

Pitzer College in Costa Rica

Pre-Departure Orientation Handbook
Spring 2012



MAP OF COSTA RICA



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CULTURAL IMMERSION AND ADAPTATION

CULTURAL IMMERSION

One of the most important modes of learning employed by this program is learning through cultural immersion. By cultural immersion we mean,

A commitment to participate as fully as possible in the local lifestyle, language and culture of your host family and community in order to understand something of what it means to be a member of the host culture.

Notice the word *commitment*. Immersion doesn't happen automatically. It takes a certain commitment over the course of the program– a mindfulness of why you came in the first place and faithfulness to that.

Pitzer's Study Abroad programs ask students to engage the local lifestyle, language and culture as fully as possible. Our programs provide ample opportunities for interaction as well as experienced cross-cultural guidance. You make the commitment to take those opportunities and follow that guidance when you participate in a Pitzer program.

We help you move beyond passive observation to active participation in the life of the host community. We ask you to meet the culture on its own terms and share the common experiences that make up the everyday lives of typical community members. You will accomplish this within the program structure of intensive language study, family stays, and field exercises that require interaction with members of the host culture.

We expect you to limit your daily living options to those available to typical members of the host community. This may mean living with little privacy and few amenities, opting for crowded and sometimes unreliable local transportation, using local health facilities that require long waits, or going into town to make a call home or send an email rather than using the program office phone or computer. This is hard work and requires a strong commitment on your part. We provide the structure and encouragement for cultural immersion, but you must choose between engaging the culture on its own terms and retreating to more convenient and familiar options.

With this in mind, it will be helpful for you to think about ways you can participate more fully in the life of your host family and community. To get you started, here are some ideas that past students have come up with. Reflect on these and add your own. Refer back to this during the course of your program to make sure you are taking full advantage of the many opportunities for cultural immersion learning on your program.

Strategies to deepen cultural immersion learning:

Ways to participate fully in the life of my host family:	Ways to participate fully in the local community where I am living:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help around the house • Run errands with your family • Play with the kids • Go out with host brothers or sisters, help with homework, read to them, go to school, share daily activities and ask about host family's life, • Shop for a meal, prepare and cook food, eat, and clean up together • Go to clinics or hospitals or local healers with host family <p>Other strategies:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer in social work agencies • "Just get out" • Visit local markets • Check out community theater groups • Get involved in sports • Take local transportation • Eat in restaurants frequented by locals • Go to church/temple/mosque • Participate in community activities • Go to local hangouts (park, restaurants, cafes), frequent the same path so you can get to know locals <p>Other strategies:</p>

CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS

Given that we want you to participate fully in the host culture, we want you to do this in a way that reflects the host culture's values. This is what we mean by cultural appropriateness:

A commitment to learn about and increase your understanding of the host culture and then interact, communicate and behave in ways that respect the host culture's values.

This may mean you need to dress differently, eat new foods, or new quantities of food. You may need to change certain concepts of time, personal space and privacy. You will certainly need to develop a new set of non-verbal behaviors and to give up certain things you value. Most importantly, you will need to develop tolerance and respect for many other things that you may not understand or cannot accept.

Committing yourself to cultural appropriateness is hard work, but the rewards are considerable and last a lifetime. The depth of your immersion experience and the character of the relationships you develop are dependent on your ability to make a serious attempt to understand and respect others. We believe the quality of your learning experience is directly related to these efforts.

A commitment to cultural appropriateness:

- is a reflection and measurement of ongoing culture learning and therefore factors into your core course grade.
- demonstrates that you care about what is important to your hosts and that you are making an honest attempt to respect their values.
- has a profound effect on the type of experience you will have.
- promotes meaningful interactions and language learning.
- increases safety and helps to prevent harassment.
- speaks well of your home college, your program, and your program staff and faculty.

A Higher Level of Cultural Sensitivity

Sensitivity to another culture requires more than mastering rules of etiquette. Of course, such rules are important, but they cannot be learned in isolation from actual experience. The best way to prepare for upcoming cross-cultural encounters is to imagine the type of person you will attempt to be during the program. Pitzer expects a sustained commitment to developing and maintaining a higher level of cultural sensitivity. What does that mean? Consider the following three characterizations:

- 1) The tourist level – represented by the sentiment: “I am oblivious to the effects my actions have on locals and never stop long enough to even question my behavior.”
- 2) The sojourner level – represented by the attitude: “How can I continue to live my life, interact and behave the way I always have without offending my hosts?”
- 3) A higher level – represented by the question: “What must I change in order to show I respect the host culture's values, facilitate meaningful relationships, and have a deeper more meaningful learning experience?”

We expect you to make a commitment to being at the higher (proactive) level of awareness and sensitivity. At this level you move from a “What can I get away with and not offend my hosts?” attitude to a higher level of sensitivity represented by this questions: “What can I do (How must I change?) to show I respect the host culture's values and through this, facilitate meaningful relationships with members of the host culture and have a deeper, more enriching learning experience?” If you commit to this higher level, a list of do's and don'ts is not necessary. You will be actively engaged in culture learning throughout your experience and your behavior and interactions will reflect this. People will see your respect for their culture and help you to learn. Even cultural blunders or faux pas (which we all make) will be accepted by members of the host culture gracefully when you are at this level.

Cultural Appropriateness as an Indicator of Learning

Cultural appropriateness is an ongoing effort throughout the course of your semester to learn about the host culture and reflect that in your interactions and behavior. It is not a list of dos or don'ts or something you can simply learn in orientation. It is a commitment to ongoing culture learning. As such, *cultural appropriateness as an indicator of learning* makes up a portion of the grading criteria of both the language and the core course. We believe that successful and appropriate participation in the local culture is just as much a demonstration of learning as a well-written paper or a top mark on an exam.

A Role Model for Cultural Appropriateness

All of culture is contested and in a process of change. It is easy in any culture to find exceptions to the norm. There will always be members of the host culture who question, challenge, disagree with, and even openly go against certain cultural practices. Students often point out such exceptions and say, "Look. She is from this culture and she's dressing like that, so why can't I?" or "He's from here and he's doing that. How can you say that is culturally inappropriate?" Our role model for cultural appropriateness is behavior that is typical for the community and host family where we live and study, not the liberal or conservative extremes that can be found in any culture. The fact that a particular cultural practice is being contested by certain members of the culture does not mean we can disregard or disrespect that practice if it is the norm for the situation we are in and the people with whom we would forge meaningful relationships.

We expect you to respect the cultural practices of the situation you are in, even as you engage in a critical exploration of how, by whom, in what context and to what extent certain aspects of the culture are being contested. We certainly don't want to enter your host family, for instance, having made pre-judgments, perhaps from certain readings, that certain of their cultural practices are oppressive to women. Rather, we want you to enter in with an open and non-judgmental attitude. Learn about the cultural practices of your host family, allow their values and beliefs to inform your own behavior as a gesture of respect, and in this context, explore from the host country perspective whether and to what extent a certain practice is being contested or is seen as oppressive. These two approaches to culture learning (critical analysis and respectful participation) are not incompatible.

Since there is such a diversity of cultural practices out there, initially, it will be difficult for you to know if behavior you observe is on the fringe or fairly typical for the community you are in. It takes a while to figure this out. Early on, you should proceed with caution and let program staff and host families serve as guides and role models for cultural appropriateness. Later on in the semester, as you commit to the process of culture learning, you will be more and more able to figure this out on your own.

Cultural Appropriateness and Your Own Core Values

A common question students often struggle with is this: *Won't a serious commitment to cultural appropriateness require me to compromise my own core values?* The answer is no. You do not need to give up your own core values to appreciate and respect the existence of contrasting values in others. Cultural appropriateness does not require us to do this, but it does require that we learn about and respect a different set of values in the way we behave and interact as long as we are guests in the host culture.

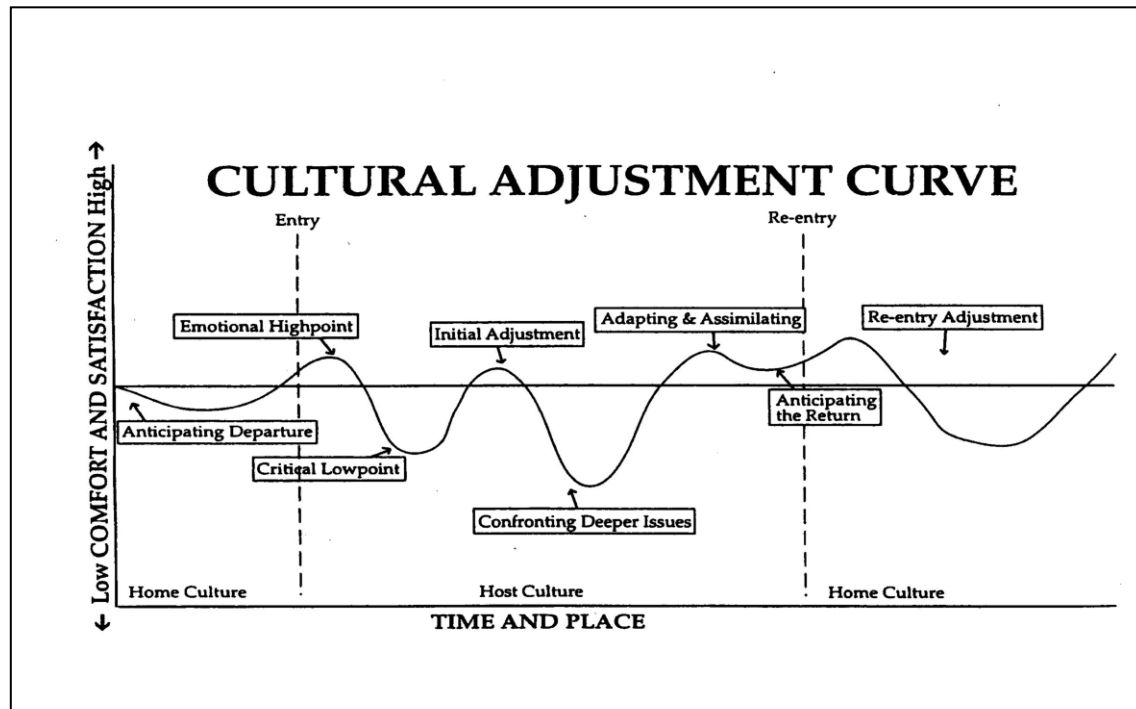
Your role as a student on this program is not to judge the host culture, especially not to judge it based on your own values, but to understand it based on its own beliefs and values and to honor these host culture values in the way you interact and behave. Again, you can do this without compromising your own core values. Cultural appropriateness is not a process of giving up or diminishing who we are, but of adding on.

"When you commit to cultural appropriateness, that is, when you are willing to see the world through the eyes of the host culture and reflect that in the way you behave and interact, you don't become less of an American, you become more of a human being." *Cap Miller SJ - Anthropologist in Nepal who has conducted research on Jhaankris and on Decision Making in Village Nepal.*

Humility and the willingness to change are the hallmarks of a higher level of cultural sensitivity. Respect for the host culture and your willingness to change should lead you to sort through your own values and struggle with better understanding your own culture. Persistent conscientious effort will enable you to eventually define a comfortable cultural boundary for yourself that neither compromises you or offends those with whom you live and learn. It is vitally important to realize that you do not need to discard your own core values to appreciate and tolerate the existence of opposing values in others. You will need to examine your values from a new perspective and be open to modifying your behavior to accommodate host culture values, but Pitzer does not believe you should ever abandon who you really are. Our programs are journeys of self-discovery as much if not more than they are journeys into the lives and experiences of others.

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

What we are trying to describe is often referred to as cultural adjustment, or acculturation. One recognized model of the process is the U-curve developed by Lysgaard in 1955



The curve depicts your emotional state as you adjust to contact with another culture. You feel uneasy leaving friends and family, and a little anxious about stepping forward into the unknown. Once you arrive, and become familiar with your new surroundings, anxiety gives way to a euphoric feeling of excitement supported by a natural fascination with the exotic and different. This is an accomplishment within reach of any earnest tourist. You, however, are more than a tourist, and must go deeper into the culture. Here is where the difficulties really begin.

The very differences that excited and attracted you slowly begin to confuse and frustrate your attempts to function in the new culture. You begin to experience what is often referred to as “culture shock”; a characterization that became popular in the 1960’s and is still used today to refer to periods of emotional discomfort that are depicted as low points on Lysgaard’s U-graph. The use of the word “shock” is a bit misleading since it lends itself to the suggestion that these feelings are provoked by incidents that would not be so shocking with proper preparation. Consider the following hypothetical description taken from Craig Storti’s *The Art of Crossing Cultures*:

Let’s conjure up a typical morning in the life of an expatriate development worker in Tunisia, and, to load the equation, let’s make her a woman. She enjoys a quiet breakfast in the sanctity of her home and then begins the drive to work. The streets are thronged with pedestrians, choked with donkey carts, and full of aggressive Tunisian drivers who take regular and prolonged solace in their car horns. She is alternately immobilized by all the confusion and driven to fits of frightening recklessness. She stops briefly at the post office, long enough to be intimidated by the throng of men pressed around the stamp seller’s window, and leaves without mailing her letters. At ten o’clock she reports for an appointment at the Ministry of Health and sits down to wait for the man she has come to see, assured by his secretary that he is due any minute. After forty-five minutes and several more assurances from the secretary, she leaves (and learns later that the man was out of town for the day and, further, knew that he would be when she pressed for the appointment). On her way back to her office she stops to buy the International Herald Tribune and have a cup of coffee. The paper isn’t available, though the vendor assured her the day before it would be (God’s will, he shrugs), and she is harassed by several male customers as she tries to relax with her coffee.

From the safe and comfortable confines of wherever you are reading this booklet, you are probably thinking that these kinds of incidents won’t bother you. You are ready. But imagine waking up to the expectation of similar incidents every day you are abroad. Imagine facing these daily disappointments while suffering from the frequent intestinal and

respiratory illnesses that often attend extended stays in foreign lands. Imagine not understanding most of the verbal and non-verbal communication attending these incidents, and the treatment of your illnesses. Imagine experiencing all these things alone, without the emotional support of family and friends. Are you really ready? Can you be? Can anyone?

Probably not, at least according to most interculturalists, who agree that culture shock is natural. It is a common experience for anyone making a serious attempt to adjust to another culture. Overt manifestations can range from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis. It is often associated with feelings in the learner of resentment, estrangement, anger, hostility, indecision, frustration, sadness, loneliness, homesickness and even physical illness. The person undergoing culture shock often vacillates between feeling angry with others for their lack of understanding, and being filled with self-pity. It is much more than the simple shock of being confronted with unexpected behaviors.

Though it may seem like a liability, culture shock is actually beneficial. It presents an opportunity for one of the most meaningful types of learning. When you find yourself on the low point of the Lysgaard curve your instinctive fight or flight response will lead you to three well-documented coping strategies. You may withdraw from the host culture, seek out the company of other expatriates, or project your discomfort onto members of the host culture, and see them as the source of your pain and suffering. All of these responses end in failure. The way to overcome culture shock is both simple and challenging. You need to continue to participate in the host culture. Without continued participation your learning experience stops at the low point, and you fall off the curve altogether. Simple persistence will get you through to the next peak where you will be able to see your experiences differently. Over time the curve should flatten out, the emotional roller coaster should subside, and at the end of the journey you will be a remarkably more mature person.

You may be hoping to avoid culture shock, but if you do you may not learn anything at all. Most experts believe that culture shock is a prerequisite for true cross-cultural effectiveness. Gary Weaver believes individuals who claim to have never experienced any form of culture shock probably did not have a genuine cross-cultural encounter.¹ Douglas Brown argues that failure here may affect language learning as well. His research suggests that adjustment through avoidance leads you through the low points with a psychology that weakens the drive for greater fluency. If you find a comfortable niche requiring minimal participation in the culture, the inevitable result is the acquisition of a stunted version of the language that meets minimal needs. Your speech remains grammatically fossilized and functionally inadequate.²

It is clear that the low points are the most critical moments of your experience abroad. You must choose to remain involved in the new culture and not to retreat into the expatriate, tourist or foreign student community lifestyle. Learning how to recognize and check this impulse to retreat is essential. Program staff will be able to help. It is their responsibility to keep you in the game. They will create opportunities for interaction and help you up when you fall. At the same time, however, they will insist you continue to confront your difficulties head on and not lead you around them. Remember that you cannot overcome culture shock by thinking about how the other culture is different or even by reading about the other culture. The only way to successfully acculturate is by trial and error. You must make mistakes, misunderstand, and suffer embarrassment. Only then can you gradually learn to read the underlying cultural conditioning in yourself, and in others. Eventually, with effort, you will be able to interact successfully and appropriately.

IMMERSION AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION THROUGH FAMILY STAYS

Pitzer study abroad programs emphasize experiential learning through immersion into local cultures and communities, and an essential ingredient of this, wherever possible, is family stays. Family stays are much more than just a convenient solution to the room and board problem. They are an important dimension of the academic program designed to give you an opportunity to understand something of what it means to live in the host culture and deal with a range of issues important to the local community and the country.

In fact, family stays often become the focal point of our commitment to cultural immersion and appropriateness. They allow for fuller participation in community life and integration into the local culture on as many fronts as possible. Living with a family allows you to develop meaningful relationships with family members and neighbors who will vary in age, gender, ethnicity, and educational background. This compels you to give a human face to ideas and theories presented in the core course lectures and readings. Indeed, family stays allow you to feel the pulse of a community, to test and verify the assumptions offered by community agencies and governing bodies, and to explore issues from a variety of

¹ Weaver, Gary. R. 1993. "Understanding and Coping with Cross-Cultural Adjustment Stress." In R. Michael Page (ed.), *Education for the Intercultural Experience*. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

² Brown, H. Douglas. 1991. *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

perspectives. J. Daniel Hess, author of [The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning](#), has observed that one can learn more by living with a family for six weeks than living in a dorm or alone in an apartment for a year. While family stays are one of the most effective tools for culture and language learning, they are also, without question, one of the most challenging dimensions of a study abroad program (for both you and the people who host you). You are expected to make a commitment to building a relationship with your host family, to participate as fully as possible in their lives and to respect their habits, lifestyle and values. This is hard work. It usually means making some significant changes in lifestyle and behavior for three to four months and forgoing much of the social life you may be accustomed to on your home campus. Nonetheless, most students who embrace this challenge realize that it results in an experience that would be impossible to have on campus (or even living alone, in an apartment in the community), and find it to be one of the most personally rewarding and academically valuable parts of the program.

Expectations for Students

Remember that there is no such thing as a typical “family,” neither in the US nor in your host country. Your family may consist of a retired couple, a large family with children, a single adult, or several generations living under the same roof. Most host families have been selected because of their interest in sharing their culture with an American student, not because they live in the most convenient location, have the best house, or can provide all the conveniences of your own home. Here are some tips for your home stay:

- Treat your host family as a family, not just as a place to eat and sleep.
- Make a real commitment to building a relationship with your family.
- Respect your family’s values, lifestyle and customs, such as meal times, quiet times, use of TV, taste in music, appropriate dress, coming home at a reasonable time, smoking restrictions, appropriate language, conversational topics, etc. *(The question a student should ask here is not, “Will my family accommodate my needs for my lifestyle and my preferences?” Or even, “What is the most I can get away with and still not offend them?” But rather, “What can I do to better fit in with my family members (and their culture) and respect their needs and their lifestyle so that I can have a deeper, more meaningful relationship with them?”*
- Time with your family will be limited. Commit to sharing as many meals with your family as possible. Notify your family ahead of time if you won’t be there for meals.
- Commit to participating as fully as possible in your family’s life and their involvement in the community. This may include visits with family to churches or temples, schools, medical facilities, markets, etc.
- Take responsibility as a full member of your family (this might include, depending on what is culturally appropriate, yard work, farming chores, washing dishes, cooking, babysitting, house cleaning, shopping, etc.)
- Occasionally, throughout the semester, engage your family (or certain members or your family) in social and community activities such as movies, theater, eating out, and visits to relatives’ houses or areas of cultural interest.
- Observe scrupulously the laws of your host country and community and the values of your family. Do not do anything that would embarrass, endanger or hurt your family.
- Explore theories and issues raised in the core course with your family and incorporate their perspectives into discussion sessions and writings for the course.
- Be patient. It takes time and energy to make this work, but Pitzer College has been facilitating thousands of these types of family stays throughout the world, and students almost always agree that the rewards of building a meaningful relationship with a host family make the effort worthwhile.
- If you have any concerns about your home stay, talk to your program director early on.

The Role of Program Staff

Program staff members are committed to help facilitate your intercultural learning. In order to do this they will often ask you make the hard choice for cultural immersion and appropriateness over the more familiar, easier option. This is sometimes seen by students as a lack of support, but to the contrary, our staff would be remiss if they did otherwise. When staff insist you do something on your own, in the same way the locals do, rather than doing it for you, they are

helping you to develop your own creative problem solving solutions in the new cultural context. They are, in fact, supporting you in your own culture learning and adjustment, which is their job. Staff members are not there to become your friends, but to facilitate your learning. By the end of the program you will appreciate this when you are capable of operating independently, appropriately and successfully in the new culture.

However, when you are in the midst of the cultural adjustment process it is often difficult to appreciate what the staff is doing in terms of supporting your culture learning. We hope that by emphasizing this here, you will be better able to step back and understand that when your program staff nudges you into participating more fully and appropriately in the local culture, as uncomfortable as that may be at first, they are supporting you in the best way possible. To the extent that you can recognize this and can express your appreciation to the staff, you will have a better educational experience. This is human nature. This doesn't mean you can't express concerns and offer suggestions, but please do these in a way that respects the collective wisdom of the staff and takes into account the educational goals of the program which attracted you in the first place. Seek to understand rather than to judge, both the host culture and your program staff. Give your program staff the gift of your enthusiasm and support and they will give you the gift of the best program and educational experience possible.

CROSS-CULTURAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The following statements are based on expectations commonly held by US students planning to study in Costa Rica and on dilemmas and issues students often face once they arrive in the country.

Directions: Please mark each statement below as true (if it is generally true) or false (if it is generally false).

1. ____ Since Costa Rica is a developing country, students should not expect to find the same commodities and amenities they are accustomed to in the US, such as T.V., cars or shopping malls.
2. ____ The most difficult physical adjustment for many students is getting used to the heat where the Firestone Center is located.
3. ____ The majority of Costa Rica is Catholic, but religious tolerance is a general practice.
4. ____ It is difficult to handle sexual advances in another culture, but if this behavior goes beyond what is comfortable for the student, a clear NO will be the correct answer.
5. ____ Coming from an affluent society, US students will be expected to share their wealth with Costa Ricans in general, especially when they come into contact with small children.
6. ____ Members of my host family will tell me if I am not acting in a culturally appropriate way.
7. ____ Leaving valuables with your host mother under lock and key is the best way to protect them and avoid unnecessary losses that would only serve to upset you and every member living in the household.
8. ____ Turning down food would be a great offense in a society where hospitality is shown by sharing their meals with outsiders.
9. ____ The dress code in San José is as common as it is in a coastal city with warmer weather. People wear shorts in the city and tank tops are common.
10. ____ Trekking or camping on Costa Rican mountains and walking along beaches present a high personal risk.
11. ____ Bargaining will be offensive to the person selling products in the market, thus the students should not ask a lower price for goods that are already quite inexpensive.
12. ____ Students are often shocked by the amount of trash on the streets in some urban and rural settings in Costa Rica.
13. ____ Since most Costa Ricans families do not have maids, students are expected to help out with household chores.
14. ____ Students, while in Costa Rica, will have to adjust to new menus, ways of preparing food and different meal schedules.

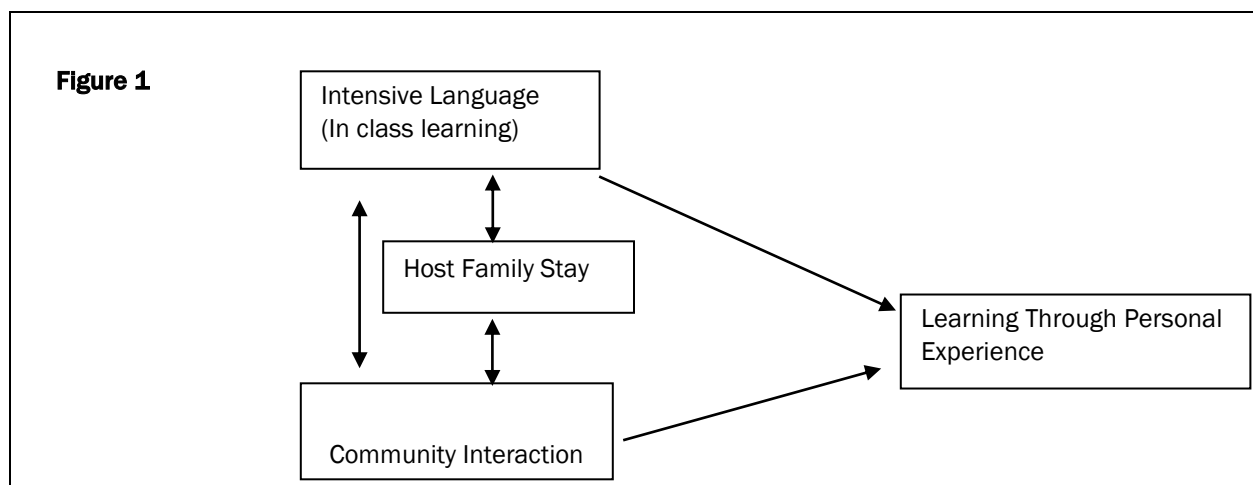
OUR EDUCATIONAL MODEL, PHILOSOPHY, AND PROGRAM STRUCTURE

In this section we review some of the basic ideas covered in previous sections as well as introduce a few new concepts all of which are essential for you to understand and accept before you make your final decision to participate on the program.

AN INTEGRATED LEARNING MODEL

Rather than thinking about the program as four separate courses or classes (which is how it shows up on the transcript), we want you to begin to see the program as it really is: a connected whole where each part of the program is related to and dependent on every other part of the program, and where all these components work together to create a particular kind of interconnected learning experience.

As you can see from Figure 1, intensive language instruction (in the classroom) allows you to participate fully in the life of your host family and make that part of your program into an important mode of learning. At the same time, full participation in the life of your host family allows you to develop a higher proficiency in the language than would be possible in any other living situation. As your language skills develop, your host family helps you to develop meaningful connections in the larger community. In turn, your interactions in the community enhance your language learning even more, while giving you an important context for better understanding your host family. Taken together, this part of your program (family stays, community interaction, out-of-class language learning) can be considered your *learning through personal experience*.

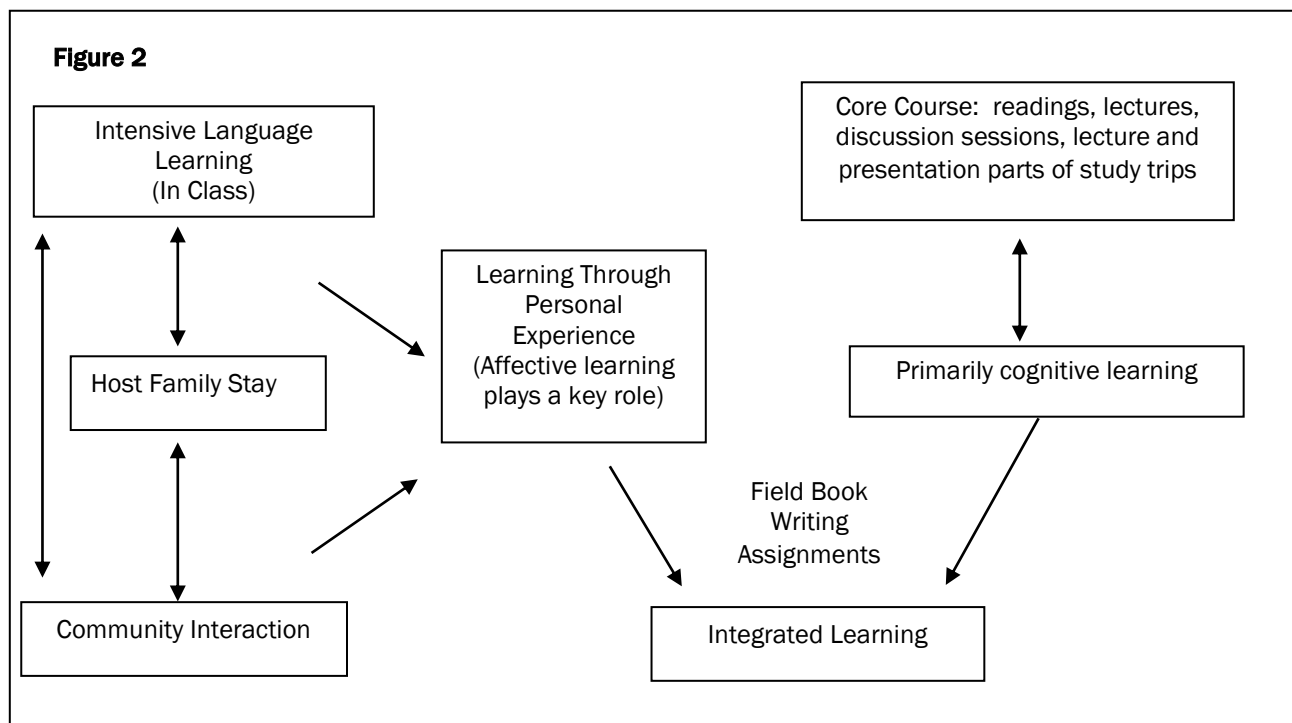


An important part of your learning through personal experience is affective learning, which relies on trust in personal experience and relationships. It acknowledges feelings as valuable tools in the learning process and is often subjective and very attached. Intuition and empathy play key roles in affective learning.

On the other side of the learning continuum is that part of the core course that consists of lectures and readings. This part of your learning is largely cognitive; that is, learning through objective, detached examination, where emotions are discouraged. Cognitive learning relies heavily on memorization, and analysis; it is the type of learning you typically do in a university classroom by taking and memorizing notes, library research, and literature review.

The heart of our educational model is the connection you make between your learning from personal experience in the culture, for which affective knowing plays a very important role, and your learning through core course lectures and readings, which is largely cognitive (Figure 2). In this type of connected learning, your own observations, conversations and experiences, as well as your feelings and intuitions are given equal importance to more traditional forms of classroom learning such as lectures and readings, and you are encouraged to combine the two in a process of constructing your own meaning. This can be a difficult exercise for students who have been conditioned to thinking that the only valid forms of knowing are contained in books, scholarly articles and the lecture notes, but for those who approach this with an open mind, it can also be a very empowering educational experience. You will be expected to engage in the process of integrated learning throughout the program and demonstrate this type of learning in core

course writing assignments and discussion sessions. You should be excited about this type of learning if you choose to participate on this program.



An Example: Cognitive, Affective and Integrated Learning

Cognitive learning is reading about infant mortality rates in a particular country, learning some of the main economic and social causes, and hearing a lecture on the efforts of international aid organizations to provide better pre-natal health care.

Affective learning is the lump in your throat and the knot in your stomach as you sit quietly and listen, speechless, as your host mother tells you about how three of her five children died from illness between the ages of one and five. Her interpretation of why and how this happened may be quite different from what is said in the books.

Integrated learning is combining the two to arrive at your own personal understanding of infant mortality – its causes, effects and possible solutions. It is meaning you construct yourself that comes from an integration of both cognitive knowing and affective knowing. It is often learning that transforms behavior and that creates a passion for action or change. Connected learning gives a human face to statistics and abstract concepts. At the same time, it allows for a fuller and more accurate understanding of personal experience. It is balanced and whole. It is especially meaningful to you as it lies in the intersection of what you know to be true from personal experience and what you have learned in your readings and lectures.

Experiential education is not just experience. It is experience plus reflection. It is education that requires connected, integrated learning.

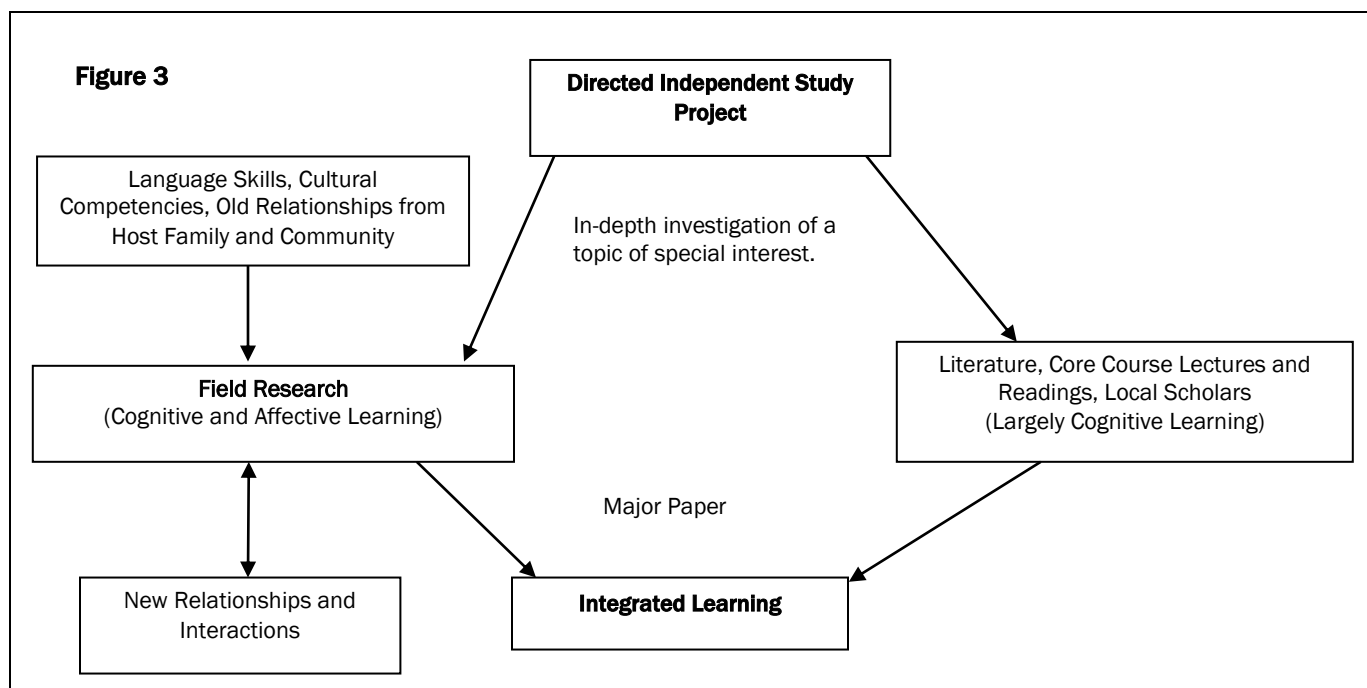
Integrated Learning and your Directed Independent Study Project

Please carefully review the section in this handbook on the directed independent study project. The DISP allows you to take one topic of special interest and pursue it in depth, usually during the last month of the program. This is the part of the program when you are called to function independently within the host culture, using your language skills and cross-cultural competencies to interact and conduct research in ways that are appropriate, successful and ethical.

The program will connect you with local experts, who, along with program staff and faculty, will help you craft a solid, feasible proposal, pick a good location, connect with local resources, and develop an appropriate methodology. As you can see in Figure 3, the DISP is another opportunity to engage in integrated learning. Reviewing the literature of your DISP topic, referring back to core course lecture notes and consulting with local scholars (largely cognitive learning) will play an important role in crafting a proposal and deciding on a location and methodology for your study. These sources will also provide important context for your final paper. The bulk of your DISP time however, will consist

of field research. Here you will rely on your previous language skills and cultural competencies to interact directly with people from the host culture who are involved in your topic. Learning here will be both affective (personal experience with people) and cognitive (surveys, questionnaires, etc.).

For your final paper, you will be expected to integrate the cognitive and affective learning you experience in your field research with learning from your interactions with local scholars, core course lectures, and the literature of your topic.



Intensive Language

The language component features small classes with intensive instruction for three to four hours a day, five days a week. During the first two weeks of the program there may be up to five hours of language class a day. You will learn grammar and vocabulary (just as you would in a class at your own college), but you will do this in a way that allows you to practice in the classroom the very features and communicative functions you will need outside the classroom in real life interactions.

Our language learning philosophy is simple: We learn the language not by studying about the language, but by using the language in the classroom, and outside the classroom, with program staff, with host family and community members, and especially with each other.

Students who commit to using the language with each other outside of class whenever possible, even when it would be easier to speak in English, consistently develop significantly higher levels of communicative competence than those who choose to speak only English with each other outside of class.

You will be expected to join with program staff and faculty in creating a host culture language speaking environment at the program office, outside the classroom, and during all program activities. Make this commitment, and the results will astonish you, we promise.

Host Family Stays

Students almost unanimously report that their stay with a host family was one of the highlights of their program and the center for much of their learning. Family stays allow you to learn much more language than you would in any other living situation. They allow you to put a human face to topics covered in your course lectures and readings. They provide a window into the culture as they include you in their daily lives and welcome you to participate in special ceremonies and events. They support you during your inevitable ups and downs as you adjust to the country and culture and help you to connect with the local community in ways that would otherwise be very difficult if not impossible to achieve.

As you can see, family stays are a key mode of learning employed by the program. As mentioned above in the section on integrated learning, all students are expected to explore issues and ideas raised in their more formal course work with their host family members and to incorporate this learning into discussion sessions and writing assignments.

INTENSITY AND STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

Pitzer programs are very intense, and you will find your life very busy and structured for much of the time you are on the program. A large amount of your time is taken up *in the classroom* by the language and core course components of the program. Outside of daily interactions with your host family and the surrounding community there is really little chance for independent learning until the Directed Independent Study Project (DISP) component during the last three to four weeks of the program.

This structure and intensity is very important for you to understand and accept if you choose to participate on this program, especially if you are strongly interested in or focused on one particular aspect of the culture or country, such as religion or rural development, etc. These topics can be pursued in depth only during the DISP, which usually means the final three to four weeks of the program.

You have to be comfortable with this model. If you see the core course or language course as hindering your chance to head out on your own to pursue a special topic, you are in the wrong program. If you are excited about pursuing your special interest as your DISP for a shorter period of time but in the context of a solid background in the language and culture, and through the eyes of members of the host culture with whom you have formed relationships (e.g., members of your host family) then a Pitzer program is an appropriate choice for you.

Please keep in mind, therefore, that you won't be able to do everything and see everything in the country you might imagine seeing and doing. It is important for you to clarify your reasons for going, make sure they match the program structure and educational goals, and then set priorities and make good choices. Find what you are most passionate about and make that your ISP, but know that you will only be able to pursue this full-time during the last month of the program and that your other interests may have to wait for future visits to be pursued in depth. Remember, it may be possible to stay on after the program is over to pursue some of your interests. Think too, about applying for a fellowship to return after graduation (See "Thinking Ahead" section of this orientation and program handbook).

VISITORS AND INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

The details of the final schedule for your program will be given to you during your on-site orientation. With this in mind, it is crucial that you **not** plan visitors or independent travel until you receive the schedule during orientation and check with your program director.

Visitors

As a rule of thumb, **having visitors during the regular program does not work**. You will be too engaged in program activities (and with homestays on weekends) to attend to a visitor properly without major conflicts arising. Participation in **all** program activities and classes is required, and guests cannot be included. Moreover, we expect you to maximize the time you spend using the language and engaging the host culture. Visitors interfere with this. The idea of playing tour guide during the program to a friend or family member may sound wonderful now, but it inevitably leads to frustration and resentment. The best time to have a visitor is right after the end of the program when your language and cultural knowledge are at their height, and you can devote full time to hosting.

Pitzer has a firm policy for all of its programs regarding visitors. Visitors cannot participate on study trips and on many other program activities. This has grown out of over thirty years of experience. Some of our key reasons for this policy include the following:

- Visitors may not understand, agree with or want to follow our expectations for cultural appropriate behavior and our commitment to abide by all local and national laws. A visitor who does not share these commitments can easily jeopardize our relationship with the host community and ability to operate the program in a particular area or country. We have no way of encouraging or enforcing this with a visitor who is not on the program for credit.
- We try on all of our programs to create an out-of-class language speaking environment in the host culture language. Visitors may not agree with this, or, as is usually the case, not have the language ability to join our commitment to this.

- Visitors may not agree with or want to follow our program guidelines for health and safety. This not only puts our students at higher risk (e.g. for gastro intestinal illness caused by eating certain foods with visitors that they wouldn't normally eat), but often undermines the program's credibility in the eyes of the students, especially when the visitor has spent considerable time in the country or region and insists he/she knows what is best.
- A visitor will often throw off group dynamics. For some students it often takes a month or two before they are willing to open up and share with the group, and through that, contribute to our collaborative learning efforts. The breakthrough often happens on a study trip. A new addition to the group will often interfere with this process. Trip leaders may also be uncomfortable with an outsider in the group, and that could affect their interaction with the group.
- When a student has a friend or family member visit, they naturally want to be a good host and/or put in the time and effort necessary to maintain an important personal relationship. This often results in the student pulling away from group activities and other important educational goals of the program.
- Having a visitor is not fair to the trip leader.
 - A visitor who falls into any of the above concerns (and most do) requires extra time, effort and worry on the part of the group leader.
 - A visitor or who does not agree with the trip leader's decisions often ends up, sometime inadvertently, undermining the leader's credibility with the group.
 - If a trip leader is not comfortable with a visitor participating in certain group activities, they end up in a very awkward and difficult position: they either must ask the visitor not to participate, and risk angering the hosting student, or they allow the visitor to participate even though they have misgivings.
- If a visitor is given permission to join the group and then gets injured or sick (which is not unlikely if the visitor chooses not to follow the program's health or safety guidelines), Pitzer would be responsible.
- Finally, before they are allowed to participate on a program, Pitzer students sign several legally binding agreements, including health forms in which they reveal all medical conditions, a waiver, and a *Conditions of Participation* document concerning respect for staff, other students, the host culture, local and national laws, and the educational goals of the program. Visitors do not sign these documents. This creates liability issues for Pitzer, and compromises our ability to 1) minimize or head-off potential health problems and 2) hold all members in the group accountable for conducting themselves in ways that honor the educational goals of the program and our relationship with the host culture.

Independent Travel

Independent travel during the program may not be possible due to health, safety, and educational considerations. All travel within the host country must be sanctioned and/or supervised by the program staff. Independent travel outside of the host country is only possible after the end of the semester.

PROGRAM RULES, GUIDELINES AND RESTRICTIONS: THREE BASIC PRINCIPLES

During on-site orientation you will be given a comprehensive list of program guidelines, rules and recommendations. We will not go over these in detail here, but we would like to discuss the three principles on which all of these are based. You should agree with all three of these principles if you choose to participate in this program.

1. Health and Safety

Your health and safety is our top priority. Certain program rules and guidelines are given to you in order to keep you healthy and safe. Please take these seriously, even if they appear silly or an overreaction. They are the result of decades of experience and our work with thousands of students. Failure to follow certain safety and health guidelines could result in your dismissal from the program.

2. Educational Goals and Philosophy

By now you are quite aware of the important roles cultural immersion and cultural appropriateness play in our educational model. Certain program rules and restrictions will be based on this.

3. Our Relationship of Trust with the Host Community University and Government

Pitzer College does not have any inherent right to operate in the countries where we are based. We are allowed to do so by the host communities, the university and the government. In return, our hosts simply ask that we respect their culture and their laws. We have pledged to do so and we invite you to join us in this relationship of trust. Please join us in our efforts to learn about and respect all local and national laws, as well as the values and cultural norms of the communities where we live and study. This is a fundamental prerequisite for participation on the program.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW - CULTURE, ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY TRACK

LOCATION

Students spend the first month in Alajuela near San José, then move four hours southwest of San José and two kilometers from the Pacific Ocean to land Pitzer College owns in the tropical rainforest. The 150-acre reserve, known as the

Firestone Center for Restoration Ecology (FCRE), is home to pre-Columbian petroglyphs, a harvestable bamboo forest, a riparian zone with waterfalls and streams, secondary growth forest in former pasture, intentionally replanted hardwood forest, original rainforest, a four-pond water catchment system, a seedling nursery, and a new Ecology Center with science and classroom facilities.

With adjacent Hacienda Barú, a wildlife refuge of 800 acres to the west; the ecologically significant Osa Peninsula to the south; and Manuel Antonio National Park to the north, students have ready access to a variety of tropical ecosystems and rich biodiversity.



PRE-DEPARTURE READING



As a participant on the Pitzer in Costa Rica program, you are **required** to purchase and read prior to your arrival in Costa Rica the book [Costa Rica in Focus: A Guide to the People, Politics and Culture](#) by Tjabel Daning. This book is available in paperback on www.amazon.com or www.barnesnoble.com.

COURSES AND CREDITS

	Course Credits	Semester Units
Intermediate Spanish	1.0	4
Core Course: Advanced Spanish in the Costa Rican Community	0.5	2
Tropical Restoration Ecology	1.0	4
Environment, People and Restoration	1.0	4
Directed Independent Study Project	1.0	4
Semester Total	4.5	18.0

Grades for this program will be recorded on a Pitzer College transcript. For details, refer to the *Conditions of Participation* reprinted as an Appendix in this Handbook.

Students who wish to receive credit towards their major for a particular course should consult their academic advisor for guidelines. Some schools, field groups, or departments may wish to see a syllabus, samples of coursework, texts, or other program materials to make a determination. Check the requirements before you go.

Intensive Spanish

This 80-hour course in intermediate or advanced Spanish is taught in Alajuela near San José at the **Instituto de Cultura y Lengua Costarricense**, where students will stay for the first month of the program. As part of an integrated approach to the teaching of language and culture, students will also participate in a homestay with a Costa Rican family, receive lectures on Costa Rican culture, and take study trips in San José. Classes are from 8 AM to noon followed by lunch and a **required** activity from 12:30 to 2:00.

Advanced Spanish in the Costa Rican Community

This course, conducted at the beginning of the program and continuing at the Firestone Center, focuses on developing oral proficiency in Spanish while deepening students' understanding of Costa Rican culture. It facilitates students' integration into surrounding communities through ongoing interviews and ethnographic work with local host families and community organizations and provides support for presenting students' independent study project in Spanish to the community at the end of the semester.

Tropical Restoration Ecology

Using the Firestone Center as a biological field station, the course provides a field-intensive exploration of the terrestrial and marine ecology of the neotropical region, with an emphasis on Costa Rica and tropical restoration ecology. The course covers physical geography, biodiversity theory, and practical methods of data collection and analysis. Field and laboratory work focuses on the terrestrial, estuarine and marine ecosystems of southwestern Costa Rica, with additional visits to contrasting ecosystems. Special emphasis is given to the theory of restoration and its practice on the property of the Firestone Center. The course is taught on site by faculty from the Joint Science Department of The Claremont Colleges and a Costa Rican specialist in restoration of the biological corridor of the Path of the Tapir. This course satisfies the natural science graduation requirement at Pitzer College.

Environment, People and Restoration

Taught on site by faculty of The Claremont Colleges along with guest lectures from local experts, this course is designed to explore special topics in relation to the rich cultural and ecological resources available at the Firestone Center, its neighboring communities, and local protected areas. Topics change from year to year and will include the following for 2010-2011: conservation policy and governance, agroecology, and protected areas. Each course segment is taught as an intensive seminar that combines theoretical considerations, case studies, methodologies, and fieldwork.

Directed Independent Study Project

Students may focus on one aspect of human or tropical restoration ecology to study in greater depth through an independent research project or internship. Students may also participate in one of the longitudinal research projects set up by scholars from the US and Costa Rica that contribute to the biological baseline assessment for the property. Some topics may have prerequisites. All projects require a final written report with a significant analytical component as well as other appropriate documentation of learning.

STUDY TRIPS

A wide range of study trips to enhance curriculum is an important part of the educational program. Destinations may change from semester to semester but possible trips include:

National Parks of Costa Rica

The national parks and reserves in Costa Rica harbor an estimated 75 percent of all Costa Rica's species of flora and fauna, including species that have all but disappeared in neighboring countries. Students will typically visit Manuel Antonio, Caño Island in Corcovado, International Park of La Amistad, Poás Volcano and Marina Ballena National Parks as part of their coursework.

Indigenous Boruca Community

Students will spend a day visiting a museum belonging to the Boruca, one of the eight indigenous groups of Costa Rica, and will work on a community project.

Study Trip to Panama

Students travel to Panama just after the midpoint of the semester. This trip allows students to compare what they have observed in Costa Rica with another Central American country and renew their visas. When students return to Costa Rica after being out of the country, they will be allowed to stay for another 90 days.

FAMILY STAYS

Costa Rican host family stays provide a window into the culture as the families include students in their daily lives and introduce students to relatives from a variety of age groups and backgrounds. Through discussions with the family, students begin to give a human face to important issues and ideas covered in their courses. Often relationships developed with host family members turn into friendships that last long past the end of the program.

Students will have two main family stays. The first will be for one month in Alajuela while students study Spanish intensively. Students' second family stay for the remainder of the semester will be with a rural farming family. Homes are usually small with simple amenities and less chance for privacy.

DIRECTED INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECT

The Directed Independent Study Project (DISP) allows you to take one topic of special interest and explore it in depth. It presents a unique opportunity to utilize and build upon your language skills and cross-cultural competencies as you form new relationships with members of the host culture related to your field of study and systematically explore your topic of interest. If you use the DISP period as an opportunity to enhance cultural immersion learning, you can expect to achieve some important outcomes: your language skills are likely to blossom as you tackle more challenging conversational topics with a wider range of people; your process of cultural adjustment will most likely accelerate as you function more fully and independently in the new culture; and your overall confidence will very likely increase dramatically as you use your language to forge new relationships and negotiate the many challenges of conducting field research in a new culture.

Types of Projects

The DISP may take one of several forms depending on your interests, available resources in the host culture, feasibility of the project, and the credit requirements of your home institution.

Research Project

Use field research techniques that facilitate cultural immersion and language learning (oral interviews, ethnographies, case histories) to investigate a question or issue of personal interest that brings you a deeper understanding of the host culture.

Internship

Work within a private, public or educational organization to gain insights into how a particular social issue is being addressed. Use your language to interact with both agency professionals and the clients served by the agency. Analyze the effectiveness of the organization as well as the issue it is addressing.

Apprenticeship/Internship in the Arts

Work with an artist, dance troupe, theatre group, etc., to both learn a new art form and better understand its role in contemporary culture.

Requirements

All projects, regardless of form and topic require the following:

1. A focused research question or topic that is viable and feasible given your progress in the language, your experience with field research, the time allotted and the available resources.
2. An appropriate methodology for exploring your topic.
3. A significant period of hands-on fieldwork that requires interaction with members of the host culture who are directly involved in your study topic.
4. A major paper reflecting on the experience.

Grading

Grading will take into account the process (e.g., proposal, methodology, relationship building, field work, internship performance, presentation of findings to program staff and students) as well as the final paper.

The Directed Project

The term 'directed' refers to the fact that all DISP proposals will be developed and approved in consultation with program staff, faculty, and local scholars or specialists. The relationships you form with program staff and local experts who help you to develop your proposal and guide your project are crucial and should be considered an important part of the learning process for the course. Depending on the project, its location and the resources available, actual fieldwork may be closely guided by program staff and/or local experts, or conducted entirely independently. Guidance for writing your final paper will be provided by your project advisor or program staff as requested and necessary. Program staff must approve DISP topics and locations. Some locations and topics will not be approved because of safety, health or other concerns.

Library Research

The DISP is not library research. Exploring literature that is relevant to your topic will be an important step in formulating your proposal and in writing up your work in your final DISP paper, but the bulk of your DISP time should be spent using your language and cross-cultural skills to conduct actual field research.

Interaction with Local Experts

Members of the host culture who have studied your topic often serve as important resources in picking a topic, choosing a location, developing a proposal with appropriate methodology, and, for placing your own work in the context of a larger body of work when you write your final paper. However, interviewing experts who have studied your topic, even when they are members of the host culture, should not be your primary means of collecting data and should not take up the bulk of your ISP time. The majority of your fieldwork should consist of hands-on work with people who are directly involved in your topic of interest. For example, the host culture university professor or NGO director, who is an expert on the role of women in village development, may provide you with important guidance for your project, but should not be seen as a substitute for working directly with village women actually involved in development efforts.

The Use of Interpreters, Questionnaires or Surveys

The use of a bilingual informant to help you translate interviews or conversations you tape may be appropriate but you should design your project and plan your questions in ways that allow you to use and develop your own language skills. Project topics and methodology (questionnaires, surveys, etc.) should be designed to fit your language level whenever possible. Remember, the goal here is for you to learn about your area of interest in ways that allow you to interact directly with people involved in your topic. The relationships you form and the learning and growth you experience while doing this (which will be recorded in your final paper) will very likely become one of the most valuable and rewarding aspects of the program for you.

Ethical Guidelines for the DISP

Students participating in DISPs abroad are held to high standards of academic and professional conduct, including adhering to the Ethical Standards for the Engagement of Communities Abroad (see the Appendix).

Summary

1. Pick a topic you are passionate about and that is feasible.
2. Do something you can't do at your home institution.
3. Do something that enhances your language and culture learning.
4. Do something that promotes interaction with members of the host culture who are directly involved in your topic of interest.

PITZER IN COSTA RICA DISP GUIDELINES

Overview

The Directed Independent Study Project (DISP) is a key component of the educational model of the Pitzer in Costa Rica program. It allows you to take one topic of special interest and explore it in depth through disciplined field research. A successful DISP aims to increase the understanding of the Tropical Restoration Ecology (TRE) and/or human ecology – Environments, People, and Restoration (EPR) of the Firestone Center for Restoration Ecology (FCRE) and surrounding communities. Whenever possible, your DISP should also provide you with an opportunity to utilize and build upon your Spanish language skills and cross-cultural competencies.

Location

All DISPs must be conducted at the Firestone Center or within neighboring communities located within a daily commute of your homestays in Platanillo. There are longitudinal projects the Firestone Center is interested in having students pursue under the guidance of program faculty. Research generated through these projects will be of assistance to establishing important baseline assessments for both TRE and EPR. It could also lead to your papers being published in conjunction with faculty research, depending on the quality of your work. You may, of course, generate a topic of your own, which will be reviewed for feasibility and approval by faculty in either TRE or EPR as well as the program director.

Faculty Supervisor(s)

In your final proposal, you must name the field (TRE or EPR or an interdisciplinary topic combining the two) and a faculty supervisor. If you are proposing an interdisciplinary topic, you must name one faculty supervisor in TRE AND EPR. The two faculty members will collaborate in supervising your project and assigning your grade. Students should be in

contact with their faculty supervisor at least once a week during the DISP period. Students are expected to initiate contact upon commencement of their project, and provide updates on their activities and progress. Program Director Isabel Argüello Chaves will serve as a guide for your DISP as well, making sure you are staying on schedule and have appropriate access to contacts and support you need for the project.

Final Proposal

Your final proposal is due in digital form to your faculty supervisor(s) and the program director.

Form of Proposal

Your proposal should have a title and address the following questions.

Topic

What focused research question would you like to explore? Please clearly state in one question the topic you will address in your study. Following this question, please expand the explanation of your project. Then comment on how your project might forward the notion of restoration or diversity within the context of TRE or EPR.

Methodology

What methods will you use to gather information/collect data? Where will your research site be? If human subjects are involved, how will you make contact with them? (See *Ethical Considerations* below.) Please be as specific as possible.

Project Location Authorization

Because there are ongoing research projects taking place at various locations on the FCRE, you must request and receive authorization from the Faculty Advisory Group for the FCRE for any project that will involve activity at any location on the FCRE, particularly projects that will alter the landscape (planting, building, traps, signage/flagging/tagging, or other restoration or research activities.) Using the GIS map of the property, please indicate as specifically as possible, all locations where your project will involve interventions or activities. You must give the exact grid number(s) in your proposal.

Materials

Do you need special materials or supplies to conduct this research?

Timetable

Please provide a weekly schedule of the DISP period for your research goals and activities, indicating when you anticipate fieldwork, analysis, and write up will be done.

Bibliographic References

What bibliographic sources have you identified that will provide context, research methods, or content knowledge for your project? Please list at least six (title, author, date published, title of article, book, or chapter, etc.). References should be peer-reviewed journal articles and books. Be careful with web information; much does not represent peer-reviewed sources. Note: Through the Internet, you can access the electronic library collection of the Claremont Colleges through JSTOR or Omnifile, but you must have an account with the library. This account is usually set up the first time you check out a book from the library.

Ethical Considerations

Are there ethical concerns or considerations you must address in relation to research you are proposing? Consider areas such as research with human subjects, animals, cultural artifacts (like the petroglyphs on the property), and environmental impact. If you will be conducting research with human subjects, will you be able to avoid physical and psychological harm to your subjects? Do you need to address any issues of privacy, such as keeping the names of people you interview anonymous? Please see the Overview and Declaration to Adhere to Ethical Practices of Research and Engagement in Community appendix as well as the protocols for conducting scientific research at the FCRE on the Joint Science website for the Firestone Center at <http://costarica.jsd.claremont.edu/index.shtml>.

Safety Considerations

Please identify any risks to your safety or others (human and animal) involved in carrying out your project.

Legacy Considerations

Think about what kind of upkeep or monitoring your project will need after you leave the program. What's the "shelf life" of your project (one semester, two years, as long as possible?) What kind of work will be needed to maintain the project? Who will do the work? (Keep in mind that students are at the FCRE only 8 months of 12 over the year.) Are there costs involved in maintaining or monitoring your project? What are they? How will they be funded?

Form of Final Paper

Length

The paper should have a text of 12-15 pages, be double-spaced, and include a bibliography. Separate from the length requirement, you must submit a title page and a one-paragraph abstract, plus any appendices which help explicate your research. Note: If you plan to conduct the project in collaboration with another student (paired research), we expect the final paper to reflect double the effort of a single paper (i.e. about 20-25 pages.)

Organization

TRE write-ups should follow the format of a scientific publication containing the following sections: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, and Literature Cited

Font: 12 point

Submission Format

Digital to the Faculty Supervisor(s) and the Office of Study Abroad at studyabroad@pitzer.edu. Digital and hard copy to the Program Director.

Deadline for Submission

To be determined.

Oral Presentation

The oral presentation in Spanish of your research project to the community is part of your Advanced Spanish course. Specific guidelines for presentation and assessment will be given by Professor Argüello Chaves.

HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

IMMUNIZATIONS

For additional information refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>.



Costa Rica does not currently require any certificate of immunizations for entry into the country, but other countries along your route may. For this reason, and for your own records, you should have an official record of all your immunizations from your doctor or health clinic. **Contact your doctor or local county health clinic** to set up a schedule for your shots. Some immunizations come in a series that may take weeks or even months to complete. All of the immunizations recommended below afford partial or full protection against diseases that still occur in Costa Rica or Panama. Without an up-to-date immunization, any of these diseases could have serious, potentially life threatening consequences. **Please take these recommendations very seriously.**

Typhoid

This vaccination, in either the oral or the injectable form is **highly recommended**.

Hepatitis A

Infectious Hepatitis (Type A) is a viral disease of the liver that is transmitted primarily by the fecal-oral route via water or contaminated food. The **Hepatitis A vaccine (Havrix) is highly recommended for all students on the Pitzer College in Costa Rica program**. The first dose provides adequate protection beginning four weeks after it is administered and lasting six to 12 months. Another dose is recommended six to 12 months after the first to provide long-term protection that will last for at least four years and maybe (as research results come in) much longer. A simultaneous dose of immune globulin is necessary *only* if you travel to a high-risk area *less* than four weeks after your initial dose of the Hepatitis A vaccine, before it becomes completely effective. The best course of action is to get both doses of the Hepatitis A vaccine before you leave. If this is not possible, it makes sense to get your first dose exactly one month before you go abroad so as to assure adequate protection from the time you arrive until the end of your program, without having to take IG. For persons who are allergic to the Hepatitis vaccine or otherwise elect not to receive it, immune globulin (5cc's) is still a viable option. You should get 5cc's of immune globulin just a few days before you leave the US to assure maximum effectiveness and coverage for your entire trip (up to four months). There is some concern that taking immune globulin for Hepatitis A at the same time or too close to some of your other immunizations may reduce their effectiveness. For this reason, if you elect to get IG rather than the Hepatitis A vaccine, we suggest that you complete all of your other immunizations at least one month before the beginning of your program, and then take your immune globulin just a few days before departure.

Malaria

Malaria is a serious, potentially fatal disease that occurs in parts of Costa Rica and other areas of Central America. It is spread by the bite of an Anopheles mosquito infected with the parasite. Malaria carrying mosquitoes are usually found in hot, humid lowland areas and are nocturnal – coming out at dusk and disappearing once the sun comes up. There is no vaccine for malaria so drug prophylaxis and protective measures against mosquito bites are highly recommended for all students who will be in a malarial area during the evening, night or early morning hours.

Fortunately, the risk of malaria during the first month of the program (in San José, the city of Alajuela and other areas in the Central highlands of Costa Rica) is extremely low or non-existent and prophylaxis is not considered necessary during this time. During the final three months of the program at the Firestone Center the risk is somewhat higher (since the elevation is lower) but still considered low. The CDC does not recommend prophylaxis for that area of Costa Rica and most students, staff and visitors choose not to take a Malaria prophylaxis. However, our study trip to Panama does go to the province of Chirique, which is listed by the CDC as having some risk of malaria transmission. Pitzer does, therefore, support the CDC recommendations for that province of Panama and encourage students to use Malaria prophylaxis to cover the Panama study trip. Pitzer strongly encourages each student to carefully consider the malaria information provided by the Center for Disease control (See the Appendix in this book) and consult with their personal physician to develop a preventative plan that they are comfortable with. When staying in an area that has significant risk for malaria, students should take an appropriate malaria prophylaxis as directed by their physician, sleep in well screened rooms or under a mosquito net, and make sure to wear protective clothing (long pants and sleeves) and use mosquito repellent with DEET, if they are out after sunset. (See the section below on Denge Fever for the latest CDC guidelines for preventing mosquito bites.)

Polio and Diphtheria-Tetanus

As a general precaution, we **highly recommend** that you update these and any other childhood immunizations for which you haven't received a booster in the last five years.

Cholera

A shot is only **recommended** for those with compromised gastric conditions such as ulcers, but **optional** for others due to the very low chance of contacting this disease, and serious doubts about the effectiveness of the vaccination.

Yellow Fever

This is a viral infection, which, like Malaria, is transmitted to humans by mosquitoes. Symptoms range from fever, chills, headache, and vomiting to jaundice and kidney failure. There is no specific drug to treat an infection of yellow fever. Prevention, therefore, (including standard precautions for preventing exposure to mosquitos, and vaccination) is very important. According to the latest CDC information, (see <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2012/chapter-3-infectious-diseases-related-to-travel/yellow-fever-and-malaria-information-by-country.htm#2867>) Yellow fever is not present in Costa Rica or in the area of Panama where we take our study trip and as such, Pitzer does not recommend this vaccination. However, Yellow Fever is present in areas of Panama east of the Panama Canal. Students on the Costa Rica program have not been asked to present a certificate of yellow fever vaccination upon their return to Costa Rica from our study trip to Panama, since we don't visit areas east of the Panama Canal. However if you plan to travel to other areas of Central America that are considered at risk for Yellow Fever transmission before or after the program, or visit countries that may require a vaccination certificate for any traveler who has been to Panama, you probably should get the vaccination and carry proper certification with you. To meet international vaccination requirements, yellow fever vaccines must be manufactured under approval by the World Health Organization and administered at an approved yellow fever vaccination center. Authorized US vaccination centers can be identified by contacting state or local health departments or by visiting CDC's Travelers' Health website, where there is a listing of current authorized yellow fever vaccination providers in the United States. (See the CDC website at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2012/chapter-3-infectious-diseases-related-to-travel/yellow-fever-and-malaria-information-by-country.htm>.)

Hepatitis B

This type of hepatitis is transmitted through body fluids such as blood and semen and is a much more serious form of the disease than type A (above). While there are compelling cultural, health, and legal reasons for avoiding sexual contact or intravenous drug use in Costa Rica, the need for an emergency blood transfusion is possible for anyone and this vaccination **should be seriously considered** in consultation with your doctor. Three shots are necessary for full protection although partial immunity is acquired after the first two, which are administered one month apart. The third shot is given six months after the first shot. If you cannot complete the series before you leave, you may consider getting the first two shots before leaving and the third shot after your return to the US, or timing the series so that you can get your third shot while you are in San José where it *should be* available.

Meningitis

Meningococcal disease (bacterial meningitis) is a bacterial infection in the lining of the brain or spinal cord, which is transmitted through respiratory droplets when an infected person sneezes or coughs on you. There are occasional outbreaks of this disease among college students in the US. Pitzer continues to **highly recommend** a Meningococcal vaccine for students on a study abroad program. Good for one year. (See the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html> for additional information.)

Rabies

If you might be exposed to wild or domestic animals through work or recreation, a rabies vaccination is recommended.

Denge Fever

Denge Fever is common in Central America, including Costa Rica. It is spread by mosquitos and occurs in both rural and urban areas. There is no vaccination for Denge Fever but you can reduce the risk by following the advice below from the CDC:

Advice for Travelers

Travelers can reduce their risk of infection with dengue fever by protecting themselves from mosquito bites. The mosquitoes that spread dengue usually bite at dusk and dawn but may bite at any time during the day, especially indoors, in shady areas, or when the weather is cloudy.

Travelers should follow the steps below to protect themselves from mosquito bites:

- *Where possible, stay in hotels or resorts that are well screened or air conditioned and that take measures such as spraying with insecticide to reduce the mosquito population.*
- *When outdoors or in a building that is not well screened, use insect repellent on uncovered skin. If sunscreen is needed, apply before applying insect repellent.*
 - *Look for a repellent that contains one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin (KBR 3023), Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus/PMD, or IR3535. Always follow the instructions on the label when you use the repellent.*
 - *In general, repellents protect longer against mosquito bites when they have a higher concentration (percentage) of any of these active ingredients. However, concentrations above 50% do not offer a marked increase in protection time. Products with less than 10% of an active ingredient may offer only limited protection, often no longer than 1-2 hours.*
 - *The American Academy of Pediatrics approves the use of repellents with up to 30% DEET on children more than 2 months old.*

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES FOR STAYING HEALTHY

The important thing is to be in control of your own health. Here are the key points to remember for staying healthy:

1. Have a complete physical examination before you go. Be aware of and prevent possible problems. **Let the Office of Study Abroad know** if you are on any medications, have any allergies, or any other medical conditions that could possibly require accommodation while you are abroad. Take adequate supplies of any medications and copies of medical prescriptions with you.
2. Make sure that your childhood immunizations are complete and up to date. Booster shots for tetanus are required every ten years; it may be time for another.
3. Visit your dentist and have a check-up to ensure that your teeth are in good shape before you leave.
4. Eat well over the break, exercise and get plenty of sleep so that you are rested and fit as you depart and your body can better fight off disease. Do not exhaust yourself with packing and preparations at the last minute. Plan ahead so that you can make your departure as stress free as possible.
5. On the long flight, bring along a bottle of water and drink plenty of fluids as you travel. Avoid alcoholic beverages. They lead to dehydration. Do isometric exercises in your seat and get up to walk up and down the aisle periodically to stretch your muscles. During flu and cold season, you may want to consider a breathing mask since the recycled air in planes can easily spread contagious diseases.
6. Follow all guidelines provided by your program about food and drink and personal hygiene. They are making these recommendations for a good reason.

General health precautions for students in Costa Rica will be covered during the on-site orientation immediately after arrival in San José. Please see the Appendix *Health Information for Travelers to Costa Rica* for specific health recommendations from the Center for Disease Control.



Have complete physical and dental examinations before you go.

AIDS

A serious health concern for travelers to Central America is AIDS. The primary mode of transmission of the AIDS virus in this part of the world is through sexual contact. Practicing safe sex will reduce your risk of contracting AIDS but not eliminate it. Abstinence is the only sure way to eliminate the risk of contracting HIV from sexual activity. For health, cultural and educational reasons, the program strongly recommends that students practice abstinence for the time they are in Costa Rica.

INSURANCE

HEALTH INSURANCE

Each student is responsible for obtaining a policy that will provide comprehensive health coverage both in the US and abroad for the duration of their program. Students may need to return to the US unexpectedly. All students must also have emergency medical and accident coverage for the duration of their program.

Regardless of what type of insurance you have, you will almost always have to pay cash upfront at clinics and hospitals abroad, collect the receipts for all expenses and submit them to your insurance company for reimbursement.

The insurance policy available to you through your school may provide adequate coverage abroad, but it is your responsibility to call the company to discuss the specifics of your study abroad program to ensure that you will indeed be covered. When speaking to any insurance company, be sure to ask the following questions:

- Will the plan cover hospitalization for accidents and illnesses while I'm abroad for a period of 3-6 months or more?
- Will the plan cover doctor visits and medication prescribed abroad?
- Is there a deductible? If yes, how much?
- Is there a dollar limit to the amount of coverage provided?
- What are the procedures for filing a claim for medical expenses abroad? Do I need to pay for expenses up front and then submit receipts to the insurance company for reimbursement? Make sure that you get full information from your policy about how to arrange for routine treatment, medical emergency procedures, and what is required to pay for or be reimbursed for a claim. Many overseas health providers will not process American insurance claims and will expect payment at the time of treatment so students should have access to a minimum of \$400 (either by credit card or ATM held in reserve for emergencies) in the event that medical treatment is required abroad. Be sure to obtain a receipt to submit with your insurance claim for reimbursement upon your return to the US.
- What if I don't have enough money to pay cash up front?
- When does the plan begin and end?
- What do I use as proof of international medical coverage if I need to use the insurance or if the host government requires documentation?
- If I am not a US citizen, will I be covered by your plan?

Pitzer Students

Pitzer students must either be enrolled in the Claremont Colleges' student insurance policy, which provides both domestic and international coverage, or supply proof of another policy that provides comparable coverage. The College further requires that proof of insurance be provided to the College EACH year that you are an enrolled student. Proof of insurance through another policy must be submitted to the Student Affairs Office at Pitzer College prior to making your tuition and fee payment. If proof of insurance is not provided, the student's account will be charged with the current annual Student Health Insurance Premium. The Insurance Waiver/Enrollment Form is available at the Office of Student Affairs or on their website at http://www.pitzer.edu/student_life/student_affairs/health_insurance_options.asp.

Non-Pitzer Students

Non-Pitzer students should check the policy at their home institution regarding medical and accident insurance while abroad.

Students who are not US Citizens

Many, if not most study abroad insurance policies do not provide coverage to students who are not US citizens. International students may need to obtain insurance from similar companies in their home countries.

TRAVEL INSURANCE PROVIDED BY PITZER COLLEGE



Students studying abroad through Pitzer will receive an **International Student Identity Card (ISIC)**, which, in addition to providing a form of identification and proof of your student status, supplies a range of emergency medical, legal and financial services.

Each student is responsible for obtaining a policy that will provide comprehensive health coverage both in the US and abroad for the duration of their program. The ISIC is travel insurance, NOT comprehensive medical insurance. This plan should be viewed as a supplement to your own medical health plan, not a replacement. ISIC does not provide comprehensive medical coverage for pre-existing or chronic medical conditions requiring ongoing care.

ISIC Premium Insurance - Plan Code 2ISIC

- \$300 Travel Delay
- \$2000 Baggage and Personal Effects Benefit
- \$500 Administrative Fees to reissue travel documents
- \$200 Baggage Delay
- \$100,000 Medical or Dental
- \$20,000 Accidental Death and Dismemberment
- \$100,000 Air Flight Accident
- \$1,000,000 Emergency Medical Transportation Assistance

For coverage details, refer to the ISIC Premium Insurance Description of Coverage brochure that came with your card or visit or <http://www.csatravelpro.com/2ISIC> to obtain your Policy or Certificate of Insurance.

EMERGENCY 240.330.1526 - call collect worldwide
877.628.9583 - toll free in the US

Information 800.353.1972 - toll free in the US
website: <http://www.myisic.com>

Claims CSA Travel Protection, P.O. Box 939057, San Diego, CA 92193-9057
866.922.0278 claims - call collect within the US
202.974.6480 claims - call collect worldwide
claims@csatravelpro.com

For claim forms and instructions visit
<http://www.csatravelpro.com/claims-forms-insurance.do>.
Enter Producer code: 2ISIC

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Pitzer College brings more than thirty years of experience managing international programs to our effort to insure student safety. Pitzer programs benefit from professional field staff, long-term relationships with the communities that host our programs, and living arrangements with host families and host culture roommates for whom the safety of our student is a top priority.

Our program directors are dedicated to the care and education of our students. They are full-time members of the Pitzer community and their labors extend beyond the operation of our programs to on-going professional training in international education. That kind of commitment, rare in study abroad programs, has allowed our staff to develop extensive expertise that can be critical in an emergency. On average our program directors have just over eight years' experience in their positions, which affords the benefit of having encountered a wide variety of different health and safety situations from geological events and political disturbances to car accidents and serious student illnesses. They work together with our staff in Claremont to resolve current emergencies and anticipate future needs.

Over the years Pitzer has developed an extensive network of personal and professional relationships that we can call upon in an emergency. Our program directors, in close consultation with our staff in Claremont, work together with both US and host country organizations to collect and evaluate information we can use to respond quickly and effectively to emerging health and safety situations.

OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

Pitzer takes the following steps to make sure that participants in our programs are safe:

1. Pitzer regularly monitors US Department of State announcements and travel warnings.
2. Pitzer works with staff at its foreign locations to develop site-specific security measures and emergency plans.
3. Pitzer provides information on health and safety for participants prior to the program and a more extensive orientation on site. This includes country-specific information on safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions.
4. Pitzer communicates applicable conditions of participation and codes of conduct to participants and alerts them to the severe consequences of noncompliance.
5. Pitzer provides all students approved to participate in study abroad with the ISIC card, which, in addition to other non-safety related benefits, provides emergency medical evacuation insurance.
6. Pitzer tailors its safety programs to the conditions of countries where the College operates our own programs.
7. Pitzer continuously evaluates the safety of our programs. The College regularly consults with the US embassy and host country government and community agencies about security concerns. Pitzer will relocate or adjust programs to avoid unsafe locations or conditions.
8. Pitzer maintains excellent communication with parents, study abroad advisers and others who need to be informed in the event of serious health problems, injury or other related health and safety circumstances.

The following guidelines are a regular part of our plans for student safety:

- Students are asked to integrate into the local culture as much as possible; to spend significant time with their host families and roommate; to dress, behave and interact in ways that do not call attention to being American; and to respect local cultural values.
- The program house or office does not stand out as 'American' but rather consists of something that is typical for the community. Public signboards advertising a US college program are not displayed.
- Students are instructed to avoid potential targets of anti-American activity such as US and British government offices, Peace Corps offices, US AID and US affiliated organizations as well as private restaurants, hotels, clubs, and internet cafes that are known as American hangouts.

- Each student lives with a local homestay family who help us to advise students on local safety conditions and monitor his or her whereabouts. If a student does not return home on schedule, for any reason, the program director is notified. Families also inform the program director, when appropriate, about the state of the emotional and physical health of each student.
- Students are instructed to carry a list of emergency phone numbers with them at all times so that they can contact program staff at the office or at home in case of an emergency.
- Students are instructed to avoid traveling alone and after dark, to avoid areas of the country or their host community not considered safe, to avoid large crowds, demonstrations or political rallies, and to refrain from impairing their judgment with the use of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- During the program (which includes all days between the program arrival date and the departure date, including weekends and breaks) students are NOT allowed to drive automobiles, ride motorcycles, fly aircraft or participate in extreme sports. Extreme sports include, but are not limited to, white water rafting, jet skiing, scuba diving, parachuting, hang gliding, parasailing, bungee jumping, rock climbing, and technical mountaineering. Additional details will be provided during your on-site orientation. Students who choose to participate in such activities before or after the program should be aware the International Student Identity Card and some private insurers do not cover injuries sustained in a number of the activities listed above.
- Students are advised to not risk injury by resisting if someone tries to rob them.
- Students are directed to stay in regular contact with program staff. Students must receive permission from the program director for independent (overnight) travel away from their host families, provide their itinerary and contact information for their destination, and a plan to check in with program staff regularly during independent travel. Students should also, as a courtesy, and for additional safety let their host families know of any plans for overnight travel.
- Students are advised how to proceed if an emergency develops when they are away from the program staff (e.g., with their rural experience families, during their DISP, on independent travel, etc.)
- Students are asked to register with the US embassy or the embassy of their home country. Program staff maintains regular contact with the US embassy regarding safety concerns.

These guidelines are discussed at every program orientation and reemphasized throughout the program as necessary.

LIMITATIONS

There are aspects of your experience abroad that are beyond our control. Please consider the following:

1. Pitzer cannot eliminate all risk from the external study environment. All foreign travel, including domestic travel within the US, entails risk.
2. Pitzer cannot monitor or control a student's daily personal decisions, choices and activities.
3. Pitzer cannot prevent students from engaging in illegal, dangerous or unwise activities.
4. Pitzer cannot assure that US standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings or provide for a legal representative.
5. Pitzer cannot assume responsibility for the actions of persons not employed or otherwise engaged by the program.
6. Pitzer cannot assume responsibility for events or activities that are not part of the program.
7. Pitzer cannot assume responsibility for situations that may arise due to the failure of a participant to disclose required or other pertinent information.
8. Pitzer cannot assure that home-country cultural values and norms will apply in the host country.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO KEEP SAFE

You can have a major impact on your own health and safety through the decisions you make before and during your study abroad experience. The most important assurance of your safety is the consistent application of informed judgment in your day-to-day choices and behaviors. Program staff will provide excellent guidance and accurate information. You should:

1. Consider your health and other personal experiences when accepting a place in the program.
2. Make available to Pitzer College accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary for planning a safe and healthy study abroad experience.
3. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for your personal preparation for the program and participate fully in all orientations.
4. Obtain and maintain appropriate insurance coverage and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers.
5. Inform parents, guardians, families, and others who may need to know about your participation in the program. Provide them with emergency contact information and keep them informed.
6. Comply with the Conditions of Participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures of the program.
7. Obey host-country laws.
8. Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions.
9. Express any health or safety concerns to the program staff.
10. Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well being of others. Encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
11. Accept responsibility for your own decisions and actions.
12. Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and law enforcement services in the host country.
13. Keep program staff informed of your whereabouts and wellbeing.
14. You should always keep in mind that no matter how immersed you are in a local community you are still a foreigner. Your chances of being a victim of criminal activity may be greater than those for the average local person. Remember not to carry around a lot of cash, airplane tickets, or your passport, unless local laws require it. Do not carry anything else that you cannot afford to lose. Refrain from visiting establishments where Americans are widely known to hang out, abstain from protest groups, and avoid drawing unnecessary attention by dressing outrageously or conspicuously.

EATING DISORDERS AND OTHER ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS

We strongly urge students who have or suspect they may be challenged with anorexia, bulimia, bingeing or other forms of eating disorders or addictive behaviors to indicate this condition on the Declaration of Disability or Special Needs form. It is important for the staff of the programs abroad to be aware of the condition and to assist students with managing it so that they can take full advantage of the learning opportunities of the program.

Though it is the goal of the College to make reasonable accommodation for students with special needs abroad, it is difficult or, at times, impossible, for the College to provide support for the management and treatment of eating disorders in other countries. Disorder-related counseling is often not available or not available in English. Students with eating disorders often run a significantly greater risk of health problems while abroad if the disorder is not acknowledged or under treatment. Therefore, the Office of Study Abroad asks the directors of Pitzer programs and strongly requests our contacts at exchange and non-Pitzer program sites to notify Pitzer College if they have evidence that a student has an eating disorder. The directors, in turn, ask host families or other staff members of the program to do the same. We ask the staff to discuss the situation with the student and ask that the student see a medical doctor to determine if they are maintaining their health. The program may also ask the student to undertake counseling or

other steps of treatment, if available on site. If the College believes that the student is not taking responsibility for her or his health by refusing medical evaluation or treatment, it reserves the right to withdraw the student from the program for medical reasons.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, ASSAULT AND RAPE

Note: The information below is directed towards all students.

You should be aware of your increased vulnerability as a foreigner in an unfamiliar location and culture. Gender relations and expectations will be covered in your on-site orientation. You may also want to discuss this with your roommate, host mom or siblings, language teacher, other students, your professors, etc. Some key questions you should answer within your first few days are:

- **What are gender relations like? How are women and men expected to interact in the family? As friends? When they go out together at night (if culturally appropriate)? In a bar? On public transportation? In the classroom? In the workplace?**
- **What can students do to prevent the risk of sexual harassment or assault?**
This would include knowing about dangerous locations, traveling in groups after dark if advisable, and culturally appropriate ways of dressing and behaving that may minimize risk.
- **If I am feeling unsafe, what should I do? Who can I ask for help?**
If a female student feels threatened and there are other, host culture women present, she should seek their assistance.
- **If I am sexually harassed, assaulted, or raped, what are my resources? What is the name and address of an OB-GYN? What are community organizations in this city that address issues of sexual violence? How can they help me?**
- **What are the laws surrounding these issues?**
- **How and to whom would I report such events?**
We urge you to confide in the program director and avail yourself of the support and resources she can provide, including medical, legal, or counseling services you may need. If you are uncomfortable reporting such an event to the program director, you should be aware of other resources that you can turn to; such as, fellow students, local sexual assault hotlines, counseling centers, physicians, etc.

If a sexual assault occurs Pitzer would like to be able to support you and may have important resources to offer. Please consider contacting us.

See the Appendix in the back of this handbook for more information on sexual harassment and prevention.

IN CASE OF PROBLEMS IN THE HOST FAMILY

Although rare, problems of sexual harassment or abuse in the host family or home stay community are possible. Because of the nature of the host family experience, the close relationships students develop with family members, the special efforts students make to behave in culturally appropriate ways, and the potential for cross-cultural or language misunderstandings, this is a particularly delicate yet important area of concern. We have developed the following guidelines to help minimize the chances of this type of situation occurring and to help us best support you when concerns or questions regarding your host family arise.

1. During your on-site orientation, you will be given explicit guidelines on what types of host family behavior are appropriate and what behavior is cause for concern and should be reported to your director. You will also be briefed on common behaviors, which, while not inappropriate in the host culture, may lead to potential misunderstandings.
2. Host families are provided with training and orientation around these issues and the type of relationship Pitzer expects between host family members and students. Host families will be given specific guidelines on the types of behavior (especially touching and cross-gender interactions) that will be considered inappropriate.
3. As you know, Pitzer programs expect a strong commitment to cultural immersion and cultural appropriateness but this does not require you to endure behavior you believe puts your safety, health or emotional wellbeing in jeopardy.

4. You have the right to ask a host family member to stop any physical contact or behavior of a sexual nature that makes you feel uncomfortable and we strongly encourage you to seek immediate clarification with program staff regarding such behavior. Romantic or sexual behavior between a student and a host family member is never appropriate.
5. Coming forward with questions or concerns about your host family behavior will not affect your grades.
6. All Pitzer Study Abroad program directors are required to consult with Claremont if a student expresses concern that there may be inappropriate behavior going on in their host family, or if the directors suspect this based on their own observations. This will allow us to share resources and better respond to these types of incidents. Information regarding these situations will be regarded as confidential and treated with the utmost discretion.
7. Your program director will be receptive to any concerns you have, and is the best person to consult if you have any problems or concerns of this nature, but please know that you are welcome to call Pitzer staff in Claremont (home and work numbers are provided in the handbook) or your own study abroad director in situations where you might feel uncomfortable contacting the program staff directly. In addition, we have asked our directors to provide information on other local resources (counseling services, sexual assault hotlines, women's centers, etc.) that you may want to consult.
8. We encourage students to approach issues and concerns of this type with an open mind. While we want you to come forward immediately if you have a concern or question regarding your host family, we also ask you to reserve judgment until you have a chance to carefully consider, with the help of your program director, the many cross-cultural or language misunderstandings that might be at play.
9. Similarly, Pitzer staff has been instructed to approach such incidents with an open mind: while a student's concern may be due to a cross-cultural or linguistic misunderstanding that can easily be explained and cleared up, it may just as easily represent a serious situation that requires immediate intervention.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY AT YOUR PROGRAM SITE

Contact the program staff as soon as possible. You will be given a list of emergency contact numbers during your on-site orientation. There is also emergency contact information inside the back cover of this handbook. While you are certainly free to contact your parents and families, program staff should be informed first in order to discuss your situation and our procedures for handling the emergency.

Pitzer provides the ISIC, which includes insurance to cover emergency medical evacuations. In the event of a political crisis or a natural disaster that would necessitate evacuation, the program staff will work closely with the US Embassy to facilitate your return home. The insurance included with the ISIC, does not cover non-medical emergencies and you should be prepared to incur additional costs.

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY AT HOME

Contact the Claremont office first. A list of emergency contact numbers has been provided in the section on *Communications* in this booklet. The Claremont office can usually contact students and staff quickly, even when they are away from the program base on field trips. In the case of a death in the family or of a close friend, we can often arrange for a private, supportive environment in which students can speak directly with loved ones. Program staff can offer considerable and sometimes vital support if they are involved early on in the process of sharing difficult news.

TRAVEL SAFETY INFORMATION

THE US DEPARTMENT OF STATE

<http://travel.state.gov/> provides information about security conditions in other countries.

- **Country Specific Information** provides information on every country in the world. For each country, you will find information like the location of the U.S. embassy and any consular offices; whether you need a visa; crime and security information; health and medical conditions; drug penalties; and localized hot spots. This is a good place to start learning about where you are going.
- **Travel Alerts** are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions, either transnational or within a particular country, that pose significant risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert.
- **Travel Warnings** are issued when long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable lead the State Department to recommend that Americans avoid or consider the risk of travel to that country. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff.

Note: There is an important difference between a Travel Alert and a Travel Warning. Travel Alerts are more frequent and do not signify an actual threat, but only the need for extra caution.

Country Specific Information sheets, Travel Alerts, and Travel Warnings

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html.

Students Abroad

<http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov/> contains information on travel documents, health, emergencies, embassies, voting, and security conditions all in one place. Students and parents may find this website very useful when preparing for a study abroad program.

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> STEP is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to US citizens who are traveling to, or living in, a foreign country. STEP allows you to enter information about your upcoming trip abroad so that the Department of State can better assist you in an emergency. STEP also allows Americans residing abroad to get routine information from the nearest US embassy or consulate.

The physical addresses to use to register with STEP are listed inside the back cover of this handbook.



Students who are US citizens are required to register with the US State Department before leaving the US. Students who are citizens of other countries should check with their consulates for recommendations.

Emergencies and Crises

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1212.html US embassies and consulates help to locate US citizens overseas when relatives or friends are concerned about their welfare or need to notify them of emergencies at home. This site contains information on how and when these services may be used.

Overseas Security Advisor Council (OSAC)

<http://www.osac.gov/> The US Department of State established the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) in 1985 to foster the exchange of security related information between the US Government and American private sector operating abroad. Through OSAC, the American private sector, including colleges and universities, is provided timely information on which to make informed corporate decisions on how best to protect their investment, facilities, personnel and intellectual property abroad.

ADDITIONAL SAFETY INFORMATION

Federal Aviation Administration

<http://www.faa.gov> Contains updated information on aviation safety, including accident and safety data on domestic and international air carriers that travel to the US They do not maintain data on any carriers that do not travel within or to and from the US.

US Customs and Boarder Protection

<http://www.customs.gov> Provides an overview of customs regulations and procedures that apply to travelers entering or exiting the United States.

ASIRT: Association for Safe International Road Travel

<http://www.asirt.org/> The Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT) is a non-profit, international, humanitarian organization that promotes road travel safety through education and advocacy.

WHO: World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/ith/> This International Travel and Health booklet is addressed to national health administrations responsible for providing advice on the health hazards of international travel, and to the practicing physicians, travel agencies, shipping companies, airline operators, and other bodies who are called upon to give advice in individual cases. In addition to summarizing the vaccination requirements of individual countries, this booklet covers certain health hazards to which the traveler may be exposed and indicates the areas in which these hazards are most likely to occur. This is particularly important with malaria, which has continued to cause serious problems in recent years. It also recommends precautions that the wise traveler should take when visiting unfamiliar places. An interactive Malaria map is also available at this site.

PREPARE TO GO

Any outstanding study abroad, financial, and academic issues must be resolved before the due dates listed in your **Acceptance Letter** for you to maintain your eligibility to study abroad.

It is your responsibility to contact your office of study abroad, student affairs, financial aid, housing, registrar's office and other departments to complete any pre-departure tasks and to find out what preparations you will need to make for a smooth return to campus after your time away. It is also your responsibility to stay in contact with your home institution while you are away so you receive important information and updates. Students are expected to check their email on a regular basis. Pitzer students will be contacted via their official Pitzer College email accounts.

The end of the semester is always a busy time with papers, exams and special events. You should plan ahead to get your passport, have a physical, have photos taken, get signatures and submit your documents now while you still have time to respond to any surprises that may arise. The following list is a guide only.

PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST



- Complete, sign and return your **acceptance forms** to the Office of Study Abroad, including your \$500 non-refundable **deposit** if applicable. (Refer to your *Acceptance Letter* and the *Money Matters* section of this handbook.)
- Email a scanned image or send a photocopy of your **passport** to the Office of Study Abroad. (Fax copies are not readable.) Make copies to take with you.
- Arrange your **flight** through the designated travel agent.
- Apply for your **visa**, if required.
- Consult with your current **medical insurance** provider to ensure that your coverage is valid abroad and in the US for the duration of your program. If not, purchase additional coverage.
- Compile a list of names, telephone numbers, postal and e-mail addresses of faculty and staff on campus who you may need to **contact** while abroad.
- Update and clean out your **email account**. Change your password, unsubscribe to student lists, and set up folders for non-urgent email that will clutter your inbox and obscure important messages.
- Meet with your **financial aid** officer to make sure you have signed loan forms and promissory notes, to discuss how your aid will transfer to your study abroad program, and to learn about procedures for renewing your aid for the semester you return to campus.
- Meet with your **academic adviser** if you have questions about your academic plan and study abroad.
- Learn how you will **register for classes from abroad** for the semester you will return to campus. (Pitzer students: if you will be a junior while abroad you must **declare your major** before you go or you will NOT be able to register for classes from abroad.)
- Submit **housing** forms and designate a proxy for room draw for the semester after study abroad, if applicable.
- Visit your doctor or public health clinic for your **physical** and **immunizations**. Visit your **dentist** before you study abroad.
- Register** with the **US Department of State** Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui> before you depart the US. Review **travel warnings**, if applicable.
- Work on your **pre-departure reading** and coursework, if applicable.
- Discuss **emergency contact procedures** with your family and friends.
- Authorize trustworthy individual(s) in the US to access and make changes to your **bank accounts and credit cards** in the event your cards are lost or stolen. Notify your bank and credit card companies of your travel plans. Depending upon your circumstances you may wish to set up a **power of attorney**.
- Shop and **pack** lightly. Leave room for items you will acquire when abroad.

PASSPORTS

Anyone traveling between countries needs a passport. Check the expiration date. If you do not have a passport valid for six months after your planned return from study abroad, expedite the application or renewal process. Processing a new passport application or renewal may take several weeks.



How to Apply for a US Passport

For information on how to apply for or renew a US passport go to the US Department of State's website at http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html# or call 877.487.2778.

If Your US Passport is Lost or Stolen

If your passport is lost or stolen while you are abroad, report the loss immediately to local police authorities and the nearest US embassy or consulate. In addition, you should report your passport lost or stolen by visiting the US Department of State's website for details: http://travel.state.gov/passport/forms/ds64/ds64_845.html.

For assistance in replacing your passport, call the International Student Identity Card (ISIC) emergency number. See the *Insurance* chapter of this handbook for details. A copy will expedite the replacement process. It is wise to email a copy of your passport to yourself and keep a photocopy of your passport in your luggage or with your on-site program representatives.

VISAS

For entry into Costa Rica, you must present a passport valid for at least 6 months after your departure date. Your passport must be in good condition, i.e. not water damaged, torn, etc. In addition to your passport, you must also have a round trip ticket exiting Costa Rica. You will be allowed to stay in Costa Rica for up to 90 days without a visa. To cover the duration of the program, you will receive an additional 90 days when you reenter Costa Rica after the study trip to Panama.

If your itinerary includes layovers or stops in other countries en route you may need a visa for those countries. Please check with your travel agent and the relevant embassy for information.

We suggest that students who are planning to travel to other countries after the end of the program strongly consider obtaining their visa before departing the US. Although it may be possible to get visas after your arrival in the host country, the process of obtaining a visa in the host country, if even possible, may involve visits to an embassy at inopportune times or relinquishing your passport, which is not advised.



Please note: All persons will be required to pay a departure tax at the airport in San José. Expect to pay between USD \$25 and \$35. Cash and credit cards are accepted at the airport.

IF YOU ARE NOT A US CITIZEN

If you are not a US citizen and you do not have a US passport, please notify the Office of Study Abroad as soon as possible. Depending on the country in which you have citizenship, you may need to apply for a visa prior to departure. **If you are not a US citizen, please visit the Embassy of Costa Rica website at <http://www.costarica-embassy.org/> to find out if you need a visa and instructions on how to apply.**

If you do not have a passport from your home country, or if it is expired, please start the process of acquiring or renewing your documents immediately. In some countries, this process can take months, so it is imperative that you start working on it as soon as possible.

Depending upon your immigration status, there may be special signatures or other procedures required to ensure that re-entry to the US will be permitted after your study abroad program. Check before you go!

TRANSPORTATION

PROGRAM DATES AND AIRLINE RESERVATIONS



Pitzer in Costa Rica runs from Saturday, January 28, 2011 (arrival date) through Wednesday, May 16, 2011 (departure from San José). Pitzer requires you to participate in the entire program. Late arrivals or early departures are unacceptable.

You should try to arrive in San José's Juan Santamaría International Airport before 6:00 pm local time on the arrival date. Please note that the program staff and host families cannot accommodate you before the arrival date. If you plan to arrive in Costa Rica earlier for independent travel, we ask that you make your own arrangements to arrive in San José before 6 pm on the arrival date. Please notify our office and the program director of your arrival plans well before that date, so that she can make arrangements to meet you. Late arrivals cause significant disruption of the program, so it is important that you arrive on time. You are free to depart San José on or after the departure date.

Travel fees

All Pitzer students pay the Pitzer comprehensive fee plus a travel contribution for travel to an international semester study abroad program. For 2011-2012 the travel contribution will be \$550. This charge will be placed on your student account for the semester you are abroad. For Pitzer students approved for Pitzer programs and exchanges, as well as those approved on non-Pitzer programs for the academic year, Pitzer will pay for a round-trip airline ticket for one semester abroad experience booked with the travel agent designated by Pitzer College. Students doing more than one semester study abroad program will pay for their own airfare for the less expensive of the two destinations and will not be charged the travel contribution for the second semester experience.

Visiting students from other colleges and universities pay as directed by their home school.

Pitzer's Designated Travel Agent

Students must book their flights through the travel agent listed below:

KIM RUDD at Corniche Travel
email: pitzer@corniche.com or
Telephone: 951.698.0089 6:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Additional agents available from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, (Pacific time zone)
Telephone: 310.854.6000 Monday through Friday, closed major holidays
Emergency After Hours Number: 800.448.4722 (There is a \$25 charge)
Please give the VIT (very important traveler) code 6TAO (six tango alpha zero) to the after hours agent.
Office: 8721 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 200, West Hollywood, CA 90069
www.corniche.com.

Kim Rudd has been providing flight services to Pitzer College students for many years and is very knowledgeable about airline travel. She has many clients and it may be necessary leave a message with a call back number.



All program participants are required to work with the travel agent designated by Pitzer College. Tickets purchased through other travel agencies, on-line, or with frequent flier miles cannot be reimbursed or credited to your student account.

Flight Arrangements

Allow ample time to work with our travel agent to arrange your flight by the date in your acceptance letter. When you contact the travel agent, identify yourself as a student on the Pitzer in Costa Rica program. Please make sure the domestic portion of your flight is written onto your international ticket. In this way, if you decide to change the dates of your return flight, as many students do, you will not have to pay additional domestic penalties above whatever fee might be charged for the change of your international flight.

The travel agent will bill Pitzer for a round trip flight based on the cost of departing from New York, Chicago or Los Angeles (whichever is closest to your college) or an equivalent priced airport for the program arrival and departure dates. You will need to pay the travel agent directly if you arrange an itinerary that is more expensive than the approved

flight (see *Extra Flight Charges* below) or if you come from a school that does not include airfare in the fees paid on your behalf.

In order to receive your ticket, you are required to submit the Pitzer acceptance paperwork and complete orientation requirements by the dates listed in your acceptance letter. The travel agent will not release your ticket until it receives clearance from Pitzer. If you complete these requirements less than two weeks prior to your departure, you will be responsible for any charges incurred to expedite your ticket.

Extra Flight Charges

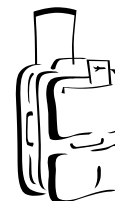
If the cost of the ticket exceeds the established approved flight amount set by Pitzer College, you will pay Pitzer's travel agent directly for the extra charges. The following items may increase the cost of your ticket:

- Late arrangements (check the deadline for booking the flight for your program)
- Travel dates that vary from the dates of the program, i.e. if you plan to go early or stay after the program and this results in a more expensive ticket
- Indirect routing or stopovers through other countries of interest
- Departure from or return to airports other than Los Angeles, Chicago or New York (Please note that you are not required to depart from these airports, these sites are simply used as the base for determining the established maximum amount of the airfare.)
- Open return tickets
- Extra luggage charges (luggage restrictions can be changed by the airlines without notice)
- Transfer charges to and from airports
- Replacement of lost tickets
- Charges for changing the ticket after issue

Baggage

We recommend you check your luggage in all the way to your final destination, when you first begin your flight in the States. If you break your journey for more than 24 hours en route, however, you may have to claim your baggage at that point and then recheck them in on your onward flight, but if you don't break your journey for more than 24 hours, you should be able to check them into your final destination. Please put both your home address and phone number, and your program address and phone number on each of your bags before you check them in.

Many airlines are setting more restrictive size and/or weight limits for checked baggage and are limiting carry-on items to one small piece of luggage and one personal item (a purse, briefcase, or laptop bag). Many airlines are limiting travelers to no more than 50 lbs. for checked baggage. If you have connecting flights, each airline may have different requirements and you must comply with the restrictions of both airlines. Limitations may vary by airline and destination, so check with the airline or travel agent before packing for your trip.



Visa Considerations

Visa and immigration requirements often obligate you to have a round trip ticket for entrance into the country. You cannot buy a one way ticket and plan to purchase the return portion later. Some destinations require that you have several blank pages remaining in your passport. If your passport does not have blank pages remaining, please arrange to get additional pages added to your current passport or renew for a new passport with plenty of blank pages.



If your itinerary includes layovers or stops in other countries en route you may need a visa for those countries. Please check with your travel agent and the relevant embassy for information.

Travel Delays

Unforeseen circumstances (weather, missed flights, equipment problems, etc.) may result in unforeseen expenses due to the delay. Students should travel with emergency funds in the event of unavoidable delays in transit. Pitzer College is not responsible for these expenses. Your International Student Identity Card (ISIC) has some coverage for costs incurred due to travel delays. Should you have expenses related to such delays, be sure to keep your receipts in order to make a claim. (See 'Travel Insurance Provided by Pitzer College' in the *Insurance* section of this handbook.)

ARRIVING EARLY OR STAYING PAST THE END OF THE PROGRAM

Students who choose to arrive in-country before the beginning date of the program must contact the program staff well in advance of the beginning of the program to arrange a time and place to meet on the arrival date. Pitzer can take no responsibility for early arrivals. Students must make their own arrangements for ground transportation, room and board.

If you think you may want to stay on past the end of the program, please advise Pitzer's travel agent before you make the final confirmation of your ticket. Otherwise, you will be booked for departure from the program site on the program departure date, and any additional costs due to changes made after your ticket is issued will be your responsibility. Please know that Pitzer can assume no responsibility for students who stay on past the departure date.

FLIGHT CHANGES, E-TICKETS AND PAPER TICKETS

If you choose to change the date of your return once you are in the host country; please know that this can be a frustrating, complicated, and costly procedure. You need to be check with the airline and the travel agent of the regulations, required tickets, and fees associated with changing your flight. Pitzer and the travel agent will not be responsible for expenses incurred for changing your return dates and/or itinerary after you make your initial confirmation with the travel agent, especially once you are in the host country.

Please verify with our designated travel agent whether your ticket is an E-ticket or a paper ticket. If your ticket is an E-ticket, please confirm with the travel agent and the airlines what you need to present for airport check-ins. Many international carriers and destinations treat E-tickets differently from the way they are treated in the US. If your ticket is a paper ticket please treat it like cash. If you lose your paper ticket or make a change in your itinerary and cannot present your original paper ticket at the airport check-in counter, you will most likely be charged full-price for a new ticket. This extra expense will be your responsibility.



If for any reason, you are not able to use an airline ticket, the **airline must be notified prior to the departure of the flight** that you will be changing the ticket. **Unused tickets including E-tickets become worthless once the plane departs.** You are responsible for the replacement cost of an unused ticket.

Please note that Pitzer requires you to participate in the entire program. Loss of credit or lowering of grades may result if you arrive late or depart early.

ARRIVAL

Where to Meet the Program Staff

You will be met by your host family immediately after you exit the airport. They will be holding a sign with your name on it. They will take you to their home and help you get settled in. The following day, you will have your first meeting with our program director, Isabel Argüello Chaves. Your host family will know the place and the time, and take you to the meeting. At that time you will meet the director and begin your orientation for the program.

In the very unlikely event that you exit the airport doors to the outside and no one is there to meet you (e.g. your plane is extremely late, or the person meeting you has an auto breakdown on the way to the airport), you should do the following: Take a taxi to the Garden Court Hotel, which is only 3 or 4 minutes from the airport. Once there, you can call the program director, Isabel Argüello-Chaves, who will instruct you on what to do. If it is extremely late (say, after midnight) Isabel will probably have you stay at the hotel for the night (Pitzer will pay) and then meet you the following morning. If it is earlier in the day, Isabel will probably come to pick you up and take you to your homestay family. Again, it is extremely unlikely that you won't be met at the airport, but just in case, please follow the above procedures.

Contact numbers for the following people are inside the back cover of this handbook:

Isabel Argüello-Chaves, Director
Sonia Rojas C., Administrative Director ICLC
Ronny García M., Academic Director ICLC

ICLC is the language school that will be running your Spanish program during the first month of the program. Either Sonia or Ronny will be able to assist you if you can't reach Isabel.

A couple of other notes from ICLC regarding your arrival

Even though you will have your host family's address, which will be emailed to you, please do not go directly to their home on your own. Especially after dark, a taxi driver always has hard time finding an address. Why? In Costa Rica there are no names on streets and avenues and no numbers in the houses. That is why we recommend you go to the Garden Court Hotel in the unlikely event that you are not met at the airport.

If your flight is extremely late and you do end up staying at the Garden Court Hotel, please note:

The hotel provides free internet access, 1 hour of international calls free of charge and breakfast. In addition, if you are waiting until someone picks you up, you can go to the fitness room to exercise or to the outdoor pool. Airport taxis will get to the Garden Court Hotel in 3 minutes. The Hotel is open 24 hours and there is a bilingual clerk on duty all night. The taxi's fee is very small and at the hotel you will have a discount when you specify that you are an ICLC client: **Pitzer will pay the bill if you have to stay in the hotel for the night, but do let them know you are with ICLC, so we can get a good deal.**

Careful! Sometimes, at arrival, travellers do not have local coins or the right calling card to dial from a public phone. We recommend that you call once you are at the hotel. When calling from a public phone, you could be distracted and your luggage could become vulnerable. You should avoid accepting help from people outside the airport. There are always people that offer to help, and sometimes, instead of receiving help you can become confused or robbed.

Lost Baggage

In the unlikely event that your baggage is lost en route, you will most likely first realize this in your host country. File a claim at the airlines desk before you depart the airport. Program staff will follow up by contacting the airlines office in the host country. Keep your baggage tags. Usually lost baggage is recovered in two to three days.

Arrival Notification

IMPORTANT: Please do not have your family call to make sure you've arrived safely and do not tell them you will call as soon as you've arrived. Once everyone has arrived, the program staff will contact the Office of Study Abroad in Claremont. **Your families will be notified by email or telephone of your safe arrival.**



MONEY MATTERS

HOW MUCH TO BRING AND HOW TO BRING IT

Generally speaking, most students spend the same amount of money (or slightly less) in Costa Rica as they would during a semester in the US. How much you spend will be determined by 1) whether you bring everything from home or buy items in Costa Rica, 2) your plans for field trips and independent travel before and after the program, and 3) any gifts or souvenirs you wish to buy. **In any event, we strongly recommend that you bring US \$800.00 to cover personal and emergency expenses.**



Travelers checks are very difficult to exchange in Costa Rica so we strongly recommend you do NOT bring them.

ATMS AND CREDIT CARDS



ATM cards with the Cirrus and Star symbols are accepted in Costa Rica. Your bank will usually charge you a small fee for withdrawing funds from an international ATM machine, but this is a good way to transfer funds to Costa Rica.

Credit cards are also accepted in Costa Rica and can be very handy in case of emergency. MasterCard and Visa are best.

If you bring a credit card, be sure to leave your card number and the 'Lost or Stolen' 800-number at home. In the unlikely event that your credit card is lost or stolen while abroad, this information will help your parents or friends cancel your card quickly. Please note: only a person previously authorized to make changes on your account will be able to cancel a lost or stolen card. You should also notify your credit card company that you will be traveling and may make expenditures on your card in your destination country and other countries en route. Otherwise, when the first few foreign charges show up, your credit card company may put a freeze on your card.

HOW TO RECEIVE FUNDS FROM HOME

The best ways to transfer additional funds from home to Costa Rica is to use an ATM card or draw a cash advance on your credit card. Western Union and American Express also provide wire transfer services, but these tend to be more expensive than standard ATM and cash advance fees. If you do not have an ATM or credit card, and you need to have money wired to you, you will need to obtain the latest details from the banks in San José and forward that information to your parents (or other benefactor).

WHAT YOUR PAYMENT FOR STUDY ABROAD WILL COVER

Payment of the comprehensive semester program fee (\$27,494 for 2011-2012) to Pitzer College plus the \$550 contribution towards airfare and travel insurance will cover your program tuition, housing and meals for the length of the program, one semester round trip travel from Los Angeles (or equivalent priced airport) to the international airport nearest your destination, an International Student Identity Card that includes travel insurance and the overall cost of providing and supporting study abroad at Pitzer College.

What happens to the comprehensive fee I pay for the Pitzer study abroad program?

Students are charged the full Pitzer College comprehensive fee for participation in any of Pitzer's study abroad programs. This does not, however, mean that the full comprehensive fee is sent to the host country for the use of the Pitzer study abroad program. As with all college programs and departments, each year the Treasurer's Office at Pitzer develops a budget for Study Abroad as a whole and for the individual programs abroad. The costs in the budget are determined in collaboration with in-country staff, the Office of Study Abroad and the Office of Academic Affairs at Pitzer College. Money to cover in-country costs, such as accommodation, school fees or tuition, DISP allowances, study trips, instructional and staff salaries, materials, insurance, office rental, etc. is sent to the host country for each semester. The College expects the local director to manage the program within the budget the College has provided. Generally, no changes are made to the budget once a program is in session except in case of emergency. Recommendations for budget changes are taken into consideration for the formulation of the budget for the next fiscal year. The portion of the comprehensive fee that doesn't go to the host country is used to support the cost of promoting and administering the study abroad programs as a whole. It is also used to support the overall

infrastructure of the college (from information technology, public relations, financial services, and insurance, to on-line library resources, etc.) that is available for study abroad students before, during, and after their time abroad.

Housing

Housing covered by Pitzer College means accommodations that are typical for that particular program or country during the period that school or the program is in session. Please note that housing expense during breaks between semesters and housing expense before or after the program are the responsibility of the student and are not covered in the fees paid to Pitzer.

Meals

The comprehensive program fee paid to Pitzer College covers all meals for the duration of the program. This usually means some combination of meals with host families (whenever possible), meals provided directly by the program, and a meal allowance given to students (if applicable), which together provide students with a diet and eating schedule that is typical for the host culture. Students will not be reimbursed for missed meals that are provided by the program or their host families. Meals during any break periods between semesters or before or after the program are the responsibility of the student and are not covered by the comprehensive program fee paid to Pitzer.

Travel Contribution

All Pitzer students pay the same travel contribution for travel and travel insurance (See the chapter on *Insurance* in this handbook) to a semester study abroad program. For 2011-2012 the travel contribution will be \$550. This charge will be placed on your student account for the semester you are abroad.

For Pitzer students approved for Pitzer programs and exchanges, as well as those approved on non Pitzer programs for the academic year, Pitzer will designate a travel agent for the student to book a round-trip airline ticket for ONE semester abroad experience for each student. Students doing more than one semester study abroad program will pay for their own airfare for the less expensive of the two destinations and will not be charged the travel contribution for the second semester.

Visiting students from other colleges and universities pay the airfare as directed by their home school. Some students may be required to pay our designated travel agent directly for their airfare. If you are a visiting student, please check with your study abroad advisor at your home school or with Jamie Francis at Pitzer for specific information.

Additional Expenses

Expenses that are NOT covered by the comprehensive program fee paid to Pitzer College include the following items that are unique to participation in study abroad: passport and visa fees, immunizations, and required photographs. Other expenses that are not covered are typical of the expenses that are not included in the comprehensive fees for students on any college or university campus. These additional expenses include (but are not limited to) the following: books, required medical/accident insurance, additional fees for science labs or art classes, housing and meals before or after the program, refundable housing/damage deposits, field trips that are not a required course component, long distance charges, laundry, personal entertainment, and toiletries. Finally, some conveniences which students may be accustomed to having access to on campus will not be included in a particular program because it is not commonly accessible to students in the host culture. Depending on location, these may include: telephones, email/internet access, gymnasium and sports facilities, and access to computer labs. Pitzer College does not provide compensation for a lack of access to such conveniences.

BILLING PROCEDURES

Pitzer College Students

Deposits

If you are a Pitzer College student, you do NOT pay a deposit. However, should you withdraw after accepting a place on the program, Pitzer will bill you for a withdrawal fee of \$350 and any non-recoverable expenses paid on your behalf.

Billing

Invoices are sent from the Student Accounts Office in the same manner as any other semester.

Financial Aid: Most financial aid (with the exception of work-study) can be applied toward the fees of any approved program. Please consult the financial aid office for specific details on how your financial aid will be handled.

Installment plan

As a convenience, Pitzer College is offering the option to make tuition payments on a monthly basis through Tuition Management Systems. To enroll, visit their website <https://www.afford.com> or call 800.722.4867. Please contact Pitzer College's Student Accounts Office at 909.621.8191 if you have questions about this option.

Visiting Students on Pitzer Programs

The handling of financial matters will vary depending on your home college or university. Some schools require that you pay fees directly to Pitzer College. Other schools have made special arrangements with Pitzer and require that students pay the home institution and the home institution then pays Pitzer on your behalf. Please contact our Office of Study Abroad and/or your home institution study abroad office for details.

Transcripts for all students will be withheld until Pitzer College is paid in full. This includes the comprehensive program fee and any outstanding balances due to charges incurred on behalf of the program such as: library fines, charges for damages to homestay or school property, non-reimbursed medical expenses, etc.



COMMUNICATIONS

TELEPHONE AND EMAIL

International Dialing Information

An international telephone number consists of several different parts:



The **International Access Code** from the **US - 011** (this number would be different from other countries), **Country code** (usually 2 to 4 digits) - **506 for Costa Rica**
Phone number (usually an eight digit number) **for telephones in Costa Rica**

Examples: 011-506-####-##-## (telephone) when dialing from the US.

Emergency telephone numbers for students in Costa Rica - see inside back cover

In an emergency, students in Costa Rica should call the emergency numbers listed inside the back cover of this handbook. Students are advised to contact the program director as soon as possible. He or she is best able to render prompt assistance and advice in the event of an emergency. Calling home to speak with a family member first, though it may be instinctive or comforting, is not going to get you the immediate local help you need.

For privacy reasons emergency numbers will only appear in the student edition of this Handbook. Please contact the Office of Study Abroad at the number below if you have questions.

Contact Information in Claremont

**Pitzer College
Office of Study Abroad
& International Programs**

Telephone **909.621.8104**
Fax **909.621.0518**
Email studyabroad@pitzer.edu

Mailing address
Scott Hall 110
1050 North Mills Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711

Office hours
Monday through Friday
8 AM to noon and 1 PM to 5 PM
except holidays

Cell Phones

If you wish to bring a cell phone there are three options: 1. You can get your phone unlocked and purchase a local SIM card once in Costa Rica. 2. Buy a phone without a US contract. 3. Buy a phone in Costa Rica for a much higher price. **Currently only 3G telephones that work on a frequency of 850 MHz (also called UMTS, HSPDA, or WCDMA) work at the Firestone Center.** Watch out: the 2G frequency of 850MHz is **not** identical with the 3G band of 850MHz!

All a foreigner needs is a valid passport and a cell phone that works with the local system.

A prepaid SIM chip is available at any branch office of the local cell phone operator ICE. The cost is minimum 2,500 Colones (about US-\$ 5 at the present exchange rate), which is good for more than 70 minutes of local calls within Costa Rica and for about 20 minutes for calls to the US. After the initial purchase the SIM chip can be reloaded with call credit as often as needed. With a SIM chip comes a number where students can also receive phone calls. In case the phone is ready for tethering with a notebook, the prepaid service also allows connections to the Internet. The cost for one Megabyte of Internet traffic is US-\$0.027.

For further information see the web site of ICE (Spanish only):

<http://portal.grupoice.com/wps/wcm/connect/web+content/Esp/CatTelecom/movil/Prepago/>

Phone models that are guaranteed to work in Costa Rica (but others have also been connected without problems):

<http://portal.grupoice.com/wps/wcm/connect/web+content/Esp/CatTelecom/movil/Homol/>

If you bring a cell phone from home, Pitzer expects all students to use cell phones in ways that are appropriate and responsible. In particular, cell phones should be turned off (including texting) during classes, program discussion sessions and study trips when interacting with program staff, faculty or guest speakers. In addition, students need to

learn and practice appropriate cell phone use in their homestays. For some families it may be considered rude, for instance, to make or receive calls or text messages during a family meal or while engaged in conversation after dinner.

In Case of an Emergency at Home - Family and Friends

In case of emergency, parents or friends should contact the Office of Study Abroad at the numbers listed above. The Study Abroad staff in Claremont can usually contact students and staff quickly, even when they are away from the program base on field trips. If you call the office number and we are closed you will be directed to Campus Safety at 909.621.8170. Campus Safety has additional contact information on file. Please have them continue down the list until they are able to speak directly with a member of our staff.

Contacting the US from Costa Rica

In order to call the United States from the San José area, you will need to use a calling card with international access between Costa Rica and the US. AT&T offers such a service. From most public phones around the country, you should be able to connect with an AT&T international operator by dialing the following access code: 0800-0-114-114. Calling card tolls are generally quite expensive (more so than dialing direct). Feel free to consult with other companies, including MCI and Sprint, to see who will give you the best deal.

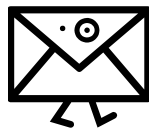
E-mail is available for student use at Instituto de Cultura y Lengua Costarricense (ICLC). An Internet café is available in Dominical when students are at the Firestone Center for Restoration Ecology (FCRE).

Another economical way to call internationally is with Skype, though quality may depend on the strength of your Internet or wireless connection. To learn more, visit Skype's website at <http://www.skype.com/>

Contacting Students in Costa Rica

The best ways to reach you in Costa Rica are by email, mail, Skype and cell phone.

MAILING AND SHIPPING TO COSTA RICA



Student Mailing Addresses

Mail

Family and friends may send mail to the following post office address during the **first month** of the program while you are **in Alajuela at ICLC**:

Student Name

Instituto de Cultura y Lengua Costarricense
Apartado Postal 609-4050
Alajuela, Costa Rica
América Central

Include the telephone number listed inside the back cover of this handbook on UPS or US Mail Global Express packages to students at ICLC in Costa Rica
Packages that arrive after students have moved to the Firestone Center will NOT be forwarded.

During your time at the **Firestone Center**, your family and friends should use the following post office address:

Student Name

Apartado Postal 704-8000
Peréz Zeledón, Costa Rica
América Central

Include the telephone number listed inside the back cover of this handbook on UPS or US Mail Global Express packages to students at the Firestone Center in Costa Rica

Usually, regular mail takes between seven to ten days to arrive. Occasionally, mail can be misplaced or lost by the postal service in Costa Rica, just as it can be lost by the postal service in the US.

If your family or friends need to send you a package urgently they should use either UPS or Global Express Mail offered through the US Postal Service. Please verify the package can be delivered to the "Apartado Postal" addresses listed above. Please do NOT ship packages to Costa Rica with DHL or FedEx since they will not deliver packages to P.O. boxes. Also, students can consult with the program director once in Costa Rica for an alternate physical address that can accept packages.

Although you can ship almost anything to Costa Rica, please keep in mind that certain items may require a special tax in order to clear customs. Think twice before shipping expensive items, such as computers, electric gadgets or digital

cameras, the exorbitant taxes will make it preferable to leave them in customs. Always make sure to write on the package "NO COMMERCIAL VALUE".

STUDENT COMMUNICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Read your Email

Before, during, and after your study abroad experience someone from the Office of Study Abroad or another Pitzer College office may contact you with information about orientation, health, safety, academic, finances, or other matters. **For Pitzer students, the official means of contacting you will be your Pitzer College email account.** For non-Pitzer students we will use the email you provided in your application.

Due to the large number of messages on student-talk, Pitzer-talk, and other email lists, we advise students going abroad to unsubscribe to email lists while off campus. If you have a limited amount of time to check email or are paying for connection time at an internet café while abroad you don't want to miss important College information buried in your inbox. Investigate methods for labeling and filtering your messages before you go.



Students are responsible for managing their email accounts and reading their official school email on a regular basis before, during, and after studying abroad.

For Pitzer Students: the Pitzer password automatically expires every six months - 180 days from when you last reset your current password. Change your password before you leave to assure continuous access. If your password does expire, log on to www.pitzer.edu/pitpass or contact the Pitzer Helpdesk at help@pitzer.edu.

Keep your Student Contact and Emergency Information Current

We may also try to reach you via your cell phone, home telephone, personal email, or other means. In the event of an emergency, we may need to contact you or your parents or guardians via the information in the College database or in your Study Abroad file. It is important that you notify us of any changes to your information.

WHAT TO BRING

ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS AND ITEMS



- Your **passport** valid for **at least six months past the end of the program** and two photocopies carried separately from your passport in other suitcases or wallets. Leave an additional copy at home with your parent or guardian.
- Your **airline ticket** (and photocopy of your ticket carried separately).
- Credit cards and ATM cards** Before deciding what form of money to carry see the *Money Matters* section for more information. Travelers checks are very difficult to exchange in Costa Rica so we strongly recommend you do NOT bring them.
- Passport-sized **photographs (optional)**. These are in addition to those requested by the Office of Study Abroad. They could be used for a variety of reasons, but are NOT required for the Costa Rica program.
- An official **immunization record** from your doctor or health clinic and a photocopy.
- International Student Identity Card (ISIC)**. Pitzer College will provide the ISIC after you confirm your participation in the program. We cannot process the card if we are missing your photo so please submit one as soon as possible. In the event that your card is lost or stolen, your insurance will continue. If you wish to replace the card in order to receive discounts, you are responsible for the replacement cost of \$22. Leave a copy of the front and back of the card at home and bring a copy with you.
- Your **medical insurance information**.
- Contact numbers** for your home institution. Remember to bring your college catalogs, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses for representatives at your home institution. During the course of the semester, you may need to fill out pre-registration forms, contact your academic adviser, arrange housing, or work with financial aid. It is extremely important that you prepare for any contingency.
- This **handbook** and other pre-departure reading materials, if necessary.

CLOTHING, MEDICINE AND MISCELLANEOUS

What you bring is really an individual matter. It depends upon how much luggage you want to carry (the lighter the better) and what you plan to do in Costa Rica, and independent travel after the program. Clothing in Costa Rica can be expensive so try to take what you'll need. Modest, clean and casual but neat dress is recommended. Take clothing that is easy to wash and dries quickly; avoid things that need dry-cleaning. Minimize white garments because they are harder to keep clean. The San José area can be cool, especially at night and during heavy rains. The weather at the Firestone Center can be hot, humid, and wet. The dry season in Costa Rica runs from January through May, and the rainy season lasts from May to November and December.

That said, we suggest you come **as light as possible** and buy anything else you need in Costa Rica. Traveling becomes much more enjoyable as the weight of your bags decrease. When you've finished packing walk around the block carrying everything, or have a friend carry your things and tell you if you've packed too much. Whether you bring it with you or buy it, the following items are suggested:

Clothing

- Long cotton **pants** or light-weight pants, 2 pairs of lightweight field pants (Jeans will NOT dry.)
- Shirts**, including long-sleeved and at least 3 t-shirts
- Underwear**
- Socks and sock liners** Bring plenty they will NOT dry
- Walking shoes** such that wear well in the rain

- You **MUST bring boots** to Costa Rica Comfortable, lightweight hiking boots or 'rubber boots' e.g. Wellingtons – See below under FCRE Field Equipment
- Leather **gloves**
- Sandals** or shoes for dancing
- Sweater or fleece**
- Jacket** (with hood, if possible)
- Raingear** Umbrella and light-weight poncho – See below under FCRE Field Equipment
- Hat** You may want to include netting to cover your face
- Shorts** for the beach
- Bathing suit**
- Slippers** to wear around your host family's home
- Robe**
- Pajamas**
- Flip flops** or slippers for the shower and beach
- Bandana**
- Semiformal clothes** appropriate for your final presentation

Women

- 1 or 2 **dresses**
- 2 or 3 **skirts**
- Blouses**

Men

- Collared sports shirts**
- One pair dress **pants**

Toiletries

You will need items similar to those you would use in the States (e.g. soap, razors, nail clippers, lip balm, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, comb and brush, shampoo, etc.). Most items are available in Costa Rica, but tend to be more expensive, and if you are attached to a particular brand of deodorant, for example, you should bring it with you. Note: you should not pack razors or any other potential weapon like accessories in carry-on luggage.

Medicines

Prescription Medications

Bring an adequate supply of any prescription drugs that you take and special contact lens solutions that you may use. If you have asthma or other allergies, bring a six-week supply of meds for that also; some peoples' symptoms are especially strong in Costa Rica. We also recommend you bring the following:

- Insect repellent** with 20% DEET (not the aerosol kind, or you will have airport problems)
- Vitamins, cold and anti-diarrhea medicine, oral rehydration packets**
- Sun screen**
- Personal first aid items** The FCRE maintains several first aid kits on site. However, it is a good idea to put a few band-aids in your pack, and you may want to bring items such as aspirin or Tylenol, Imodium (anti-diarrhea), Benadryl (anti-inflammatory), antibiotic ointment, antihistamine cream, etc. to keep at the dorm.

Miscellaneous Items

- English/Spanish Dictionary**
- Small towel, bath towel, washcloth, and small scrub brush.** Ultralight back packing towels are useful.
- Glasses**
- Sunglasses**
- Spring semester** students **MUST** bring **a mask and a snorkel** for the trip to Marino Ballena National Park. (These are NOT required nor suggested for fall semester students).
- Small compass** A cheap, basic compass to keep in your field pack.
- Whistle** For emergencies. Keep in your field pack at all times.
- Travel **alarm clock** or watch with an alarm
- Waterproof notebook** and pencil for taking notes and data in wet conditions
- You will need a **hard-cover notebook** to transcribe your data into. Bring a couple soft-lead, cheap mechanical pencils for the field notebook.
- Knife** A good, folding sharp knife is very useful. Pack it in your checked baggage
- Head light and small flashlight** - See below under FCRE Field Equipment
- Cheap **waterproof watch** may double as an alarm clock
- Camera** Most students bring digital cameras. Keep it in a resealable plastic bag with silica gel when not in use. Camera supply stores sell special silica packs for camera equipment.
- IPod, Walkman or portable mini disk player**
- Small tape recorder** (for interviews or recording music)
- Mini flashlight - headlight style** preferred. Pick a flashlight that takes AA batteries.
- Batteries** for your camera, alarm clock, flashlight, etc. Consider buying rechargeable AA's and a charger.
- Photos** of family and friends
- A few **novels** for reading and swapping
- Notepaper** (for taking lecture notes), pens, mechanical pencil.
- Stationary, book for personal **Journal**
- One or two one-quart plastic **water bottles** for carrying purified water
- Box of quart sized **resealable plastic bags** The resealable plastic bag is the greatest invention for tropical life in the past 100 years. Bring plenty of multiple sizes – you will use them to keep moisture away from everything from cameras to clothes. FCRE has silica-gel packets that can be added to absorb moisture.
- Mosquito net** (optional)
- USB memory stick** - **required** for transferring files between computers

FCRE Field Equipment

Rain Gear

Expensive rain jackets are not needed, and usually too warm. A cheap poncho will suffice. Bear in mind that you may only have access to laundry facilities a couple of times a week, and that wet clothes generally don't dry in the near 100% humidity. So, you will need multiple changes of tee-shirts and field pants. Jeans will not suffice – you will never be able to dry them, and they will go moldy in a few days. Get yourself a couple of pairs of lightweight field pants – the kind with zip-off lower legs are popular. (discount stores offer these for a third of the price than the fancy ones at REI, etc). Umbrellas are also useful when working in the rain.

Boots

You will be hiking steep, muddy trails. You have three options: Wellington (“rubber”) boots; snake boots, or hiking boots. If you choose to wear hiking boots, get cheap, lightweight ones - you will need to wear snake gaiters with them, which

will be provided by the FCRE. Regardless of what you choose, make sure they are comfortable – break them in before you arrive at the FCRE!



Hiking Boots



Snake boot



Rubber Boot

Packs

You are going to need a way to carry water, a notebook, and various bits of safety equipment. Some sort of cheap “butt pack” has generally found favor at the FCRE. Go for a decent capacity.



Lights

We require that you keep a light with you when working in the Reserve. A headlight is a “must” as it keeps your hands free. Headlights vary in price enormously; get an LED light that uses AA cells (rather than AAA’s or expensive lithium cells). Some are AA and rechargeable. The program strongly recommends getting two lights; one (for serious illumination) and one small one that stays permanently in your butt pack for emergencies.



Baggage

- One **suitcase** for checking onto the plane (We recommend something with wheels, or a back-pack for easy transport)
- Money belt** – for around the waist or neck
- Day pack** or duffle bag (may also be used as a carry on)



Check the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) website for current regulations about prohibited and permitted items for carry-on luggage and checked baggage.

<http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm>

LAPTOPS: TO BRING OR NOT TO BRING?



We highly recommend students bring an inexpensive laptop or notebook to complete assignments during the program. The Firestone Center provides wireless service between 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM in support of students and faculty using their laptops. You should note that the wireless service is not consistent because of frequent power outages in the area. Its strength is also not as powerful as networks you may be used to, so you should moderate Internet usage among yourselves. An Internet café is available in Dominical for personal Internet use. Due to high humidity in Costa Rica, bring an extra-large resealable plastic bag to keep your laptop dry. Be sure to bring an adapter plug.

GIFTS

It is always nice to bring small gifts from home for each member of your host families. You should keep in mind that giving too generously might make it difficult for future, perhaps less affluent, students who may live with your family. Pictures of yourself, your own family and your home would be appreciated. Picture books of your state or country would also be a good idea. T-shirts and sweatshirts from home, cassette tapes, CDs, nice stationary sets, colored pens, calendars, crayons, small toys or games for kids, perfume, mugs, scarves, earrings, kitchen towels, or a souvenir from your home town are all possibilities. Program staff can help you decide which gifts to give to each family. An effective strategy is to bring one gift of a food item (nuts, candies) for your entire family and then wait until you are settled in to purchase inexpensive gifts locally (cloth, notebooks, food supplies, etc.) home, according to the interests and needs of family members.



Alumni suggested Nalgene water bottles, Frisbees, and CDs of popular American music, Tupperware, cassette player/ cassettes, Swiss army knives, headlamps, and small (travel-size) lotions/cosmetic items as gifts.

THINKING AHEAD

REGISTRATION FOR NEXT SEMESTER'S COURSES

Pre-registration at Pitzer College will occur on campus in late April for fall, and in late November for spring. If you do not attend Pitzer, please consult with your study abroad office to determine how pre-registration will be handled on your campus. For all students, planning ahead will do much to alleviate the anxiety you often experience about pre-registration. Before you leave campus, it is advisable to:

- Declare your major with the proper forms in the Registrar's office. If you will be a junior while you are abroad you must submit your major declaration form to the Registrar's Office before you leave. If you do not, you will not be able to register for the next semester.
- Talk to your adviser to have a clear idea of the type of courses that you will need to take upon your return;
- Take your college catalogue and e-mail and phone numbers of anyone you may need to contact regarding courses and general requirements;
- Ask a friend who is staying on campus to collect the necessary forms and signatures on your behalf for any courses that require special permission;
- Provide a signed document stating that your friend is acting as your proxy (most professors probably wouldn't require something this formal, but it couldn't hurt);

For Pitzer Students Only: Registration from Abroad

Students are encouraged to use the online registration system on the MyCampus2 portal. If you will be unable to register at your designated time, follow the instructions below:

Select courses from the 5-College Course Schedule at http://mycampus2.pitzer.edu/ics/Course_Schedules/ and email their registration to regabroad@pitzer.edu using the study abroad registration format found at http://www.pitzer.edu/offices/registration/externalstudies_request.asp.

In your email, please include the following:

Subject line - please put your name.

Example: "Your Name - Spring 2012 Registration"

Name

Student ID Number

Advisor

Major

Course ID Number

Section Number

Course Title

Instructor

Day and Time

Please be assured that you will be registered with your class. Your registration will appear on your student portal the day after your registration date. Due to the high level of student registrations from abroad, please allow 3 to 5 business days after your class registration date to receive an e-mail confirmation of classes. If a class you have requested is full or has been cancelled, you will be notified. E-mail permission from an instructor to register in a full course will be accepted only from the instructor's Claremont Colleges email account.

Information for fall courses should be available around mid-April and around mid-November for spring courses, about two weeks before pre-registration. Also, as communicated to you before your departure, if you have junior class standing and have not yet declared a major, or if you owe money to the College, you will not be allowed to register for courses until you have taken care of these matters.

PITZER IN ONTARIO - AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EXTENDING YOUR STUDY ABROAD LEARNING

Many students want to continue the type of learning that was possible on their study abroad program when they return to campus. An excellent opportunity to employ field methods, be involved in a community and participate in a meaningful internship is to apply to the Pitzer in Ontario program. Additionally, there is a program that allows students to start graduate coursework towards a Masters in Community Education and Teaching in their senior year at Pitzer. The Pitzer in Ontario program is a pre-requisite for students interested in obtaining this degree. Contact the Community Engagement (CEC) for information on how to apply for the Pitzer in Ontario program.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS

Most study abroad program alumni want to go back. One way to do this is to apply for one or more of several fellowships available to graduating seniors. The most popular of these seem to be the Watson, Marshall, Fulbright and Rotary International. For more information see the Pitzer College Office of Graduate Fellowships website: <http://www.pitzer.edu/academics/fellowships-grants/>.

The following ideas may increase your chances of winning a fellowship:

- Your career placement office and faculty fellowship advisors will have specific information on each particular fellowship. Find out as much about these fellowships as you can *before* you go on your program and then be on the lookout for good ideas.
- Think about applying to as many fellowships as possible. This can only increase your chances. You may choose to try out more than one idea or use the same idea (and essay) for more than one fellowship application.
- Keep a journal and have a section for dreams and fellowship ideas (often one and the same).
- Refer back to journal entries and quote them when appropriate in your fellowship application essay. This demonstrates long term interest and, perhaps, passion – important ingredients of successful fellowship applications.
- Many students who apply for these fellowships propose to build upon their independent study projects (ISP). If this is a possibility for you, conduct your ISP with this in mind. Think about the questions you would investigate, the people you would meet, the work you would do, the places you would go if you were able to return for a full year. Write these ideas into your ISP paper and your fellowship essay will be half written.
- When applying for a fellowship, your ability to demonstrate relationships with and support from host-country institutions and individuals will strengthen your application.
- The most important thing you can do is develop contacts *while you are abroad*. Cultivate relationships with host-nationals and organizations in the field you wish to pursue with a fellowship. Discuss your ideas with them. Ask them for advice.
- Get specific and accurate contact information for people and their institutions (phone numbers, fax number, email addresses, official titles, etc.). Ask them before you leave if they would be willing to support and or recommend you for a fellowship. If you are in a country where communication is slow, consider asking for a recommendation letter before you leave to avoid the frustration of trying to meet a deadline while waiting for recommendations from far away. Your mentor may have travel plans of their own and may not be easily reached when you need them.
- Keep in touch with your contacts. Send a thank you message as soon as you return home.
- When appropriate, and if communications permit, allow host-culture contacts to help you with your proposal. If they feel involved in the planning stage, they may offer stronger support.
- While you are still abroad, visit local institutions that sponsor specific fellowship recipients. Fulbright representatives and Rotary International members are often very willing to discuss your ideas and fellowship

possibilities with you. Six months later when many applications come across their desk, yours may be the only one with a face associated with it. That may make all the difference.

- When you return to the US, it is also a good idea to do follow up research on the country from which you have just returned. You have likely had a life changing experience and learned much about your host culture but there are many recognized scholars who should be consulted to deepen your understanding. Find out who is the leading authority and read some of his/her works. Don't rely on only your own perspective about the culture; test it out by reading further works.

CAREER SERVICES

During each of your years at Pitzer we want you to gain information and experience that will allow you to formulate your career and life goals. Even though you will be off campus for a period of time, it is important for you to be aware of timelines and deadlines that could impact your future. As you prepare to study abroad there are several things you can do before leaving and even while abroad to assist you in making career, graduate school, internship, and job decisions.

Sophomore Year

- Meet with a career counselor and take career interest assessment inventories to help clarify your interests.
- Conduct information interviews with alumni and professionals who work in fields that interest you.
- Create or update your resume.
- Review internship directories and listings. You can often apply for internships while you are abroad. Remember, summer internship deadlines are often in late fall semester or early spring semester.

Junior Year

- Begin to explore graduate school programs and become familiar with the application process.
- Review financial aid information - application deadlines occur early in the process.
- Explore scholarship and fellowship possibilities (most deadlines are early in the fall semester of your senior year).
- Update your resume.
- Register with Career Services during spring semester for senior year on-campus recruiting.
- Review internship directories and listings. You can often apply for internships while you are abroad. Remember, summer internship deadlines are often in late fall semester or early spring semester.

Senior Year

- Research and apply to graduate schools.
- Take the GRE or other necessary standardized entrance exams.
- If you are off campus first semester, contact Career Services to obtain on-campus recruiting information.
- Finalize your resume.
- Request references for graduate school applications.
- Network with alumni and other professionals.
- Learn the necessary steps you can take to conduct a job search.

Contact Career services via email and visit their web page at http://www.pitzer.edu/offices/career_services.

APPENDIX A: USEFUL WEBSITES

Websites About Costa Rica

Guías Costa Rica

A comprehensive site providing links for general information, travel and tourism, arts and humanities, newspapers and radio, society and culture, science and technology, national symbols, national parks, and other interests for Costa Rica.
<http://www.guiascostarica.com/>

Costa Rica Information

Primarily meant for travelers, this website provides brief history, cultural information, photo galleries, climate, government information, and other information about Costa Rica.
<http://centralamerica.com/cr/info/>

Library of Congress

The Library of Congress provides information on general resources; business, commerce, and economy; culture, education; government, politics and law.
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/hispanic/costarica/costarica.html>

Costa Rica

Information on business, culture, news, travel and weather.
<http://costarica.com/Home/>

Costa Rica Embassy in Washington D.C.

<http://www.costarica-embassy.org/>

General Information Websites

Library services available to students of the Claremont Colleges while abroad. (Students from other institutions should check with their schools for similar services that may be offered.)
<http://libraries.claremont.edu>

How to get a US passport

http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

US State Department Country Specific Information

Provides information about embassy and consulate locations, visa requirements, crime and security information, and health and medical conditions about each country
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (country by country information on staying healthy):

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>

International calling codes

<http://www.countrycallingcodes.com>

Time Zone converter

<http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock>

Currency converter

<http://www.oanda.com/converter/travel?lang=en>

International Human Rights Declaration

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr>

Adaptors for converting appliances to different international electric currents

http://www.escapeartist.com/global/World_Electric_Power_Guide.html

Locating ATM machines

<http://www.mastercard.com/atm>

<http://www.visa.com>

Disabled travelers

<http://www.miusa.org>

Students of color

<http://www.studyabroad.msu.edu/people/studentsofcolor>

Gay/lesbian students

<http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/index.html>

Voting while abroad

<http://www.fvap.gov>

World Factbook

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>

Global Calendar - holidays and festivals around the globe

http://www.oanda.com/cgi/world_holiday.pl?hdnAction=search_countries

Travel publications

<http://www.ricksteves.com>

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com>

<http://www.fodors.com>

<http://www.frommers.com>

<http://www.moon.com>

News

<http://www.newslink.org>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk>

Migration

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/talking_point/special/migration/default.stm#

Travel zines and newsletters for sharing stories as you travel

<http://www.travelmedia.com>

<http://www.great-adventures.com>

<http://www.artoftravel.com>

<http://www.journeywoman.com>

Tips on taking better photographs

<http://www.photosecrets.com>

International Internet Radio

<http://www.web-radio.com>

<http://www.live-radio.net/info.shtml>

APPENDIX B: SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND PREVENTION

THE • CENTER • FOR • GLOBAL • EDUCATION



SAFETI Clearinghouse



SAFETI On-Line Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 2, Spring - Summer 2000

Sexual Harassment And Prevention In College Students Studying Abroad

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Introduction

It has been my experience over the years as a Consultant to the US Peace Corps that the issue of sexual harassment for women can become a major stress factor that can greatly affect the entire overseas experience.

The information included in these pages comes directly from the work I have done with hundreds of inspiring and courageous Peace Corps Volunteer females as well as my own personal experience as a 22 year old Peace Corps Volunteer in Brasil many years ago. I have listened to and experienced the struggles, fears, frustrations, dilemmas, as well as joys of being a female in a developing culture. I have learned a great deal from the experience and from the incredible women with whom I have had the privilege of counseling. My life and my clinical work have been immeasurably enriched by the experiences we have shared together.

Cultural Sensitivity

We all want to be culturally sensitive, to get along, to be respectful, to fit in, to not offend. In training, cultural sensitivity is emphasized and highly valued. It can be the doorway through which a college student studying abroad gains entry to and acceptance with the community abroad.

It is very important that the cultural sensitivity training provided never requires that you submit to behaviors that invade your personal boundaries and that feel unsafe or even uncomfortable to you. If it feels inappropriate or makes you uneasy, get yourself out of the situation. Never sacrifice yourself or your sense of safety for the sake of cultural sensitivity.

Personal Boundaries

Personal boundaries are the personal space around us, physically and emotionally, that serves to preserve our physical and emotional integrity. When someone gets "too close", an alarm sounds inside. We need to listen for, respect, and respond to that alarm. We also need to respect the personal boundaries of each other. These areas can be very confusing for students for several reasons:

Reason One: The issue of personal boundaries tends to be confusing for people. Some of us were raised in families with broad rigid boundaries, lots of secrets, locked doors, distance from people, and perhaps even distance from our own emotions. Others of us were raised in families with loose boundaries, or inconsistent boundaries where people did not consistently allow personal respect or require privacy, where frequently no one knocked on bedroom doors before entering, where people shared common space and little personal space was available. And some of us (a very few) were raised with more of a balance of closeness, respect, and honoring of privacy and personal space.

Reason Two: Social conditioning in college has influenced boundary understandings by increasing tolerance for loose, fluid boundaries. Many college students have been acclimated to a very loose boundaried college culture. Students may "crash" in each other's dorm or apartment...males and females may share sleeping space for convenience without sexual expectations. They may have become accustomed to, and therefore have a high tolerance for loose personal boundaries.

Reason Three: We "assume" every one has the same understanding about personal boundaries as we do. Now enter another country and find the whole issue of boundaries and personal space is highly influenced by cultural norms and very different from what you are accustomed to. And the amount of personal space has a certain meaning in one culture and a different meaning in another culture. Like learning a foreign language, customs and personal boundaries in a new culture are not to be "assumed" to be known, but must be learned for your safety.

The Ultimate Boundary – Your Body

In some cultures, allowing a man to enter your house is symbolic of letting him enter your body. Many men have told women that they "assumed" she wanted sex just because she allowed entry into her house. Staying outside on the porch is a safer way to receive male guests. Where is the best place to entertain men in a safe way without misunderstandings where you live in the US? Where will the best place be to entertain men in a safe way without misunderstandings where you live/study abroad?

Concept of Male Friendship – A Boundary Misunderstanding

American women are accustomed to the concept of male friendship. It has a meaning that may not translate in the new culture. Being seen with a man, talking with a man, going out with a man may have a different "meaning" in the culture than a female student may intend. What does it mean in the culture you are in? Is that your intention? If no, change your behaviors to send the message you intend.

Strokes – Finding Deeper Meaning in Communication

Strokes are the measure of the exchange of communication between people. When interacting with others, we are constantly exchanging numbers of strokes. When we are communicating with peers, we tend to exchange a comparable number of strokes, a balanced exchange. In communication with those in authority however, the exchange may tend to not be balanced. The employee, for example, may tend to deliver more strokes than he/she receives from the boss. With friends, coworkers, spouse, children, authority figures, parents, strangers, strokes are delivered in varying amounts of balance or imbalance. Notice how this plays out in your life. Normally we are not aware of this measure of exchange as it operates at an unconscious level.

So it is, that when someone is being approached by a stranger or unwelcome individual, the amount of strokes should be kept to a minimum. In Latin culture, for instance, a man may sit next to a female student on a bus and begin an uninvited conversation with "Oh, baby. I love you." There is a tendency on some women's part to give a lecture on love to that individual ("How can you love me? You don't know me.", etc.)—providing a lot of strokes. Remember it's the number of strokes that are important, not the quality or content (negative or positive). This woman is then surprised to discover that the man continues and even escalates the harassment rather than moving away.

It is more effective to:

- Ignore the harassment/pretend ignorance
- Feign confusion/lack of understanding
- Move away/remove yourself from the situation

Confrontations of any type serve to encourage harassers who want attention, even negative attention will do. It's important to know about the power of strokes. When people come at you with strokes that you don't want, don't give away any strokes in return. Don't offer explanations. Get up and move, say no, but do not equalize the number of strokes exchanged as it may only escalate into getting you into more trouble.

Notice how strokes play out in your life. Notice the relationships where strokes are not equal—where someone is giving you far more strokes than you are giving out, and notice how it feels inside. Does it make you uncomfortable? This is true in all kinds of relationships, and can be used to help identify predators.

Harassment behavior and language varies from one culture to another. How do men harass women in the culture in which you are visiting? How do national women in that culture deal with it? Notice their effectiveness and use their response as a model.

Assertiveness

Passive	Assertive	Aggressive
<p>Passive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · "Too Nice" · Suck it up · Hold it in · Denial · Subtle manipulation · Guilt · Powerless · Latent Hostility · Weak Boundaries - not setting personal limits 	<p>Assertive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · "Firm" · Deliver messages clearly · "I" statements · "Broken record" technique (say "No, thank you" and then keep saying it over and over) · Good boundaries 	<p>Aggressive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · "Mean" · Blow it out · Explode · Expressed Hostility · Overt Manipulation · Threats/Ultimatums · Guilt · Powerless/Out of control · Rigid boundaries

Actions

Actions speak louder than words. Make sure your body language is congruent with your words. If you say no with a smile on your face or in a weak, unconvincing voice, the words lose their force and power. Say no firmly and swiftly and follow that up with removing yourself from the situation and getting assistance if needed to back you up.

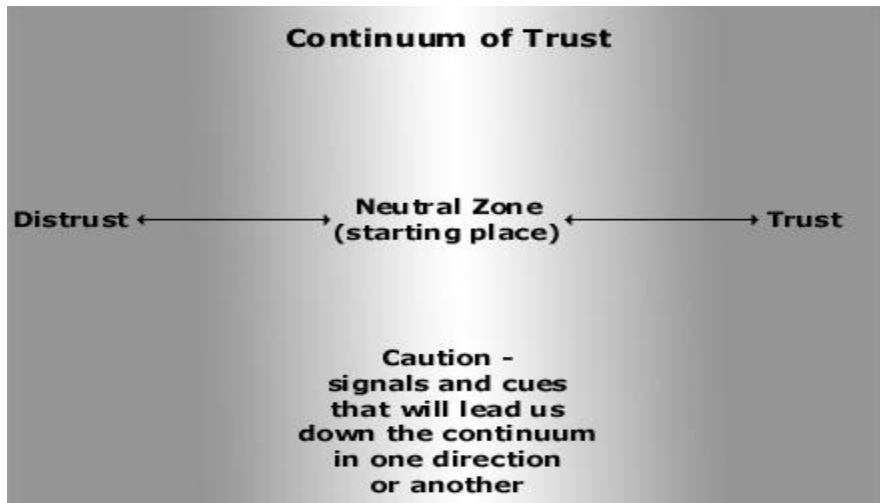
Persistent People

Use the broken record technique when faced with a situation when someone will not take no for an answer. Do not be coerced into backing down from your position by the persistence of the person insisting. Just because they did not accept your "no" does not mean you now need to come up with another reason or excuse. Keep saying the same answer over and over again, without developing a new reason or excuse each time the other person doesn't accept it. You don't have to be creative. Stick to your answer and just don't budge.

Example:

"Would you like to go to the movies with me?"
 "No, thank you. I can't go."
 "Oh, come on. It's just a movie."
 "No, thank you. I can't go."
 "I'll get you home early. I'll be a perfect gentleman."
 "No, thank you. I can't go."
 "Oh, you're too good for me, is that it?"
 "No, thank you. I can't go."
 "Oh, you can't go?"
 "No, thank you. I can't go."
 "Oh."

Trust



Trust needs to be earned. Many people have the mistaken notion that people should be trusted until proven otherwise. Actually, it is prudent to stay in a neutral position about a person, neither trusting nor distrusting them at first. Gather information from this person that will help you determine the trustworthiness of the person. In a new culture, watch for clues and cues from people who know the person and figure out how trusted he/she is by the community.

Harassment Burn Out

Harassing behavior is annoying at best and threatening and dangerous at worst. All students should seek assistance if harassment towards them becomes out of control and /or causes increased anxiety and anger. Many students reach a point, after which time they can no longer tolerate the catcalls on the street with the same humor they had when they arrived in country. For some, the irritation escalates to anger and retaliation. Some students have acted out toward men on the street (yelling at them, insulting them, throwing things, hitting them) out of exasperation. This aggressive behavior is dangerous. It is a warning sign that needs to be addressed for your protection. It is very understandable that the harassment has "gotten to you," but exhibiting aggressive behavior back can put you at risk. This "burn out" is a signal that it's time to take a break. Get out of town. Take a vacation. Go talk to your teachers, staff, and/or counselor. Do some stress relieving exercises that work for you. Talk to someone. Do something different!

Predators/Prey

In the wild, when an animal is either separated from the herd, is weak, young, injured, or otherwise vulnerable, it is likely that a predator will spot the animal, consider it prey and attack.

It is essential to your safety that you never allow yourself to be vulnerable to attack, that you avoid behaviors that can make you prey. You may have the right to walk down the beach at 2:00 in the morning, but if you do, you are making yourself prey to a waiting predator.

You may want to go to a bar or a party and have some fun, let off some steam, kick back and have a good time but if you drink alcohol or use any mood altering substance, you are now potential prey. It's as if you said to the strangers/acquaintances around you, "I'm going to relinquish control of myself/my body now. I put myself in your hands." Being at the effect of substances of any kind sets us up to be vulnerable to the attack of a predator.

It's not fair. Of course, it's not. But it's true—and staying in control of yourself can save your life. Being awake and aware allows you to pick up on warning signs that alert you that something is wrong. In the book, *The Gift of Fear*, Gavin deBecker describes the "gut feeling", the intuitive sense, that something is not right—that some danger may be present—as the gift of fear. Fear alerts us if we are awake and aware and respectful of the feelings we get. We must not override our sense of fear by saying to ourselves, "I don't know what I'm worried about, I'm sure nothing's wrong here", instead of paying attention to that little voice in our gut that says, "I don't know what's going on here, but something's up". It is really, really important to pay attention to our intuition, that little sense of knowing that something is amiss here, and not to dismiss it or deny it.

In his book, deBecker describes seven (7) ways that predators manipulate people to become prey. Learn all of these strategies so that you will not fall prey to them yourself. The tactics are:

- Forced teaming: intentional and directed manipulation to establish premature trust, example: "we're in this together"—a form of false rapport
- Charm and niceness: manipulative, deceptive, for self-gain
- Too many details: a tactic used when people are lying
- Typecasting: a slight insult designed to manipulate a woman to feel compelled to prove its inaccuracy
- Loan sharking: unsolicited giving designed to create a feeling of indebtedness
- The unsolicited promise: false promises
- Discounting the word "no": when someone refuses to accept "no" for an answer

More about these tactics can be learned from reading the book, *The Gift of Fear*. It is a highly recommended resource for anyone wanting to be more savvy about ways to protect themselves.

Potential Predator Behavior—Progressive Intrusive Invasion of Boundaries

If in a situation there is someone giving you more attention that you want, or is finding excuses to touch you, this can be potentially dangerous to your safety. For example, a guy comes up to a woman and gently brushes his shoulder up against her, flipping her hair off her shoulder, grazing her hand. She's thinking, "This is creeping me out, but I'm sure I'm overreacting, I'm sure he doesn't mean anything." This is where danger begins. He is thinking, "How much will she tolerate and allow? How long can I get away with this without her calling me on it? How far can I go?"

Touch:

- Uninvited, seemingly "unintentional" touching (brushing up against a woman's leg or arm, touching her hair)

Escalated touch:

- If not acknowledged and objected to, the touch will escalate (hand on thigh, hand on arm, sitting very close)

Forced sense of indebtedness:

- Creating a sense of indebtedness (buying an unsolicited drink or meal for example) and then expecting her attention in return (a dance, to walk her home, to spend time with her)

Conclusion

While some men are harassed, women experience the majority of sexual harassment and sexual assault. If you are a female student, this reality undoubtedly frustrates and angers you to have to be so very aware of your safety. If you are a male student, it likely dismays and angers you that women are ever treated disrespectfully.

There are steps to take to minimize risk in while traveling abroad and maximize fun and a rich cultural experience. It is important for women to:

- Integrate into their community
- Make friends with the women of the village
- Learn from the women about self protection and practice what you learn
- Dress according to local customs
- Interact with men according to the local customs
- Behave according to the local customs
- Stay in control; staying sober and alert keeps your senses in place to protect you
- Have a buddy system: having at least one other person with you that you trust can help you in regular circumstances as well as in problematic situations (what if someone spikes your drink). It is generally a good idea to travel in groups
- Pay attention and respond to any inner signal (intuition) that "something isn't right" and remove yourself from the situation

Do not try to behave like you would in the States. You are here to experience a different way of life, one that allows you to assimilate into your village, to "join" the community, to have a full, rich cultural experience. Enjoy it. You are not giving up yourself—you, indeed, are expanding on your choices as a female. This article has been created as an invitation to you to be awake and aware and to acknowledge the realities of potential safety issues around you. To live your life as if this isn't so is to deny yourself adequate protection. Treat yourself well.

Nancy Newport is a psychotherapist in private practice in Fairfax, Virginia. She has been a counseling consultant to the Peace Corps since 1992 and has a specialty in treating trauma, especially sexual and physical assault. Ms. Newport conducts the Peace Corps Medical Officer Training on sexual harassment and assault treatment. She is certified in Clinical Hypnotherapy, NLP and EMDR and uses these modalities extensively in her trauma work. Ms. Newport is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (Brasil). Her website is: <http://www.nancynewport.com>.



Safety Abroad First-
Educational Travel Info
(SAFETY) Clearinghouse

Student Study Abroad
Safety Handbook

World Wide Colleges
and Universities

Study Abroad Research
Online

Resources for Study
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APPENDIX C: PITZER COLLEGE STUDY ABROAD OVERVIEW OF ETHICAL PRACTICES OF RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY

1. Informed Consent

RESEARCH

When conducting an interview or using a conversation for research data collection, you must have informed consent from the individual. This means you must inform the individual of your research intentions and who might possibly view your data before interviewing that individual. You must accept any refusal or declination to be interviewed.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Please consult with your program director regarding cultural and legal issues involved in photographing of members of the host culture. Please ask each individual you intend to photograph before taking any pictures. Be specific about the intended use of the photo. If appropriate, given the norms of the culture in which you are conducting research, get a signed release form. Please do not take pictures for public use unless given permission by the individual in the photograph and the director of your program.

Photographing children – Again, consult with your program director. In many countries, you may not do this without the approval of the parents/legal guardian. In general it is best to take photos only when the parents are present and give their approval. Again, if appropriate, use an authorization form in their first language and never assume they know what it says.

2. Compensation

Before offering compensation for participation in a research project to any individual, discuss your plans with the faculty supervisor of your project and the director of your program. Never loan money to anyone in the organization in which you are working or any individual involved in your project.

3. Questions

Be critical of the types of questions you include in everyday conversation, surveys, and/or interviews. Avoid questions that may frighten or intimidate the people you are interviewing. Be respectful of their privacy and ask only questions that have a clear purpose. Always explain your intentions. Assure confidentiality. For example, if working with a mostly undocumented population, you must always be aware of issues of privacy and law. Whenever possible, review and refine your research questions with your program director and faculty advisor before beginning your field research.

4. Confidentiality

If you are discussing sensitive topics that make the individual uneasy, always assure confidentiality and always keep your promise. Never use real names or any other information that can lead to an individual's identity in your data, field book, research notes or final paper. Keep a private key to the names for your own private use, but do not release those names. Always ask the individual if you can use his/her real name before doing so. In some cases you may want to use a pseudonym for your research location (village, community, organization) to add another level of confidentiality. Discuss this with your program director and faculty advisor.

5. Culture and Reality

Always be aware of the specific reality of your particular site. This reality may be different from what you would expect, what you are accustomed to, or what you commonly understand. Or it may be very similar to what you would expect. Whatever the situation, there are some general guidelines to follow in order to retain professionalism in a community environment. For example, dress code can become an issue in many environments. It is important to dress in a manner that affirms you as a student with an academic and community-based purpose. Otherwise, you may attract attention that may be perceived negatively or be misunderstood.

Also, age and gender play roles in forming relationships. For example, if you are working with older participants, they may expect you to demonstrate clear respect for them because of their long and often complex histories, yet they may feel they have to be deferential to you because you are college-educated and therefore have a high social/economic

position. These relationships of power and respect are sometimes difficult to manage, but you should always be sensitive to another individual's life experiences. Everyone is a teacher, and everyone is a student. Keep lines of communication open. Assume good will.

6. Safety

If there is any question about safety (e.g. the neighbourhood where your internship or research site is located), try to go to your site with a partner – especially at night. Consider going with a fellow student, a member of your host family, or a trusted member of the organization where you are working. Always have the organization supervisor or a staff member present at your site when you are there. Never go to your site alone when confronting a conflict or problem. Ask your program director to accompany you under such a circumstance.

7. Phone numbers

Never give out your phone number or the address or phone number of your host family. You can use the number of your program office if you absolutely must give contact information.

8. Sexuality and Gender Considerations

Cultural norms in this area vary greatly. In general, the guidelines you receive for culturally appropriate behaviour in the community and with your host families should apply for your internship or research. Check with your program director on any special considerations you need to be aware of in your particular situation. While cultural norms may vary, certain behaviours are not acceptable. Sexual harassment will not be permitted in any form (although the understanding/definition of sexual harassment will vary from culture to culture, and you need to be sensitive to this). This means that within the context of your host culture, you should refrain from any type of behaviour that gives the appearance of sexual harassment. By the same token, we will not permit any type of sexual harassment to be perpetrated on you. At the first sign of a problem please contact your program director so that you can work together to resolve the situation.

Keep in mind that any romantic or sexual relationships you form with people involved in your research or internship (clients, participants, supervisors, interviewees, etc.) may be unethical and/or culturally inappropriate, could negatively affect your ability to conduct your project, and might have negative consequences for the person you are involved with. Please consult with your program director for clarification in this regard if this is likely to become an issue.

9. Working with Children

Consult with your program director regarding cultural, ethical and legal concerns you need to understand when working with children. In general, if you witness any type of physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, emotional maltreatment of a child you should report to your program director. You are not permitted to transport children.

10. First Aid

You should learn and follow your organization's procedures for medical emergencies and the administration of first aid. You should wear protective gloves when coming in contact with blood or any type of wound. Take special care around needles or other medical instruments if you are working in a health care situation. It is always best, whenever possible, to allow a school nurse, local health professional, or member of your organization to handle medical and first aid situations.

11. Punctuality and Follow-through

It is important to remember that some of those with whom you may be working (e.g. children, adolescents, abused girls and women) may have abandonment issues. You may trigger negative emotions if you are late or fail to show up when you are scheduled. It is imperative that you prove to them that they can count on you for doing as you promise. In addition, you are a role model, and they will see no reason to follow through with their promises if you do not follow through with yours.

Note: This document was adapted from a document produced by the Pitzer College Community Engagement Center (formerly California Center for Cultural and Social Issues). These guidelines may be modified to fit the cultural and legal realities of your particular program site.

Pitzer College: Study Abroad
Declaration to Adhere to Ethical Practices of Research and Engagement in Community

Read the document. Place your name, date and signature at the bottom.

1. I will always obtain consent from the participants for any interview/questionnaire/research/evaluation I conduct with them. I will inform them of the purpose of the task. I will respect their decision and not treat them unfairly if they decline to participate.
2. When I ask questions of the participants – whether for research or everyday conversation – I will refrain from asking any questions which might be construed as intimidating or frightening. I will always explain my intentions and assure confidentiality.
3. I will always obtain consent for photographing, audio taping, or videotaping the individuals. If appropriate, I will get a signed release form - even if the collection of this information is for my personal use. When photographing, audio taping, interviewing, or videotaping children/minors, I will always go to the parents or legal guardian for consent.
4. If these individuals are clients of or participants in a particular organization with which I am working, I will always get permission from the director of the organization before I take any action related to my research.
5. If I keep field notes or other written records of my interactions, I will refrain from using real names. I may choose to create a key to the names, which I will keep confidential.
6. I will arrive at the organization or research site at the time I am scheduled. If there is preparatory work to be done for the meeting, I will complete that work before the meeting or arrive early enough before the meeting to make necessary preparations.
7. I will dress in a manner appropriate for the program, organization, or community with which I am working. In addition, I will be sensitive with regard to dress and attitude to not in any way demonstrate disrespect to its members, clients, or collaborators of that organization.
8. I will always use respectful language at my site and in my research interactions.
9. I will follow all safety guidelines given to me by the program director and organization supervisor, including precautions related to travel to and from my site.
10. I will ask for and follow safety, first aid, and other emergency procedures from my site.
11. If it is necessary to give a contact number to others in relation to this project, I will provide the number or email of the program office. I will not give out my personal contact information or that of my host family.
12. If I feel I am the recipient of any form of harassment in the organization with which I am working or I am confused about any behaviour or language that is directed at me, I will consult with the program director and organization supervisor immediately.
13. If I witness any type of abuse or harassment, or behaviour that I am not sure about, I will consult with my program director immediately in order to better understand the situation, and if necessary, resolve or report a problem.

I have read, understood, and agree to follow these ethical practices of research and engaging in the community.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Note: This document has been adapted from the original produced by the Pitzer College Community Engagement Center (formerly the Center for California Cultural and Social Issues).

APPENDIX D: ACCEPTANCE AND RELEASE

Acceptance and Release Agreement for Student Participation on Programs Directly Administered by Pitzer College

This document requires the signature of both the student and his/her parent or legal guardian (regardless of the student's age) in order to participate in a study abroad program. **READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING. MAKE A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS.**

I understand that there are certain risks and hazards inherent in activities involved in study abroad and travel and that the best provisions possible for my safety have been arranged by Pitzer College. I also understand that the College has not made and does not make any representation regarding my personal safety while participating in this program. Specifically, but not by way of limitation, Pitzer College shall not be responsible for any negligent act or omission which injures me or my property, and which results from any activity arising while participating in the Program including, but not limited to, sanitary or health conditions, civil disturbances, crime, travel or other accidents.

I understand that various forms of travel are involved in program participation, and I agree that Pitzer College is not responsible or liable for any loss of property, injury or death during such travel. Additionally, Pitzer College is not responsible or liable for any disruption of travel or any additional expenses incurred from such disruption. I understand that personal use of a motorized vehicle in a foreign country can be extremely hazardous due to different traffic laws and regulations and that the College advises against such activity by any student. If I choose to operate a motorized vehicle, Pitzer College assumes no responsibility or liability should I be involved in an accident. I understand that any travel either before, during, or after the program is at my own expense and that Pitzer College is not responsible or liable for me while traveling. I certify that I have read and understood the health, safety and other risks identified in the CDC Health Information for Travelers and the US Department of State Country Specific Information available on-line for the location where I will be studying.

In consideration of the services rendered by Pitzer College, and in consideration of becoming part of the program, I acknowledge that I assume all risks associated with foreign study, travel, and living and hereby release Pitzer College from all liability for any negligent or wrongful acts or omissions referred to herein.

I have consulted with a medical doctor and have fully described on the health form any physical or psychological health condition(s) that I may have. I state that there are no undisclosed health-related conditions or problems that will preclude or restrict my participation on the program.

RELEASE FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT

I authorize the College to receive and use the medical information I have provided for the purpose of determining whether, and to what degree, any medical condition(s) or other limitation(s) may impact my ability to participate, or continue to participate, in the College Study Abroad Program. I further authorize the College to receive and to use the medical information for the purpose or determining what actions, if any, may be required to be taken in case a medical emergency exists with respect to my participation in the College Study Abroad Program.

In the event of any illness or injury to me if I am unable to grant consent for treatment, I authorize and grant permission to any official representative of the Pitzer College program to secure medical treatment (including but not limited to surgery and the administration of an anesthetic), on my behalf, to notify my emergency contact, and to execute written or oral consents to medical action as may be required.

I wish to participate in the study abroad program indicated in my letter of acceptance from Pitzer College. I have read and I understand the terms of this Acceptance and Release Agreement as stated above, and I agree to be bound by these terms and the terms of the acceptance letter and the Conditions of Participation. It is my express intent that this Agreement shall also bind my family, estate, heirs, administrators, personal representatives and assigns. I state that I am at least eighteen years of age and fully competent to sign this Acceptance and Release Agreement and that I have signed this agreement as my own free act.

Student Name Printed _____ Date _____

Signature of Student _____ Signed at _____

(Please indicate city and state)

As the parent or legal guardian of the participant whose signature appears above, I have read and understood the terms of this Acceptance and Release Agreement and agree to be bound by these terms and the terms of the acceptance letter and Conditions of Participation, and have given my child or ward permission to participate in the study abroad program indicated in the letter of acceptance from Pitzer College.

Parent or Legal Guardian Name Printed _____ Date _____

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian _____ Signed at _____
(Please indicate city and state)

APPENDIX E: CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

PITZER COLLEGE STUDY ABROAD CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION FOR PITZER STUDENTS

Please read this document carefully and acquaint yourself with these policies before signing to indicate acceptance. Make a copy for your records and make your parents or guardians aware of these policies. Return the original to the Office of Study Abroad by the due date listed in your acceptance letter.

Eligibility: Pitzer College considers participation in study abroad as a privilege and places in the programs may be limited. Study abroad programs are open to all qualified juniors and first semester seniors (i.e. students who have completed a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 24 courses prior to participation) who might benefit from on-site international and intercultural experiences. Students with less than 16 and a minimum of 12 courses completed prior to participation may be considered if space is available. Selection will be made by the External Studies Committee. Approval for study abroad will be based not only on the applicant's academic record, but also on his/her suitability for the program in question. Some programs are more competitive than others. In order to be selected and to participate in a study abroad program approved by Pitzer College, a student must satisfy the program's requirements and be considered by the External Studies Committee as likely to benefit from and contribute to the program.

The Office of Study Abroad maintains a listing of the Pitzer College programs and exchanges that have been approved by the College. Students may petition for unapproved programs but a limited number of spaces are available. If a student is approved for one of the limited spaces on a non-Pitzer program, that program will be regarded, for the duration of the student's participation, as a Pitzer-approved program. Policies regarding credit and refunds will vary depending on the type of program chosen. Students on programs directly managed by Pitzer College, which presently are: Pitzer in Botswana, Pitzer in China, Pitzer in Costa Rica, Pitzer in Ecuador, Pitzer Exchange in Italy, and Pitzer in Nepal must sign Form A. Students on other exchanges and students on non-Pitzer programs must sign Form B.

Required Health Insurance: Pitzer College requires all participants to have adequate health, hospitalization and accident insurance coverage during participation on and travel to and from the program. It is the responsibility of student to verify that any current policy (or new policy they obtain) will provide insurance coverage during the full period of overseas study. Pitzer College makes no assessments or assurances regarding the level of health insurance necessary for its programs, nor does it make any assessments or assurances regarding the individual health needs of any of its participants or for specific program locations.

Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the Required Health Insurance section: _____

Fees and Financial Aid: For all first-time participants on a semester study abroad program approved by Pitzer College, students are charged Pitzer's comprehensive fee for 2011-2012 (Pitzer tuition, fees, room and board) and a flat \$550 travel contribution. The comprehensive fees for a first semester abroad cover: tuition, room, board, a round-trip airline ticket for travel from Los Angeles International Airport to the international airport nearest to the program site, an International Student Identity Card (ISIC) and the overall cost of administering study abroad at Pitzer College. There is one exception to this, the CMC Washington Semester, for which students are neither provided with nor charged for room and board. Students on a second semester abroad pay the full comprehensive fee, are responsible for paying the full cost of airfare for the least expensive destination but are not charged an additional \$550 contribution. In addition, accepted students may be responsible for some portion of their travel expenses (if extending their stay, departing from or arriving at alternate airports, making additional stops or making late arrangements that increase the cost of the ticket). Students may be charged additional fees for some courses and/or field trips (e.g. lab fees, art fees and optional field trips). In cases where the total costs paid by Pitzer, including the College's own overhead, exceed Pitzer's comprehensive fee, students may be asked to pay the difference. Pitzer financial aid is granted only to students approved for study abroad by the External Studies Committee. All program fees, charges and expenses, whether mandatory or discretionary, are paid in U.S. dollars to Pitzer College in Claremont, California. **Some costs connected with overseas studies are NOT included in the fees paid to Pitzer** and should be considered in the student's budget planning. Expenses that are the student's responsibility include fees for a passport and student visa, medical insurance coverage while abroad (required), the medical exam required prior to participation, immunizations recommended for participation, photographs, additional costs incurred if departure is not from Los Angeles or if arriving before or extending after the program dates, cost of housing and meals before or after the program or during school break periods or independent travel, textbooks, housing or damage deposits (these will be refunded to you at the end of the program if you do not cause any damage), expenses for items or services that are not typically provided on the program but to which American students may be accustomed (e.g. telephones in rooms, email/internet access, access to computer labs, gymnasium and sports facilities, etc.), field trips that are not a required part of a course, long distance

phone charges, laundry charges, etc.), and expenses for a difference in the cost of living and generally expenses for items that are not covered in fees paid to Pitzer (e.g. personal entertainment, toiletries, independent travel during school breaks, etc.). Students are advised to be attentive to the exchange rate and the impact that it will have on their budget.

Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the Fees and Financial Aid section: _____

Participation and Reasons for Dismissal: All study abroad programs are governed by the normal rules and regulations of Pitzer College as stated in the Student Handbook and the Pitzer College Catalogue. In addition, students are expected to participate fully in all dimensions of their program, obey all laws of the host country, follow all program specific rules, and make a sincere effort to understand and respect the host culture, especially in interactions with their host family and community and in their participation in program activities and classes. The Program Director, in consultation with the Assistant Vice President for International Programs, has the authority to dismiss a student when in his/her view, it is determined that the student's behavior 1) is in violation of the laws of the country, 2) is excessively offensive or disrespectful to the student's host family, the host community members or members of the program staff, 3) is potentially detrimental to the health and safety of self or others, or 4) compromises the ability of the College to operate the program and realize its educational objectives. Students dismissed under these circumstances will receive no credit or refund.

Participants are subject to the laws of the host country. It is the student's responsibility to be informed of and observe the laws in the country in which the program is offered and other countries where a student may travel during any free time. Possession and use of illegal drugs is a serious criminal offense punishable by fine, imprisonment and/or deportation; thus, students currently dependent upon any such substances should not participate. Students found to be in violation of the laws of the host country are subject to immediate expulsion from the program. Pitzer College is not responsible for providing any assistance under such circumstances. Students should also understand that the US Embassy can only aid in obtaining legal assistance and cannot obtain release from jail for any US citizen. Any costs associated with such legal problems (including but not limited to lawyer fees, fines, return airfare) are the sole responsibility of the student.

Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the Participation and Reasons for Dismissal section: _____

Program Changes: Programs are offered contingent upon minimum enrollment, permission from host governments or institutions, stable political conditions, etc. Pitzer College reserves the right to alter or cancel a program or withdraw approval for any program in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Some programs are only offered on a one-time or alternate-year basis. In the event of program cancellation, participants may not receive course credit.

Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the Program Changes section: _____

WITHDRAWAL AND REFUND POLICY

Charges and Refunds: In the event of a withdrawal, deferral or change to another program anytime after May 15 for fall programs and November 15 for spring programs, a \$350 administrative fee will be charged to the student's account. Any refund of Pitzer's comprehensive fee will be made according to the schedule below. If written notification of change of status is received by the Office of Study Abroad:

- on or before two days prior to the study abroad program start date, the refund will be the balance of charges remaining after paying the \$350 administrative processing fee, and repaying the amount of any allowances and stipends (for airfare, meals, room and board) previously paid by Pitzer College to the student and other non-recoverable costs or deposits made on behalf of the student by Pitzer College (e.g. tuition and fees) either in the US or at the study abroad site. Students enrolled in exchanges may be responsible for tuition, room and board fees up to \$9,000 if the host institution charges Pitzer such fees or decides that the student has taken up an exchange slot that cannot be filled.
- on or before the tenth day of the program, the resulting refund will be 60% of charges;
- on or before the twenty-fifth day of the program, the resulting refund will be 40% of charges;
- on or before the fortieth day of the program, the resulting refund will be 20% of charges;
- after the fortieth day of the program, there will be no refund.

Notification of Change of Status: Refunds will be calculated from the time written notification by the student of withdrawal, deferral or change is received in Claremont, California at Pitzer College's Office of Study Abroad. Notifying another campus office does not fulfill this obligation. After the refund amount has been determined, a new balance statement for the student account will be issued and refunds, if any, paid. Refunds may take up to 90 days to process. Notification of change of status is acceptable by fax or a scanned document attached to an email if it bears the student's legible signature or by direct email if it is sent through the student's college email account.

Financial Aid: Students on financial aid should check with the Financial Aid Office to see what if any effect the change of status will have on their financial aid package. In some cases, even in the case of medical or family emergency, a full or significant portion of a student's financial aid for the semester may have been allocated and prove unrecoverable for subsequent semesters, even if students receive no or partial credit for their semester abroad.

Enrolling in courses back at Pitzer: Students who withdraw from or defer enrollment in study abroad program and wish to return to Pitzer to register for classes must do so on or before the last date to add courses published in the Pitzer catalog for that semester. Students returning after this date will not be eligible to return to Pitzer College for that semester. Such students will be placed on a Leave of Absence and must follow procedures required by the Office of the Registrar to return to Pitzer in a subsequent semester. Students who return to Pitzer and register for classes prior to the last day to add courses will be charged the comprehensive semester fees for tuition, fees, room, and board on campus in addition to the amount due based on the refund schedule for study abroad above.

Airfare: If students withdraw from, defer enrollment in or change a program any time after their tickets are confirmed with the designated travel agent they will be charged the full cost of their plane tickets minus the \$550 travel contribution. If they withdraw, defer or change programs they will be responsible for working directly with the travel agent to change or refund their tickets and for any fees or penalties associated with the change or refund process.

Academic Credit: The granting of credit, if any, to students withdrawing early from a Pitzer program will be decided by Pitzer College on an individual basis. Academic credit is usually not given to Pitzer students who withdraw early from a Pitzer exchange or non-Pitzer programs.

Housing: Students who withdraw early or defer from their study abroad program and plan to re-enroll at Pitzer are responsible for contacting the Office of Student Affairs to arrange housing. Campus housing may not be available and is not guaranteed.

Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the WITHDRAWAL AND REFUND section: _____

Credit Policy: Credit information is included as part of this document as this policy is dependent upon the type of program chosen. Students should note the section on the following pages that is applicable to their category of program.

- Programs directly administered by Pitzer College - Includes Pitzer in Botswana, Pitzer in China, Pitzer in Costa Rica, Pitzer in Ecuador, Pitzer Exchange in Italy, and Pitzer in Nepal.
- Programs not directly administered by Pitzer College - i.e. other exchanges and non-Pitzer programs.

Please ensure you have the page that refers to the conditions that apply to your chosen category of program and return that with this document. If on more than one program, you will need to sign the appropriate version for each program.

Agreement to Conditions: I will be participating on the _____ program. I agree to the terms of Pitzer's acceptance letter and these "Conditions of Participation" and acknowledge by my signature below and initials as required above that I have read and understood them thoroughly.

Student's Name Printed _____

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

**A. Credit policy specific to programs directly administered by Pitzer College
Includes Pitzer programs in Botswana, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Italy and Nepal**

No credit will be granted to Pitzer students for study abroad programs during the academic year without approval of the External Studies Committee and payment to Pitzer College for the comprehensive semester fee and the flat \$550 travel contribution. The comprehensive fee includes tuition, student fees, room and board charges for a double room and full meal plan. Grades received on Pitzer College programs in Botswana, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Italy or Nepal will be treated as any grade received for courses offered in Claremont and will be included in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA. Students are required to participate fully in all program components and are not allowed to withdraw from individual courses. Students are not allowed to take program course work on a pass/no credit basis and must take all courses for a letter grade.

Students can expect to receive their transcript for fall programs by approximately the first week of March. Spring program transcripts are normally available in the first week of August. Nepal and Italy grades are available later since the Independent Study Project (ISP) papers are graded after the end of the program by faculty who may be away during the summer or winter holidays. Transcripts for these programs may not be available until the end of September for spring programs and end of March for fall programs. Pitzer College is not responsible for delayed transcripts in the event of late or incomplete work by the student.

Agreement to Conditions: I will be participating on the _____
program.

I agree to the terms of Pitzer's credit policy for programs directly administered by Pitzer College and acknowledge by my signature below that I have read and understood them thoroughly.

Student's Name Printed _____

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING. MAKE A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS.

PITZER COLLEGE STUDY ABROAD CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION FOR VISITING STUDENTS

Please read this document carefully and acquaint yourself with these policies before signing to indicate acceptance. Make a copy for your records and make your parents or guardians aware of these policies. Return the original to the Office of Study Abroad by the due date listed in your acceptance letter.

Pitzer College recognizes the need to educate students to be informed citizens of the world by providing a variety of study abroad programs. Students interested in overseas study should prepare carefully for these programs by enrolling in appropriate courses, such as language and/or regional or comparative studies. Students should consult their own study abroad offices for additional requirements.

Eligibility: Pitzer College considers participation in a study abroad program a privilege and places in the programs are limited. Acceptance for a program will be based not only on the applicant's academic record, but also on his/her suitability for the program in question. In order to be selected and to participate in a Pitzer College program, a student must satisfy the program's requirements and be considered by Pitzer College as likely to benefit from and contribute to the program. Applicants are responsible for following all procedures related to participation that may be required by their home institution.

Required Health Insurance: Pitzer College requires all participants to have adequate health, accident and hospitalization insurance coverage during participation on and travel to and from the program. It is the responsibility of students to verify that any current policy (or any new policy they obtain) will provide insurance coverage during the full period of study. Pitzer College makes no assessments or assurances regarding the level of health insurance necessary for its programs, nor does it make any assessments or assurances regarding the individual health needs of any of its participants, or for specific program locations.

Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the Required Health Insurance section: _____

Fees and Financial Aid: For all programs offered during the academic year by Pitzer College, students are charged a comprehensive study abroad fee. The comprehensive fee covers: tuition, room, board, round-trip airline ticket from Los Angeles, Chicago or New York **depending on the location of your home school**, required course-related trips, evacuation insurance as provided by the International Student Identity Card (ISIC), transcripts, as well as the overall cost of providing and supporting study abroad at Pitzer College. Pitzer financial aid is granted for Pitzer College students only. Visiting students should consult their own institution's study abroad office for information on any aid available for study abroad. **Some costs connected with overseas studies are NOT included in the fees paid to Pitzer** and should be considered in the student's budget planning. These include: fees for passports, student visas, airfare to the departure airport (Los Angeles, Chicago or New York), additional required insurance coverage while abroad if not already covered under a parent's comprehensive plan, immunizations, photographs, fees for visas and passports, books, personal spending for supplies, gifts, independent travel, entertainment, postage, phone calls, laundry and other such expenses. Additionally, many insurance policies require that students pay directly for necessary services and file a claim form for reimbursement. Students should have immediate access to funds either through a credit card or reserve travelers' checks in the event of a medical emergency.

In order to hold a student's place upon acceptance to the program, a student must return the acceptance documents by the deadlines indicated on the acceptance letter. A non-refundable \$500 deposit must be received by the deadline in acceptance letter (or guaranteed by the sending institution on the *Contact and Billing Information* sheet) to hold a student's place on the program. When paid, this deposit will be deducted from the total amount to be paid to Pitzer College. Payment of the balance of the program fee is due before the start of the program or students may participate in the payment plan with the organization designated by Pitzer College.

Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the Fees and Financial Aid section: _____

Expectations of Participation and Reasons for Dismissal: All study abroad programs are governed by the normal rules and regulations of Pitzer College as stated in the Student Handbook and the College Catalogue. In addition, students are expected to participate fully in all dimensions of their program, obey all laws of the host country, follow all program specific rules, and make a sincere effort to understand and respect the host culture, especially in interactions with their host family and community, and in their participation in program activities and classes. The Program Director, in consultation with the Assistant Vice President for International Programs, has the authority to dismiss a student when in their view, and after review, it is determined that the student's behavior 1) is in violation of the laws of the country, 2)

is offensive, disrespectful or rude to the student's host family or the host community or to members of the program staff, 3) is potentially detrimental to the health and safety of self or others, or 4) compromises the ability of the College to operate the program and realize its educational objectives. Students dismissed under these circumstances may receive no credit or refund.

Participants are subject to the laws of the host country. It is the student's responsibility to be informed of and observe the laws in the country in which the program is offered and other countries where a student may travel during any free time. Possession and use of illegal drugs is a serious criminal offense punishable by fine, imprisonment and/or deportation. Students found to be in violation of the laws of the host country are subject to immediate expulsion from the program. Pitzer College is not responsible for providing any assistance under such circumstances. Students should also understand that the US Embassy can only aid in obtaining legal assistance and cannot obtain release from jail for any US citizen. Any costs associated with such legal problems (including but not limited to lawyer fees, fines, return airfare) are the sole responsibility of the student. **Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the Expectations of Participation and Reasons for Dismissal section: _____**

Program Changes: Programs are offered contingent upon minimum enrollment, permission from host governments, stable political conditions, etc. Some programs are offered on a one time or alternate-year basis. Pitzer College reserves the right to alter or cancel a program in the event of unforeseen circumstances, especially if student well-being is considered to be at risk. In the event of program cancellation, participants may not receive course credit. **Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the Program Changes section: _____**

WITHDRAWAL AND REFUND POLICY

Charges and Refunds: In the event of a withdrawal, deferral or change to another program any time after May 15 for fall programs and November 15 for spring programs, a non-refundable \$500 deposit will be charged to the student's account. Any refund of Pitzer's comprehensive fee will be made according to the schedule below. If written notification of change of status is received by the Office of Study Abroad:

- On or before two days prior to the study abroad program start date, the refund will be the balance of charges remaining after paying the non-refundable \$500 deposit and repaying the amount of any allowances and stipends (for airfare, meals, room and board) previously paid by Pitzer College to the student and other non-recoverable costs or deposits made on behalf of the student by Pitzer College (e.g. tuition and fees) either in the US or at the study abroad site. Visiting students enrolled in Pitzer exchanges may be responsible for tuition, room and board fees up to \$9,000 if the host institution charges Pitzer such fees or decides that the student has taken up an exchange slot that cannot be filled.
- On or before the tenth day of the program, the resulting refund will be 60% of charges.
- On or before the twenty-fifth day of the program, the resulting refund will be 40% of charges.
- On or before the fortieth day of the program, the resulting refund will be 20% of charges.
- After the fortieth day of the program, there will be no refund.

Notification of Change of Status: Refunds will be calculated from the time written notification by the student of withdrawal, deferral or change is received on the *Request to Change Status for Study Abroad Programs* form in Claremont, California at Pitzer College's Office of Study Abroad. Notifying another campus office or the home school does not fulfill this obligation. After the refund amount has been determined, a new balance statement for the student account will be issued and refunds, if any, paid. Refunds may take up to 90 days to process. Notification of change of status is acceptable by fax or a scanned document attached to an email if it bears the student's legible signature or by direct email if it is sent through the student's college email account.

Financial Aid: Students on financial aid should check with their financial aid office to see what if any effect the change of status will have on their financial aid package. In some cases, even in the case of medical or family emergency, a full or significant portion of a student's financial aid for the semester may have been allocated and prove unrecoverable for subsequent semesters, even if students receive no or partial credit for their semester abroad.

Enrolling in courses back at your home college: Visiting students who withdraw from, or defer enrollment in a Pitzer program will be subject to the regulations of their home institution regarding enrollment and registration for classes.

Airfare: If students withdraw from, defer enrollment in or change a program anytime after their tickets are confirmed with the designated travel agent they will be charged the full cost of their plane tickets. If they withdraw, defer or change programs they will be responsible for working directly with the travel agent to change or refund their tickets and for any fees or penalties associated with the change or refund process.

Academic Credit: The granting of credit, if any, to students withdrawing early from a Pitzer program will be decided by Pitzer College on an individual basis.

Housing: Students who withdraw early or defer from a Pitzer program or Pitzer exchange and want to return to their home campus are responsible for contacting the housing officer at their home institution to arrange housing. Campus housing may not be available and is not guaranteed.

Initial to acknowledge you agree to the conditions in the WITHDRAWAL AND REFUND section: _____

Grades, Credit and Transcripts: Please also note that all grades will be recorded on a Pitzer transcript. Credit is awarded in the form of course credit with each course credit equal to four semester units. A normal course load is four course credits, or sixteen semester units. Pitzer has no control in how a student's own registrar will translate Pitzer grades and Pitzer credit. Before choosing to participate, students should understand the policy of their home campus for awarding credit and translating grades from a Pitzer program. Students are required to participate fully in all program components. Upon completion of all required course work and receipt of full payment of fees, transcripts will be sent to the address designated by the student in the transcript release form of the application. Students can expect to receive their transcript for fall programs by approximately mid March. Spring program transcripts will be available in mid August with the exception of the Nepal and Italy programs. Since the Nepal and Italy Independent Study Project (ISP) papers are graded by faculty who may be away during the summer, transcripts for this program may not be available until the end of September. Pitzer College is not responsible for delayed transcripts in the event of work that is incomplete or submitted late by the student.

Agreement to Conditions: I agree to the terms of Pitzer's acceptance letter and these "Conditions of Participation" and acknowledge by my signature below and initials as required above that I have read and understood them thoroughly.

Student's Name Printed

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Pitzer College Office of Study Abroad
REQUEST TO CHANGE STATUS FOR STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Student name (print) _____ Home institution _____

Program name _____ Semester / Year _____

Location (city and country) _____

I _____ hereby notify the Pitzer College Office of Study Abroad that
Student name - please print

I am withdrawing from the above program effective _____
Month / Day / Year

Pitzer students only:

I intend to re-enroll at Pitzer College for the _____ and understand the last day to add classes for
Semester / Year
that semester is _____
Month/Day/Year

I do not intend to re-enroll at Pitzer College for the _____ and acknowledge I will be on a
Semester / Year
Leave of Absence for that semester.

All students, including Pitzer students:

I request a change of my participation in this program to _____
Semester / Year

I request to change my program from the program listed above to the following program for the same semester:

Program Name _____

Location (city and country) _____

I am neither requesting a deferral nor a program change.

I understand that approval to defer my participation or to change programs is at the sole discretion of Pitzer College. I have read and understood the Change of Status and Refund Policy for Study Abroad Programs and agree to abide by the terms of this policy.

Student's signature _____ **Date** _____

Currently in (city and country) _____

Request to Change Status for Study Abroad Programs may be submitted to the Office of Study Abroad by fax or a scanned document attached to an email if it bears a legible signature or by direct email if it is sent through the student's college email account. Submit your request to:

Pitzer College, Office of Study Abroad, Scott Hall 110, 1050 North Mills Avenue, Claremont, CA 91711
Telephone 909.621.8104 • Email studyabroad@pitzer.edu • Fax 909.621.0518

APPENDIX F: COSTA RICA COUNTRY SPECIFIC INFORMATION

U.S. Department of State Costa Rica Country Specific Information

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1093.html

July 19, 2011

COUNTRY DESCRIPTION: Costa Rica is a middle-income, developing country with a strong democratic tradition. Tourist facilities are extensive and generally adequate. While English is a second language for many Costa Ricans, knowledge of Spanish is necessary for legal matters. Potential visitors or investors should carefully read the following sections on Safety and Security, Crime, Special Circumstances, the [Overseas Security Advisory Council reports](#), and the Department of State's [Background Notes on Costa Rica](#) for additional information.



SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP) / EMBASSY LOCATION: If you are going to live in or visit Costa Rica, please take the time to tell our Embassy about your trip by enrolling in STEP. If you enroll, we can keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements. It will also help your friends and family get in touch with you in an emergency. Here's the link to the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#).

The Embassy is located in Pavas, San Jose, and may be reached at (506) 2519-2000; the extension for the Consular Section is 2188. The Embassy is open Monday through Friday but is closed on Costa Rican and U.S. federal holidays. We strongly encourage those seeking information to use the [Embassy website](#). For emergencies arising outside of normal business hours, U.S. citizens may call (506) 2220-3127 and ask for the duty officer.

ENTRY / EXIT REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S. CITIZENS: For entry into Costa Rica, you must present a valid passport that will not expire for at least thirty days after arrival and a roundtrip/outbound ticket. Because of possible fines levied by Costa Rican Immigration, many Airlines will not permit passengers without a roundtrip ticket to board flights to Costa Rica unless they have Costa Rican citizenship, residency or a visa. There is a departure tax of \$26 USD for visitors.

Passports should be in good condition; Costa Rican Immigration may deny entry if the passport is damaged in any way. Costa Rican authorities generally permit U.S. citizens to stay up to ninety days. To extend a stay, travelers must submit an application for an extension to the Office of Temporary Permits in the Costa Rican Department of Immigration. Extension requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Tourists who stay more than ninety days, without receiving an extension, may experience a delay at the airport when departing, may be fined \$100, or may be denied entry to Costa Rica on future visits.

Individuals planning to study in Costa Rica can only apply for a student visa from Costa Rican Immigration after arriving in the country. Neither the Costa Rican Embassy in Washington, DC nor its Consulates have the authority to issue student visas. This has led to some confusion by airline employees who mistakenly believe

that individuals traveling to Costa Rica as part of a legitimate exchange program must have a return travel date that is less than 90 days from their initial date of travel.

Persons traveling to Costa Rica from some countries in South America and Sub-Saharan Africa must provide evidence of a valid yellow fever vaccination prior to entry. The South American countries include Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

See "SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES" for information on requirements to carry identity documentation within Costa Rica and on travel by minors who are dual nationals or legal residents.

The most authoritative and up-to-date information on Costa Rican entry and exit requirements may be obtained from the Consular Section of the Embassy of Costa Rica at 2114 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC 20008, telephone (202) 234-2945/46 , fax (202) 265-4795. You may visit the [Embassy of Costa Rica's website](#) or contact the Embassy via [email](#). You may also obtain information from the Costa Rican consulates in Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, and Denver. Please also see the [Costa Rican Immigration Agency website](#). It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Costa Rica in Washington or one of Costa Rica's Consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements before shipping any items.

Information about [dual nationality](#) or the [prevention of international child abduction](#) can be found on our website. For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information page](#).

[Visit the Embassy of Costa Rica web site for the most current visa information.](#)

HIV/AIDS restrictions:

The U.S. Department of State is unaware of any HIV/AIDS entry restrictions for visitors to or foreign residents of Costa Rica.

THREATS TO SAFETY AND SECURITY: On both the Caribbean and Pacific coasts, currents are swift and dangerous, and there are few lifeguards or signs warning of dangerous beaches. A number of U.S. citizens drown every year in Costa Rica due to riptides or sudden drop-offs while in shallow water. In addition, since August 2009, at least four foreign visitors, including one American Citizen, have disappeared without a trace while hiking or traveling in Costa Rica. Extreme caution, whether swimming, hiking, or driving, is advised.

There have been no recent acts of terrorism in Costa Rica. Visitors to Costa Rica may be inconvenienced by infrequent civil disturbances such as work stoppages and strikes.

Adventure tourism is popular in Costa Rica, and many companies offer white-water rafting, bungee jumping, jungle canopy tours, SCUBA diving, and other outdoor attractions. U.S. citizens are urged to use caution in selecting adventure tourism companies. The Government of Costa Rica regulates and monitors the safety of these companies, and registered tourism companies with operating permits must meet safety standards and have insurance coverage. Nonetheless, be advised that safety regulations enforced in Costa Rica are not as stringent as safety regulations in the United States. [The Costa Rican Tourism Institute \(ICT\) web site](#) has contact information for licensed tour operators and travel agencies.

Stay up to date by:

- Bookmarking our [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#), which contains the current [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#) as well as the [Worldwide Caution](#).
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on [Facebook](#) as well.
- Download our free [Smart Traveler iPhone App](#) to have travel information at your fingertips.
- Calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free within the U.S. and Canada, or a regular toll line, 1-202-501-4444, from other countries.
- Take some time before travel to consider your personal security –Here are some useful tips for traveling safely abroad.

CRIME: Ten U.S. citizens have been murdered in Costa Rica since January, 2010. Crime is a significant concern for Costa Ricans and visitors alike. Local law enforcement agencies have limited capabilities and different standards than U.S. law enforcement. Daytime robberies in public places occur, and thieves have been known to brandish weapons or use violence if victims resist. Almost two million foreign tourists, about half U.S. citizens, visit Costa Rica annually. All are potential targets for criminals, primarily thieves looking for cash, jewelry, credit cards, electronic items and passports.

Thieves often work in small groups. The most prevalent scam involves the surreptitious puncturing of tires of rental cars, often near restaurants, tourist attractions, airports, or close to the car rental agencies themselves. When the travelers pull over, "good Samaritans" quickly appear to help change the tire - and just as quickly remove valuables from the car, sometimes brandishing weapons. Drivers with flat tires are advised to drive, if at all possible, to the nearest service station or other public area and change the tire themselves, watching valuables at all times. Another common scam involves one person dropping change in a crowded area, such as on a bus. When the victim tries to assist, a wallet or other item is taken.

We encourage you to take proactive steps to avoid becoming a crime victim. You should not walk, hike or exercise alone, and should bear in mind that crowded tourist attractions and resort areas popular with foreign tourists are common venues for criminal activity. Ignore any verbal harassment, and avoid carrying your passport, large amounts of cash, jewelry or expensive photographic equipment.

Tourists should carry photocopies of their passport data page and Costa Rican entry stamp on their persons, and leave the original passport in a hotel safe or other secure place. Costa Rican immigration authorities conduct routine immigration checks at locations, such as bars in downtown San Jose and beach communities. U.S. citizens detained during one of these checks who have only a copy of the passport may be required to provide the original passport with appropriate stamps.

Travelers renting vehicles should purchase an adequate level of locally valid theft insurance, park in secure lots whenever possible, and never leave valuables in their vehicles. The U.S. Embassy receives several reports daily of valuables, identity documents, and other items stolen from locked vehicles, primarily rental cars. Thefts from parked cars occur in cities, at beaches, at the airport, in front of restaurants and hotels, and at national parks and other tourist attractions.

Travelers should use only licensed taxis, which are red with medallions (yellow triangles containing numbers) painted on the side. Licensed taxis at the airport are painted orange. All licensed taxis should have working door handles, locks, seatbelts and meters (called "marias"); passengers are required to use seatbelts. When

traveling by bus, avoid putting bags or other personal belongings in the storage bins. You should at all times have your belongings in your line of sight and your valuables in your possession.

Don't buy counterfeit and pirated goods, even if they are widely available. Not only are the bootlegs illegal in the United States, if you purchase them you may also be breaking local law.

VICTIMS OF CRIME: If you or someone you know becomes the victim of a crime abroad, you should contact the local police and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. We can:

- Replace a stolen passport.
- For violent crimes such as assault or rape, help you find appropriate medical care,
- Put you in contact with the appropriate police authorities, and contact family members or friends.
- Although the local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting the crime, consular officers can help you understand the local criminal justice process and can direct you to local attorneys.

The local equivalent to the "911" emergency line in Costa Rica is also "911".

Please see our [information on victims of crime](#), including possible victim compensation programs in the United States.

CRIMINAL PENALTIES: While you are traveling in Costa Rica, you are subject to its laws and regulations even if you are a U.S. citizen. Some laws in Costa Rica differ significantly from those in the United States and may not afford the protections available to the individual under U.S. law. Penalties for breaking the law can be more severe than in the United States for similar offenses. Persons violating Costa Rica's laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested or imprisoned. The law permits pre-trial detention of persons accused of serious crimes. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Costa Rica are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines. Engaging in sexual conduct with children or using or disseminating child pornography in a foreign country is a crime, prosecutable in the United States. Please see our information on [Criminal Penalties](#).

Foreign laws and legal systems can be vastly different than our own. You may be taken in for questioning if you don't have your passport with you. Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs could land you immediately in jail. You can be prosecuted under U.S. law if you buy pirated goods. If you break local laws in Costa Rica, your U.S. passport won't help you avoid arrest or prosecution. It's very important to know what's legal and what's not where you are going.

If you are arrested in Costa Rica, authorities are required to notify the U.S. embassy of your arrest. If you are concerned the Department of State may not be aware of your situation, you should request the police or prison officials to notify the U.S. embassy of your arrest.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

Land Ownership and Shoreline Property: U.S. citizens are urged to use extreme caution when making real estate purchases, and to consult with reputable legal counsel and investigate thoroughly all aspects before entering into a contract. Coastal land within fifty meters of the high tide line is open to the public and

therefore closed to development, and construction on the next one hundred fifty meters inland is possible only with the approval of the local municipality.

Squatters: Organized squatter groups have invaded properties in various parts of the country. These squatter groups, often supported by politically active persons and non-governmental organizations, take advantage of legal provisions that allow people without land to gain title to unused agricultural property. Local courts may show considerable sympathy for the squatters. Victims of squatters have reported threats, harassment, and violence.

Documentation Requirements: Visitors are required to carry appropriate documentation at all times. However, due to the high incidence of passport theft, tourists are permitted and encouraged to carry photocopies of the data page and entry stamp from the passport, leaving the passport in a hotel safe or other secure place. However, as noted under CRIME, Costa Rican immigration authorities conduct routine checks for illegal immigrants, especially in bars located in downtown San Jose and in beach communities. A U.S. citizen detained during one of these checks and carrying only the copy of the passport will be required to produce the original passport. Therefore, tourists should carry their passports when taking domestic air flights, when traveling overnight, and when traveling a considerable distance from their hotel. Tourists who carry passports are urged to place them securely in an inside pocket.

Exit Procedures for Costa Rican citizens and legal residents: All children born in Costa Rica acquire Costa Rican citizenship at birth, and may only depart the country upon presentation of an exit permit issued by immigration authorities. This policy, designed to prevent international child abduction, applies to dual national U.S./Costa Rican citizens as well as U.S. citizens who are legal residents in Costa Rica. Parents of minors who obtained Costa Rican citizenship through a parent or through birth in Costa Rica are advised to consult with appropriate Costa Rican authorities prior to travel to Costa Rica, especially if one (or both) parent(s) is not accompanying the child.

Disaster Preparedness: Costa Rica is located in an earthquake and volcanic zone. Serious flooding occurs annually in the Caribbean Province of Limon and the Pacific Province of Puntarenas, and flash floods and severe landslides occur in other parts of Costa Rica as well, depending on the time of year and rainfall. [General information about natural disaster preparedness](#) is available from the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Accessibility: While in Costa Rica, individuals with disabilities may find accessibility and accommodation very different from what you find in the United States. While Costa Rica has legislation that mandates access to transportation, communication and public buildings for persons with disabilities, the government does not effectively enforce these laws.

We are not aware of any special currency or customs circumstances for Costa Rica.

MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION: Costa Rica is actively promoting **medical tourism**. While there are advantages like affordable costs, quality health care, and a chance to recuperate and have a vacation at the same time, there are also risks

Medical tourists should confirm that the facilities they are considering are accredited, purchase medical evacuation insurance before travelling, and should confirm that the cost and payment for their treatment is

clearly understood by both parties. Persons with unpaid or disputed debts in Costa Rica may be legally prevented from leaving the country.

In the event of unforeseen medical complications or malpractice, medical tourists might not be covered by their personal insurance or might not be able to seek damages through malpractice lawsuits. Although many hospitals and clinics abroad have medical malpractice insurance, seeking compensation can prove to be difficult because insurance laws and legal options may not exist.

Medical care in San Jose is adequate, but is limited in areas outside of San Jose. Most prescription and over-the-counter medications are available throughout Costa Rica. Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services, and U.S. medical insurance is not always valid outside the United States. [A list of local doctors and medical facilities can be obtained from the U.S. Embassy in San Jose](#). An ambulance may be summoned by calling 911. Most ambulances provide transportation but little or no medical assistance.

You can find good information on vaccinations and other health precautions on the [CDC website](#). For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) website](#). The WHO website also contains additional health information for travelers, including [detailed country-specific health information](#).

MEDICAL INSURANCE: You can't assume your insurance will go with you when you travel. It's very important to find out BEFORE you leave whether or not your medical insurance will cover you overseas. You need to ask your insurance company two questions:

- Does my policy apply when I'm out of the United States?
- Will it cover emergencies like a trip to a foreign hospital or a medical evacuation?

In many places, doctors and hospitals still expect payment in cash at the time of service. Your regular U.S. health insurance may not cover doctors' and hospital visits in other countries. If your policy doesn't go with you when you travel, it's a very good idea to take out another one for your trip. For more information, please see our [medical insurance overseas page](#).

TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CONDITIONS: While in Costa Rica, you may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in the United States. The information below concerning Costa Rica is provided for general reference only, and may not be totally accurate in a particular location or circumstance.

Roads are often in poor condition, and large potholes with the potential to cause significant damage to vehicles are common. Traffic signs, even on major highways, are inadequate and few roads are lined. Shoulders are narrow or consist of drainage ditches. Pedestrians, cyclists, and farm animals are common sights along main roads, creating additional potential driving hazards. Traffic laws and speed limits are often ignored, turn signals are rarely used, passing on dangerous stretches of highway is common, and pedestrians are not given the right of way. As a result, the fatality rate for pedestrians and those riding bicycles and motorcycles is disproportionately high. All of the above, in addition to poor visibility due to heavy fog or rain, can make driving treacherous. Landslides are common in the rainy season. Main highways and principal roads in the major cities are paved, but some roads to beaches and other rural locations are not.

Accordingly, many destinations are accessible only with high clearance, four-wheel drive vehicles. Travelers are advised to call ahead to their hotels to ask about the current status of access roads. Travelers should minimize driving at night, especially outside urban areas.

Costa Rica has a 911 system for reporting emergencies. In the event of a traffic accident, vehicles must be left where they are. Both the traffic police and an insurance investigator must make accident reports before the vehicles are moved.

Please refer to our [road safety](#) page for more information or visit the web site of [the Costa Rican Ministry for Public Transport](#)

AVIATION SAFETY OVERSIGHT: The [U.S. Federal Aviation Administration](#) (FAA) has assessed the Government of Costa Rica's Civil Aviation Authority as being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for oversight of Costa Rica's air carrier operations. For more information, travelers may visit the [FAA web site](#).

CHILDREN'S ISSUES: Please see our Office of Children's Issues web pages on [intercountry adoption](#) and [international parental child abduction](#).

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This replaces the Country Specific Information for Costa Rica dated December 22, 2010, to update sections on Safety and Security and Crime.

APPENDIX G: PANAMA COUNTRY SPECIFIC INFORMATION

U.S. Department of State Costa Rica Country Specific Information

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_994.html

May 31, 2011

COUNTRY DESCRIPTION: Panama is a constitutional democracy with an executive branch led by a president who is elected to a 5-year term, a unicameral legislature, and judicial branch. The country is divided into 9 provinces and three indigenous territories known as comarcas. It



became independent from Colombia on November 3, 1903. Panama has a rapidly developing economy but suffers from a weak, non-transparent judiciary. Outside the Panama City area, which has many first-class hotels and restaurants, tourist facilities vary in quality. The U.S. dollar is the paper currency of Panama, and is also referred to as the Panama Balboa. Panama mints its own coinage, though U.S. coins are also accepted. Read the Department of State's [Background Notes on Panama](#) for additional information regarding the people, culture, government, economy, and history of Panama.



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SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP) / EMBASSY LOCATION: If you are going to live in or visit Panama, please take the time to tell our embassy about your trip. If you check in, we can keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements. It will also help your friends and family get in touch with you in an emergency. Here's the link to the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#).

Local embassy information is available below and at the [Department of State's list of embassies and consulates](#).

U.S. Embassy Panama

Physical location: Avenida Demetrio Basilio Lakas, Building No.783 in the Clayton section of Panama City.

International mailing address: Apartado 0816-02561, Zona 5, Panama, Republic of Panama.

U.S. mailing address: U.S. Embassy Panama, 9100 Panama City Place, Washington, DC 20521-9100.

Telephone: (011) 507-207-7000 or (011) 507-207-7030

Emergency after-hours telephone: (011) 507-207-7000

Facsimile: (011) 507-317-5568 or (011) 507-207-7303

You may also [send the Embassy inquiries by e-mail](#).

ENTRY / EXIT REQUIREMENTS: U.S. citizens traveling by air to and from Panama must present a valid passport when entering or re-entering the United States. Sea travelers entering Panama must have a valid U.S. passport. Complete information for U.S. citizens is available on the [Passport Information page at travel.state.gov](#) or by calling 1-877-4USA-PPT (1-877-487-2778) for information on applying for a passport.

Panamanian law requires that travelers present a passport valid for at least three months. U.S. citizens entering Panama as tourists will be charged \$5.00 for a tourist card when they purchase their travel ticket. To obtain a multiple entry visa, please contact the Panamanian embassy or Panamanian consulate before traveling. Further information on visas other than tourist visas may be obtained from the [Embassy of Panama or its Consulates in the United States](#). The Panamanian Embassy is located at 2862 McGill Terrace NW, Washington, DC 20008, tel. (202) 483-1407.

As of April, 2010, U.S. tourists are allowed to stay in Panama for 180 days, without extension. If you want to stay longer, a "change of migratory status visa" should be requested through a Panamanian lawyer before the expiration of the 180 days in country. An initial fee of \$250.00 must be paid for the "change of migratory status visa." Please note that the approval of the change in migratory status falls under the Panamanian Immigration Office's discretion.

More information on visa types and the necessary steps to take in Panama is available at the [National Migration website](#).

U.S. citizens transiting the Panama Canal as passengers, regardless of their intention to disembark from the ship or not do not need to obtain visas, or pay any fees. If you are piloting a private craft or plane, then you need to have a pre-stamped visa from a Panamanian Embassy or consulate, as do persons crossing into Panama by land. U.S. citizens piloting private craft through the canal should contact the Panama Canal Authority at (011) 507-272-4567, (011) 507-272-4200, (011) 507-272-1111 or consult the [Canal Authority web site](#) to make an appointment.

Minors who are citizens (including dual-citizens) or legal residents of Panama are required to present birth certificates and notarized consent from both parents (in Spanish) in order to exit the country if not accompanied by both parents. This documentation is required at all land, sea, and air ports. Even if minors are not documented as Panamanian citizens and are documented as U.S. citizens, they may be denied departure. If your consent documents are notarized in the United States, they still need to be authenticated in the U.S. with an [Apostille stamp](#).

Visit the Consular Services tab of the [Embassy of Panama](#) website for the most current visa information.

Some HIV/AIDS entry restrictions exist for visitors to and foreign residents of Panama. Panamanian immigration does not require an HIV/AIDS test, but Panamanian law does allow for deportation upon discovery by immigration. Embassy Panama is not aware of any U.S. citizens who have been deported due to HIV/AIDS. Should you have questions, you may wish to inquire directly with the [Embassy of Panama](#) before you travel.

Information about [dual nationality](#) or the [prevention of international child abduction](#) can be found on our website. For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information page](#).

SAFETY AND SECURITY: U.S. citizens are warned not to travel to remote areas of the Darien Province off of the Pan American Highway. Embassy personnel are only allowed to travel to the restricted border areas of the Darien and San Blas Provinces on official business and with prior approval of the Embassy's Regional Security Officer and Deputy Chief of Mission. This restricted area encompasses the Darien National Park as well as some privately owned nature reserves and tourist resorts. The general remoteness of the region contributes to

the potential hazards. Due to scarcity of roads, most travel is by river or by foot path. This combined with spotty medical infrastructure outside of major towns makes travel there potentially hazardous. While the number of actual incidents remains low, U.S. citizens, other foreign nationals and Panamanian citizens are potentially at risk of violent crime, kidnapping and murder in this general area. Moreover, all around the Panama-Colombia border area the presence of Colombian terrorist groups, drug traffickers and other criminals is common, increasing the danger to travelers. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) operates in Panama's Darien Province, including in areas far removed from the immediate vicinity of the Panamanian-Colombian border. Note: The Secretary of State has designated the FARC, the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) as Foreign Terrorist Organizations.

U.S. citizens are similarly warned to not travel to the area of Panama referred to as the "Mosquito Coast," an extremely remote and inaccessible area along the Panamanian north coast bounded by Boca de Rio Chiriquí on the west and Coclé Del Norte on the east and stretching inward from the coast for 5 kilometers. Embassy personnel are only allowed to travel to this area on official business and with prior approval of senior Embassy management. Access to the region is almost exclusively by boat and/or aircraft. The area may also have a few unimproved roads and/or paths which are not marked on maps. This may be particularly true in the mining area along the Petaquillo river. Sections of this coastline are frequently used for narco-trafficking and other illegal activities.

From time to time, there may be demonstrations protesting internal Panamanian issues or manifestations of anti-American sentiment by small but vociferous groups. While most demonstrations relate to labor disputes or other local issues and are typically non-violent, it is nonetheless a good security practice to avoid demonstrations. The Panamanian National Police generally do not use force to breakup demonstrations, but there have been occasions where tear gas has been used. Demonstrations and marches can and do occur in many locations around the country, to include areas along the Pan-American highway. U.S. citizens are advised to exercise caution near the campus of the University of Panama, the Presidential Palace, and the National Assembly which have been the scenes of frequent protests. Protestors have been known to block remote roadways, sometimes for periods lasting several days. During these extended road closings the security situation is always tense and the potential for violence between Panamanian authorities and protestors is always a very real possibility.

Visitors should be cautious when swimming or wading at the beach. Some beaches, especially those on the Pacific Ocean and those in Bocas del Toro Province, have dangerous currents that cause drowning deaths every year. These beaches are seldom posted with warning signs or monitored by lifeguards.

On the Pacific Coast and Atlantic coasts, boaters should be wary of vessels that may be transporting narcotics, illicit materials, and illegal immigrants to and from Colombia. Bales and specially wrapped packages containing narcotics have been found floating in the ocean or lying on remote beaches. Boaters and beachgoers are warned to steer clear of these items, to not pick up or move these packages and to immediately report their location to the Panamanian authorities. Special permission is needed from the Ministry of Government and Justice and the National Environment Authority to visit the National Park on Coiba Island. The island is an abandoned penal colony, although on occasion, prisoners are sent there to care for the animals. Boaters should avoid the southeastern coast of Kuna Yala Comarca (San Blas Islands), south of Punta Carreto, on the Atlantic Coast.

Local maritime search and rescue capabilities are limited and well below U.S. standards.

Stay up to date by bookmarking our [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#), which contains the current [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#) as well as the [Worldwide Caution](#). Follow us on [Twitter](#) and become a fan of the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on [Facebook](#) as well.

You can also call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free within the United States and Canada, or by calling a regular toll line, 1-202-501-4444, from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

CRIME: Crime in Panama City is increasing and the Department of State maintains its evaluation at "High" for purposes of providing increased resources to protect Embassy employees housed in Panama City. Violent crime has steadily increased from 2007 to 2009 and this increase is primarily related to narco-trafficking related violence. However, the rate of violent crimes has diminished somewhat during calendar year 2010. It is too early to tell whether this positive trend will continue or reverse course and continue its previous upward spiral. The entire city of Colon is also a high crime area; travelers should use extreme caution anywhere in Colon. Based upon reported incidents by local police, the high-crime areas around Panama City are San Miguelito, Rio Abajo, El Chorrillo, Hollywood, Curundu, Veracruz Beach, Panama Viejo, Casco Viejo (particularly at night), Santa Librada, San Miguel, Cabo Verde, and the Madden Dam overlook.

Crimes are typical of those that plague metropolitan areas and include shootings, rapes, armed robberies, muggings, purse-snatchings, thefts from autos, thefts of unsecured items, petty theft, and "express kidnappings" from ATM banking facilities, in which the victim is briefly kidnapped and robbed after withdrawing cash from an ATM. There has also been a recent spike in the number of credit card and ATM card fraud reports. Criminals are capturing credit and ATM card information to credit fraudulent cards. There have been several targeted kidnappings, including in Panama City.

Panama City has a curfew for those under 18 years of age, which is being enforced with new vigor since July 2009. Under the law, students attending night classes must have a carnet or permit, issued by the school or, if employed, a Certificate of Employment. Minors who are picked up for a curfew violation are subject to detention at a police station until parents or legal guardians can arrange for them to be released into their custody. Parents or legal guardians may be fined up to U.S. \$50.00 for the first violation.

Panamanian customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Panama of items such as firearms and ammunition, cultural property, endangered wildlife species, narcotics, biological material, and food products. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Panama in Washington or one of Panama's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements. Don't buy counterfeit and pirated goods, even if they are widely available. Not only are the bootlegs illegal in the United States, if you purchase them you may also be breaking local law. The [Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Division in the U.S. Department of Justice](#) has more information on this serious problem. For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information page](#).

INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME: If you or someone you know becomes the victim of a crime abroad, you should contact the local police and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate (see the [Department of State's list of embassies and consulates](#)). If your passport is stolen we can help you replace it. For violent

crimes such as assault and rape, we can help you find appropriate medical care, contact family members or friends, and help them send you money if you need it. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime are solely the responsibility of local authorities, consular officers can help you to understand the local criminal justice process and to find an attorney if you need. The Panamanian Government also sponsors a program to assist victims of crime. The program is managed by the Oficina de Asistencia a Víctimas de Crímenes, located at the Policia Tecnica Judicial in the Ancon area of Panama City. Its telephone numbers are (011) 507-262-1973 or (011) 507-512-2222.

As in the United States, the emergency line in Panama is 911.

Please see our [information on victims of crime](#), including possible victim compensation programs in the United States.

CRIMINAL PENALTIES: While you are traveling in another country, you are subject to its laws even if you are a U.S. citizen. Foreign laws and legal systems can be vastly different than our own. In some places you may be taken in for questioning if you don't have your passport with you. In some places driving under the influence could land you immediately in jail. These criminal penalties will vary from country to country. There are also some things that might be legal in the country you visit, but still illegal in the United States, and you can be prosecuted under U.S. law if you buy pirated goods. Engaging in sexual conduct with children or using or disseminating child pornography in a foreign country is a crime [prosecutable in the United States](#). If you break local laws in your host country, your U.S. passport won't help you avoid arrest or prosecution. It's very important to know what's legal and what's not where you are going.

If you are arrested in Panama, authorities of Panama are required to alert the U.S. Embassy of your arrest. If you are concerned the Department of State may not be aware of your situation, you should request the police to notify the closest U.S. embassy or consulate of your arrest.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: Anyone not bearing identification at all times, including tourists from the United States, will be penalized by the Panamanian authorities. U.S. tourists need to provide an original, valid passport at entry in Panama. While in Panama, American tourists should carry either their original passport or an original, valid photo I.D. such as driver's license **with** a photocopy of the bio-data page in their U.S. passport **and** a photocopy of the page in their passport that contains the entry stamp to Panama.

The U.S. Embassy in Panama has received numerous property dispute complaints. The complaints include lost property, broken contracts, additional payments, accusations of fraud and corruption, and occasionally threats of violence. There are two root causes for a large proportion of the complaints – title issues and weak judiciary. The majority of land in Panama and almost all land outside of Panama City are not titled. The lack of clear title leads to competing claims to property and frequently to lawsuits. The judicial system's capacity to resolve contractual and property disputes is weak and open to corruption. Americans should exercise more due diligence in purchasing real estate than in the United States. Engaging a reputable attorney and licensed real estate broker is strongly recommended. For more information, please see our [Property Information Sheet](#).

Panamanian customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Panama of items such as firearms and ammunition, cultural property, endangered wildlife species, narcotics, biological material, and food products. It is advisable to contact the Embassy of Panama in

Washington or one of Panama's consulates in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements. Please see our [Customs Information](#) page for more information.

MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION: Panama City has some very good hospitals and clinics, but medical facilities outside of the capital are limited. When making a decision regarding health insurance, U.S. citizens should consider that many foreign doctors and hospitals require payment in cash prior to providing service and that a medical evacuation to the U.S. may cost well in excess of \$50,000. Uninsured travelers who require medical care overseas often face extreme difficulties, whereas travelers who have purchased overseas medical insurance have found it to be life-saving if a medical emergency occurs. Some insurance policies also include coverage for psychiatric treatment and for disposition of remains in the event of death. In Panama, most hospitals accept credit cards for hospital charges, but not for doctors' fees.

During May 2009, Panamanian health authorities placed travelers suspected of carrying the H1N1 flu in quarantine.

Except for antibiotics and narcotics, most medications are available without a prescription.

The 911 call center also provides an ambulance service, however, the ambulance might not always be available and given difficulties in transitting traffic jams and poor road conditions, it might arrive too late to do much good. There are also private ambulance services people can subscribe to.

You can find good information on vaccinations and other health precautions, on the [CDC website](#). For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) website](#). The WHO website also contains additional health information for travelers, including [detailed country-specific health information](#).

MEDICAL INSURANCE: You can't assume your insurance will go with you when you travel. It's very important to find out BEFORE you leave whether or not your medical insurance will cover you overseas. You need to ask your insurance company two questions:

- Does my policy apply when I'm out of the United States?
- Will it cover emergencies like a trip to a foreign hospital or a medical evacuation?

In many places, doctors and hospitals still expect payment in cash at the time of service. Your regular U.S. health insurance may not cover doctors' and hospital visits in other countries. If your policy doesn't go with you when you travel, it's a very good idea to take out another one for your trip. For more information, please see our [medical insurance overseas page](#).

TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CONDITIONS: While in a foreign country, you may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in the United States. The information below concerning Panama is provided for general reference only, and may not be applicable for a particular location or circumstance. Travelers should carry identification with them at all times and be prepared to stop for unannounced checkpoints throughout the country, especially at night.

Panama's roads, traffic and transportation systems are generally safe, but traffic lights often do not exist, even at busy intersections. Driving is often hazardous and demanding due to dense traffic, undisciplined

driving habits, poorly maintained streets, and a lack of effective signs and traffic signals. On roads where poor lighting and driving conditions prevail, night driving is difficult and should be approached with caution. Night driving is particularly hazardous on the old Panama City – Colon highway. Riding your bicycle in the streets is not recommended, but there are a number of parks throughout the country where riding is permitted and safe.

Buses and taxis are not always maintained in a safe operating condition due to lack of regulatory enforcement. Third party liability auto insurance is mandatory. If an accident occurs, a recent law requires that the vehicles be moved off the roadway, failure to do so could result in a fine. Individuals involved in non-injury accidents should take a photo of both cars and then pull their vehicle off the roadway. Exchange information with the other driver and wait for the police to arrive. Emergency response in Panama is not regularly reliable. Police may take hours to respond to routine accidents, and response is often quicker for serious accidents. Ambulances will take all injured persons to a public hospital for treatment unless proof of health insurance is provided at the time of arrival. Traffic in Panama moves on the right, as in the U.S., and Panamanian law requires that drivers and passengers wear seat belts.

Flooding during the April to December rainy season occasionally makes city streets impassible and washes out some roads in the interior of the country. In addition, rural areas are often poorly maintained and lack illumination at night. Such roads are generally less traveled and the availability of emergency roadside assistance is very limited. Road travel is more dangerous during the rainy season and in the interior from Carnival through Good Friday. Carnival starts the Saturday prior to Ash Wednesday and goes on for four days.

There is often construction at night on Panama's portion of the Pan American highway. There are few signs alerting drivers to such construction and the highway is not well lit at night. When traveling on the highway, travelers should be aware of possible roadblocks. The Pan American Highway ends at Yaviza in the Darien Province of Panama and does not continue through to Colombia.

Please refer to our [Road Safety page](#) for more information. Also, we suggest that you visit the websites of [Panama's Tourism Authority](#), [Transportation Authority](#), and [the national authority responsible for road safety in Panama](#), for helpful information on road conditions in Panama.

AVIATION SAFETY OVERSIGHT: The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assessed the government of Panama's Civil Aviation Authority as being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for oversight of Panama's air carrier operations. Further information may be found on the [FAA safety assessment page](#).

CHILDREN'S ISSUES: Please see our Office of Children's Issues web pages on [intercountry adoption](#) and [international parental child abduction](#).

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This replaces the Country Specific Information for Panama dated November 30, 2009 with changes to every section.

APPENDIX H: HEALTH INFORMATION FOR TRAVELERS TO COSTA RICA

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/costa-rica.aspx>

Travel Notices in Effect

- [Update: Dengue in Tropical and Subtropical Regions](#) September 15, 2011
- [2011 Measles Update](#) June 23, 2011

Safety and Security Abroad

- [Registration of Traveler Emergency Contact and Itinerary Information](#) January 13, 2011
- [Transportation Security Administration](#)
- [U.S. Department of State](#)



Preparing for Your Trip to Costa Rica

Before visiting Costa Rica, you may need to get the following vaccinations and medications for vaccine-preventable diseases and other diseases you might be at risk for at your destination: (Note: Your doctor or health-care provider will determine what you will need, depending on factors such as your health and immunization history, areas of the country you will be visiting, and planned activities.)

To have the most benefit, see a health-care provider at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for your vaccines to take effect and to start taking medicine to prevent malaria, if you need it.

Even if you have less than 4 weeks before you leave, you should still see a health-care provider for needed vaccines, anti-malaria drugs and other medications and information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while traveling.

CDC recommends that you see a health-care provider who specializes in Travel Medicine. [Find a travel medicine clinic](#) near you. If you have a medical condition, you should also share your travel plans with any doctors you are currently seeing for other medical reasons.

If your travel plans will take you to more than one country during a single trip, be sure to let your health-care provider know so that you can receive the appropriate vaccinations and information for all of your destinations. Long-term travelers, such as those who plan to work or study abroad, may also need additional vaccinations as required by their employer or school.

Although yellow fever is not a disease risk in Costa Rica, the government requires some travelers arriving from [countries with risk of yellow fever virus transmission](#) to present proof of yellow fever vaccination. If you will be traveling to Costa Rica from any country other than the United States, this requirement may affect you. For specific requirement details, see [Yellow Fever & Malaria Information, by Country](#).

Be sure your routine vaccinations are up-to-date. Check the links below to see which vaccinations adults and children should get.

Routine vaccines, as they are often called, such as for influenza, chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), and diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) are given at all stages of life; see the [childhood and adolescent immunization schedule](#) and [routine adult immunization schedule](#).

Routine vaccines are recommended even if you do not travel. Although childhood diseases, such as measles, rarely occur in the United States, they are still common in many parts of the world. A traveler who is not vaccinated would be at risk for infection.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Vaccine recommendations are based on the best available risk information. Please note that the level of risk for vaccine-preventable diseases can change at any time.

Vaccination or Disease	Recommendations or Requirements for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases
<u>Routine</u>	Recommended if you are not up-to-date with routine shots such as, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine, etc.
<u>Hepatitis A</u> or immune globulin (IG)	Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in countries with an intermediate or high level of hepatitis A virus infection (see map) where exposure might occur through food or water. Cases of travel-related hepatitis A can also occur in travelers to developing countries with "standard" tourist itineraries, accommodations, and food consumption behaviors.
<u>Hepatitis B</u>	Recommended for all unvaccinated persons traveling to or working in countries with intermediate to high levels of endemic HBV transmission (see map), especially those who might be exposed to blood or body fluids, have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment (e.g., for an accident).
<u>Typhoid</u>	Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in Mexico and Central America, especially if staying with friends or relatives or visiting smaller cities, villages, or rural areas where exposure might occur through food or water.

Rabies vaccination is only recommended for travelers involved in any activities that might bring them into direct contact with bats, carnivores, and other mammals. These travelers include wildlife professionals, researchers, veterinarians, or adventure travelers visiting areas where bats, carnivores, and other mammals are commonly found.

Malaria

Areas of Costa Rica with Malaria: Limón Province, but not in Limón City (Puerto Limón). Rare cases in other parts of the country. ([more information](#))

If you will be visiting an area of Costa Rica with malaria, you will need to discuss with your doctor the best ways for you to avoid getting sick with malaria. Ways to prevent malaria include the following:

- Taking a prescription antimalarial drug
- Using insect repellent and wearing long pants and sleeves to prevent mosquito bites
- Sleeping in air-conditioned or well-screened rooms or using bednets

It is particularly important when traveling to Costa Rica that you have detailed information of where you are going within this country, because malaria prevention recommendations vary depending on where you go within the country.

There are some areas in Costa Rica where the risk of malaria is low, and taking an antimalarial drug is not recommended. For areas in Costa Rica where an antimalarial is recommended, primaquine is a good option for an antimalarial drug (only after G6PD testing). Atovaquone-proguanil, chloroquine, doxycycline, or mefloquine can also be used instead. For detailed information about each of these drugs, see [Table 3-11: Drugs used in the prophylaxis of malaria](#). For information that can help you and your doctor decide which of these drugs would be best for you, please see [Choosing a Drug to Prevent Malaria](#).

To find out more information on malaria throughout the world, you can use the [interactive CDC malaria map](#). You can search or browse countries, cities, and place names for more specific malaria risk information and the recommended prevention medicines for that area.

Malaria Contact for Health-Care Providers

For assistance with the diagnosis or management of suspected cases of malaria, call the CDC Malaria Hotline: 770-488-7788 (M-F, 9 am-5 pm, Eastern time). For emergency consultation after hours, call 770-488-7100 and ask to speak with a CDC Malaria Branch clinician.

More Information About Malaria

Malaria is always a serious disease and may be a deadly illness. Humans get malaria from the bite of a mosquito infected with the parasite. Prevent this serious disease by seeing your health-care provider for a prescription antimalarial drug and by protecting yourself against mosquito bites ([see below](#)).

Travelers to malaria risk-areas in Costa Rica, including infants, children, and former residents of Costa Rica, should take one of the antimalarial drugs listed in the box above.

Symptoms

Malaria symptoms may include

- fever
- chills
- sweats
- headache
- body aches
- nausea and vomiting
- fatigue

Malaria symptoms will occur at least 7 to 9 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Fever in the first week of travel in a malaria-risk area is unlikely to be malaria; however, you should see a doctor right away if you develop a fever during your trip.

Malaria may cause anemia and jaundice. Malaria infections with *Plasmodium falciparum*, if not promptly treated, may cause kidney failure, coma, and death. Despite using the protective measures outlined above, travelers may still develop malaria up to a year after returning from a malarious area. You should see a doctor immediately if you develop a fever anytime during the year following your return and tell the physician of your travel.

A Special Note about Antimalarial Drugs

You should purchase your antimalarial drugs before travel. Drugs purchased overseas may not be manufactured according to United States standards and may not be effective. They also may be dangerous, contain counterfeit medications or contaminants, or be combinations of drugs that are not safe to use.

Halofantrine (marketed as Halfan) is widely used overseas to treat malaria. CDC recommends that you do **NOT** use halofantrine because of serious heart-related side effects, including deaths. You should avoid using antimalarial drugs that are not recommended **unless** you have been diagnosed with life-threatening malaria and no other options are immediately available.

For detailed information about these antimalarial drugs, see [Choosing a Drug to Prevent Malaria](#).

Items to Bring With You

Medicines you may need:

- **The prescription medicines you take every day.** Make sure you have enough to last during your trip. Keep them in their original prescription bottles and always in your carry-on luggage. [Be sure to follow security guidelines](#), if the medicines are liquids.
- Antimalarial drugs, if traveling to a [malaria-risk area](#) in Costa Rica and prescribed by your doctor.
- **Medicine for diarrhea**, usually over-the-counter.

Note: Some drugs available by prescription in the US are illegal in other countries. Check the US Department of State [Consular Information Sheets](#) for the country(s) you intend to visit or the embassy or consulate for that

country(s). If your medication is not allowed in the country you will be visiting, ask your health-care provider to write a letter on office stationery stating the medication has been prescribed for you.

Other items you may need:

- Iodine tablets and portable water filters to purify water if bottled water is not available. See [A Guide to Water Filters](#), [A Guide to Commercially-Bottled Water and Other Beverages](#), and [Safe Food and Water](#) for more detailed information.
- Sunblock and sunglasses for protection from harmful effects of UV sun rays. See [Basic Information about Skin Cancer](#) for more information.
- Antibacterial hand wipes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- To prevent insect/mosquito bites, bring:
 - Lightweight long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and a hat to wear outside, whenever possible.
 - Flying-insect spray to help clear rooms of mosquitoes. The product should contain a pyrethroid insecticide; these insecticides quickly kill flying insects, including mosquitoes.
 - Bed nets treated with permethrin, if you will not be sleeping in an air-conditioned or well-screened room and will be in malaria-risk areas. For use and purchasing information, see [Insecticide Treated Bed Nets](#) on the CDC malaria site. Overseas, permethrin or another insecticide, deltamethrin, may be purchased to treat bed nets and clothes.

See other suggested over-the-counter medications and first aid items for a [travelers' health kit](#).

Note: Check the [Air Travel section](#) of the [Transportation Security Administration](#) website for the latest information about airport screening procedures and prohibited items.

Other Diseases Found in Mexico and Central America

Risk can vary between countries within this region and also within a country; the quality of in-country surveillance also varies.

The following are disease risks that might affect travelers; this is not a complete list of diseases that can be present. Environmental conditions may also change, and up to date information about risk by regions within a country may also not always be available.

[Dengue](#) epidemics have affected most countries in Central America in the past 5 years. [Filariasis](#), [leishmaniasis](#), [onchocerciasis \(River blindness\)](#), and [American trypanosomiasis \(Chagas' disease\)](#) are diseases carried by insects that also occur in this region, mostly in rural areas. Risk to the usual traveler is low. Myiasis (botfly) is endemic in Central America. Protecting yourself against insect bites ([see below](#)) will help to prevent these diseases.

[Gnathostomiasis \(roundworms\)](#) has increased in Mexico, with many cases being reported from the Acapulco area, infection has been reported in travelers. Humans become infected by eating undercooked fish or poultry, or reportedly by drinking contaminated water.

Foci of active transmission of [leishmaniasis](#) (predominantly cutaneous) are present in all countries in Central America. West Nile virus has been found in Mexico and may spread in Central America.

[Diarrhea](#) in travelers is common and may be caused by bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Diarrhea caused by enterotoxigenic *E. coli* predominates, but other bacteria and protozoa (including *Giardia*, *Cryptosporidia*, and *Entamoeba histolytica*) can also cause diarrhea.

Cases of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome have been reported from Panama.

Outbreaks of [leptospirosis](#) have occurred in travelers to the area (including whitewater rafters in Costa Rica and U.S. troops training in Panama). Sporadic cases and outbreaks of [coccidioidomycosis](#) and [histoplasmosis](#) have occurred in travelers to Central America. Risky activities include disturbing soil and entering caves and abandoned mines. Cutaneous larva migrans occurs in visitors, especially those visiting beaches.

Staying Healthy During Your Trip

Prevent Insect Bites

Many diseases, like [malaria](#) and [dengue](#), are spread through insect bites. One of the best protections is to prevent insect bites by:

- Using insect repellent (bug spray) with 30%-50% DEET. Picaridin, available in 7% and 15% concentrations, needs more frequent application. There is less information available on how effective picaridin is at protecting against all of the types of mosquitoes that transmit malaria.
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and a hat outdoors.
- Remaining indoors in a screened or air-conditioned area during the peak biting period for malaria (dusk and dawn).
- Sleeping in beds covered by nets treated with permethrin, if not sleeping in an air-conditioned or well-screened room.
- Spraying rooms with products effective against flying insects, such as those containing pyrethroid.

For detailed information about insect repellent use, see [Insect and Arthropod Protection](#).

Prevent Animal Bites and Scratches

Direct contact with animals can spread diseases like rabies or cause serious injury or illness. It is important to prevent animal bites and scratches.

- Be sure you are up to date with tetanus vaccination.
- Do not touch or feed any animals, including dogs and cats. Even animals that look like healthy pets can have rabies or other diseases.
- Help children stay safe by supervising them carefully around all animals.
- If you are bitten or scratched, wash the wound well with soap and water and **go to a doctor right away**.
- After your trip, be sure to tell your doctor or state health department if you were bitten or scratched during travel.

For more information about rabies and travel, see the [Rabies chapter](#) of the [Yellow Book](#) or [CDC's Rabies homepage](#). For more information about how to protect yourself from other risks related to animals, see [Animal-Associated Hazards](#).

Be Careful about Food and Water

Diseases from food and water are the leading cause of illness in travelers. Follow these tips for safe eating and drinking:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially before eating. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel (with at least 60% alcohol).
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. If this is not possible, learn how to [make water safer to drink](#).
- Do not eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Make sure food is fully cooked.
- Avoid dairy products, unless you know they have been pasteurized.

Diseases from food and water often cause vomiting and diarrhea. Make sure to bring diarrhea medicine with you so that you can treat mild cases yourself.

Avoid Injuries

Car crashes are a leading cause of [injury](#) among travelers. Protect yourself from these injuries by:

- Not drinking and driving.

- Wearing your seat belt and using car seats or booster seats in the backseat for children.
- Following local traffic laws.
- Wearing helmets when you ride bikes, motorcycles, and motor bikes.
- Not getting on an overloaded bus or mini-bus.
- Hiring a local driver, when possible.
- Avoiding night driving.

Other Health Tips

- To avoid infections such as HIV and viral hepatitis do not share needles for tattoos, body piercing, or injections.
- To reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases always use latex condoms.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot, especially on beaches where animals may have defecated.

After You Return Home

If you are not feeling well, you should see your doctor and mention that you have recently traveled. Also tell your doctor if you were bitten or scratched by an animal while traveling.

If you have visited a malaria-risk area, continue taking your chloroquine for 4 weeks after leaving the risk area.

Malaria is always a serious disease and may be a deadly illness. If you become ill with a fever or flu-like illness either while traveling in a malaria-risk area or after you return home (for up to 1 year), you should seek **immediate** medical attention and should tell the physician your travel history.

Important Note: This document is not a complete medical guide for travelers to this region. Consult with your doctor for specific information related to your needs and your medical history; recommendations may differ for pregnant women, young children, and persons who have chronic medical conditions.

Map Disclaimer - *The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on maps do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement are generally marked.*

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National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID)

Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMO)

APPENDIX I: HEALTH INFORMATION FOR TRAVELERS TO PANAMA

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/panama.htm>

Travel Notices in Effect

- [Update: Dengue in Tropical and Subtropical Regions](#) September 15, 2011
- [2011 Measles Update](#) June 23, 2011

Safety and Security Abroad

- [Registration of Traveler Emergency Contact and Itinerary Information](#) January 13, 2011
- [Transportation Security Administration](#)
- [U.S. Department of State](#)



Preparing for Your Trip to Panama

Before visiting Panama, you may need to get the following vaccinations and medications for vaccine-preventable diseases and other diseases you might be at risk for at your destination: (Note: Your doctor or health-care provider will determine what you will need, depending on factors such as your health and immunization history, areas of the country you will be visiting, and planned activities.)

To have the most benefit, see a health-care provider at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for your vaccines to take effect and to start taking medicine to prevent malaria, if you need it.

Even if you have less than 4 weeks before you leave, you should still see a health-care provider for needed vaccines, anti-malaria drugs and other medications and information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while traveling.

CDC recommends that you see a health-care provider who specializes in Travel Medicine. [Find a travel medicine clinic](#) near you. If you have a medical condition, you should also share your travel plans with any doctors you are currently seeing for other medical reasons.

If your travel plans will take you to more than one country during a single trip, be sure to let your health-care provider know so that you can receive the appropriate vaccinations and information for all of your destinations. Long-term travelers, such as those who plan to work or study abroad, may also need additional vaccinations as required by their employer or school.

Be sure your routine vaccinations are up-to-date. Check the links below to see which vaccinations adults and children should get.

Routine vaccines, as they are often called, such as for influenza, chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), and diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) are given at all stages of life; see the [childhood and adolescent immunization schedule](#) and [routine adult immunization schedule](#).

Routine vaccines are recommended even if you do not travel. Although childhood diseases, such as measles, rarely occur in the United States, they are still common in many parts of the world. A traveler who is not vaccinated would be at risk for infection.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Vaccine recommendations are based on the best available risk information. Please note that the level of risk for vaccine-preventable diseases can change at any time.

Vaccination or Disease	Recommendations or Requirements for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases
<u>Routine</u>	Recommended if you are not up-to-date with routine shots such as, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine, etc.
<u>Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG)</u>	Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in countries with an intermediate or high level of hepatitis A virus infection (see map) where exposure might occur through food or water. Cases of travel-related hepatitis A can also occur in travelers to developing countries with "standard" tourist itineraries, accommodations, and food consumption behaviors.
<u>Hepatitis B</u>	Recommended for all unvaccinated persons traveling to or working in countries with intermediate to high levels of endemic HBV transmission (see map), especially those who might be exposed to blood or body fluids, have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment (e.g., for an accident).
<u>Typhoid</u>	Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in Mexico and Central America, especially if staying with friends or relatives or visiting smaller cities, villages, or rural areas where exposure might occur through food or water.
<u>Yellow Fever</u>	<p>Requirements: Required if traveling from a country with risk of YFV transmission.^a</p> <p>Recommendations: Recommended for all travelers ≥9 months of age traveling to all mainland areas east of the Canal Zone, encompassing the entire comarcas (autonomous territories) of Emberá and Kuna Yala, the entire province of Darién, and areas of the provinces of Colón and Panamá that are east of the Canal Zone (see Map 3-19). Not recommended for travelers whose itineraries are limited to areas west of the Canal Zone, the city of Panama, the Canal Zone itself, the San Blas Islands, and the Balboa Islands (see Map 3-19).</p> <p>Vaccination should be given 10 days before travel and at 10 year intervals if there is on-going risk. Find an authorized U.S. yellow fever vaccination clinic.</p>

Rabies vaccination is only recommended for travelers involved in any activities that might bring them into direct contact with bats, carnivores, and other mammals. These travelers include wildlife professionals, researchers, veterinarians, or adventure travelers visiting areas where bats, carnivores, and other mammals are commonly found.

Malaria

Areas of Panama with Malaria: Most transmission in provinces east of the Panama Canal toward the border with Colombia (provinces of Panamá east of the canal and Darién). Transmission also in provinces of C. Ngöbe-Buglé, Chiriquí, Coclé, Kuna Yala (San Blas), and Veraguas. None in urban areas of Panama City or in the former Canal Zone. ([more information](#))

If you will be visiting an area of Panama with malaria, you will need to discuss with your doctor the best ways for you to avoid getting sick with malaria. Ways to prevent malaria include the following:

- Taking a prescription antimalarial drug
- Using insect repellent and wearing long pants and sleeves to prevent mosquito bites
- Sleeping in air-conditioned or well-screened rooms or using bednets

It is particularly important when traveling to Panama that you have detailed information of where you are going within this country because malaria prevention recommendations vary depending on where you go within the country.

Some areas of Panama have resistance to chloroquine. There are also some areas where the risk of malaria is low, and taking an antimalarial drug is not recommended. See the [malaria information listed by country](#) to find out the best way for you to prevent malaria for the area you plan to visit in Panama. For detailed information about each of these drugs, see [Table 3-11: Drugs used in the prophylaxis of malaria](#). For information that can help you and your doctor decide which of these drugs would be best for you, please see [Choosing a Drug to Prevent Malaria](#).

To find out more information on malaria throughout the world, you can use the [interactive CDC malaria map](#). You can search or browse countries, cities, and place names for more specific malaria risk information and the recommended prevention medicines for that area.

Malaria Contact for Health-Care Providers

For assistance with the diagnosis or management of suspected cases of malaria, call the CDC Malaria Hotline: 770-488-7788 (M-F, 9 am-5 pm, Eastern time). For emergency consultation after hours, call 770-488-7100 and ask to speak with a CDC Malaria Branch clinician.

More Information About Malaria

Malaria is always a serious disease and may be a deadly illness. Humans get malaria from the bite of a mosquito infected with the parasite. Prevent this serious disease by seeing your health-care provider for a prescription antimalarial drug and by protecting yourself against mosquito bites ([see below](#)).

Travelers to malaria risk-areas in Panama, including infants, children, and former residents of Panama, should take one of the antimalarial drugs listed in the box above.

Symptoms

Malaria symptoms may include

- fever
- chills
- sweats
- headache
- body aches
- nausea and vomiting
- fatigue

Malaria symptoms will occur at least 7 to 9 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Fever in the first week of travel in a malaria-risk area is unlikely to be malaria; however, you should see a doctor right away if you develop a fever during your trip.

Malaria may cause anemia and jaundice. Malaria infections with *Plasmodium falciparum*, if not promptly treated, may cause kidney failure, coma, and death. Despite using the protective measures outlined above, travelers may still develop malaria up to a year after returning from a malarious area. You should see a doctor immediately if you develop a fever anytime during the year following your return and tell the physician of your travel.

A Special Note about Antimalarial Drugs

You should purchase your antimalarial drugs before travel. Drugs purchased overseas may not be manufactured according to United States standards and may not be effective. They also may be dangerous, contain counterfeit medications or contaminants, or be combinations of drugs that are not safe to use.

Halofantrine (marketed as Halfan) is widely used overseas to treat malaria. CDC recommends that you do **NOT** use halofantrine because of serious heart-related side effects, including deaths. You should avoid using antimalarial drugs that are not recommended **unless** you have been diagnosed with life-threatening malaria and no other options are immediately available.

For detailed information about these antimalarial drugs, see [Choosing a Drug to Prevent Malaria](#).

Items to Bring With You

Medicines you may need:

- **The prescription medicines you take every day.** Make sure you have enough to last during your trip. Keep them in their original prescription bottles and always in your carry-on luggage. Be sure to follow security guidelines, if the medicines are liquids.
- Antimalarial drugs, if traveling to a malaria-risk area in Panama and prescribed by your doctor.
- **Medicine for diarrhea**, usually over-the-counter.

Note: Some drugs available by prescription in the US are illegal in other countries. Check the US Department of State Consular Information Sheets for the country(s) you intend to visit or the embassy or consulate for that country(s). If your medication is not allowed in the country you will be visiting, ask your health-care provider to write a letter on office stationery stating the medication has been prescribed for you.

Other items you may need:

- Iodine tablets and portable water filters to purify water if bottled water is not available. See A Guide to Water Filters, A Guide to Commercially-Bottled Water and Other Beverages, and Safe Food and Water for more detailed information.
- Sunblock and sunglasses for protection from harmful effects of UV sun rays. See Basic Information about Skin Cancer for more information.
- Antibacterial hand wipes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- To prevent insect/mosquito bites, bring:
 - Lightweight long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and a hat to wear outside, whenever possible.
 - Flying-insect spray to help clear rooms of mosquitoes. The product should contain a pyrethroid insecticide; these insecticides quickly kill flying insects, including mosquitoes.
 - Bed nets treated with permethrin, if you will not be sleeping in an air-conditioned or well-screened room and will be in malaria-risk areas. For use and purchasing information, see Insecticide Treated Bed Nets on the CDC malaria site. Overseas, permethrin or another insecticide, deltamethrin, may be purchased to treat bed nets and clothes.

See other suggested over-the-counter medications and first aid items for a travelers' health kit.

Note: Check the Air Travel section of the Transportation Security Administration website for the latest information about airport screening procedures and prohibited items.

Other Diseases Found in Mexico and Central America

Risk can vary between countries within this region and also within a country; the quality of in-country surveillance also varies.

The following are disease risks that might affect travelers; this is not a complete list of diseases that can be present. Environmental conditions may also change, and up to date information about risk by regions within a country may also not always be available.

Dengue epidemics have affected most countries in Central America in the past 5 years. Filariasis, leishmaniasis, onchocerciasis (River blindness), and American trypanosomiasis (Chagas' disease) are diseases carried by insects that also occur in this region, mostly in rural areas. Risk to the usual traveler is low. Myiasis (botfly) is endemic in Central America. Protecting yourself against insect bites (see below) will help to prevent these diseases.

Gnathostomiasis (roundworms) has increased in Mexico, with many cases being reported from the Acapulco area, infection has been reported in travelers. Humans become infected by eating undercooked fish or poultry, or reportedly by drinking contaminated water.

Foci of active transmission of leishmaniasis (predominantly cutaneous) are present in all countries in Central America. West Nile virus has been found in Mexico and may spread in Central America.

Diarrhea in travelers is common and may be caused by bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Diarrhea caused by enterotoxigenic *E. coli* predominates, but other bacteria and protozoa (including *Giardia*, *Cryptosporidia*, and *Entamoeba histolytica*) can also cause diarrhea.

Cases of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome have been reported from Panama.

Outbreaks of [leptospirosis](#) have occurred in travelers to the area (including whitewater rafters in Costa Rica and U.S. troops training in Panama). Sporadic cases and outbreaks of [coccidioidomycosis](#) and [histoplasmosis](#) have occurred in travelers to Central America. Risky activities include disturbing soil and entering caves and abandoned mines. Cutaneous larva migrans occurs in visitors, especially those visiting beaches.

Staying Healthy During Your Trip

Prevent Insect Bites

Many diseases, like [malaria](#) and [dengue](#), are spread through insect bites. One of the best protections is to prevent insect bites by:

- Using insect repellent (bug spray) with 30%-50% DEET. Picaridin, available in 7% and 15% concentrations, needs more frequent application. There is less information available on how effective picaridin is at protecting against all of the types of mosquitoes that transmit malaria.
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and a hat outdoors.
- Remaining indoors in a screened or air-conditioned area during the peak biting period for malaria (dusk and dawn).
- Sleeping in beds covered by nets treated with permethrin, if not sleeping in an air-conditioned or well-screened room.
- Spraying rooms with products effective against flying insects, such as those containing pyrethroid.

For detailed information about insect repellent use, see [Insect and Arthropod Protection](#).

Prevent Animal Bites and Scratches

Direct contact with animals can spread diseases like rabies or cause serious injury or illness. It is important to prevent animal bites and scratches.

- Be sure you are up to date with tetanus vaccination.
- Do not touch or feed any animals, including dogs and cats. Even animals that look like healthy pets can have rabies or other diseases.
- Help children stay safe by supervising them carefully around all animals.
- If you are bitten or scratched, wash the wound well with soap and water and **go to a doctor right away**.
- After your trip, be sure to tell your doctor or state health department if you were bitten or scratched during travel.

For more information about rabies and travel, see the [Rabies chapter](#) of the [Yellow Book](#) or [CDC's Rabies homepage](#). For more information about how to protect yourself from other risks related to animals, see [Animal-Associated Hazards](#).

Be Careful about Food and Water

Diseases from food and water are the leading cause of illness in travelers. Follow these tips for safe eating and drinking:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially before eating. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel (with at least 60% alcohol).
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. If this is not possible, learn how to [make water safer to drink](#).
- Do not eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Make sure food is fully cooked.
- Avoid dairy products, unless you know they have been pasteurized.

Diseases from food and water often cause vomiting and diarrhea. Make sure to bring diarrhea medicine with you so that you can treat mild cases yourself.

Avoid Injuries

Car crashes are a leading cause of injury among travelers. Protect yourself from these injuries by:

- Not drinking and driving.
- Wearing your seat belt and using car seats or booster seats in the backseat for children.
- Following local traffic laws.
- Wearing helmets when you ride bikes, motorcycles, and motor bikes.
- Not getting on an overloaded bus or mini-bus.
- Hiring a local driver, when possible.
- Avoiding night driving.

Other Health Tips

- To avoid infections such as HIV and viral hepatitis do not share needles for tattoos, body piercing, or injections.
- To reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases always use latex condoms.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot, especially on beaches where animals may have defecated.

After You Return Home

If you are not feeling well, you should see your doctor and mention that you have recently traveled. Also tell your doctor if you were bitten or scratched by an animal while traveling.

If you have visited a malaria-risk area, continue taking your antimalarial drug for 4 weeks (chloroquine, doxycycline, or mefloquine) or seven days (atovaquone/proguanil) after leaving the risk area.

Malaria is always a serious disease and may be a deadly illness. If you become ill with a fever or flu-like illness either while traveling in a malaria-risk area or after you return home (for up to 1 year), you should seek **immediate** medical attention and should tell the physician your travel history.

Important Note: This document is not a complete medical guide for travelers to this region. Consult with your doctor for specific information related to your needs and your medical history; recommendations may differ for pregnant women, young children, and persons who have chronic medical conditions.

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National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID)

Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMO)

APPENDIX J: MALARIA AND TRAVELERS

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Malaria and Travelers

<http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/travelers/index.html>

This information is intended for travelers who reside in the United States. Travelers from other countries may find this information helpful; however, because malaria prevention recommendations and the availability of antimalarial drugs vary, travelers from other countries should consult health care providers in their respective countries.

Every year, millions of US residents travel to countries where malaria is present. About 1,500 cases of malaria are diagnosed in the United States annually, mostly in returned travelers.

Travelers to sub-Saharan Africa have the greatest risk of both getting malaria and dying from their infection. However, all travelers to countries where malaria is present may be at risk for infection.

Determine if malaria transmission occurs at the destinations

Obtain a detailed itinerary including all possible destinations that may be encountered during the trip and check to see if malaria transmission occurs in these locations. The [Malaria Information by Country Table](#) provides detailed information about the specific parts of countries where malaria transmission does or does not occur. It also provides additional information including the species of malaria that occur there, the presence of drug resistance, and the specific medicines that CDC recommends for use for malaria prevention in each country where malaria transmission occurs.

Another way of finding this information is through the CDC [Malaria Map Application](#). This web-based tool is particularly useful for obtaining information about malaria transmission in specific parts of countries.



Conduct an individualized risk assessment

Prevention of malaria involves a balance between ensuring that all people who will be at risk of infection use the appropriate prevention measures, while preventing adverse effects of those interventions among people using them unnecessarily. An individual risk assessment should be conducted for every traveler, taking into account not only the destination country, but also the detailed itinerary, including specific cities, types of accommodation, season, and style of travel. In addition, conditions such as pregnancy or the presence of antimalarial drug resistance at the destination may modify the risk assessment.

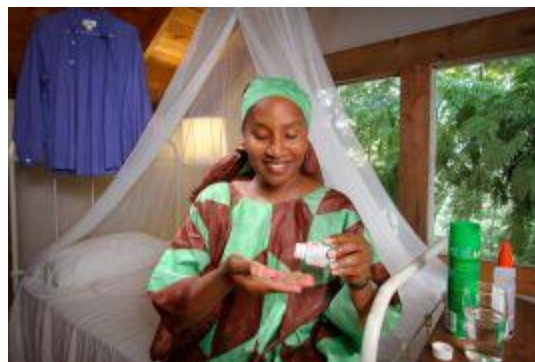
More on: [Malaria Risk Assessment for Travelers](#)

Choose the most appropriate malaria prevention measures

This picture shows some things that travelers can use to protect themselves against malaria: malaria pills; insect repellent; long-sleeved clothing; bednet; and flying insect spray. (Not shown, but also protective: air conditioned or screened quarters.)

Based on the risk assessment, specific malaria prevention interventions should be used by the traveler. Often this includes avoiding mosquito bites through the use of repellents or insecticide treated bed nets, and specific medicines to prevent malaria.

More on: [Preventing Mosquito Bites While Traveling](#)



If malaria prevention medicines will be needed for the traveler, the [Malaria information by country table](#) lists the CDC-recommended options. For many destinations, there are multiple options available. Factors to consider are the patient's other medical conditions, medications being taken (to assess potential drug-drug interactions), the cost of the medicines, and the potential side effects.

More on: [Tips on Choosing the Right Drug for an Individual Traveler](#)

The [Drugs for Malaria Prevention table](#) provides prescription dosing information for both adults and children.

In some countries (including those with malaria risk), drugs may be sold that are counterfeit ("fake") or substandard (not made according to United States standards). Such drugs may not be effective. Antimalarial drugs should always be purchased before traveling overseas!

For details and specific warnings, see [Counterfeit and Substandard Antimalarial Drugs](#)

Preventing Malaria in Travelers Brochure.

Know the symptoms of malaria

The interventions used to prevent malaria can be very effective when used properly, but none of them are 100% effective.

If [symptoms of malaria](#) occur, the traveler should seek immediate medical attention. Malaria is always a serious disease and may be a deadly illness. Travelers who become ill with a fever or flu-like illness either while traveling in a malaria-risk area or after returning home (for up to 1 year) should seek immediate medical attention and should tell the physician their travel history.



Travelers who are assessed at being at high risk of developing malaria while traveling should consider carrying a full treatment course of malaria medicines with them. Providing this reliable supply of medicine (formerly referred to as standby or emergency self-treatment) will ensure that travelers have immediate access to an appropriate and high quality medicine if they are diagnosed with malaria while abroad. Depending on the medicine they are using for prevention, this could either be atovaquone/proguanil or artemether/lumefantrine.

More on: [Malaria Treatment \(United States\)](#)

Be aware of blood donation eligibility

Travelers are often surprised to learn that even if they adhered to all of the prevention advice and did not become sick with malaria, recent travel to a place where malaria transmission occurs is an exclusion criterion for blood donation.

More on: [Prevention of Blood Transfusion-Associated Malaria](#)

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1600 Clifton Rd, Atlanta, GA 30333
- Health care providers needing assistance with diagnosis or management of suspected cases of malaria should call the **CDC Malaria Hotline**: 770-488-7788 (M-F, 9am-5pm, eastern time).
- Emergency consultation after hours, call: 770-488-7100 and request to speak with a CDC Malaria Branch clinician.
- malaria@cdc.gov

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Content source: [Global Health - Division of Parasitic Diseases](#)

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800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) TTY: (888) 232-6348, 24 Hours/Every Day - cdcinfo@cdc.gov

APPENDIX K: ANSWERS TO CROSS-CULTURAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The following statements are based on expectations commonly held by US students planning to study in Costa Rica and on dilemmas and issues students often face once they arrive in the country.

Directions: Please mark each statement below as true (if it is generally true) or false (if it is generally false).

1. **FALSE - Since Costa Rica is a developing country; students should not expect to find the same commodities and amenities they are accustomed to in the US, such as T.V., cars, or shopping malls.**

San José, the capital of Costa Rica, is a city with close to three million inhabitants and offers all the commodities listed above, and many more, common to our modern, globalized world.

2. **TRUE - The most difficult physical adjustment for many students is getting used to the heat where the Firestone Center is located.**

The average temperature in the southern area of Costa Rica is in the 100 °s during the dry season and is quite the same during the rainy season. Humidity can be intense.

3. **TRUE - The majority of Costa Rica is Catholic, but religious tolerance is a general practice.**

Whatever your religious beliefs, you will find that most Costa Ricans will respect them. There are many other Christian religions practiced in Costa Rica and a small Jewish community.

4. **TRUE - It is difficult to handle sexual advances in another culture, but if this behavior goes beyond what is comfortable for the student, a clear NO will be the correct answer.**

This would apply to both sexes. In addition, female students should realize that due to the prevalent “machismo” in Costa Rican culture, their position needs to be stated very firmly. A weak refusal will only serve as an encouragement for more advances.

5. **FALSE - Coming from an affluent society, US students will be expected to share their wealth with Costa Ricans, especially when they come into contact with small children.**

Even though there is a general belief that being a US citizen means being rich, this does not imply that you need to establish a paternalistic relationship with Costa Ricans. What would be most appreciated in the long run, and beneficial for both sides, is establishing a relationship of mutual respect and cultural sensitivity. This human interchange will lead to a deeper understanding of the cultural differences and awareness of the complexities of the social and economic levels in Costa Rica.

6. **FALSE - Members of my family will tell me if I am not acting in a culturally appropriate way.**

This most likely will not be the case, unless they feel it is an extreme situation, because they will be afraid of hurting your feelings. For the most part, they will find indirect means to make you aware of inappropriate conduct.

7. **TRUE - Leaving valuables with your host mother under lock and key is the best way to protect them and avoid unnecessary losses that would only serve to upset you and every member living in the household.**

Even though we haven't had a problem, host mothers are more than happy to take all the necessary precautions to avoid unpleasant situations of this sort. It will be up to you to make sure that your valuables are secured in a safe place, once you arrive at your homestay.

8. **FALSE - Turning down food would be a great offense in a society where hospitality is shown by sharing their meals with outsiders.**

There could be many reasons why you would want to turn down food and you should feel it is okay to do it. However, keep in mind that in the Costa Rican society, people will tend to offer many times before accepting a “no” for an answer. This might feel somewhat uncomfortable for you, but it should be understood that offering food is a means to please you and make you feel welcomed.

- 9. TRUE - The dress code in San José is as common as it is in a coastal city with warmer weather. People wear shorts in the city and tank tops are common.**

A practical way to find out what is appropriate in the dress code would be to observe your family members or other Costa Ricans within the different contexts in which you will have a chance to participate. Factors of place and time establish important differences in the dress code.

- 10. TRUE - Trekking or camping on Costa Rican mountains and walking along beaches present a high personal risk.**

Climbing, trekking or hiking on Costa Rican mountains and walking along beaches should always be done in a group and accompanied by a well-trained guide. People that practice these sports alone are easy victims of assault or can get lost when weather conditions change. No camping in any public area and walks on lonely beaches are also to be avoided because of the risks entailed.

- 11. FALSE - Bargaining will be offensive to the person selling products in the market, thus the students should not ask a lower price for goods that are already quite inexpensive.**

It is a common practice to bargain with the merchants to arrive to what both sides consider a fair price. It takes a bit of practice and language skills, which most students easily develop, especially if they spend some free time in the markets in the city.

- 12. TRUE - Students are often shocked by the amount of trash on the streets in some urban and rural settings in Costa Rica**

Even though most Costa Ricans are proud to have such a beautiful country full of diverse ecosystems and wildlife, trash on the streets is still a widespread concern. There is no government support or budget to educate the people about alternative methods of disposal.

- 13. TRUE - Since most Costa Rican families do not have maids; students are expected to help out with household chores.**

Your help at home will be greatly appreciated by all members of the family, whether they can afford to have a maid or not. What you will be allowed to do at home might vary from family to family and might also be directly related to your gender. In any event, please keep in mind that you will have all the privileges and the duties of a member of the family where you are living and will not be treated as a boarder.

- 14. TRUE - While in Costa Rica, students will have to adjust to new menus, ways of preparing food and different meal schedules.**

Food and the way it is prepared represents a very important aspect of the culture and traditions of Costa Rica. The country's great variety of climatic zones and a wealth of agricultural produce, allow many Costa Ricans to enjoy a varied diet. If you have special dietary limitations or needs, your host family will try to be flexible and helpful in this respect.

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