ASSUMPTION & LIABILITY WAIVER.....	11
MONEY MATTERS.....	12
CURRENCY .....	12
EXCHANGE RATE .....	12
CURRENCY CHANGES.....	12
NUMBERS .....	12
CASH.....	12
ATM .....	12
CREDIT CARDS.....	12
TRAVELERS' CHEQUES .....	12
CULTURE .....	12
STUDY GOALS .....	12
CULTURAL EXPERIENCES.....	12

RESEARCH TOOLS .....	12
CULTURE SHOCK.....	13
CULTURAL COMPARISONS .....	13
TRAVEL & CURRENT EVENTS .....	14
SEASONS .....	14
TRAVEL .....	14
HOLIDAYS .....	14
TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF YOUR DESTINATION COUNTRY.....	14
NEWS (DESTINATION COUNTRY).....	14
OTHER RESOURCES .....	14
PACKING.....	15
PACK LIGHT ... NO, REALLY LIGHT!.....	15
CLOTHING .....	15
MEDICINE AND TOILETRIES .....	16
MISCELLANEOUS: .....	16
DOCUMENTS AND OTHER .....	16
MISCELLANEOUS.....	17
CANADIAN CONTACTS.....	17
MAIL .....	17
POSTAGE AND PARCELS.....	17
E-MAIL.....	17
TIME DIFFERENCE .....	17
TELEPHONE .....	17
RRU WEBSITE.....	17
MY QUESTIONS & CONCERNS .....	17

# INTRODUCTION

---

The responsibility for your Study Abroad preparation does not rest with the staff of Royal Roads University. Staff can and will guide you, but ultimately **you must prepare yourself** for the period of the **Study Abroad**. Having an enjoyable study abroad experience means learning how to travel responsibly and sometimes, independently.

To assist you in this process, Royal Roads University has prepared a **Pre-Departure Orientation Handbook**. Information has been taken from a variety of sources including tips from students and staff who have travelled, studied and/or worked abroad.

This Handbook is fundamentally a series of questions on travel, study and life in another culture. Although you may have answers to some questions already, there will be other issues that require research. **Your Handbook requires that you find the answers by searching them out for yourself**. Remember, answering the questions should keep surprises to a minimum once you arrive in your destination country.

## **Here are some good places to start researching and finding answers:**

- The Internet (surprise!)
- Students and locals who have lived or traveled in the countries you will visit
- The library
- A travel guide (can be purchased at any bookstore or may be found at the library)

## **Acknowledgements**

Royal Roads University wishes to acknowledge and thank the sources we have used to create our Study Abroad Pre-Departure Orientation Handbook.

# TIMELINE

---

## FOUR MONTHS prior to departure

- Get your PASSPORT
- Start to RESEARCH YOUR DESTINATION COUNTRY and its culture
- Research any vaccinations/medications you will need to take prior to departure

## TWO MONTHS prior to departure

- Make sure that you have medical insurance and check the limitations on the policy
- Get a physical and have a health card filled out with prescription information
- Get your VISAS for destination country study (if required) and other countries' travel
- Purchase a travel guide or make your own
- Get any immunizations required to visit the destination country (see page 7 for more info)

## ONE MONTH prior to departure

- Make sure that you are available to attend the mandatory pre-departure orientation scheduled by Royal Roads University
- If you plan to travel after the Study Abroad make sure all your arrangements are completed
- Arrange for your International Student Identity Card (some host institutions provide this card)
- Arrange for your MONEY matters (traveler's cheques, credit cards, ATM cards) and determine bank fees for overseas bank activity (you may want to talk to someone about a banking plan that best accommodates your needs)

## ONE WEEK prior to departure

- Confirm with the assigned staff person at RRU that everything is in order and you will be departing as scheduled

# TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

---

## Airline Tickets

For students participating in RRU Study Abroad, travel arrangements to and from your destination country may be arranged through RRU's preferred travel agent. If you wish to travel after the Study Abroad, you will need to pre-arrange this.

## Passport and Visas

Prior to your trip, you should ensure that you organize your travel documents well in advance, especially your passport and travel visa(s). It is essential for you to check with your destination country's embassy or consulate regarding their specific regulations for passport validity and visa requirements.

Passport	Visas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that your passport is valid for minimum of <b>6 months</b> beyond your scheduled date of departure from your destination country</li><li>• Check country-specific visa requirements and apply for a visa, if applicable</li><li>• Check if you need a medical exam</li><li>• Review the <a href="#">DFAIT Country Travel Reports and</a></li></ul>	<p>Visas are special permissions to visit a country and are issued by the destination country. Not all countries require a visa for Canadian citizens. However, if you are planning to stay for more than a specified period in a country, you will be required to acquire the appropriate visa.</p> <p>A visa gives travellers official permissions to enter a country and allows you to stay in the country for a specific duration of time. Some countries require a formal application for an entry</p>

[Advisories](#) website for your destination country

- Prior to departure, please ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months beyond the end of your trip. If you are unsure, please check with your destination country's embassy or consulate regarding their regulations. In most cases, you cannot apply for a visa without a valid passport. For more information about passports, please visit your country of citizenship's official website.

#### **TIPS:**

- Make a photocopy of the picture page of your passport and save it on your hard drive or print a copy. Keep this copy separate from your passport.
- Always keep your passport in a safe place. Do not keep it in an outer compartment of your backpack, carrier or suitcase.
- Upon arrival in your destination country, keep your passport and passport copy in separate safe places.
- When going on excursions, do not bring your passport with you unless absolutely necessary – bring a photocopy instead.

visa either in advance of your trip or upon arrival at the border. Some countries do not require travellers to obtain a visa. Some countries have specific visa requirements depending on your country of origin. You should be sure to research your destination country's visa requirements well in advance of your trip.

**IMPORTANT** – As a traveller, it is your sole responsibility to ensure that you meet visa requirements for your destination countries. You are responsible for being aware of the rules and restrictions governing visas and the duration of your stay abroad. Be aware that if you stay beyond the expiry of your visa, you could be fined, deported or even arrested

#### **TIPS:**

- Research your destination country's visa requirements (plus visa requirements for any country that you will be travelling through).
- Apply early – visa applications can take several weeks or months to process.
- Review the [DFAIT Travel Reports and Warnings](#).
- Check the DFAIT website regularly prior to your trip. Entry and exit requirements may change before your departure.
- Do not remove your visa from your passport once it has been attached.
- Ensure that your arrival and departure dates are correct. If you extend your stay, you may need to apply for another visa.
- If you are an international student at RRU on a student visa, check your Canadian re-entry documents for expiry dates so that you don't encounter any problems when re-entering Canada.

### **Canadian Customs Certificates**

These certificates are for personal valuables accompanying you abroad. They must be completed and returned to Canada Customs before you leave, as proof of prior ownership when you return. You can register your camera, computer, jewelry and other valuables before you leave so that you will not be required to pay duty on these when you return to Canada.

### **International Student Identification Card (ISIC)**

An [International Student Identity Card \(ISIC\)](#) is the only internationally accepted proof of full-time student status. Students can take advantage of countless benefits and discounts with their ISIC card while they are abroad. This card lets you receive discounts for travel on many airlines and ground transportation, as well as cultural sites. In addition, this card provides a basic plan of accident/medical insurance for travel outside of the Canada as well as access to an international toll-free hotline for assistance in medical, legal or financial emergencies.

# HEALTH AND MEDICAL

---

## Health Habits

- What health risks are there in your destination country?
- What are the health risks in other countries or areas you may visit?

## Precautions

- What should you do to protect yourself from health risks identified above?
- Inoculations
- Medicines
- Certain clothing
- Other

## Prescriptions

- Are you taking any prescription medicines that you will need while abroad?
- Do you have enough medicine to last you the entire time that you are abroad?
- If not, how will you get your medication while you are abroad?

Prescription medications may come under intense scrutiny by foreign officials. In some countries, drugs that are legal and readily available in Canada are considered illegal or require a prescription. Please visit the [travelling with medication](#) information on the government website.

Before your departure from Canada, contact the [Embassy in Canada](#) of the country you plan to visit and confirm the status of your medication.

When travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medication:

- Pack an extra supply of your medication in case you are away for longer than expected
- Carry a copy of the original prescription, and ensure that both the generic and trade names of the drug are included in case your medication is lost or stolen (a doctor's note describing why you are taking the medication is also recommended)
- If you are taking a less common medication, check to ensure that it is readily available in the country you intend to visit

Your medications should be packed in the original, labeled container to avoid problems with customs officials. Do not try to save luggage space by combining medications into a single container. Make sure you are aware of what the health regulations are in your country and in your destination country. Please visit [Canadian regulations](#) for more information.

## Medical Services at Destination Institution

- Are there any medical services provided by your host institution and where is it?
- Who can you call to find information out about the medical services?

## Immunizations

Prior to arriving in your destination country, you should make yourself aware of travel health information, such as the types of immunizations and vaccines needed for certain destinations. For more information and recommendations on vaccinations, visit a travel clinic or the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) website.

## Medical Insurance

You must have medical insurance that will cover you while you are abroad. If you are a full-time, on-campus undergraduate student, your extended health plan at Royal Roads University covers you for travel and medical emergencies abroad. If you have opted out of the RRU plan, please contact the coordinator of the Study Abroad Program immediately to discuss your options.

If you are insured by [guard.me International Insurance](http://guard.me), your coverage will cover you in any country except for your home country. Please note that premiums for countries where the DFAIT Risk Assessment is Level 3 (Avoid Non-Essential Travel) are increased by \$0.40 per person per day. If the risk is at Level 4 (Avoid All Travel), no coverage is effective for the trip. Benefits are not payable for any injuries and/or treatments in any area where the Risk Assessment is Level 4.

For students covered by MSP, you may wish to consider travel insurance, travel cancellation insurance and liability insurance on accompanying household and personal effects. Rates may vary depending on your length of time away. Not all travel and medical insurance plans are equal, so you are responsible for assessing your own international health coverage needs and plans that are available to ensure that you have sufficient coverage while you are away.

*\*If you are travelling to a country or region with a DFAIT advisory level of “AVOID NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL” or “AVOID ALL TRAVEL,” you **will NOT** be covered by MSP or the RRU extended health plan. You will need to purchase special insurance.*

Things to keep in mind:

- Familiarize yourself with your plan before your departure
- Review travel and medical insurance policies carefully before choosing a plan to ensure that all of your needs will be covered while you are abroad
- Ensure to carry all proper documentation with you while travelling
- Make a note of the correct number to call if you need to contact your insurance provider from abroad.

There are THREE types of medical insurance:

- **Basic** – The British Columbia Medical Service Plan (MSP) or another provincial plan covers basic insurance. You must be covered by MSP or a provincial equivalent to be eligible for an extended plan.
- **Extended** (required for international travel) – This insurance typically covers medical issues during international travel. It is only valid if you have basic provincial coverage and covers dental, vision, and prescription drugs.
- **Emergency** (recommended for international travel) – Emergency insurance covers medical emergencies such as medical evacuations and emergency surgeries. If you are only covered by MSP or another basic provincial plan, you must purchase additional medical insurance from a private company.

When choosing your travel abroad health insurance plan, ensure that the following items are included:

- Continuous coverage before departure and after returning
- Coverage that is renewable from abroad for the duration of your stay
- 24-hour emergency contact number
- Coverage of medical evaluation costs
- Hospitalization for illness or accident
- Deductible costs
- Procedures to file claims
- Maximum hospitalization coverage

### **Questions to ask when choosing a plan:**

*What is the scope of your coverage?*

- Are vaccinations covered?
- What is the amount you are covered for (per incident)?
- What is the maximum amount of coverage provided?
- Medical and security evacuation in the case of natural disaster or political conflict?
- What is the coverage for medical evacuation?
- Are you covered for high-risk activities?



- Are you covered for hospitalization for accidents and illnesses while abroad?
- Do you have pre-existing medical conditions?
- Are your pre-existing medical conditions covered by your insurance provider?
- In the event of death, what is the coverage for return of remains?
- Are you covered for visits to the doctor or medication prescribed while abroad?
- Are you required to purchase medical coverage with a national plan (i.e. the equivalent of BC's MSP)?
- Is there a booklet or brochure explaining the coverage in detail?

#### *Payment & Expenses*

- Are there deductibles? If so, what are they?
- Are you covered for charges in excess of the provincial healthcare allowance?
- Will the plan include emergency room expenses?
- What do you do under the plan if you have to pay cash up front and have no money?
- What are the procedures for filing a claim? How long does it take to get reimbursed after filing?
- Is your plan designed to prevent out-of-pocket expenses?
- What are the recommended steps for payment?
- Should you contact your medical insurance provider before incurring medical expenses?

#### *Period of Coverage*

- When does the plan begin and end?
- Does the plan have continuous coverage before, during and after you go abroad?
- Are you travelling as part of an exchange or internship? Does your health insurance cover you for the duration for your exchange/internship? If not, what is the period of time that you are covered for?
- Is the plan a primary or secondary carrier? If it is secondary, when does the coverage begin?

Some countries may require that you have a medical examination or certain vaccinations before entry. Be sure to check with your destination country's embassy/consulate, or consult the [DFAIT Travel Advisory](#). It is vitally important to review vaccination requirements prior to your departure. Vaccinations should be recorded on an International Certificate of Vaccination card, available from passport offices. This card should be signed by a medical official at the time of the vaccination.

### **Travel Health Kit**

While you are travelling, it is a good idea to plan ahead and pack some over-the-counter medication and first aid supplies for unexpected incidences. Some things to prepare for:

#### **Allergies**

Insect bites  
General pain  
Constipation and diarrhea

#### **Infection and Inflammation**

Heartburn and indigestion  
Travel sickness, nausea and vomiting  
Fever

## **SAFETY**

---

### **Personal Safety**

As you prepare for your travels outside of Canada you should think about your personal safety. As you would in many areas here in Canada, you should continue to use care and caution while travelling abroad.

Remember, ignorance is not an excuse! Students participating in a study abroad program are expected to be familiar with and follow the laws of the destination country as well as other countries the student may be visiting. Failure to do so could have very serious legal implications including possible prison sentences. Students being charged with an offence should contact the Canadian Embassy immediately; however, they should not expect any benefits from the Canadian government if they have broken a local national law.

The following are some common safe travel suggestions to help you plan:

- Before you head off, familiarize yourself with any trouble spots and/or potential conflicts in the countries you plan to visit, and be aware of current events while you are away. Visit the Department of [Global Affairs](#) website for more information. Please also visit
- Protect your valuables from pickpockets by remaining alert and cautious. Conceal your valuables in a money belt or neck-safe under your clothing while traveling
- Do not leave your luggage unattended and do not agree to carry or check any luggage or other items for anyone
- If you are looking for a taxi, 'official' taxi stops are generally located outside airports, train and bus stations
- Do not impair your judgment by consuming excessive amounts of alcohol or by using drugs
- Always avoid traveling alone
- As is wise anywhere, do not walk alone at night or in remote and unfamiliar areas. Stay near busy and well-lit areas
- Avoid demonstrations. What appears to be a peaceful demonstration can suddenly change into a dangerous situation and you can become caught up in an unwanted situation
- Leave your travel itinerary – where you are going and when you expect to return – with the international office of the host College and with a friend

## Harassment

While RRU attempts to ensure its students are not placed where racism, homophobia and/or sexism are evident or rife, we do recognize that in some cultures and some countries one or all of the above may be an issue. Please prepare for your travels by thoroughly researching (on the internet, using travel guides and talking with past participants) your destination country and region to have a better understanding of the culture and society. If you find yourself in an uncomfortable situation involving some form of harassment, please contact the international office of your host institution and/or contact RRU International Programs Office for possible guidance and assistance.

## EMERGENCIES

---

There are different kinds of emergencies that could occur while you are abroad. These could include environmental (e.g. earthquakes), personal (e.g. petty theft), or health safety issues (e.g. illness). Understanding the different situations that could arise will help you to prepare a proper emergency plan.

Things to keep in mind:

- Consider possible emergency situations that could occur in your destination country and plan accordingly.
- Carry your Emergency Wallet Card with you at all times while you are abroad.
- Make a note of the emergency phone number to call in your destination country – keep in mind that it may not be 9-1-1.

Preparing for Emergencies:

- Complete and submit the RRU Student Emergency Contact and Travel Information Form available in the international office (Grant 130).
- Print and complete the Emergency Wallet Card – stash it somewhere safe and keep it with you at all times.

- Check the [DFAIT website](#) to keep abreast of up-to-date events in your destination country.
- Familiarize yourself with contact numbers for local police, embassies and your host organization's contact (if applicable)
- If you are Canadian, register with the [Registration for Canadians Abroad](#), or the equivalent for your home country.

## Consular Assistance

There are a few ways to access emergency consular assistance while you are abroad. For emergency help during business hours, you should call your [nearest embassy or consulate directly](#).

If you call outside of office hours, your telephone call will automatically be transferred to a consular officer in Ottawa OR you will be asked to leave a message for a return call. In normal circumstances, an operations officer will get back to you within 15 minutes.

You may also contact DFAIT's Emergency Watch and Response Centre in Ottawa 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call Collect: 1.613.944.6788

Email: [sos@international.gc.ca](mailto:sos@international.gc.ca)

You may also call from within Canada: 1.800.267.6788 **OR** 613.944.6788

Helpful Quick Links:

[DFAIT Country Travel Reports & Advisories](#)

This site contains reports and advisories from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT), in addition to other important travel tips.

[Canadian Offices Abroad](#)

[Foreign Embassies](#)

[Registration for Canadians Abroad](#)

## Insurance

You may wish to consider travel insurance, travel cancellation insurance and liability insurance on accompanying household and personal effects. Rates may vary depending on your length of time away. Find out if your personal items are covered by your (or your parents') homeowner's policy while you are away.

## Will

It may happen. In consideration of family members, ensure that your will is in good order. In the event of a tragedy, the Canadian embassy will contact your family and help to make the required arrangements. If you are international student, be sure to make yourself aware of what steps to take in order to prepare yourself and your family in the event of tragedy. This may involve contacting your home country's embassy/consulate in Canada prior to your departure.

## Duplication of Documents

It is a good idea to make copies of valuable documents and to leave them in the safekeeping of friends or family. Documents that should be copied include your Birth Certificate, your Passport, travelers' cheques and university transcripts. It is also a good idea to carry several extra passport-sized photos with you, for visas or for other identification purposes while you are away.

## Risk Assumption & Liability Waiver

This form, which can be signed by you or by your parents, is required before you depart.

# MONEY MATTERS

---

## Currency

- How much currency will you take with you? \_\_\_\_\_ In what categories [CAN\_\_\_\_\_US \_\_\_\_\_ Foreign \_\_\_\_\_

## Exchange Rate

- What is the exchange rate for Canadian currency in the destination country?

Rate \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Source \_\_\_\_\_

## Currency Changes

- Where can you change currency in the destination country?
- Where can you get information abroad regarding rates and the best currency exchanges?

## Numbers

- Have you written down the numbers of your traveler's cheques, credit cards? \_\_\_ (yes) \_\_\_ (no)
- Remember to leave the list of numbers in a safe place.

## Cash

- How do you plan to handle cash while abroad? How much cash should you have at one time? How will you safeguard it?

## ATM

- Where can you find a list of ATM's abroad that will accept your card? Write down your PIN and keep it in a safe place.

## Credit Cards

- Have you informed your credit card company that you will be using the card abroad? \_\_\_ (yes) \_\_\_ (no)  
Be sure to have the credit card customer service number with you.

## Travelers' Cheques

- What documents must you have when you use the traveler's cheques? Remember to write down the numbers of the cheques and keep them in a safe place.

# CULTURE

---

## Study Goals

- Write down 3 of your goals or expectations for this trip

## Cultural Experiences

- Write down 3 cultural experiences you want to have during your study abroad experience

## Research Tools

There are many sources for learning about your destination country. Aside from a visit to your local public library, the internet, travel books, seek out people from that country. Write down ways you can learn about your host culture in the following categories:

- Title and author of a book about the culture:
- One person you know who has visited or lived in the country:
- Website about the country:

- One source of current news about the country:
- Other

### **Culture Shock**

- What is culture shock and what are the stages of culture shock?
- List 3 symptoms of culture shock.

### **Cultural Comparisons**

	<b>Canadian Culture</b>	<b>Host Culture</b>
<b>Communication Styles</b>		
<b>Gestures</b>		
<b>Personal Appearance (Dress)</b>		
<b>Recreation and Leisure Activities</b>		
<b>Eating Habits</b>		
<b>Food (Diet)</b>		
<b>Family Lifestyle</b>		
<b>Dating/Marriage</b>		
<b>Religion and Spirituality</b>		
<b>Local Views on Sex, Alcohol and Drugs</b>		

# TRAVEL & CURRENT EVENTS

---

## Seasons

- What season(s) will it be in your destination country while you are there?
- How will this affect your packing?

## Travel

- What are four things you expect to see and to do in your destination country?

## Holidays

- What is the national holiday (similar to July 1 in Canada) in your destination country?
- Which holidays will happen during your stay?
- What are the dates of the host institution breaks?

## Travel Outside of Your Destination Country

- What other countries do you expect to visit during your stay?
- What travel documents are required to visit these countries?

## News (Destination Country)

- What is the name of the major political leader in your destination country?
- What form of government exists in the destination country?
- Identify the following relating to your destination country:
  - One major current news event
  - One major current sporting event/group/or player
  - One national popular entertainer
  - One internationally recognized person

# OTHER RESOURCES

---

**Air Security International: Hot Spots:** Up-to-date information on various situations throughout the world, including important reminders of anniversary dates which may indicate an increased risk.

**Health Canada:** This comprehensive web site contains current information on health, inoculations, and current conditions in countries throughout the world.

**Global Affairs:** Contains travel information and advisory reports from the Canadian government.

**Foreign & Commonwealth Office:** This is the British version of the US State Department consular information sheets. Information on world news and travel can be found at this website.

**Foreign Affairs and Trade/Australia:** This service offered by the foreign affairs office of Australia provides hints for travelers and consular information by country.

**Kroll & Associates:** A private investigation and risk assessment company with offices through out the US and world. Features current press releases on world situations.

**Transport Canada:** Information for Canadians flying internationally. Includes listings of what you can and cannot pack in your hand luggage.

**World Clock:** Easily check the time difference between major cities and convert the time zones between home and your current location.

## PACKING

---

Safety begins when you pack! To avoid being a target, dress conservatively. A flashy wardrobe, or one that is too casual, can mark you as a tourist. As much as possible, avoid the appearance of affluence.

- How many weeks will you be abroad?
- While abroad, will the season change?
- How often will you do your laundry?
- How accessible will the washing facilities be?
- What are the customs in your destination country regarding energy conservation, hot water usage, and room temperature?
- Does your host supply linens? If not, do you plan to buy them there or take them with you?
- Do you plan to take appliances?
- What is the electrical current in your destination country?
- What kinds of plugs are necessary? And adaptors?
- What toiletries do you need to take and in what quantity?

Consider taking something small and special that will remind you of home (a keep-sake, music, photos of family and your pet).

Keep important documents in your carry-on luggage or a neck pouch. Remember to keep a change of clothes and your medications in your carry-on in case there is a problem with your bags.

Remember, most people around the world do not feel the need to wear a different outfit every day. Black is the favorite non-color. Loud, colorful t-shirts, white shoes (especially Reeboks and Nikes), ball caps, and anything with corporate logos will mark you as a North American.

Pack your bags and then lift everything (including your carry-on, favorite stuffed animal, travel guide, etc.) and walk five blocks! If you are panting or in serious risk of heart failure, unpack and then re-pack with half of what you were going to take.

### **Pack Light ... No, Really Light!**

The packing dilemma may be the biggest stress in your life in the weeks before you leave. Most airlines allow you to check one bag and bring one carry-on. Keep in mind that every item you pack may return to haunt your weary feet and aching back! After packing, walk several blocks with the luggage you plan to carry. Your best bet is to keep it simple. Use this list as a guideline and pick and choose what is essential for you.

#### **Clothing:**

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1 pair of walking shoes (break them in before you go to avoid blisters) |                       |
| 1 pair of flip-flops (showers may be less than scrupulously clean)      |                       |
| 3-5 pairs of socks  | 5-7 pair of underwear |
| 1-2 pair of shorts  | 1-2 skirts/trousers   |
| 2 shirts  | 1 sweater/sweatshirt  |

- 1 poncho/rain jacket
- 1 bathing suit
- 1 semi-nice outfit (2-3 if you plan on attending formal events)
- 1 light jacket
- 1 hat

**Medicine and Toiletries:**

- Prescription medicine (keep it in the original bottle and carry a copy of the prescription)
- Glasses, sunglasses, contact lenses and cleaning solution (carry a copy of lens prescription)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Comb and brush
- Deodorant
- Aspirin
- Tampons
- Soap and shampoo (travel sizes)
- Sunscreen, moisturizers, cosmetics
- First aid kit
- Kleenex
- Razor blades (must be in checked luggage)

**Miscellaneous:**

- Swiss army knife (must be in checked luggage)
- Camera and film
- Flashlight
- Orientation Handbook
- Backpack
- Sewing kit
- Hostel sleepsack
- Umbrella
- Battery-operated alarm clock
- Batteries Adapter and voltage converter
- Watch
- Address book
- Books, guides and maps
- Laundry soap, line and clothespins
- Stuff bags (plastic storage bags)
- Change purse
- Luggage locks and tags

**Documents and Other :**

- International Student Identity Card (ISIC)
- Passport (and visa)
- Insurance documents
- International Driving Permit
- Money belt or neck wallet
- Host Institution documents
- Tickets and rail passes
- Hostel membership card
- Cash, traveler's checks, credit cards



## MISCELLANEOUS

---

### Canadian Contacts

- What offices, agencies or people must you contact to update changes in your address or contact information after you are settled in your destination country?

### Mail

- Is your mail to be forwarded?
- Have you informed the people who will receive your mail?

### Postage and Parcels

- How much is postage from your destination country to Canada?
- How long will it take for a box to arrive in Canada?

### E-Mail

- What is your e-mail address while abroad?
- Will you have e-mail in your destination country or at your host institution?
- How do you get e-mail if it is not included in your study abroad location?

### Time Difference

- What is the time difference between Victoria and your destination country?
- Have you informed your friends and family of the difference?

### Telephone

- Are you setting up a schedule for your family to call at a certain time on certain days?
- Is it cheaper for people to call you from Canada or vice-versa?
- Are you planning to bring a cell/smart phone?
- Have you checked with your current service provider about abroad fees or cellular service in the destination country?

### RRU Website

- While you are abroad, RRU would like to share your impressions with other students who are considering study abroad.
- Would you be interested in writing a testimonial and sharing photos with RRU?

## MY QUESTIONS & CONCERNS

---

Write down questions and concerns to bring up during the pre-departure orientation.  
Be sure to write down the answers as well.