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Salisbury Abroad Student Handbook 2014-15

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CONGRATULATIONS!

You're about to embark upon a great experience.

The opportunity to study in a different part of the world is a thrilling one that many people can only dream about. You are receiving the chance to not only continue your Salisbury University studies in a different country, but to learn about your new host country, to learn about yourself, and gain a new perspective on how you view the world. After working with hundreds of students who have studied in different parts of the globe, we are confident that you will learn, gain valuable skills and return to Salisbury a changed person.

As you might imagine, studying in a different part of the globe is a great opportunity and also one with significant challenges. The purpose of this handbook is to prepare you for both the opportunities and challenges you may encounter.

Please be certain to read through this handbook prior to your program orientation.

And as always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Salisbury University Center for International Education (SUCIE) at sucie@salisbury.edu or +1-410-677-5027.

Bon voyage!

**In case of an emergency abroad,
first contact your program site director and then:**

- Dr. Brian Stiegler, *SUCIE Director*
bnstiegler@salisbury.edu
SUCIE@salisbury.edu
+1-410-677-5027

In case of emergency outside of office hours please contact:
University Police: +1-410-543-6222

SECTION I

LIVING AND STUDYING ABROAD

“There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered.”

— Nelson Mandela, *The Long Walk to Freedom* —

Ten reasons to study abroad:

1. Earn credits toward your degree around the globe.
2. Learn about another culture firsthand, as well as your own.
3. Understand more about yourself as you grow and develop in a new situation.
4. Make your resume stand out from other candidates.
5. Experience a great way to learn a new language.
6. Enhance your employment opportunities and job skills.
7. Open up a whole new world of opportunities, jobs and ideas
8. Highlight your independence and initiative.
9. Gain intercultural and interpersonal skills.
10. Develop friendships and relationships with people all around the globe.

You Are a Learner, Not a Tourist

A tourist plans a very nice vacation to a beautiful destination, takes pictures, eats whatever food they're used to eating, speaks English all the time and basically transposes whatever version of their home culture they desire into the location they are visiting. In studying abroad, you are not a tourist – you are a learner. Your priority is not to have a nice vacation and post some great pictures on Facebook to impress your friends back home. Your priority is to learn: to learn about life, local culture, learn about your academic discipline, learn how people are different, learn how

people are similar, learn how different your own culture is and learn about the world of which you are a part. You can be a tourist any time of your life. Go be a learner now!

“The traveler sees what he sees, the tourist sees what he has come to see.”

— G.K. Chesterton —

Living as a Guest

When entering someone else's home, you may look to see whether or not they take their shoes off at the door, whether they put their feet on the coffee table or whether they use a coaster under their drink. When you see how they respond, you would likely do the same. The same applies in visiting a new culture. Things will be different. Expect that! When you're not certain how to act, look to the people around you and act accordingly. Do men wear shorts? Do women wear flip flops? Do people shout to talk on the bus? Take a look at your neighbors in your new home and follow their example. **You can spend time living with students from the United States any time during college – make friends who are from your host country! When in Rome, do as the Romans!**

No Pain, No Gain!

If you are training to compete in a sport, you understand that you have to work very hard to get great results. At times, it is very challenging and can take a lot of work, but you recognize that the outcome is that you will be a better athlete. The same is true for many aspects of life, including living in a different culture. Studying in a different country will undoubtedly be challenging (as is being in college at Salisbury), but the challenges make you a better student, professional and person. Challenges can include getting to know a roommate from a different culture, adjusting to a different style of teaching and grading, trying to buy lunch in a different language, or finding your way around a new city. If you aren't finding challenges, you may not be trying hard enough to get to know your new culture. But remember, these challenges help you grow, learn and develop.

Ask Questions!

Many things in your new host country will be different. Instead of simply writing off things as “dumb” or “wrong,” start asking why things are different or why you are not used to things being that way.

Here is a list of 30 questions to get you thinking about your host country and many aspects of its culture. They are not intended to be an exclusive list. Many more will be suggested as you answer these. Nevertheless, when you have the answers to the following 30, you may consider yourself well beyond the beginner stage.

History/Politics

1. Who are the country's heroes and heroines?
2. What is the political structure of the country? How long has the structure been in place?
3. What is the history of the relationship between the country and the U.S.?

Religion

4. What is the predominant religion of the country? Is it a state religion?
5. What are the most important religious observances and ceremonies?
6. What is the attitude of the predominant religion toward other religions?

Relationships/Family

7. What are the norms of “romantic” relationships in this country? Do young people date? If they date, do they date in couples? Do they need a chaperone?
8. What is the norm regarding premarital sex?
9. Is it okay to hold hands, touch or kiss in public?
10. What are the rules/norms for male-female friendships? In what types of social activities do young women and men participate together?
11. What is the attitude toward divorce? Extra-marital relations? Plural marriage?
12. What games do children play? Where do children congregate?
13. How are children disciplined at home?

Education

14. Who goes to the university?
15. What is the university calendar?

Society

16. What is the normal work schedule?
17. What things are taboo in this society?
18. How do people greet one another? Shake hands? Embrace or kiss?
19. How do they leave one another?
20. What sports are popular?
21. What are the favorite leisure and recreational activities of adults? of teenagers?
22. How will your financial position and living conditions compare with those of the majority of the people living in this country?

Dress

23. What is the usual dress for women? For men?
24. Are pants or shorts worn? If so, on what occasions? What is the climate like where I will be?
25. What types of clothing are taboo?

Food and Drink

26. What foods are most popular and how are they prepared?
27. If you are invited for dinner, should you arrive early? On time? Late? If late, how late?
28. What is the attitude toward drinking?

Language

29. Are there other languages spoken besides the dominant language?
30. What are three helpful phrases in the local language that I can easily learn and use?

(Adapted from L. Robert Kohls, *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*)



SECTION II

STAYING SAFE AND HEALTHY

Safety and Security

Risks surround you all the time – some are good and some are bad. It can be risky to try a new food, to talk to a new person or to navigating a new bus system. Without risks people do not learn or grow.

Some risks, however, challenge your health and wellbeing. Walking around by yourself at 2 a.m. is a risk in Salisbury; Baltimore; Cuenca, Ecuador; or Anqing, China. You want to try to minimize the unhealthy risks. Be aware of your surroundings and try to stay in control as best as possible.

There are general things to be aware of, but many details will depend on your location. Listen to the site staff with their recommendations of how to stay safe and stay in control. Also, you should observe the U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings for your country.

Safety Tips

- Do not use shortcuts, narrow alleys or poorly-lit streets.
- Do not travel alone at night.
- Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances.
- Keep a low profile and avoid loud conversations or arguments.
- Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers.
- Avoid scam artists who approach you and offer to be your guide or sell you something at bargain prices.
- Beware of pickpockets. They often have an accomplice who will jostle you or try to distract you.
- Wear the shoulder strap of your bag across your chest and walk with the bag away from the curb to avoid drive-by purse-snatchers.
- Try to seem purposeful when you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going.
- Always know a few phrases in the local language.
- Make a note of emergency telephone numbers you may need: police, fire, your hotel and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.
- If you are confronted, don't fight back – give up your valuables.

(Taken from *A Safe Trip Abroad*, travel.state.gov)

Always carry with you:

- A copy of the face-page of your passport. (Consult with your on-site program director. In most countries, you will not need your original passport within the city. You can lock your passport in your suitcase or safe place in your room.)
- Address and phone number for your homestay family or student residence.
- Emergency contact number for your on-site program director. If you are in trouble, your on-site program director is your best resource. Your family will be able to do very little from 3,000 miles away.

If you are a citizen of the United States, be certain to register with the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP): step.state.gov/step. Should an emergency arise in your area, they will only be able to reach you if they have a way of contacting you.



Emergencies

In case of a terrorist incident, natural disaster, political upheaval or any other risk anywhere within your country or even on the continent where you are studying, whether it is affecting your city or not, please immediately contact:

- Dr. Brian Stiegler, *SUCIE Director*
bnstieglers@salisbury.edu
SUCIE@salisbury.edu
+1-410-677-5027

In case of emergency outside of office hours please contact:

University Police: +1-410-543-6222

Please send a quick note that you are safe and an update from your perspective.

If you have any trouble (you get sick, you get robbed, you are involved in an accident), contact your on-site program director first. Only once the immediate crisis has passed, contact Dr. Stiegler with an update. We want to hear about your trouble from you first before hearing about it from someone else.

Alcohol & Drugs

Drinking alcohol, though it may be legal in the country you are living in, may reduce the amount of control you have in a situation. Be certain to drink with caution and always have people around you who you trust.

Also be aware of laws surrounding alcohol consumption or drug usage. In many countries, alcohol consumption with meals is very common, but public intoxication is treated very severely. Drug usage is also treated with extreme strictness in many countries. If you are arrested for breaking a local law, there is nothing the University or the government of the United States (or your home country) can do to help you. You do NOT want to turn your time studying abroad into a prison sentence abroad.

Health

Hopefully no health concerns will arise, but always carry a copy of your health insurance information with you. Also review the Center for Disease Control's Web page for country-specific information on your country: wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel.

All students studying abroad must provide proof that they have obtained International Health Insurance coverage for the time they are abroad. A letter from any insurance carrier with appropriate coverage can be submitted as proof.

Sex

Be aware of different cultural perceptions surrounding romance and sexual interactions. Movies and television from the United States have created the image that people from the U.S. have low standards when it comes to sex. Women in particular may need to be aware of the advances of men who assume women from the U.S. will easily accept sexual situations. Sexually transmitted infections are very real at home and abroad; be aware of the physical risks as well as the emotional and social consequences of sexual interactions.

Sexual Identity

If you identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual, you will want to be aware of how that is perceived by your host country. Your host country may be less accepting to different sexual orientations than the U.S., and you may need to be cautious as to how open you are with sharing about your sexual identity.

Student Conduct

While the SUCIE staff hope that there will not be any issues with student conduct while abroad, it is important to note that all student conduct issues occurring abroad are reported to Salisbury University and can impact your standing as a student at SU.

SECTION III

BEFORE YOU GO

Academics at Salisbury University

As a Salisbury student studying abroad, all of your classes will appear on your Salisbury University transcript. For Salisbury Abroad programs, courses will appear on your transcript as if you studied at SU for the semester. For affiliate programs, the courses will appear as transfer credits. If you did not select specific courses to take when applying for the program, make certain to complete the Program Planning Form to ensure you receive the correct courses at SU. It is your responsibility to complete the necessary paperwork in order to receive the correct grades.

Be certain to follow the Salisbury Abroad checklist to confirm you take care of all the necessary details that occur abroad. Also be certain to stay connected with SU through e-mail, as that will be your main connecting point to the University and SUCIE.

If you are going through a Salisbury University affiliate program (i.e. one not called "Salisbury Abroad"), be certain to request an official transcript. Transcripts should be sent to:

- Office of the Registrar
Salisbury University
1101 Camden Avenue
Salisbury, MD 21801

The Registrar's Office will send you a reminder e-mail in mid-semester as to what dates you can register online through Gullnet. The Registrar's Office will give

you priority registration as a senior regardless of what year you actually are for the semester you are abroad. You should e-mail your academic advisor with any questions about what courses to take the following semester; you might want to discuss this before you leave.

Pre-Departure Checklist

Before departure you should complete ALL the following:

Administrative

- Copy down all names, phone numbers, postal and e-mail addresses of people and offices with who you MIGHT need to have contact during your time away.
- Apply for your passport. If you already have a passport, make sure that it is valid well past the date of your anticipated return. If it is not, renew it ASAP.
- Apply for your visa. Your site provider will discuss how to obtain the passport.
- Make three photocopies of the picture page of your passport.
- Leave one photocopy of your passport with your parents or someone at home.
- Give one photocopy of your passport to the SU Center for International Education.
- Leave the list of contact numbers for your program with someone at home.
- Register online with the U.S. Embassy (step.state.gov/step).
- Pay all required fees.
- Buy textbooks.

Clothes Tips

- Don't bring too much. If you get stuck, you can always buy something locally.
- Mix and match outfits.
- Bring one semi-formal outfit (skirt, dress shirt and tie).
- Bring clothes that you can use for multiple purposes (e.g. a pair of nice pants you could wear to class, going out or for a nice event).
- Avoid tattered jeans, t-shirts/sweatshirts with writing in English, baseball caps. Both for personal security and for cultural sensitivity, try not to look like an "ugly American."

Logistics and Money

- Contact your bank and credit card company to tell them you will be traveling abroad.
- Plan a budget. Bring spending money; bring your ATM card after checking with your bank that you will be able to use it abroad, and bring your credit card.
- Discuss health and safety and terrorism issues with your family, and think about emergency contact procedures.
- Consider purchasing insurance for personal liability property loss, trip cancellation, etc.
- Have a physical, dental check, eye examination, etc. Make sure you receive all appropriate inoculations.

Luggage

- Confirm with airline the number and weight of checked pieces of luggage and charges for luggage.
- Put tags on all luggage and also inside your bag.
- Pack a luggage lock for use when you are in your host country; do not lock checked luggage unless you want it cut off.
- Liquids and gels must be packed in checked luggage; any liquids and gels in carry-on must be in 3 oz. containers maximum, in a 1 quart clear ziplock bag – only 1 ziplock bag per traveler. Ziplock bag must be presented at security.

Packing

- Prescriptions, glasses, other medical needs (bring all you need, as due to customs regulations, your parents may not be able to ship you more).
- Written prescription for each medication.
- An extra pair of glasses and/or extra contact lenses.
- Enough personal hygiene products to last you one month. You can always buy more products in the host country, though you may not be able to find the specific brand or product you are used to.

SECTION IV GOALS

“Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal.”

– Henry Ford –

“Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare.”

– Japanese Proverb –

Research has indicated that students who work toward goals prior to studying abroad are able to maximize more of their experience abroad. By having goals you will be able to make the most of your experience abroad and help you persevere through challenges when they arise.

George T. Doran (*Management Review*, 1981) identified the importance of “**SMART**” goals:

Specific – What is it you actually want to do? Focus on a few key things.

Measurable – Can you look and see if it was actually attained?

Attainable – Can it be accomplished?

Relevant – Does it make sense for you?

Time-sensitive – When will this goal be accomplished?

■ **Not SMART:** I want to have good grades.

■ **SMART goal:** I want to have an overall grade of A at the end of my semester in China.

■ **Not SMART:** I want to meet people.

■ **SMART goal:** I want to make one good Estonian friend who I can hang out with on the weekends.

■ **Not SMART:** I want to have cultural experiences.

■ **SMART goal:** I want to go to one soccer match during my first month in Ecuador.

Academic

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Cultural

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Personal

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Other
(Physical, Emotional, Social, etc.)

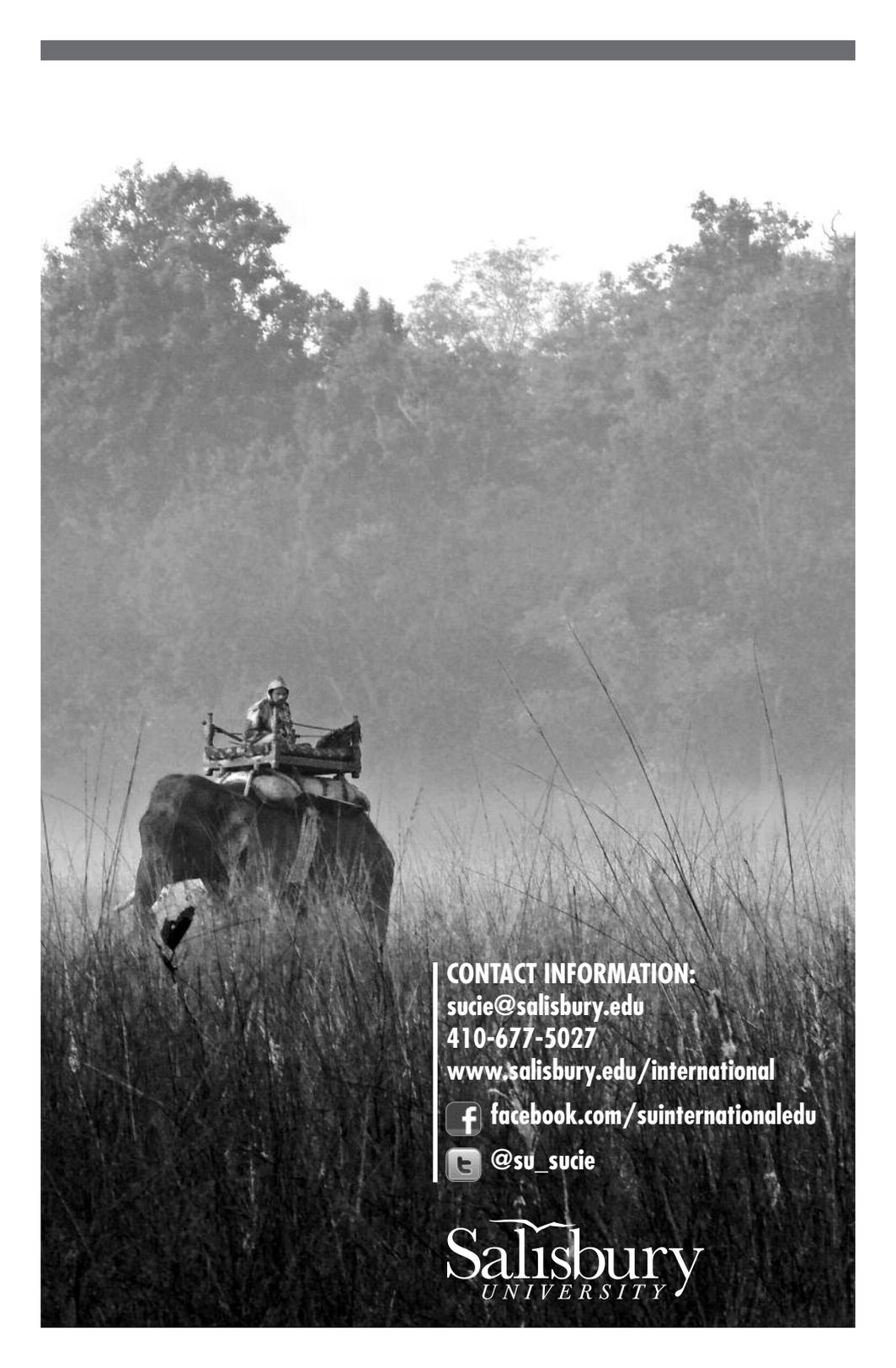
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Begin thinking about your goals. SUCIE staff also will work with you on them during the Pre-Departure Orientation.

Salisbury University has a strong institutional commitment to diversity and is an Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action employer, providing equal employment and educational opportunities to all those qualified, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation or gender identity. Inquiries should be directed to Salisbury University Human Resources Office, Salisbury University, 1101 Camden Avenue, Salisbury, Maryland 21801-6860. Telephone 410-543-6035.



CONTACT INFORMATION:

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410-677-5027

www.salisbury.edu/international

 facebook.com/suinternationaledu

 [@su_sucie](https://twitter.com/su_sucie)

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