STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK

#PackAbroad

NC STATE UNIVERSITY
Emergency Numbers

NC State Study Abroad Office: +1 919-515-2087
NC State Campus Police: +1 919-515-3000
NC State Counseling Center: +1 919-515-2423
GeoBlue Emergency Number: +1 610-254-8741

If you have an emergency abroad, first contact your on-site program coordinator.

- My coordinator’s contact info:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Weisfeld</td>
<td>General Advising</td>
<td><a href="mailto:study_abroad@ncsu.edu">study_abroad@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Hayes</td>
<td>Czech Republic (exchange)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aafitzpa@ncsu.edu">aafitzpa@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Keith</td>
<td>Spain, Portugal, France, Italy &amp; Greece</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jkkeith@ncsu.edu">jkkeith@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Feeney</td>
<td>UK, Ireland, Central &amp; Eastern Europe</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kmfeene2@ncsu.edu">kmfeene2@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kory Saunders</td>
<td>Australia, New Zealand, &amp; Pacific Islands</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kmsaund3@ncsu.edu">kmsaund3@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maura McCarthy</td>
<td>Asia, the Middle East, &amp; North Africa</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mcmccar3@ncsu.edu">mcmccar3@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean Addley</td>
<td>NC State Prague</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sjaddley@ncsu.edu">sjaddley@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallory Minnehan</td>
<td>Latin America, Scandinavia, &amp; Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mmsmith3@ncsu.edu">mmsmith3@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebekkah Speller</td>
<td>Accounting, Billing, and Insurance</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rlspelle@ncsu.edu">rlspelle@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell West</td>
<td>Accounting, Billing, and Insurance</td>
<td><a href="mailto:elwest@ncsu.edu">elwest@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seth Parrish</td>
<td>NC State Scholarship</td>
<td><a href="mailto:shparris@ncsu.edu">shparris@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben Severin</td>
<td>Financial Aid Liaison</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bmseveri@ncsu.edu">bmseveri@ncsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Advising Appointment Notes

Major Department Approver: __________________________

College Approver: ________________________________

Minor Department Approver: ______________________

Study Abroad Office Scholarship Deadline: __________

Pre-Departure Conference Date: _____________________

Host University Notes:
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Travel Related Information

US Department of State:
http://www.travel.state.gov
Information on living abroad, travel warnings, U.S. Embassy and Consulate websites, and other important information. Search by country for specific information about entry requirements.

Passports:
http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports.html
If you have not already done so, you should apply for a passport immediately.

NC State Passport Services
Witherspoon Student Center, 321
Email: passport-services@ncsu.edu

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel
Information and advice about vaccines and medicines that are recommended by location.

NC State Travel Clinic:
tavelclinic@ncsu.edu

Currency Conversions:
http://www.oanda.com

Health Insurance:
http://www.geobluestudents.com
Email: studentinfo@geo-blue.com
Phone number: +1.610.263.2847 (collect calls accepted)
### While Applying: Checklist

- Consider the different **program models** available
- Visit **Financial Aid Office** and start your budget
- Attend a *Funding Your Study Abroad Information Session* which are offered throughout the semester
- Apply for **scholarships**
- Schedule Appointments to complete **course approval form**: Meet with Academic Advisor, Department Approver, and then College Approver
- **Request recommendations** a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the deadline
- Review **housing options** at your university
- **Apply for your passport** and research visa requirements
- Review **Study Abroad Policies**
- Review **Identity-Based Resources**

**Recommended additional preparations:**

- Connect with a **Pack Abroad Ambassador** who studied in your country
- Follow [@ncstatestudyabroad](https://www.instagram.com/ncstatestudyabroad) and [@packabroadbaton](https://www.instagram.com/packabroadbaton) on Instagram for updates from current study abroad students
While Applying: Choosing a Program
Consider these items to help narrow down the options. Make a list of priorities before looking at all the options.

Academic and Professional
- See our programs recommended by major page, http://go.ncsu.edu/studyabroadmajors, or use the “field of study” parameter when searching for programs.
- What kind of classes are ideal to take abroad: major, minor, or general education courses?
- Student populations on programs vary and may consist of all NC State students and other Americans, primarily international students, or mainly local students from the host country.
- Most foreign language programs require level 202 in the respective language.
- The majority of programs offer courses in English – even in non-traditional locations like South Africa, Hong Kong, Sweden, Turkey, the Czech Republic and Chile.
- Some regions may be particularly appealing to a future employer, depending on the field.

Personal
- Is there a region or country of interest?
- Location: small town, university community, or big city?
- Warm or colder climate preferences?
- Timing - double check when your program begins/ends - the dates on our website are general, not exact. For example, does your program selection overlap with a summer internship opportunity?
- Housing: dormitory, apartment, with a host family, with other Americans roommates or local student roommates?
Consider program cost and resources for Funding Study Abroad when making a program selection. For more information, visit: https://studyabroad.ncsu.edu/funding/

Note if all or parts of your host country are under an increased U.S. Dept. of State travel advisory: http://travel.state.gov/ If so, you should discuss alternative options with your advisor.

Program Models

- **Exchange Programs**: A student from NC State and a student at a partner university trade places. NC State students pay NC State tuition and fees only and become a visiting student at the international university. Benefits include low cost (especially for in-state students); an independent, immersion experience into the host university; and a wide range of course options.

- **Direct Enroll**: Students study as a visiting student at an international university with access to a wide array of courses, similar to an exchange student. Direct Enroll students pay tuition to the host university directly and do not pay tuition to NC State while abroad.

- **Group Semester**: Students study and participate in activities with other American study abroad students. The program cost is fixed and typically includes tuition, housing, and insurance. Benefits include programs tailored for American students abroad with increased student support services.

- **Non-NC State Program**: If students can’t find an NC State program that fits their needs, students may study abroad through any program sponsored by a U.S. accredited institution, accredited third-party provider, or direct enrollment at an accredited institution overseas.
While Applying: Identity Abroad

Prior to choosing a study abroad program and location, you should also take into consideration different aspects of your identity and how they may shape your experience overseas. In recognizing that students’ identities are ever-changing and developing, the following is meant to prompt your reflection and further research while applying to study abroad.

Learning and Mobility Differences
Students with learning and/or mobility differences are increasingly participating in study abroad programs. As with other identities and topics mentioned throughout this handbook, advanced planning and research are key. Accessibility and the availability of certain accommodations may vary depending on location; therefore, it is crucial that students work with the Study Abroad Office, their host institution, and the Disability Resource Office well in advance of their program start date.

Gender
Gender - and the various cultural norms, behaviors, and attitudes associated with it - significantly shape one’s experiences, in both large and small ways. All students - regardless of their gender identity and/or expression - may encounter differences around gender that are unique to their country/location of study; some locations being quite similar to the U.S., others differing dramatically. Students are encouraged to keep an open mind when evaluating any gender differences, as these differences can be used as an opportunity to gain insights into another culture.

Students should be aware that many cultures around the world have been exposed to American media - such as movies, television programs, and magazines - that often portray stereotypical representations of gender and sexuality in the United States. Therefore, it is advisable that students take social cues from locals, such as dress, body language, etc., and follow the
advice of their in-country support staff on ways to best adjust/acclimate, if needed.

GLBTQAI+
You may already identify as GLBTQAI+ or you may still be exploring these issues. In any case, you may find that the social climate, laws, and personal interactions of your host culture differ from the U.S. Keep in mind that many of the ideas held in the U.S. about sexuality and gender are culturally-based and may be quite different in your host country.
In some cultures, Western understandings of “gay” and “straight” - for example - do not exist or do not carry the same societal importance. In other cultures, there are more active social movements for civil rights for sexual minorities.

In preparing to study abroad, it may be important for you to research the GLBTQAI+ climate of the countries you will be visiting. Though research might lead to potentially affirming or challenging information, it will help you to be better prepared to face the environment you will encounter abroad. Even if you do not plan to be open about this aspect of your identity while abroad, you should be informed about specific laws pertaining to sexuality, gender, and the GLBTQAI+ community.

Race and Ethnicity
Racial and ethnic perceptions and experiences may vary by culture and country. While abroad, you may find that you are an ethnic/racial minority or majority for the first time in your life, or you may find that the ethnic/racial identity you have always felt to be an integral part of yourself is viewed in a completely different way in your host country. If you are visiting a country where you have ethnic or racial roots, you may find you are expected to behave according to the host country norms in a way that other Americans of a different background are not. Or, you may find that you are considered an American first, and your ethnic or racial identity may be considered secondary.
In many countries, there may be existing ethnic and/or racial conflicts, and you may find you are identified with one group or another because of your physical features. However, by researching the cultural landscape and current issues of your host country, you can better prepare yourself for situations you may encounter abroad.

If interested, your advisor can put you in contact with a student or staff member at NC State who has experience in your host country and share their perspective with you.

**American Identity Abroad**

For some students, studying abroad may be the first time they have thought critically about their identity as an American. While abroad, students will encounter a plethora of views and opinions on the United States that will vary widely based on their region, host country, and the individuals they encounter. Students should keep an open mind when navigating conversations or situations in which Americans or the United States are being discussed. In some locations, Americans may find themselves welcomed; in other locations, they may be at increased risk for theft/crime. Please review the general safety tips provided in this handbook.

**Religion/Faith/Spirituality**

In many countries, religious beliefs, practices, and traditions - or lack thereof - play an important role in defining a nation’s history and informing its present. In preparing for your study abroad experience, it’s a good idea to research what religions or faith-based communities have an active presence in your region or country and how they may have evolved or changed over time. If the religious practices or traditions differ from your own identity or background, doing some initial pre-departure research may prepare you for better acclimating to what you may experience overseas.
If practicing your religion is an important part of your identity currently, it’s advisable that you begin to locate local mosques, churches, temples, or community centers in your host city or neighborhood to gain a firmer understanding of the opportunities that may exist abroad. If needed, your study abroad advisor or in-country support staff can assist you in doing so.

**Identity-Based Resources**
There are many online additional resources for students from historically underrepresented backgrounds and identities to further explore. Visit the *Identity-Based Resources* page on the Study Abroad Office website to learn more: [https://studyabroad.ncsu.edu/identity-based-resources/](https://studyabroad.ncsu.edu/identity-based-resources/) or contact your advisor.

Note: You should immediately contact a staff member from your host institution or the Study Abroad Office if you find yourself in an uncomfortable or threatening situation abroad based on your identity or background.

**While Applying: Money Matters**

**Financial Aid**
If you will be receiving financial aid, it is very important to meet with Financial Aid, and you should fill out a Direct Deposit Authorization with the Cashier’s Office. These forms will allow most aid to be deposited directly to your checking account, and will allow any aid which cannot be directly deposited to be mailed to the person you designate (family member or friend).

Failure to maintain full-time status while abroad could jeopardize your enrollment at NC State and your eligibility for financial aid. Regardless of host institution requirements, undergraduates should enroll in a minimum of the equivalent of 12 NC State hours for semester programs or 6 credits for summer programs. Graduate students should enroll in the equivalent of 9 hours for
semester programs and 4.5 hours for summer programs. To maintain full-time status, you must enroll in courses that will transfer back to satisfy NC State degree requirements. If you are receiving financial aid you may need to pay back a portion of your aid if your full-time course load does not apply toward your NC State degree.

Scholarships
- Students are encouraged to apply to the Study Abroad Office Scholarship. More information and deadlines can be found at: https://studyabroad.ncsu.edu/for-students/funding-study-abroad/scholarships/
  - Deadlines for these scholarships are on the website
- In addition to the NC State Scholarships, there are many other financial resources available in support of study abroad. More information can be found at: https://studyabroad.ncsu.edu/for-students/funding-study-abroad/outside-scholarships/
- Scholarship funds will be deposited into the direct deposit account that you have on file with the university. If you do not have direct deposit set up, a check will be sent to your permanent address on file with the university.

Budgeting
The amount that students spend while abroad varies greatly. Here is some advice on developing a budget:
- Gather information on program costs. Find out how much is included in your exchange, or what costs are expected for direct enrollment. Know what is included in your fees, and what additional costs you may have to pay while “settling in” (bed linens, toiletries, replacements for things you left at home).
- Determine how much you and your family are willing to budget for discretionary expenses (travel, entertainment, etc.) and incidentals (laundry, postage, etc.).
• Expect some items to be more expensive overseas. This may include food, books, and “luxury” items, such as electronics and clothing.
• Check the exchange rate and guidebooks for your host country. Guidebooks typically list costs for accommodations, transportation, entrance fees, and other items that will help you estimate for personal travel.
• Look for ways to cut costs. Evaluate your personal spending habits and where you are willing to cut back to afford other things while abroad. Consider getting an International Student Identity Card (ISIC) for discounts.
While Applying: Course Approval Process

Steps to Complete the Course Approval

1. In consultation with your academic advisor, review your degree audit to identify courses that will satisfy incomplete NC State degree requirements.

2. Prior to meeting with the departmental and college contacts who approve courses, you should identify potential courses by reviewing the NC State transfer credit database AND reviewing the host university website. If a course is not listed on the transfer credit database you will need to provide a syllabus/description to the departmental/college contact (listed on your course approval form) who is responsible for approving the selected course(s).

3. Pre-approve twice as many courses as you expect to take at the host university. As a general rule, you should expect to pre-approve a minimum of eight courses—though in some cases it may be more.

4. Verify that the courses you are approving are offered in the semester you will be abroad. For students studying in the southern hemisphere (e.g. Australia, South Africa, parts of South America), the terms are typically reversed. For example, semester 1 in Australia is February - June, which coincides with the spring term (semester 2) in the northern hemisphere.

5. Review and make sure you understand the Credit Hour Guidelines for your host institution (http://go.ncsu.edu/creditguidelines). For each of the courses that have been pre-approved, make sure you are receiving the full transfer credit.
   a. If you are not receiving the recommended number of credits for a given course, talk to your Department/College Approver to find out how the extra credit hour(s) may fit into your degree plan.
Consult with your Study Abroad Advisor if you need further guidance.

6. Submit your signed form to the Study Abroad Office. A copy will be attached to your PackAbroad application, which you may access at any time.

**Advisor Tip:** Once abroad, if you register for a course that hasn’t been pre-approved, you should email your department/college approver and request approval. If you’re unsure whether a course has been approved, return home with the course syllabi/description.
While Applying: Housing

Housing options at your host university will vary. Some may require all study abroad students to live in a certain area, while others may offer choices such as residence halls/dorms, apartments/flats, or homestays. The accommodations in your host country may not be as luxurious as you are accustomed to, so keep an open mind. You are responsible for researching options and making a decision that fits your needs and lifestyle.

Homestay

Living with a homestay family provides a wonderful opportunity to enhance your cultural experience. As with any family, there will be certain expectations to keep in mind. Here are some general recommendations:

- Ask at the beginning of your stay about the family schedule and house rules. Are there expectations to participate in family activities? Do they expect you to be at family meals? Do they want to know when you'll be out late or gone for the weekend? Will they allow you to have guests?
- Bring a small gift (no more than $20), such as a t-shirt or other item with the NCSU logo, a cookbook of American recipes, or a CD of traditional American music (blues, jazz, etc.)
- Ask about the house rules for telephone use. In many countries, even local calls are charged on a metered basis, and phone service is quite expensive. Families may prefer that you make outgoing calls from another location. Also ask about appropriate hours for receiving incoming calls.
- If meals are included in your homestay, don’t skip family meals without letting your hosts know well in advance.
- Don’t snack from the family refrigerator or pantry without asking. Also ask where you can keep food of your own.
- Be conservative with electricity and water use. These services may be limited or more expensive in your host
country. Turn off lights and appliances when not in use, and don’t take long showers.
- Offer to help with household tasks.
- Be open, flexible, and don’t be afraid to ask questions.

Homestay Expectations
While host families are typically interested in interaction with international students, they are also being paid for their hosting duties, and in some cases consider it an income supplement. While you should expect your family to provide a safe, clean living environment, adequate meals, and a polite, respectful atmosphere, the amount of personal interaction may vary from family to family.
If your family is truly unreasonable or if you are uncomfortable with your family, you should consult with your host university coordinator. Be sure the reason(s) for wanting to move are more serious than small inconveniences (phone use, curfews, etc.), or culturally-based issues that are likely to be the same from family to family.

Housing at NC State
If you have already signed a contract and are assigned to University housing for the semester you will be abroad, you will need a release from your contract. Take your host university acceptance letter to the University Housing Office to make this request.
If you want to live on-campus when you return, you will need to reserve a room online through University Housing. We encourage you to consider continuing your international experience by living in Global Village! If you currently live off-campus, or if you want to live off-campus upon your return, it is your responsibility to make your own arrangements and any necessary payments.
**Advisor Tip:** Students that identify as GLTBQAI+ and students that have mobility differences may have specific concerns regarding the safety and accessibility of housing abroad. If you feel comfortable doing so, feel free to work with your advisor to identify the most appropriate housing for your needs.
**Post-Acceptance: Checklist**

- [ ] **Commit to your study abroad program** in PackAbroad
- [ ] **Complete host institution application** (you may have already done this). See notes from advising meeting
- [ ] **Apply for housing abroad** if you have not already
- [ ] **Attend Pre-Departure Conference**
- [ ] **Read “Staying Informed”** in this handbook
- [ ] **Familiarize yourself with the required international health insurance**
- [ ] **Download** the AlertTraveler app from PackAbroad
- [ ] **Register with the NC State Travel Clinic**
- [ ] **Make arrangements for medications** you will need abroad
- [ ] **Research your host country**

*Once you have received official acceptance from your host institution, complete these items:*

- [ ] **Cancel your current housing and/or meal plan**
- [ ] **Drop on-campus courses** and resolve any holds on your student account
- [ ] **Apply for a Visa or Residency Permit**
- [ ] **Complete all post-decision requirements** in PackAbroad by the posted deadlines
- [ ] **Contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid**, if you receive financial aid
- [ ] **Purchase your flight(s)**
International Health Insurance
All students studying abroad through NC State are required to purchase the UNC System health insurance (GeoBlue). The UNC system policy provides low-cost comprehensive primary medical coverage with no deductible.

Prior to departure, you will receive your insurance card via email. You should print this card and carry the card with you at all times. When you receive the email, register online at [http://geobluestudents.com](http://geobluestudents.com)

You can also download the app to:
- Locate qualified providers and hospitals outside the U.S.
- Obtain a list of English-speaking doctors
- Find common translations of medical phrases
- Access Direct Pay
- Access an online ID card

Although arrangements can be made for the insurance company to pay the hospital directly for very serious and lengthy hospital stays, or for services provided by a GeoBlue approved physician, it is much more typical for a student to pay all costs up front and then be reimbursed.

Be sure that you have access to adequate funds to cover a health emergency, and keep all receipts you receive in order to file your claim.

If you plan to travel before or after the program dates, you are eligible to purchase up to 30 days of additional insurance through the GeoBlue website after you have been enrolled in the insurance by the Study Abroad Office.
**Download AlertTraveler App**
On your PackAbroad Student Page, at the bottom you will see an info box for AlertTravler, NC State’s way to get in touch with you in the case of an in-country emergency when you are abroad. Both Android and iOS apps are available. Once you download the phone app, you will go to your student page, click “Generate Code,” and input the code into the phone app. Now you’ll receive emergency information and be able to check-in with our office should a problem arise when you are abroad.

**Register with the NC State Travel Clinic**
https://healthypack.dasa.ncsu.edu/care-provided/travel-clinic/
Contact Info: travelclinic@ncsu.edu

The NC State Travel Clinic provides comprehensive and personalized recommendations, medications and vaccinations based upon both your destination and your itinerary.

Please register online with the Travel Clinic 6-8 weeks before you plan to travel. Remember, most vaccines take 10-30 days to become effective and protective. Travel Clinic staff will contact you within five working days of your registration to schedule your appointment.

**Make Arrangements for Medications**
Regardless of the pharmacy situation in any country, it is always advisable to:

- Bring enough medication to last through your trip.
- Carry it with you rather than trusting it to checked luggage (many frequent travelers bring a double supply of medication and pack each in different bags).
- Keep extra prescription sheets written by your doctor (with the generic names) in case you need refills during your trip and to show at customs as proof of the medication’s identity and necessity.
• Check the expiration dates on all medications, whether they are from home or abroad.
• You may also want to carry an anti-diarrheal medication and/or ask your physician for an appropriate anti-diarrheal prescription, as a precautionary measure.

Research your host country
Researching your host country is one way to reduce culture shock, and also to be a responsible traveler and citizen of the world. Here are some themes to help you understand the culture of your host country.

• Politics
• Holidays
• Laws
• Daily life
• Clothing
• History
• Religion
• Family
• Communication
• Medical care
• Language
• Social norms
• Shopping
• Food
• Values surrounding alcohol

Resources:

Websites
• U.S Department of State Country Profiles
  http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html
• CIA World Factbook
• GeoBlue website for medical/pharmacy and security profiles geobluestudents.com (Health and Security tab)
• Going Global Portal: NC State students can access the Going Global Portal through MyPack (MyPack→For Students→Student Services). This portal contains regularly updated Country Guides.
Apply for a Visa or Residency Permit

- A visa is an official document or stamp issued by the government of the host country that is placed on a passport that allows the bearer to visit that country.
- Some students will be required to obtain a visa, a few will be required to obtain a residency permit, and others may need no immigration verification. Immigration policies depend on the host country requirements.
- It is the student’s responsibility to research and verify immigration requirements (visas, residency permits, etc.).
- The U.S. Dept. of State provides country-specific information and links to foreign embassy or consulate sites. [http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html)
- Visa service agencies, though sometimes pricey, can assist with visa applications and often have expedited options. Visa Service Agencies:
  - A Briggs, China Visa Service Center, Travel Document Systems, Travisa.

Advisor Notes:
Contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid
http://go.ncsu.edu/studyabroadfinaid

Financial Aid Enrollment Agreement Form

- Contact Ben Severin; Ben_Severin@ncsu.edu

The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid requires all students not going on NC State Prague to complete an Enrollment Agreement Form. Find more information in the “Financial Aid” Online Orientation Video on your PackAbroad Student Page.

Purchase your flight

- Wait until you receive host institution acceptance letter and arrival dates before purchasing.
- Important: check the residence permit/visa application before purchasing your airfare; some may require you purchase before submitting application; may not allow open-ended flights
- Student Travel resources
  - statravel.com
    - Book Now, Pay Later - A non-refundable deposit, allows you to lock in the price of your ticket, and pay the remaining balance seven days before your flight.
  - studentuniverse.com
  - hickorybeeline.com
  - worldtrav.com
- Students are strongly encouraged to consider purchasing trip cancellation/interruption insurance when purchasing their airfare.
  - squaremouth.com
  - travelguard.com
Inform your bank of all travel dates
Inform your bank know when and where you will be travelling. Often, for your protections, banks will turn off your account if they see suspicious activity. You can prevent this from happening by keeping them updated with your travel itinerary

Identify a Power of Attorney
The Study Abroad Office recommends that all students identify someone as a Power of Attorney to sign documents or make bank transactions on their behalf. Assistance is available through Student Legal Services. http://studentlegal.dasa.ncsu.edu/

Make copies of important documents
Make multiple copies of important documents (i.e., passport, visa, credit cards, driver’s license). Take a copy with you and keep a copy at home. You may also want to have a digital copy available
via email, Google Drive, etc. If any important document is lost, it is easier to replace with a copy.

**Add an alternate email in PackAbroad**
Because you will still be enrolled at NC State while abroad, you will continue to have access to your NC State Gmail account. The SAO is required to send correspondence to your NC State email account. However, there are some countries where Gmail is not accessible (e.g., China). To ensure our office is still able to communicate with you abroad, add an alternative email address in the PackAbroad system. Emails will then be sent to your NC State and alternative email accounts.

You can add the alternative email address by selecting “Edit Profile” on your Applicant Home page. Then entering the alternative address under “CC Email Address.”

**Establish a communication plan**
It is important to set expectations with your friends and family back home about how often you will be able to communicate while abroad and how you plan to do so (phone, email, video chat, etc). Make initial contact with family/friends as soon as you can to let them know you have arrived safe and sound.
Update Itinerary
As you are finalizing your preparations, make sure to include ALL side trips you are taking into your 'Itinerary' section of your study abroad application. This includes personal travel before, during, or after your program dates and any travel sponsored by your host institution. These can be added at any time, and will assist us in locating you in case of an emergency. From inside of your program application, simply click on 'add new itinerary record', input your travel dates and location, then hit submit.

Enroll in STEP
The State Department's State Department’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) gives you access to updated information about areas abroad and makes it easier for the US Embassy or Consulate to contact and assist you if a crisis occurred in your current location.
https://step.state.gov

- Register your travel through STEP, if you did not do so prior to your departure.
- Subscribe to receive location specific alerts & warnings
- Follow the State Department on Twitter for regular updates.

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs travel website is a resource for all current advisories, including Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Country
Specific Information. If you have limited Internet access, you can call +1-202-50-4444 from outside the US and Canada (1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the U.S. and Canada).

**Familiarize yourself with the US Embassy**
Before you depart for your study abroad, ensure you are familiar with the US Embassy nearest to your host institution, should you need to make an appointment. It is also beneficial to follow the Embassy location on social media to stay up-to-date with latest information for US citizens in that specific country. Embassy locations and webpages can be found at [http://www.usembassy.gov/](http://www.usembassy.gov/).

**Locate nearest hospitals and pharmacies**
In case of an emergency, it is important that you know where the closest hospitals and pharmacies are to your location abroad. GeoBlue has online resources available (at [geobluestudents.com](http://geobluestudents.com)) to help you find these locations. You should also review any pre-arrival information from your host institution for a listing of these locations and/or any on-site facilities available.
While Abroad: Checklist

☐ Call home upon arrival
☐ If you get an international SIM card or phone, update the AlertTraveler App
☐ Update “Abroad Address” on PackAbroad Student Page
☐ Update STEP Enrollment (step.state.gov)
  - Continuously as you make plans to travel
☐ Update Itineraries on PackAbroad Student Page
  - Continuously as you make plans to travel
☐ Speak with host program about reliable healthcare providers
☐ Share your photos from abroad with #PackAbroad on social media
☐ Complete Enrollment Verification Form on PackAbroad Student Page
  - If your courses change, be in touch with academic advising at NC State
  - Maintain a full-time course load
  - Take all courses for a grade
☐ Make preparations to register for NC State courses
  - Think about the time difference
  - Look into your degree audit
  - Consult with academic advising and your departments
☐ Arrange to have your transcript mailed to:
  NC State Study Abroad Office
  315 University College Commons
  Campus Box 7344
  Raleigh, NC 27695-7344 USA
☐ Find housing for when you return
  - Consider living in Global Village in Alexander Residence Hall in order to continue connecting with international students
While Abroad: Safety

SAO emergency Numbers

NC State Study Abroad Office: +1 919-515-2087
NC State Campus Police: +1 919-515-3000
NC State Counseling Center: +1 919-515-2423
GeoBlueEmergency Number: +1 610-254-8771

If you have an emergency abroad, first contact your on-site program coordinator.

- My coordinator’s contact info:
  __________________________________________

- General Emergencies:
  - Both the SAO and Campus Police are available 24 hours per day and will accept collect international calls. If you can only make one call, call NC State Campus Police. They have instructions to accept collect calls, and will then get in touch with a member of the Study Abroad Emergency Response Team.

- Mental Health Emergencies
  - Emergency counseling service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Ph.: +1 919.515.2423; select the option to speak with the crisis hotline and you will be directly connected

Safety: Advisor Tips

- Carry a copy of your Passport and Emergency Contact Card (found on the back cover) along with your insurance card(s).
• Don’t carry your actual passport unless you absolutely need it or are crossing international borders.
• Don’t carry large amounts of cash, and don’t carry all of your money and documents in one bag - separate them out.
• Always carry a cell phone with you with GPS turned on to best utilize the AlertTraveler app.
• Don’t wear headphones when you need to be aware of your surroundings.
• Be alert in crowds, especially in train stations or at tourist attractions. Thieves may use distractions to their advantage.
• Act like you know where you are going and what you are doing. If you are lost or need to check a map, step into a café or other business
• Backpacks, purses, and camera bags are targets. Wear them snug to your body and keep them closed. Carry your wallet in your front pocket rather than your back pocket. If confronted, give up your valuables instead of fighting the attackers.
• If possible, don’t travel alone. Stay in public places, travel with a friend, and always let someone know where you are.
• Make a plan in case you get separated from your travel companions - especially on metros/busses.
• When making travel arrangements abroad, please consider safety and do not sacrifice safety for cost. There are some means of transportation such as overnight trains and busses that may be cheap but may also come with a greater degree of risk.
• Call hotels or hostels before booking a room to make sure your items can be secured in a safe or locker.
• When traveling at night by bus or train, attach your bag to the luggage rack or your seat by using a lock or strap from the bag.
• Ride in the back seat of taxis.
- Along with the Study Abroad Emergency Response Team, stay informed about developments in your host country and around the world.
- Stay away from political or military demonstrations.
Back At Home

☐ Fill out Final Evaluation on PackAbroad Student Page
☐ Confirm with your host institution that your transcript has been sent to the Study Abroad Office
  ◦ Contact the Study Abroad Office to make sure it has arrived
☐ Read Learning Content about ways to get involved on campus

Credits/Transcript
Your host institution will send your official transcript to the NC State Study Abroad Office at the end of your study abroad program (please note this may take a couple of months to arrive at our office). When your transcript arrives, we will forward it to your college coordinator for your first major, and a digital copy will be attached to your study abroad application. You will receive an email with additional instructions and information once we have received your transcript from abroad.

Getting Involved
Pack Abroad Ambassadors: Connect with others who have studied abroad and who would like to share their experience to other NC State Students about their experience. Members of Pack Abroad Ambassadors give presentations, table at colleges and information sessions, create and plan events, and do so much more.
**Volunteer at the Study Abroad Fair:** Held early each fall, come represent your program and share your experiences with interested students.

**Volunteer at the Incoming Exchange Student Orientation:** Held shortly before the beginning of each semester. Help us welcome new exchange students from around the world to the wolf pack!

**Pre-Departure Conference:** Remember how great it was to connect with past program participants at your regional breakout? Share your knowledge and relive your great memories from abroad.

**Cultural Exchange Network (CENet):** Connects NC State students with international students in participating in activities like field trips, seminars, and workshops - most of which are free!

**Global Perspectives Certificate:** The GPC program helps students continue their international engagement back on campus, in the local community, and in their studies. The GPC is a great way to highlight international involvement to future employers and to provide guided reflection on how international engagement can continue after a study abroad experience.

**International Friendship Program:** Be matched with an international student for the year for the purpose of a cross-cultural friendship. Get together once a month for coffee or a movie, and maintain regular contact throughout the year.

**English Conversation Club:** American student volunteers are needed to help international students practice English and learn American slang and idioms.
**Global Village:** Residents from across the world come to reside at the Global Village in Alexander Hall.

**North Carolina Reentry Conference: Go Beyond Abroad:** designed to bring study abroad students together to share benefits and common challenges from study abroad.

### Staying Informed

#### US Embassy Assistance
- You should locate the U.S. Embassy closest to your location by visiting [http://usembassy.state.gov](http://usembassy.state.gov).
- U.S. Embassy personnel provide routine citizenship services and emergency assistance for American citizens abroad.
  - Passport Replacement
  - Legal Difficulties
    - **Consular Officers CAN**
      - Provide visits to jail
      - Provide a list of local attorneys
      - Notify relatives and program director of arrest
      - Relay requests for money or other aid
      - Intercede with the local authorities to ensure humane treatment and that rights under local law are observed
      - Assist in cases of death and serious medical emergency
    - **Consular Officers CANNOT**
      - Get you out of jail.
      - Represent you at trial or give legal counsel.
      - Pay legal fees or fines with U.S. government funds.
Foreign Laws

- It is important for you to become informed of all laws, regulations and standards for each country to or through which you will travel during your program participation.
- Each foreign country has its own laws and regulations and has standards of acceptable conduct in the areas of dress, manners, morals, religion, social customs, politics, alcohol use, drug use and behavior.
- Behavior or conduct which violate those laws or standards could harm the program’s effectiveness, the University’s relations with those countries in which the program is located, your own health and safety, or the health and safety of other participants in the program.
- Many practices that are illegal or grounds for mistrial in the U.S., including extraction of a confession, entrapment, police searches without a warrant, etc., are admissible in court in other countries. In many systems, there is no bail requirement, no jury trial; the burden of proof is on the accused to prove his or her innocence, etc.
- You are fully responsible for any legal problems, any encounters with any foreign government or any individual and the University is not responsible for providing any assistance under such circumstances.

Sexual Harassment & Assault

- Make sure you are aware of any harassment and assault policies at your host university and host country, and know how to report an incident or emergency.
- In general, the U.S. description of sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advances and/or behavior of a verbal, visual, written, or physical nature. You should note, however, that this description may not be the same for the country in which you are studying. In such cases, you are encouraged to discuss the issue with staff at your host university or the Study Abroad Office to determine an appropriate course of action.
• Harassment may include:
  o Derogatory comments, jokes or teasing about the body, body parts, clothing, or sexual activities
  o Visual materials or pictures which are offensive
  o Subtle pressure for dating and/or sexual activity
  o Requests of sexual favors for grades, letters of recommendation, etc.
  o Persistent verbal attacks
  o Unnecessary or unwanted touching or pinching
  o Physical assault
  o Emails or other electronic communications which include any of the above.

• If a situation makes you uncomfortable, it needs to be addressed. Per the NC State Unlawful Harassment Policy, “North Carolina State University hereby affirms its desire to maintain a work environment for all employees and an academic environment for all faculty and students that is free from all forms of harassment. Harassment is completely incompatible with the values and goals of North Carolina State University and will not be tolerated.”

Culture Shock
• Culture shock is the personal disorientation a person may feel when experiencing an unfamiliar way of life due to being in a new country or environment.
• Common problems include: cultural understanding gaps, information overload, language barrier, generation gap, technology gap, skill interdependence, and homesickness.
• Culture shock is unavoidable, and it affects each individual differently.
• Phases
  o Honeymoon
    During this period, the differences between the old and new culture are seen in a romantic light. During the first few weeks, most people are fascinated by the new culture.
o Negotiation
After some time, differences between the old and new culture become apparent and may create anxiety. Excitement may eventually give way to unpleasant feelings of frustration and anger as one continues to experience unfavorable events that may be perceived as strange and offensive to one's cultural attitude. Language barriers, stark differences in public hygiene, traffic safety, food accessibility and quality may heighten the sense of disconnection from the surroundings.

o Adjustment
Strategies are developed to cope with difficulties and feelings, make new friends, and to learn to adapt to the host culture. Finding enjoyable activities is important in routine building.

o Adaption
In the mastery stage individuals are able to participate fully and comfortably in the host culture. Cultural differences are embraced and accepted. The host country is seen as a new yet different home.

Reverse Culture Shock
- Reasons:
  o Realities vs. expectations
    While abroad, many students combat homesickness and culture shock with thoughts of how terrific things will be once they return home. When the return home doesn't meet those expectations, it can make adjustment harder.
  o Personal changes and growth
    Most students returning from an overseas experience feel that they've learned a lot, grown as a person, acquired new attitudes and knowledge, etc. Many students come back to the same old
thing at home and find that friends, family, and school don't recognize or appreciate the new you.

- Becoming ordinary

As international students, many returnees got used to being automatically considered interesting, asked for their opinion as the American, or invited to interesting events, simply because of their status as a foreigner. Students also typically spent their free time doing exciting things (taking weekend trips to other countries, going to festivals and other cultural events, etc.) Coming back to the U.S. and returning to ordinary life and no longer being considered unusual can contribute to feelings of isolation and depression.

- Isolation from changes at home

Many returnees find that it's hard to keep up with changes with friends, family, and pop culture (music, TV, fashion) that took place while they were overseas. While you're excited about and want to share your experiences from abroad, people here may not seem very interested or are more interested in sharing what you missed with you.

- Symptoms of Re-entry Shock

- Re-entry shock symptoms can be very similar to those of culture shock, and will also vary tremendously in specifics and in intensity from person to person. There is no standard reaction -- your experience, whatever it is, is normal! Some common symptoms are:
  - Disruptions in sleeping or eating habits
  - Fatigue
  - Problems concentrating
  - Feelings of isolation
  - Depression

- Ways to Combat Re-entry Shock
Integrate your experience abroad with your life here! Think about some of the ways that you got over culture shock while you were abroad:

- Become involved with activities,
- forming a routine,
- Connect with international students. These can also be very helpful ways to get over re-entry shock.

Academics

- Your host institution and country will likely have very different academic and classroom expectations than you are used to in the United States. Familiarize yourself with teaching styles, grading systems, classroom environments, and assessment expectations. In general, classroom settings abroad are more formal than they are in the United States. Many courses are taught lecture style with lots of students in one classroom - think the size of 101 level courses at NC State.

- In some countries, you may have only 1-2 assessments, which make-up your entire grade for the course. Learning and keeping up with coursework is considered the responsibility of the students. Exams may be either on lectures or required readings for the course. Though the temptation may not be there since quizzes, papers, and other testing isn’t regular, make sure you do not “save” your reading for the end of the term. You will become overwhelmed!

- Note that you will likely register and finalize your class schedule upon arrival at the host institution. This will be in consultation with an academic or faculty member and occur during the first few days on-site.
Policies

The policies below are subject to change, but are current at the time of printing. If you are concerned that a policy has changed, please consult the Policies section of studyabroad.ncsu.edu.

Student Conduct

- As a participant in a study abroad program with NC State, you are expected to take responsibility for your own actions at all times while studying abroad. You will be held accountable for your behavior and you are expected to abide by the NC State Code of Student Conduct, all Study Abroad Office policies, and the laws and customs that govern the host countries where you are studying or visiting.
- It is expected that you will demonstrate respect for yourself and others at all times. These policies exist to ensure a safe, fair and successful experience for all students participating in the program.
- Ignorance of the policies is not an acceptable excuse for policy violation. The Study Abroad Office Policies and Standards of Student Conduct are in writing to give you general notice of expected behavior. These standards should be read broadly and are not designed to define misconduct in exhaustive terms.

Failure to comply with host country laws/regulations, the North Carolina State University Code of Student Conduct, the Study Abroad Office Standards of Student Conduct, Study Abroad Office policies, and/or engaging in behavior which in the judgment of the Faculty Director jeopardizes the safety or well-being of yourself, others, or the program may result in immediate dismissal from the program, failure of courses, loss of program costs, and/or an early return home at your expense. Note that due to the circumstances of foreign travel and foreign study programs, a due process hearing may not be possible and therefore may not be available.
until after the trip or program has ended and you have returned home.

If you are dismissed from the program, you may be sent home at your own expense with no refund of fees or expenses. In being dismissed, you may be subject to failure of courses and/or an early return home. You may also be subject to further disciplinary, civil and/or criminal action upon return to the University. Students will be held financially responsible for any damages or fines incurred on the study abroad program as a result of their misconduct.

Eligibility
- **Minimum GPA Requirement**: 2.5 for semester program (most programs require higher)
- **Minimum Class Standing**: You can study abroad as soon as the summer after your first year or after completing at least one semester at NC State.
- **Conduct**: For all study abroad programs, including Non-NC State programs, students are not eligible to participate if, at the time of program start, the student: (1) is on active disciplinary probation, as defined by Section 11.2 in the NC State Code of Student Conduct or (2) has been on Academic Integrity Probation, as defined by Section 9.1 in the NC State Code of Student Conduct, for less than one full Fall or Spring semester.

Payment Policy
- The application charge (exact cash, check, or money order made payable to NC State in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank; no credit cards accepted) is due to the Study Abroad Office (SAO) by the application deadline.
- The NC State Study Abroad Office portion of the application charge is only refundable if the student is not accepted to the program. Students who withdraw their application before decisions are made will not be refunded
the fee. Any additional portions of application charges are subject to the refund and payment policies of their respective organizations. A $25 fee will be charged for returned checks.

- Additional information can be found at https://studyabroad.ncsu.edu/about/policies/

**Withdrawal and Refund Policy**

- Any student who withdraws from a study abroad program must notify the Study Abroad Office in writing, study_abroad@ncsu.edu.
- Non-Refundable Application Charge:
  - The NC State Study Abroad Office portion of the application charge is only refundable if the student is not accepted to the program.
  - Students who withdraw their application at any time, before or after the decision date, will not be refunded the application charge.
  - A student who withdraws may transfer the NC State Study Abroad Office portion of the application charge to a program during the same or future year.
- The Study Abroad Office will not provide refunds of any monies paid to outside institutions, organizations, or entities (e.g., tuition for direct enroll programs, host institution housing, third-party program providers, ISEP). Students should contact the outside institution, organization, or entity with questions regarding refund policies.

- Additional Information for Semester/Academic Year Exchange Programs
  - Students pay NC State tuition to the Cashier’s Office and are subject to the NC State Cashier’s Office policies.
Additional Information for NC State Prague, London General Studies, and Semester at Lorenzo de’Medici Programs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline of Student Withdrawal</th>
<th>Amount of Program Cost Student is Financially Responsible to Pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After commitment until the Payment Deadline</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment Deadline to 45 days prior to the program start date</td>
<td>25% or $500, whichever is greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 to 15 days prior to the program start date</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 days to 1 day prior to program start date</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On or after the program start date</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Programs that are not financially administered by the Study Abroad Office may have a different refund policy. Students should inquire with their faculty director or program provider for details on the terms of their refund policy.
- MBA premium tuition refunds will follow the standard University schedule.
- Students who choose not to participate in a program activity, either mandatory or non-mandatory (e.g., field trip, excursion, cultural event) will not be refunded any portion of the program cost.
- Students have the right to file a refund application (an appeal) in the Student Accounts Section of the University Cashier’s Office. The appeal must be substantiated by
medical reasons, unexpected employment changes, death in the immediate family, or University error and will be reviewed by the University Fee Appeals Committee. The appeal cannot be processed if you have received academic credit for the course.

Restricted Travel Policy
- Students wishing to study abroad in a location considered a Restricted Travel Area must petition the Study Abroad Office to request special approval. Restricted Travel Areas are determined by the U.S. Dept. of State’s travel advisories, the Center for Disease Control’s travel health notices, and NC State. Additional information can be found at: https://studyabroad.ncsu.edu/health-safety-abroad/travel-warning-policy/

Visitors Policy
- Visitors of participants and general community members are not permitted to participate in NC State study abroad programs. Participation in a study abroad program and its associated benefits (accommodations, meals, transportation, excursions, events, insurance, etc.) are limited to students enrolled in the program.
- NC State Faculty-Led Summer and Short-Term Study Abroad Programs
  - Due to the short and intensive nature of summer and short-term study abroad programs, and for risk management and liability purposes, visitors are not permitted to accompany a participant on the program. This allows the University to maintain the academic integrity of the program, and ensure the safety of the student participant cohort.
  - NC State University faculty or staff must have a formal role with the program either as a program director, instructor, or program support staff.
- Semester or Full Year Study Abroad Programs
Visitors may hinder the student’s immersion in the host culture, thus students are discouraged from having visitors while classes are in session. Students may host visitors at the conclusion of their program or during university breaks.

- **Overnight Guests in Program Accommodations (All Programs)**
  - Most residence halls of host universities, homestays, and housing arranged by program providers have strict regulations prohibiting overnight guests in student rooms. Program participants may not allow visitors to stay overnight in their assigned rooms during participation in a study abroad program without the express permission from the program host or host family.

**International Insurance Coverage**

- All students studying abroad on an NC State programs are required to be covered for the duration of their study abroad program. This is a mandatory UNC System requirement. SAO enrolls students in coverage based upon a standard set of coverage dates for the term they will be abroad. These dates will be listed in the invoice attached to the student’s online study abroad application.
- Students going on semester programs are expected to verify that the standard set of coverage dates will cover the duration of their program. If a student’s program is longer or shorter than the duration of the coverage period, he/she may request a date adjustment. Students should submit a request in writing to the SAO at least one week prior to the insurance payment deadline.

**Seniors and Graduating Students**

- Some academic departments have residency requirements that state you must complete a certain number of credit
hours at NC State (such as 30 of the last 45 credits earned towards your degree). Study abroad is often regarded as an exception to this requirement, but you **MUST** apply for permission for such an exception from the dean of your school or college before leaving.

- If you plan to spend part of your senior year abroad, and particularly if you plan to graduate immediately after your return from abroad, remember that you may not receive your transcript from the overseas university until several months after your return. Therefore, you should not plan to receive your degree earlier than one semester after your return.

**Advisor Tip:** You may extend your international insurance coverage up to 30 days before and after your program. This is easily done by logging into your GeoBlue Portal, and requesting additional dates outside the listed coverage dates.
Fill out, tear off, and carry with you while abroad.