

SALT LAKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR STUDY ABROAD



Congratulations and welcome to one of the Salt Lake Community College study abroad programs. We are confident that you will find your experience in this program both life-changing and enlightening. By choosing to travel and study abroad, for whatever period of time, you are choosing to expand your personal, academic, and cultural view of the world.

Many times students have unique experiences while studying abroad, including: language issues, culture shock, scheduling problems, and personal behaviors not typical of your home experience. We sincerely hope that you will be excited by these challenges, and that you will view them as an opportunity to learn and grow personally. Also, we hope that you will utilize your intelligence, maturity, patience, flexibility and your sense of humor to manage any experience that comes your way. The information provided to you in this handbook should begin to answer most of your pre-travel questions. However, we strongly suggest that you enhance your experience by studying the customs and culture of the country you will be traveling to before you leave the United States. The more you know the better your experience will be.

Along with this handbook, specific information about the program you have registered for will be provided separately. There are several forms which require your signature. It is your responsibility to make certain they are returned to the college by the applicable due dates. Refer to your specific program information for these due dates. Any questions or forms should be addressed to:

Study Abroad Office
Salt Lake Community College (TB 325B)
4600 S Redwood Rd.
P.O. Box 30808
Salt Lake City, UT 84130-0808
Phone: 801.957.4593
Fax: 801.957.4980
Email: sandra.kikuchi@slcc.edu
Website:

Please read this handbook carefully and feel free to share it with anyone who might need information about your program. Also, take it with you when you leave for easy reference.

Also, there will be group orientation meetings with your group leader and a mandatory pre-departure meeting with your group leader and the Director of Study Abroad where specific travel information will be shared and travel packets will be distributed.

Salt Lake Community College Study Abroad Policies

Terms, Conditions, and Responsibilities

Salt Lake Community College has specific policy, procedure, terms, and conditions for all study abroad and student foreign travel programs. As a participant in a study abroad program you will be required to sign a copy of the "Terms, Conditions, and Responsibilities" form indicating that you have read and understand the document. Please take the time to read this and all other documents carefully. Be aware that there are legal aspects and considerations for your participation in our study abroad programs. Also, if your program has a host institution abroad, that institution may have forms which must be completed and signed as well.

Name and Passport Information

It is required that the name on your records **matches exactly** your name as it appears on your passport for all international travel. It is your responsibility to assure that all forms match your passport. Any cost for a name correction or re-issuing of a ticket will be the sole responsibility of the student participant. Therefore it is critical that your paperwork is filled out accordingly.

Documents

If you do not have a passport you can obtain a passport application from most local U.S. Post Offices. It is important to apply for your passport at least eight to nine weeks before your planned departure from the U.S. There are companies who expedite your passport application for a fee (usually \$75.00 or more). However it is strongly suggested that you not delay this process.

If you already have a passport, it is important that it will be valid for at least six months beyond your expected return date. If your passport is about to expire, it is advised that you obtain a new one before your trip.

Once you have your passport, make three photocopies of the front page (the one with your picture and information on it). Leave one copy at home with your family or a responsible friend, give one copy to the Study Abroad Office, and take one with you. Keep your copy separate from your actual passport. This copy will help you receive a replacement passport in case yours is lost, stolen, or destroyed.

Make and keep copies of other important documents and your credit cards as well. This is not required but is strongly suggested.

Orientation Meetings

Your group leader will hold an Orientation Meeting or several Orientation Meetings, depending on the program in which you are participating. These meetings are very important to your success in the program. It is strongly suggested that you attend all Orientation Meetings scheduled for your program. This is a great opportunity to meet all of the participants in your specific program.

Pre-Departure Meeting

Attendance at a pre-departure meeting is required. You will be notified of this meeting well in advance and you should make every possible effort to attend. If you cannot attend due to a serious conflict with the meeting time, please contact the Study Abroad Program (957-4593) and schedule an individual Pre-Departure meeting to assure that you have all of the information required.

Current Personal Contact Information

Please make sure that the Study Abroad Program has all of your current contact information. Accurate mailing addresses, phone numbers, cell phone numbers, and e-mail addresses are critical in order to update you on any changes to your program or last minute updates to information you may need. Please keep our office informed on any changes you make to the information you have provided.

Student Conduct

As a participant in an SLCC Study Abroad program or Foreign Travel Experience, you are expected and obligated to conform to the regulations of Salt Lake Community College and the laws of the country that you visit while participating in the program. In today's global environment, misconduct may not only jeopardize your personal welfare, but the welfare of other students on the trip and the study abroad program as a whole. It is your responsibility to read and understand the "Statement of

Responsibility and Assumption of Risk” document, a copy of which is on the Study Abroad website.

Your conduct while participating in the program should reflect positively on you, as well as your program group. You should be aware that you are one of several participants and that your individual actions may have a direct impact on another participant in your group or your roommates.

Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and may jeopardize your full participation in the program.

Illegal Activities

It is important for all participants to recognize that if you are caught in possession of illegal drugs or commit any other illegal act, you will be subject to the local laws of the country in which you are, NOT the laws of the United States or Utah. Also, the government of the United States of America or its agencies abroad may not be able to ensure that you are not discriminated against should you participate in an illegal activity and cannot protect you against arrest, incarceration, or punishment. In such a circumstance, contact your group leader as soon as you can. Your group leader, at your direction only, will contact the person of your choice on your behalf.

Sexual Harassment

Notify your program leader immediately if you feel you have been harassed or if you are at all uncomfortable with someone in your program, a host family member, an instructor, etc. You must make the program leader aware of the situation and ask for help in resolving the problem. If the harassment involves the program leader, please contact the SLCC Study Abroad Program office at the contact information printed in this document.

Alcohol

You must be 18 years of age to participate in an SLCC program and many countries have a legal drinking age of 18. If you plan to drink, you are advised to do so in moderation. Most cultures disapprove of “getting drunk.” Drinking in excess can put you at risk and is therefore discouraged. Alcohol is not permitted at any Salt Lake Community College sponsored event. During identified program hours or activities drinking alcohol is specifically prohibited.

Program Travel

All SLCC programs include the cost of travel for all program participants in order to obtain the best program prices. If for some reason you must make your own travel arrangements, the program price will be reduced by

an amount determined by the Study Abroad Program. Notice to the office of your intention to make your own travel arrangements must be made within 30 days of your application to the particular program. If you change your mind later, it may not be possible to obtain the same group rate and the program price may be higher.

Travel During the Program

If you plan to do any traveling on weekends or other free time during your program, please notify your program leader of your travel plans. You must provide information about where you are going and when you plan to return in order to assist your program leader in case of emergency. Please be aware that any and all independent travel is at your own expense and at your own risk. All programs where SLCC credit is awarded, program participation is required and your personal travel must not interfere with scheduled course activities.

Payment, Registration and Other Financial Information

Course Registration

Most of the SLCC Study Abroad Programs offered have courses and credits available. Students may enroll for credit based on the options offered in each program. Please refer to the specific program information. The costs related to registration, texts, etc. for credit in a Study Abroad Program are NOT included in the price of the program. Each student is responsible for registering for the course or courses related to their individual program. The costs of texts related to courses offered are NOT included in the program price.

If you have financial aid, please speak to your financial aid counselor to determine how many credits you must maintain to keep your financial aid.

Deposit and Application

The study abroad application form is found on our website under various forms. A signed copy of the application must be received by the SLCC Study Abroad office in order to be considered. A copy of your deposit receipt must be attached to your application.

The deposit indicated for each program is required at the time your application is made. Deposits may be paid at any SLCC Cashiering window using the specific program payment form available on our website. Payments may be made by check, Certified Check, or Money Order made out to Salt Lake Community College with notation of the program you are applying for; or by credit card utilizing the program payment form specific to your program. A copy of your deposit receipt must be included with

your signed application. If an applicant is determined to be ineligible to participate, the application deposit will be refunded in full.

Payment Schedule

The information sheet and program flier include the payment schedule for your specific program. Study Abroad Program and International Experience payments must be made to the SLCC Cashiering Office. Your payment must be made in person, must include your program payment voucher (provided upon acceptance), and may be made by cash, check, money order, VISA, Master Card, Discover, or American Express. Please contact the Study Abroad Office for payment information and payment vouchers.

All program payments must be completely paid by the last date shown on the program payment schedule. No exceptions.

Refund Policy

Withdrawal from any SLCC Study Abroad Program or International Experience Program will result in \$200.00 plus any and all unrecoverable costs related to the program being retained as non-refundable. All fees paid become non-refundable in the entirety on the first day of the month of scheduled departure.

This policy is based on the fact that the Study Abroad Office pays advance deposits on behalf of program participants to airlines, overseas vendors, foreign institutions, etc. and there are non-refundable costs related to all of our activities.

Other Costs

Any cost that the participant might incur while participating in the program, and not identified as inclusions in the program plan, are the sole responsibility of each program participant. Please be certain that any charges accrued at a hotel, hostel, or other facility are fully settled before departure. Each participant is also responsible for any damages to housing facilities, library fees or fines, medical treatment, etc. Reports of unpaid accounts may result in a hold being placed on your academic records.

Travel Tips and Health Issues

Money

Costs not covered by the program are the responsibility of each program participant. The amount of personal funds needed will vary greatly depending upon the length of your program and your own personal spending patterns. It is advisable to take a small amount of currency for any expense on your day of arrival. Locally, Zions and Wells Fargo banks offer currency exchange at their main offices downtown Salt Lake City. Check with your own bank at least 30 days in advance to see if they offer this service.

Traveler's Checks are very safe and generally easy to convert to local currencies. American Express and Thomas Cook seem to be the most common and widely accepted at most banks, hotels, exchange bureaus, train stations and airports. Rates of currency exchange and commission fees will vary widely. The best locations for currency exchanges are banks and exchange bureaus. The worst rates are typically found in hotels and airports.

Credit cards like VISA, and MasterCard are widely accepted. American Express, Diners Club, and Discover Card are accepted but not as widely accepted as VISA and MasterCard. Be sure to contact your credit card company to verify your authorization to use your card abroad. Many times this is merely a formality and easily done. Generally, any credit card must be in your name, not a parent's, in order to be accepted. If not, your card may be confiscated.

Debit cards or a credit card with ATM capabilities is very useful when traveling to most countries. Most ATM machines give you your money in the local currency. Check with your banking institution to verify that your ATM card is usable in your program country or countries.

Airport Security and Customs

Since September 11, 2001 airports in the U.S.A. have significantly increased security and baggage screening procedures. Be certain to be familiar with current standards for both checked and carry-on-luggage before you depart for the Salt Lake airport.

Upon arrival in your destination country you will be required to go through Passport Control, and Immigration/Customs. Have your passport available and follow the appropriate line for holders of U.S.A. passports. You will be asked several questions about the purpose of your visit and the length of your stay. Do not be intimidated by the questions, but do give honest and

confident answers to the questions asked. The process is generally similar among most countries and fairly simple. You may be asked to open your luggage for inspection. Cooperate with authorities. If you are not carrying anything illegal or threatening, there will be nothing to worry about. Your program leader and group will NOT leave you behind. Usually you will gather together outside the Customs area, where arriving passengers are met by friends and family. Plan for extra time to clear security and other checkpoints at all airports.

Many international airports have armed guards, sometimes with security dogs, walking through the airports. This is very common and nothing to worry about. Remember, the tighter the security the safer you will be.

Eurail and Other Train Passes

Many of our programs include some sort of transportation pass. The Eurail, Brit Rail, and Japan Rail passes offer several different options to accommodate the traveler. If they are not included in your program, you may want to purchase a train pass to allow for independent travel before, during or after your program. Prices vary according to the type of pass you get. If your program does not include one, check with any travel agency for information. Generally, these passes are not available to you once you arrive in your destination country.

Accommodations

Your SLCC program includes your lodging for the program. The lodging type is identified in your program information sheet. Lodging varies from first class hotels, to tourist class, student class or youth hostels. Some programs may have "home-stay" as an accommodation. If you have questions about your identified lodging, please do not hesitate to ask.

If you travel on your own before, during or after your program, Youth Hostels may offer a good option. Memberships are usually required so check with a travel agent before you leave. Many times inexpensive hotels, pensions, B&B's and monasteries/abbeys offer inexpensive, clean, and safe options. Check online resources and travel guides for prices and contact information.

Electrical Appliances

Voltages, electrical sockets and electrical plugs differ around the world. Converters are available at a variety of travel stores and larger chains like Wal-Mart. Computers are highly susceptible to voltage fluctuations. Check with your manufacturer for information on the type of converter you might need. Be sure the converter you buy is usable in the country you are going

to. Also, limit the number of electrical appliances you take. They do add weight to your luggage.

Personal Health Information

The "Health Information Form" in this packet and online is optional for your participation in our programs. However, if a medical emergency happens while traveling, the information may be needed to help you get the best care possible. If you choose to provide this information, it will be kept strictly confidential and will be used only to assist you in getting emergency care. If you have a specific health condition, you may want to inform your program leader of the condition and what may be needed to assist you, as a heads-up just in case.

Medical Insurance

It is your personal responsibility to provide your own health insurance and medical coverage while on the program. Check with your insurance carrier to make certain of your coverage in a foreign country.

Your International Student ID, for those programs that have the ID plan, does include limited health insurance, but it is not comprehensive. You must have proof of additional insurance coverage for participation in the program.

In other countries, payment will usually be due at the time the medical treatment is received. Generally it will be your responsibility to file the claim with your carrier later for reimbursement.

Pre-Departure Doctor and Dentist Visit

We recommend that you see your doctor and dentist for a routine examination prior to departure for your program. It is always advisable to discuss your travel plans and ask about any immunizations, medications, and health practices that might be recommended for your destination country.

Prescriptions and Medicine

Since medicines and other medical supplies may or may not be readily available to you in another country it is important to take an adequate supply with you. If you will be participating in an extended program it is strongly suggested that you check with your health care provider about refilling any prescriptions you might need abroad. Remember that mail can take weeks and so expedited delivery may be required.

If you take any medication with you, carry it in your carry-on luggage, keep it in the original prescription bottle with the label in good condition, showing your name, the prescription number, doctor's name, etc.

If you take allergy shots or insulin, take an adequate supply of well-labeled syringes. It is also advisable to carry a letter from your physician stating your medical need for carrying a supply of syringes and injectable medications.

If you wear glasses or contact lenses, take an extra pair with you. If you wear lenses, take adequate supplies of your wetting and cleaning solutions as they may not be easily available or much more expensive than at home.

General Health Care

As you travel you will go through several time changes, new climates, new or strange food and beverages, all of which may weaken your immune system. Take care of yourself! Get plenty of rest and eat properly. On your flights, drink plenty of liquids. Avoid caffeine and alcohol while flying as they tend to dehydrate you and can enhance "jet lag." Get exercise regularly to help maintain your body and your energy levels.

In Case of Illness

If you become sick or are injured, let your program leader know immediately. He or she may be of assistance if you need to see a doctor, find a clinic or hospital. Do ask for help! Many times a short-term system upset will actually pass quickly. However a more serious illness may need additional care.

Safe Sex

We consider you an adult, capable of making your own decisions about personal relationships. However, don't take undue risks or chances. In some countries, American women may become a target or seen as easy prey. Please be aware that what may be considered casual conversation or flirtation here may be considered sexual encouragement in other cultures. When you are out on your free time, go in groups. If you feel uncomfortable in any situation, get out of the situation as quickly as possible. Condoms are generally available in most countries. However, be safe and prepared. Please be considerate of your lodging situation and roommates if you have one or more.

Mental Health

As anyone who has traveled knows, paying attention to your state of mind, mental and emotional well-being is important to maintaining a positive experience. Many students experience culture shock and some degree of homesickness while studying abroad. Understand this is normal and do not be afraid to talk about it with your peers or your program leader. Try to relieve any stress you might experience because travel, new environments, new cultures, apprehension can worsen your anxiety.

A Final Word About Expectations/Differences

There is no doubt that you will have expectations about your trip and your life while traveling. Be very cautious about your expectations as they can lead to disappointment. We strongly request that you maintain an open mind about what you will see, the people you will meet, and all of the experiences you will have. Other countries and people are NOT always like us, nor do they do things our way! Recognize that this trip will be an opportunity for you to see how others live their lives. Enjoy and embrace the differences you will experience.

Be humble, respectful and understanding. View the world as a chance to learn. You will no doubt experience some of the following while abroad, depending on where you go: slow lines and service, crowded transportation, personal hygiene differences, strange and new smells, invasion of your "personal space," people watching you, and probably questions about the United States of America and the government's administration. Remember you are not in the USA and are a guest in their country. You are there to learn and experience another view of the world. Watch the people of the country you are in. Practice doing what they do, and emulate their behavior. Enjoy!

"Those who visit foreign nations but associate only with their own countrymen, change their climate but not their customs; and with their heads as empty as their pockets, return home with traveled bodies but untraveled minds."

Anonymous

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SLCC Study Abroad Advisory Committee

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