



# STUDY ABROAD PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION

*Preparing for the Journey*

# Outline

- Your Decision to Go Abroad
- Global Perception
- Academics
- Fin Aid, \$, Electronics,
- Accommodation
- Health & Safety
- Packing
- Cultural Stereotypes
- Culture Shock



# Your Decision to Study Abroad

- Enrich and diversify your education
- Gain a global outlook and global literacy
- Enhance your career preparation
- Deepen intellectual and personal maturity
- Foster independent thinking
- Build self-confidence
- Develop Intercultural Competencies



# Global Perception



# Academics



- ❑ Meet with your advisor
- ❑ Complete International Study Course Approval Form
- ❑ Prepare for different academic experience
- ❑ Grades COUNT!
- ❑ Registration at UWP while abroad

# Financial Aid

- 100% aid applies
- Increased budget may not mean increased aid
- UWP International Study Grant
- Some program and major specific aid
- TSI grant does not apply to study abroad



# Financial Aid Continued

- How does financial aid disbursements work?
- How do refunds work?
- Private loans require student signature
  - ▣ Make sure your parents can endorse your checks & deposit them into your account



# Money Management

- Exchanging money
  - ▣ ATM easiest access (Cirrus) – check with bank for fees
- Credit card – for emergencies
  - ▣ Call your bank before you leave
- Back-ups
  - ▣ Traveler's checks
  - ▣ Credit card
- Copies - keep copies separate from originals
- Personal budgeting – varies from person to person
  - ▣ Think before you spend
  - ▣ Live like a local
- Use ISIC

# Packing



- <http://www.uwplatt.edu/intprog/educationabroad/accepted/packingtips.html>

- Pack only what you can comfortably carry
- Be prepared for delayed and/or lost luggage
- 3-1-1 rule
- Check with airline for regulations/luggage weight limits
- Sending items abroad

# Your Responsibilities

- ❑ Complete application & paperwork
- ❑ Bring passport
- ❑ Visa or other immigration documentation
- ❑ Book flight (only when acceptance and program dates are confirmed)
- ❑ Become intimately familiar with host country – do your research!
- ❑ Consult the State Department Website
- ❑ Register with the State Department (travel?)



# Insurance & Health

- CISI Insurance
  - ▣ Accident & Sickness
  - ▣ Emergency Medical Reunion
  - ▣ Team Assist Plan
  - ▣ Emergency Medical Evacuation
  - ▣ Repatriation
  - ▣ Security Evacuation
  
- Prescription Meds – carry-on, letter from doctor, generic name, original containers



# Immunizations & Health

- Immunizations – check with Center for Disease Control website: [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)
- Tetanus update (10 years)
- Hepatitis A (2 shots)
- Hepatitis B (3 shots)
- TB
- Menomune
- Contraceptives/Condoms
- Travel Clinic at Medical Associates in Dubuque
- Take detailed health history with you & keep on your person



# Mental Health Issues

- Disorders can manifest or become exacerbated
- Recognize symptoms of distress or mental illness:



- engaging in risky behavior
- personality changes
- missed assignments
- sleeping more or less than usual
- lack of personal hygiene
- excessive fatigue
- constant sadness or tearfulness
- expressions of hopelessness
- focus on death, suicide or despair

# Mental Health Issues Continued

- Identify coping skills
  - ▣ Finding a support group
  - ▣ Learning to laugh at mistakes
  - ▣ Making time for:
    - Good self care
    - Close relationships
    - Spirituality
    - Exercise
    - Fun



# Accommodations

- ❑ Varies from program to program
- ❑ Expect differences in size, heat, and customs
- ❑ Respect for host family, roommates
- ❑ Guests and visitors
- ❑ Housing at UWP for the next term



# Computer & Internet Access



- ❑ Don't expect same conveniences
- ❑ Cyber cafes, possible campus access
- ❑ Laptops
- ❑ Don't overuse
- ❑ Consider secure online backup for data

# Electronics Abroad



- Electricity currents and power outlets may be different
- You may need an adapter and converter to use US hair dryers, curling irons, I-pod (MP3 player), etc. and they may not work

# Communications



- 24 hour rule on arrival
- Communication with home
  - ▣ Web cams
  - ▣ Skype
  - ▣ IM
  - ▣ Email, Blogs
- Cell phones vs. calling cards

# Travel & Safety



- ❑ Carrying money & documents
- ❑ Don't drive! Use public transportation systems
- ❑ Always leave itinerary behind
- ❑ Discuss emergency plan with family
- ❑ Make advance reservations
- ❑ US State Department recommendations (Worldwide Caution)
- ❑ Never walk alone at night

# Alcohol and Drugs

- Placing yourself in risky situations because of alcohol consumption is very dangerous
- There is a difference between leisure drinking and binge drinking
- In other countries drinking is a social norm – drinking to excess is stigmatized as an “Ugly American” trait
- Drugs (including marijuana) are illegal while abroad as well as in the U.S.



# Sex & the International Traveler



- Some Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) are more prevalent abroad
- General precautions:
  - Abstinence
  - “Safer Sex”
  - Always use condoms!
    - Bring your own supply as packaging & manufacturing abroad may be questionable

# Student Safety Abroad

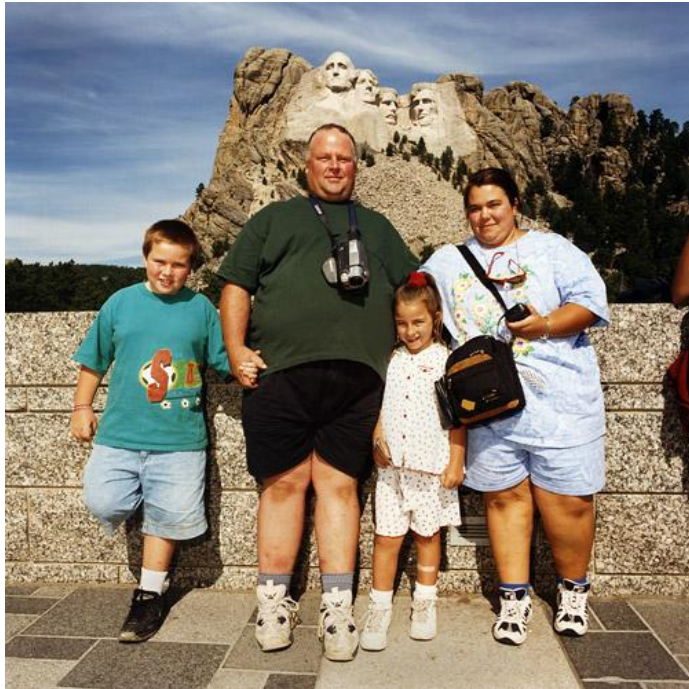
- Keep a low profile



- Avoid dressing like an American – university t-shirts, baseball caps, etc.
- Avoid hanging out in groups dominated by Americans
- Be aware of talking loudly in public places
- Avoid go to American-style clubs and restaurants
- Attempt to blend in

# Cultural Stereotypes

## □ Stereotypes of U.S.-Americans (Physical Appearance)



- Tall with blue eyes and blonde hair
- Men are handsome like movie stars and have muscular builds
- Women are either fat or too thin, and wear too much makeup
- No sense of style
- “Native dress” is blue jeans, cowboy boots and cowboy hat

# Cultural Stereotypes Continued

## □ Stereotypes of U.S.-Americans (General)

- Loud, obnoxious, demanding and rude
- Expect everyone to speak English
- All are rich
- Ignorant of the rest of the world

- In international affairs, as in personal lives, do whatever we want and don't care about what other people think
- Women are perceived as being “easy”



# Expectations

- Identify the reasons you wish to study abroad
- What are your impressions of the country where you will be living? Are they realistic?
- You may find that your personal expectations of the country, its people, the institution, etc. do not match reality

Prepare to be flexible,  
not disappointed!



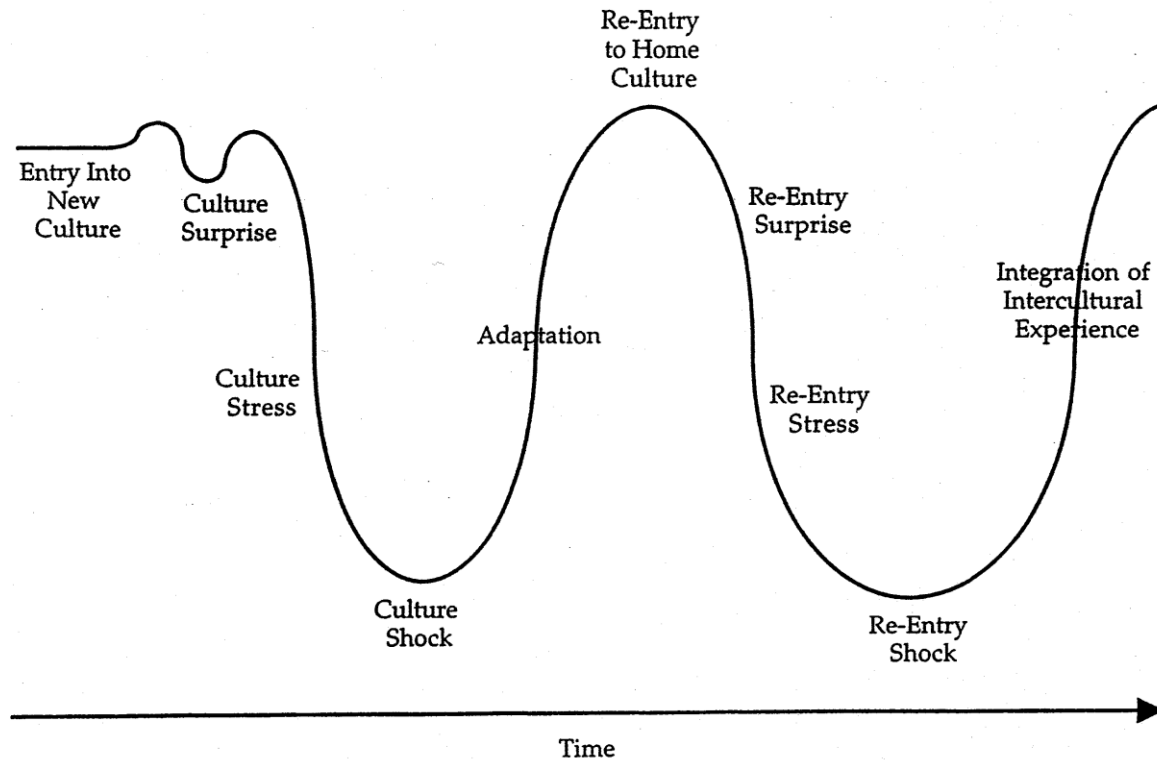
# Maximizing Study Abroad

- ❑ Buy a dictionary
- ❑ Start a journal/blog
- ❑ Set pre-departure & in-country goals
- ❑ Make a list of things you want to learn
- ❑ Bring photos from home
- ❑ Define what “survival” skills you’ll need

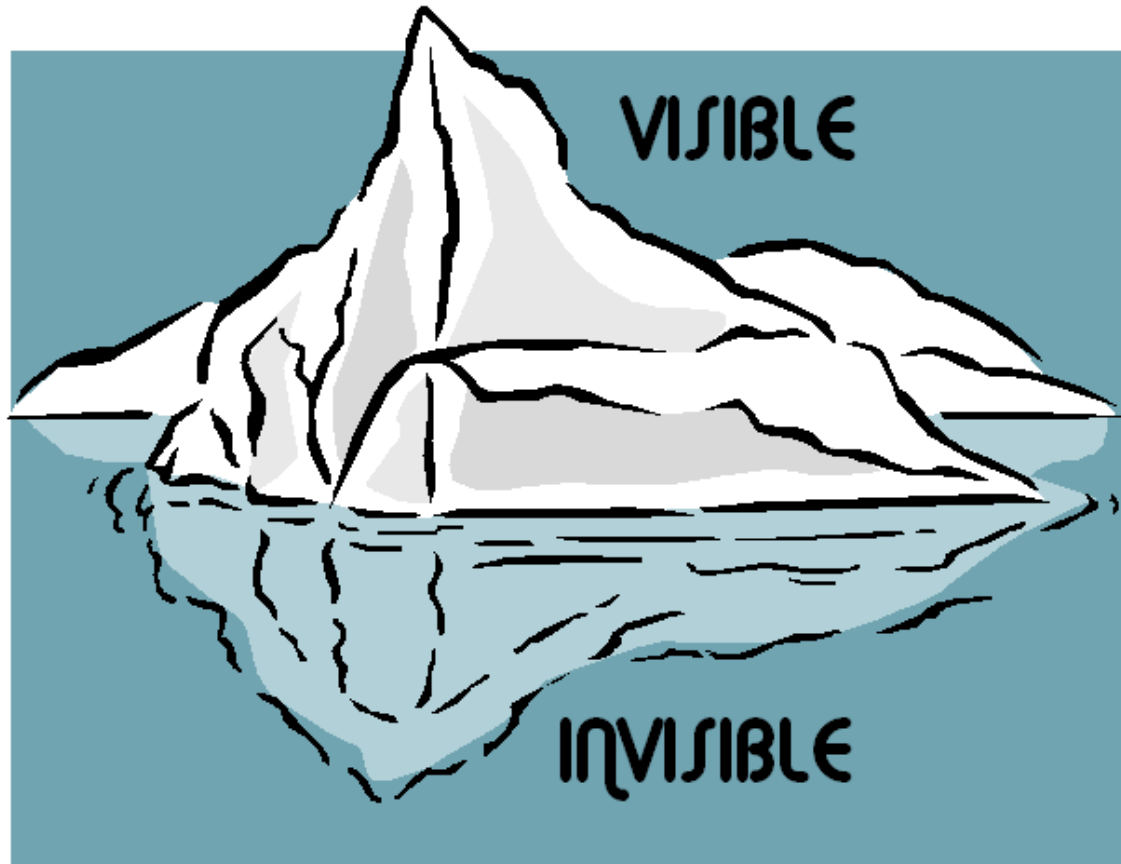


# Transition Shock

## Stages of Transition Shock



# Iceberg Model



# What's Up With Culture?

- A free, open-access on-line resource for US-American study abroad students hosted by the School of International Studies, University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA



- [www.pacific.edu/culture](http://www.pacific.edu/culture)

# Evaluation

Please fill out our  
evaluation of this  
Pre-Departure  
Orientation before  
you leave.



# Break Out Session

- Important areas to address:
  - ✓ academic program/considerations
  - ✓ what to pack and how
  - ✓ calendar (beginning & ending dates/breaks)
  - ✓ accommodations/food
  - ✓ travel to and from program
  - ✓ local and regional safety issues
  - ✓ realistic expectations
  - ✓ what I wish I had known before I left!

**SPECIAL THANKS TO UW-  
WHITEWATER FOR CONTRIBUTIONS  
TO THIS PRESENTATION.**

