

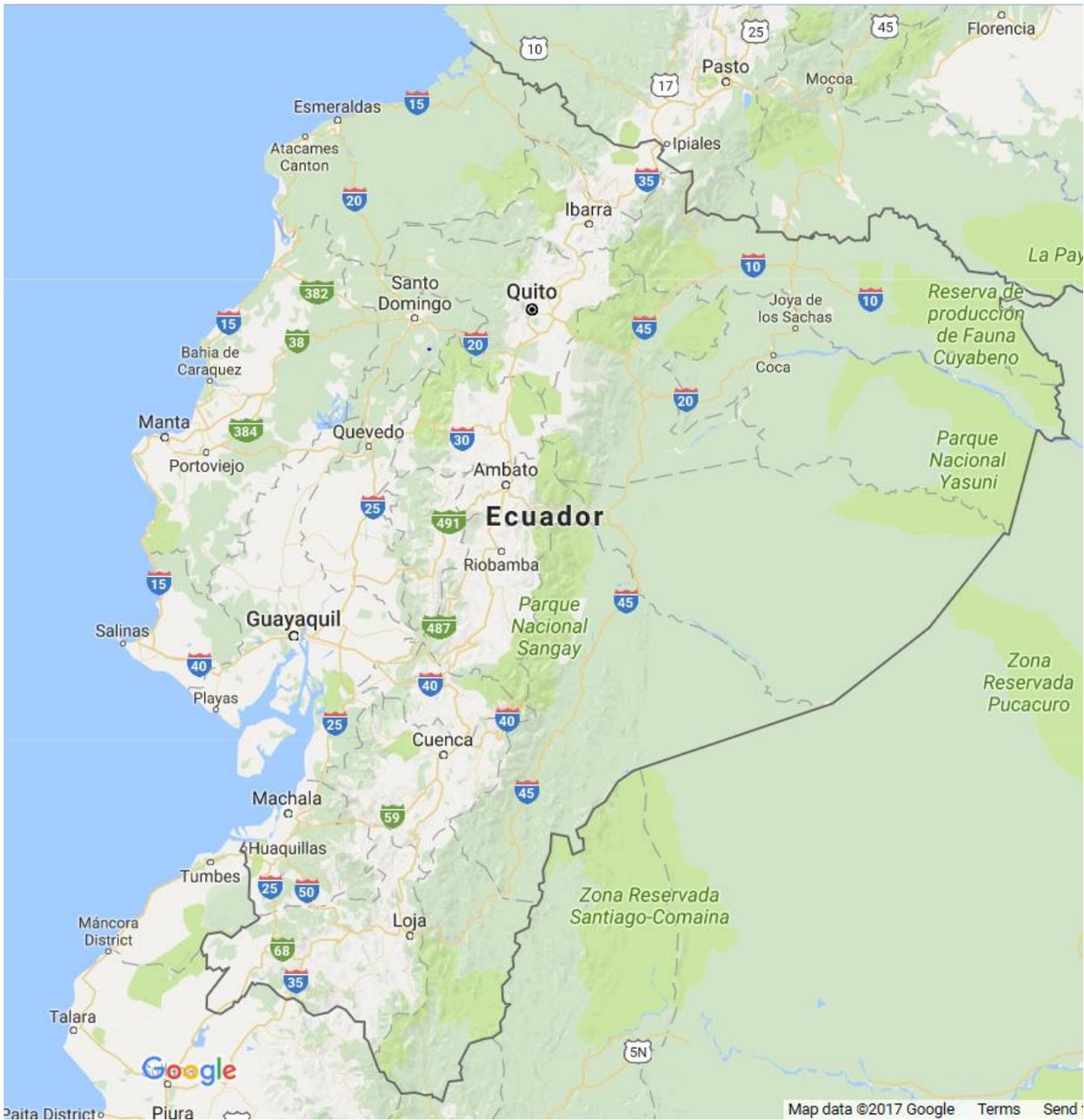
# Pitzer College in Ecuador

## Pre-Departure Orientation Handbook Spring 2018



Cover photo by Kate Mudd  
Pitzer in Ecuador, Fall 2010

# MAP OF ECUADOR



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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"> <li>• Help around the house</li> <li>• Run errands with your family</li> <li>• Play with the kids</li> <li>• 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,</li> <li>• Shop for a meal, prepare and cook food, eat, and clean up together</li> <li>• Go to clinics or hospitals or local healers with host family</li> </ul> <p>Other strategies:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer in social work agencies</li> <li>• "Just get out"</li> <li>• Visit local markets</li> <li>• Check out community theater groups</li> <li>• Get involved in sports</li> <li>• Take local transportation</li> <li>• Eat in restaurants frequented by locals</li> <li>• Go to church/temple/mosque</li> <li>• Participate in community activities</li> <li>• Go to local hangouts (park, restaurants, cafes), frequent the same path so you can get to know locals</li> </ul> <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.

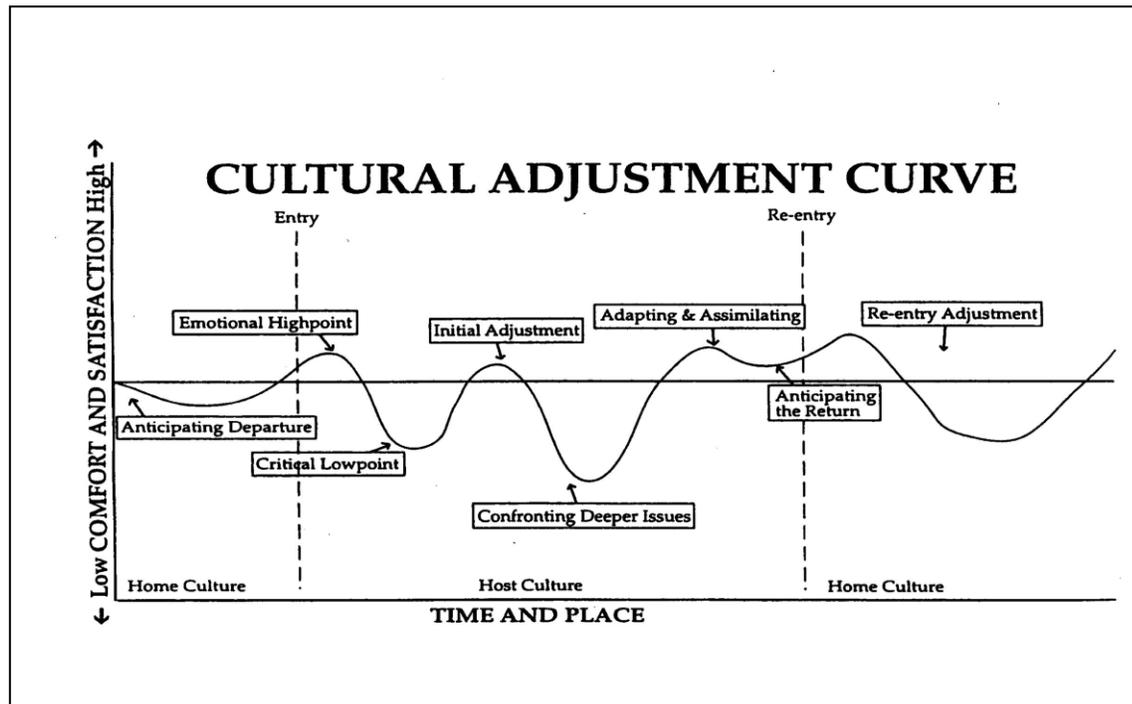
Your role as a student on this program is not to judge the host culture, especially not to judge it based on your own values, but to understand it based on its own beliefs and values and to honor these host culture values in the way you interact and behave. Again, you can do this without compromising 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

## CULTURE LEARNING WORKSHOP

If you received this handbook, then you've already completed one out of two orientation requirements. Congratulations! The second orientation requirement is the following:



**Complete the on-line Culture Learning Workshop (time requirement - approximately 3-5 hours) and email the completed short essay responses to [studyabroad@pitzer.edu](mailto:studyabroad@pitzer.edu) prior to departure for study abroad.**

### Instructions for the on-line version of the Culture Learning Workshop

You are expected to work through Module 1 – from Section 1.1 through Section 1.7 of the on-line workshop at <http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/>. You will get the most out of this workshop if you complete each of the exercises and read the explanations for your answers. Reading the Cultural Encounter and Critical Incident sections that are sprinkled throughout will provide additional insights. While there may not be an example from the country where you will study, you should be able to extract the concepts needed to develop useful skills for understanding your host culture. Once you have completed the full Module, please respond thoughtfully to the essay questions below and send your responses to [studyabroad@pitzer.edu](mailto:studyabroad@pitzer.edu).

1. Decide where the US and your host culture are most likely to be different in the value continuums (Individualist/Collectivist, Universalist/Particularist, High Context/Low Context or Monochronic/Polychronic) and in communication styles (linear/circular, direct/indirect, informational engagement/relational engagement etc.) Which set of differences do you anticipate having the most trouble adjusting to and what can you do to deal with this challenge?
2. According to the orientation materials what is the difference between a helpful generalization and making potentially harmful over-generalizations or stereotypes? How might this apply to your answer in Question 1?
3. Which of the other exercises did you find most useful and how will you apply what you have learned from this exercise on your semester abroad?
4. Describe the process of cultural adjustment as described in the workshop. Have you ever experienced culture shock? How did you work your way through this? What are your strategies for dealing with the inevitable culture shock when you are abroad?

## CROSS-CULTURAL QUESTIONNAIRE

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The following statements are based on expectations commonly held by US students planning to study in Ecuador 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. \_\_\_\_ The city of Quito, being in a developing and poor country, cannot offer commodities found in the US, such as televisions, cars or shopping malls.
2. \_\_\_\_ The most difficult physical adjustment for many students is getting used to the heat in Ecuador.
3. \_\_\_\_ The majority of Ecuadorians are Catholic, but religious tolerance is a general practice.
4. \_\_\_\_ When students arrive in Ecuador, they will need to communicate solely in Spanish with all members of their host families, take language courses and engage in the Pitzer Seminar, which has a community service component.
5. \_\_\_\_ Students will need a large amount of anti-malaria pills on hand during their semester in Ecuador.
6. \_\_\_\_ 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.
7. \_\_\_\_ Coming from an affluent society, US students will be expected to share their wealth with poor Ecuadorians, especially when they come into contact with small children.
8. \_\_\_\_ Members of my family will tell me if I am not acting in a culturally appropriate way.
9. \_\_\_\_ 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.
10. \_\_\_\_ Turning down food would be a great offense in a society where there are so many hungry people.
11. \_\_\_\_ The dress code in Quito is more conservative than it would be in a coastal city with warmer weather. People do not wear shorts in the city and tank tops are not appropriate, especially if you are using public transportation.
12. \_\_\_\_ Trekking or camping on Ecuadorian mountains and walking along beaches present a high personal risk.
13. \_\_\_\_ 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.
14. \_\_\_\_ Students are often shocked by the unsanitary conditions found in some urban and rural settings in Ecuador.
15. \_\_\_\_ Americans do not make distinctions between social classes, thus US students should oppose any class distinctions practiced in Ecuador.
16. \_\_\_\_ Since most Ecuadorian families have maids, students are not expected to help out with household chores.
17. \_\_\_\_ The Andean mountains will provide you with great skiing opportunities all year around.
18. \_\_\_\_ Whatever cannot be bought in Ecuador could be sent to the student by parcel post.
19. \_\_\_\_ Students, while in Ecuador, will have to adjust to new menus, ways of preparing food and different meal schedules.

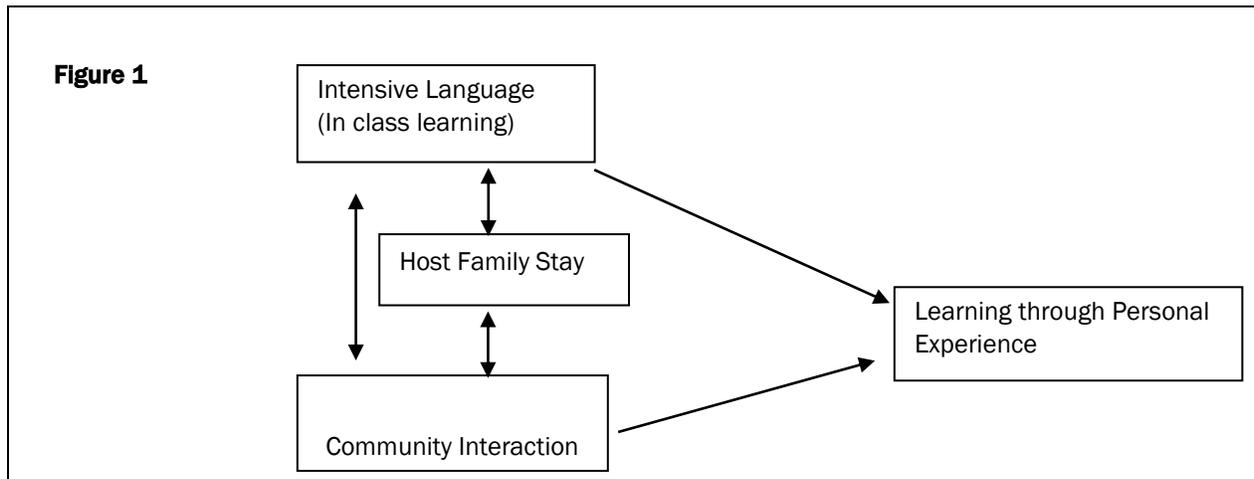
# OUR EDUCATIONAL MODEL, PHILOSOPHY, AND PROGRAM STRUCTURE

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 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.

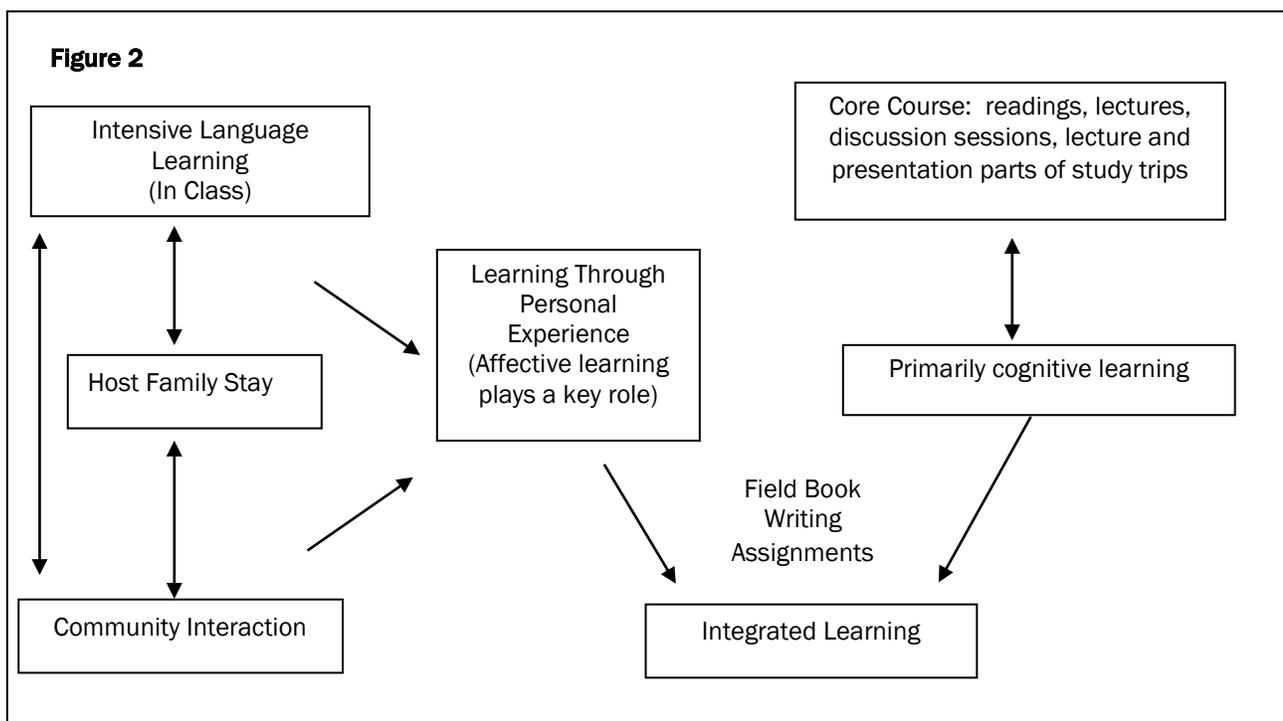
As you can see from Figure 1, intensive language instruction (in the classroom) allows you to participate fully in the life of your host family and make that part of your program into an important mode of learning. At the same time, full participation in the life of your host family allows you to develop 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.

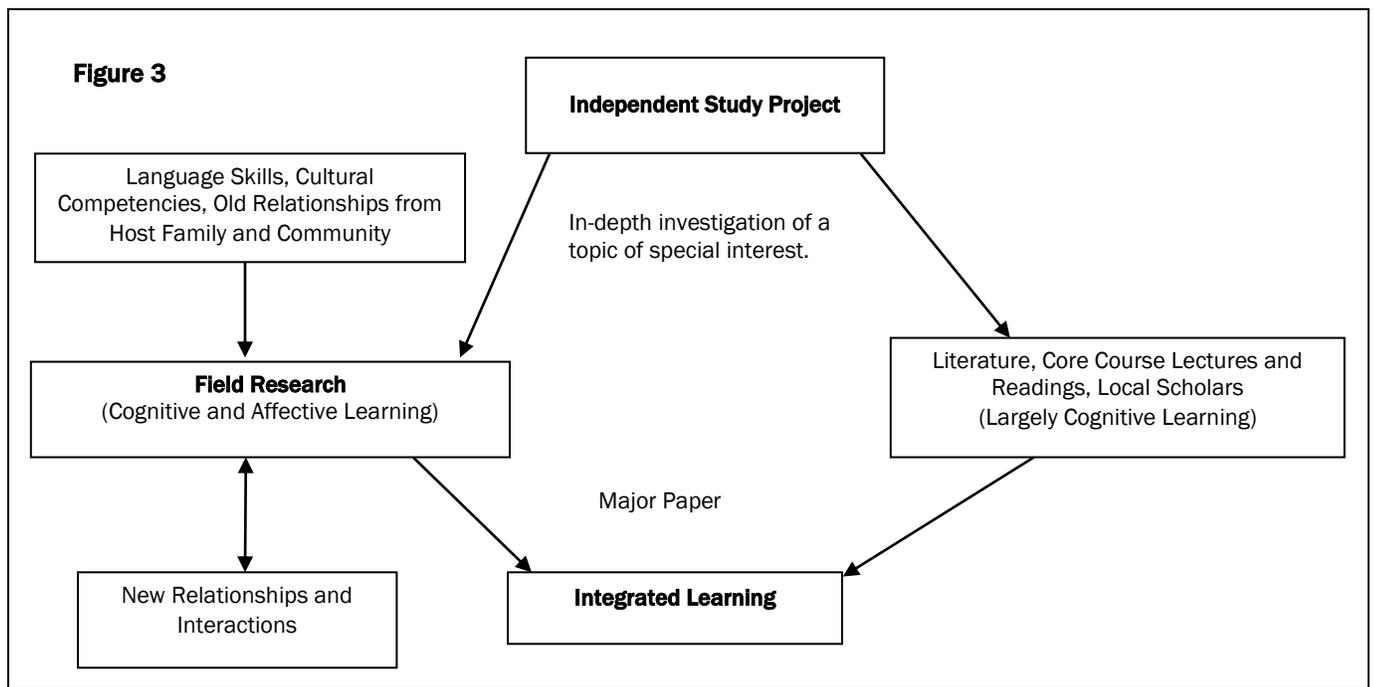
### Integrated Learning and your Independent Study Project (ISP)

Please carefully review the section in this handbook on the independent study project. The ISP 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 ISP is another opportunity to engage in integrated learning. Reviewing the literature of your ISP 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 ISP 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 hours a day, five days a week. 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.

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 as part of the ISP.

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 ISP 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 the focus of your ISP. Know 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.

## 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 they know 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

## LOCATION

High in the Andes and with a spring-like climate throughout the year, Quito, Ecuador, is one of the most beautiful cities in South America. In 1978, UNESCO designated Quito as a world cultural heritage site, ensuring the preservation of some of the most impressive colonial era architecture in Latin America. With geography that encompasses tropical Pacific beaches, Andean mountain villages, and the Amazon rainforest, Ecuador provides a dynamic setting for studying the challenges that face a small, developing nation.



## COURSES AND CREDITS

	Course Credits	Semester Units
<b>Core Course: Ecuador, un país andino</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Independent Study Project (ISP)</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Intensive Spanish or Content Courses for Advanced Students</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>8</b>

**Students at beginning, intermediate or advanced-low levels** will take Intensive Spanish as a second language at Academia Latinoamericana de Español, a premier language institution in Quito with which Pitzer has had a relationship for over twenty years.

### Students with Advanced Spanish proficiency

(usually 5 or 6 semesters of college Spanish or the equivalent) and a suitable language evaluation may take content courses at Universidad San Francisco de Quito for up to two Pitzer course credits.

Grades for this program will be recorded on a Pitzer College transcript and included in the Pitzer GPA. Students are required to participate fully in all program components and are not allowed to withdraw from individual courses. Students must take all courses for a letter grade.

Students who wish to receive credit towards their major for a particular course should consult their academic adviser for guidelines. At Pitzer College the field group decides which courses may be counted towards a major or minor graduation requirement. The Pitzer registrar in conjunction with various field groups decides which courses may be counted towards general graduation requirements. 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 before you go.

## The Core Course - Ecuador, un país andino

The Pitzer core course, *Ecuador: un país andino*, integrates all components of the program, including lectures, study trips, involvement in a local community organization and the family stay. It offers an important framework for understanding the social, political, economic, and environmental issues in contemporary Ecuador and provides students with training in ethnographic field methods that they will employ in their independent study project. Students meet once a week in class and spend additional hours participating in a community organization in Quito. The core course is taught in Spanish by the program director, using a sheltered approach that is appropriate for all language levels, and that allows all students to engage fully in the ideas and issues covered in the classroom and the readings.



## Intensive Spanish

Intensive Spanish is offered at the beginner, intermediate and advanced levels through *Academia Latinoamericana de Español*, Quito's premier Spanish as a Second Language institute. The course emphasizes both oral and written proficiency through a highly communicative, interactive curriculum that is closely connected to the homestay experience, issues raised in the core course, and other field activities. Students attend language classes for 16 to 20 hours a week for the duration of the program for a total of over 200 hours of in-class instruction. Becoming fluent in Spanish, however, is not just a classroom exercise. Language learning is part of your everyday life through interactions with your host family, program staff and internship organization. The competence you develop in Spanish will be crucial to realizing your educational goals in Ecuador, and a vital component of this will be the commitment you make to create a Spanish-speaking environment both in and out of class. Intensive Spanish is offered at the beginner, intermediate and advanced levels through *Academia Latinoamericana de Español*.

## Courses at USFQ

Students who have sufficient language proficiency and want to take regular content courses at USFQ must register with the university, take an on-line proficiency exam, and then select and register for courses on line. Instructions will be provided during orientation.

## Service Learning

In order to gain firsthand experience with issues explored in the core course, students spend two afternoons a week participating in a service learning experience with a local organization. A variety of opportunities are available, ranging from work in a hospital or clinical setting, to teaching in a school for indigenous children, to participating in an organization that assists street children and their families.



## Independent Study Project

The independent study project for this program allows students to engage in an in-depth exploration of a topic of interest. This part of the program, often allows students to do something in their major that they couldn't do back in the States, and can easily serve as the beginning of a senior thesis. Students must select a project that involves ethnographic field research, and other techniques that facilitate cultural immersion. The project culminates in a major paper written in Spanish for students with advanced Spanish proficiency, and in English for students with beginning or intermediate Spanish proficiency.

## STUDY TRIPS

To deepen students' understanding of topics covered in the core course, students will participate in a rural stay in the Quichua-speaking mountain community of San Clemente and an excursion to the Amazon, as well as a variety of day trips to organizations and places of historical and cultural importance in and around Quito.

## FAMILY STAY

Host families are important co-educators on the program, providing students with a singular opportunity to develop their Spanish proficiency, learn about Ecuadorian culture, and explore issues raised in the core course. The first and longest family stay will take place in Quito with a middle-class, professional family. The second, shorter stay, will take place with an indigenous family in the rural community of San Clemente, where families engage in agriculture and maintain many of their cultural and ancestral practices.

# INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECT

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The Independent Study Project (ISP) 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 ISP 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 ISP 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.

## 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 Independent Project

ISP 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 adviser or program staff as requested and necessary. Program staff must approve ISP topics and locations. Some locations and topics will not be approved because of safety, health or other concerns.

### Library Research

The ISP 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 ISP paper, but the bulk of your ISP 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.

### **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 Independent Study Project**

Students participating in ISPs 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.

## HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

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The **Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** and the **World Health Organization (WHO)** provide up-to-date health information on their websites at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.htm> and <http://www.who.int/ith>.

There are special health considerations for students traveling to Ecuador. If you have a heart condition you should be aware that Quito's altitude (close to 10,000 feet) might cause serious health risks. You should consult with your personal medical provider before undertaking high-altitude travel. Malaria, yellow fever, and cholera are reaching epidemic levels in some outlying regions and are encroaching on the outskirts of cities such as Guayaquil.

### Immunizations

Ecuador 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 Ecuador. 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**; this is a serious and widespread disease in much of South America.

### 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 Ecuador 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 present in some parts of Ecuador, but not in Quito, so you do NOT need to take the prophylaxis for the entire program. Because the drug prophylaxis currently available in Ecuador may be ineffective due to resistant strains of Malaria known to be present in some areas of Ecuador, Pitzer highly recommends you bring enough to cover the one week trip to the Amazon and any other independent travel to malaria areas you may anticipate. Please review the CDC Malaria Information at <http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/travelers/index.html> and speak with your doctor to choose the appropriate amount for your needs. At the very least, you should bring enough Malaria prophylaxis for the one week trip to the Amazon. The CDC recommends the following drugs: **mefloquine** (brand name **Lariam®**), **doxycycline**, or **Malarone™**.

Of the three options, the one with the least side effects seems to be Malorone. This is also the most expensive, but if you can afford it, or your insurance company pays for it, and if your physician feels Malorone is an appropriate drug for you, this may be your best bet.

### 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 also 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, is very important. Yellow fever is endemic throughout parts of Ecuador, and the **vaccination is required for all students** who participate on the program. It's a onetime shot good for ten years.



**Students must bring their yellow fever vaccination certificate with them to Ecuador.**

## 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 Ecuador, the need for an emergency blood transfusion is possible for anyone and this vaccination is **highly recommended**. 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 Quito where it is 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 web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html> for additional information.)

## AIDS

A serious health concern for travelers to South 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 Ecuador.

## Zika Virus

The Zika Virus has spread rapidly over the last year throughout many areas of South and Central America, including areas of Ecuador along the Pacific coast below 6,500 feet in elevation. According to the Ecuadorian ministry of public health, as of Oct.5, 2016, there have been 2,437 cases of locally transmitted Zika within Ecuador with the majority in the coastal provinces of Manabía (2,054 cases), Esmeraldas (193 cases) and Guayas (101 cases). The hardest hit province, Manabía was the region along the coast devastated by the earthquake last spring. The lack of public health infrastructure due to the quake probably explains the high number of cases in that part of Ecuador relative to the rest of the country. The capital city, Quito, at 9000 feet elevation, where the bulk of the program takes place, has no risk for Zika. Additionally, the number of cases has steadily been decreasing over the last 4 to 5 weeks which is a very good sign.

The Zika virus is transmitted primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* genus of mosquito (mainly *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*), the same mosquito that spreads dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever viruses. These mosquitos are aggressive daytime biters and can also bite at night. Studies conducted in Mexico indicate that these mosquitoes probably cannot survive over 2,100m (6,890 ft) in elevation, meaning most areas of the central Andean corridor are too high for these mosquitos to survive. The virus can also be spread through sexual contact and blood. Sexual transmission is of particular concern for men who have been in a Zika area who might spread the virus to their pregnant partner or to a partner who may be planning to get pregnant in the near future.

The most common symptoms of Zika virus disease in adults are fever, rash, joint or muscle pain, weakness, headache and conjunctivitis (red eye). Usually these symptoms appear just a few days after being exposed to the virus, are mild, and last from several days to a week. Sometimes they are so mild that the person infected does not realize they may have contracted the disease. The effects of the virus on pregnant women and their fetus however, can be much more severe and there is conclusive evidence that the virus can cause microcephaly in the fetus and other poor pregnancy outcomes. There is also strong evidence that Zika is occasionally related to a rare nervous disorder called Guillain - Barre syndrome, which can cause paralysis or death.

The CDC is urging special precautions for pregnant women and women trying to become pregnant, including avoiding travel to Zika infected areas and postponing becoming pregnant after being in an area where the virus is present. Men are advised to practice safer sex or abstinence for six months after being in a Zika zone, whether they have experienced symptoms or not.

It is not yet conclusively known how long the virus stays in someone after they become infected, and therefore, how long an infected woman might be at risk for fetal abnormalities if she is pregnant or wants to become pregnant, and how long an infected man would be able to infect a partner through sexual contact. The WHO and CDC recommendations to take precautions for six months after possible exposure is, admittedly, based on limited evidence, but seems to be accepted by most of the medical and public health community. There is currently no evidence that there is risk beyond six months.

There is currently no vaccine or medicine for Zika so the best way to avoid the disease is to avoid areas where Zika is being actively spread. If travel to a Zika area is unavoidable, it is important to take maximum precautions to avoid mosquito bites (see *Prevention of Mosquito Bites* below) and to avoid pregnancy and practice safer sex or abstinence (see *CDC Zika and Sexual Transmission* link below) while in the area and for six months thereafter.

Because the situation is changing so rapidly, it is difficult to know at this time how the Zika outbreak might affect the program in Ecuador. Since Quito is way above the upper elevation limit for mosquitos that carry Zika, there is no danger at all that the bulk of the program will be affected. However, depending on how the epidemic progresses over the next few months, we may have to limit travel to certain areas of the country where local transmission of Zika is occurring, including, possibly, areas along the coast and in the Amazon. We may also ask you to sign a special waiver specific to Zika.

We are monitoring the situation closely and will keep you updated as new information comes in. We also encourage you to keep informed by monitoring the relevant CDC and WHO websites: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/> and <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/zika/en/> and other reliable sources of information:

Zika Virus Net – Updates on Zika from many sources including CDC, WHO, PAHO, and many others  
<http://www.zikavirusnet.com/guidelines.html>

WHO Zika Fact Sheet - <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/zika/en/>

CDC Zika and Sexual Transmission - <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/transmission/sexual-transmission.html>

CDC scientific studies on sexual transmission and how long Zika may stay in system after infection --  
[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6539e1.htm?s\\_cid=mm6539e1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6539e1.htm?s_cid=mm6539e1_w)

CDC Zika Virus in Ecuador - <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/zika-virus-ecuador>

Ecuador Ministry of Health - <http://www.salud.gob.ec/zika/>

Scroll down and click on “GACETA ZIKA SEM 39-2016” for updated statistics on numbers of cases in various provinces of Ecuador.

### **Other Mosquito Borne Diseases and Prevention of Mosquito Bites**

**Besides Zika, there is risk of several other mosquito borne diseases in the lower elevations of Ecuador, especially along the coast and in the Amazon, including Malaria, Chikungunya, Denge and Yellow Fever. All Pitzer students are strongly encouraged to take the following precautions for preventing mosquito bites whenever they are in areas where mosquito borne disease is possible.**

The best way to reduce mosquitoes is to eliminate the places where the mosquito lays her eggs, like artificial containers that hold water in and around the home. Outdoors, clean water containers like pet and animal watering containers,

flower planter dishes or cover water storage barrels. Look for standing water indoors such as in vases with fresh flowers and clean at least once a week.

The adult mosquitoes like to bite inside as well as around homes, during the day and at night when the lights are on. To protect yourself, use repellent on your skin while indoors or out. When possible, wear long sleeves and pants for additional protection. Also, make sure window and door screens are secure and without holes. If available, use air-conditioning.

If someone in your house is ill with one of the mosquito borne diseases, take extra precautions to prevent mosquitoes from biting the patient and going on to bite others in the household. Sleep under a mosquito bed net, eliminate mosquitoes you find indoors and wear repellent!

List of repellent products approved by the EPA: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/>

Preventing bites can be difficult, but it is important as you can get sick after just one bite. Follow these steps to reduce the chances that you will be bitten by mosquitoes during your trip.

- Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE, also called para-menthane-diol [PMD]), or IR3535. Always use as directed.
  - Pregnant and breastfeeding women can use all EPA-registered insect repellents, including DEET, according to the product label.
  - Most repellents, including DEET, can be used on children older than 2 months. (OLE should not be used on children younger than 3 years.)
- Use permethrin-treated clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents). You can buy pre-treated clothing and gear or treat them yourself.
- Stay in places with air conditioning and window and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if air conditioned or screened rooms are not available or if sleeping outdoors.
- Mosquito netting can be used to cover babies younger than 2 months old in carriers, strollers, or cribs to protect them from mosquito bites.

## Preventing Gastro Intestinal Illness

Basic health guidelines to be followed faithfully in areas of Ecuador or surrounding countries where the risk for water and food-borne disease significant or unknown

### Water

If there is any doubt about whether tap water is safe in a particular area:

- Drink only boiled or bottled water.
  - If boiled, make sure the water is poured into a clean container after boiling (not poured into a pitcher or glass that has been rinsed with tap water).
  - If bottled, make sure it is from a reputable company and comes in a properly sealed bottle.
- Besides your drinking water, avoid other sources of contaminated water including: ice cubes, fruit drinks mixed with water, any other food products or drinks that are mixed with water.
- Avoid wet plates, cups, glasses and utensils. Make sure your food and drink is served in clean and dry plates, cups, etc.
- Use boiled or bottled water for brushing teeth and try not to swallow water when you shower.
- When ordering a drink at a restaurant or bar, ask that the original bottle be brought to your table and opened in front of you. Then, you can pour it into a clean, dry glass, or (in the case of soft drinks or beers) drink straight from

the bottle if necessary. This minimizes the chance that your drink might be poured into a glass that has just been rinsed in tap water. This also minimizes the chance that your drink can be tampered with (Ruffies, Micky Finns, etc.)

- Avoid mixed alcoholic drinks (often have juices, water, ice, raw herbs or other unsafe items mixed in) in favor of beer, wine and soft drinks.
- Avoid fruit drinks unless you are sure they come in a bottle or container from a reputable company, or have been made with well cleaned fruit and haven't had water or ice mixed in.

**Unless you are 100% sure, assume all tap and well water to be contaminated. (CDC Recommendations)**

### **Salads, Vegetables and Fruit**

- Avoid salads, uncooked vegetables and raw fruit, especially in restaurants.
- You can eat smooth-skinned raw vegetables and fruits if you wash them carefully with soap and water and dry them thoroughly, and peel yourself. Items that are OK when cleaned and dried properly include thin-skinned fruits like guava, mango or papaya, and smooth vegetables like tomatoes, cucumbers, etc.
- Avoid lettuce; it is difficult to clean properly.
- Thick skinned fruits like bananas and oranges need not be cleaned, but if eaten without cleansing, care must be taken when peeling to not contaminate the inside fruit with fingers or knives that have come into contact with the outside skin. Even with thick-skinned fruits, washing with soap and water and then drying thoroughly is probably a good idea, especially with oranges.

### **Flies**

- Avoid food that has been (or may have been) exposed to flies, especially in areas where you have doubts about hygiene and sanitation, or where there are lots of farm animals.

### **Hands**

- Wash your hands thoroughly (usually for 15-20 seconds) with soap and water and dry completely, especially before eating and after going to the bathroom. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel (with at least 60% alcohol) for 15 seconds, but soap and water is preferred.
- Try to eat in restaurants where food preparers and servers practice good hygiene.

### **Food**

- Stick with freshly cooked food that is prepared when you order it and served hot.
- Avoid street food unless you are sure it is fresh, wholesome and cooked properly as you wait.
- As mentioned above, avoid salads.
- Make sure milk products are pasteurized.
- Make sure meat, fish and sea food is fresh and well cooked.
- Peel hard boiled eggs yourself. Don't eat raw or soft-cooked (runny) eggs.
- Don't eat "Bushmeat" (monkeys, bats, or other wild game).

### **What to do if You Get Sick**

If you get sick while in Ecuador please contact the program staff as soon as possible. Emergency phone numbers are provided on the last page of your handbook. Additional phone numbers will be provided once in Costa Rica.

## **PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES FOR STAYING HEALTHY**

General health precautions for students in Ecuador will be covered thoroughly during the on-site orientation immediately after arrival in Quito. 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 and International Programs and your program sponsor know if you are on any medications, have any allergies, or any other medical conditions that could possibly require accommodation while you are abroad.** Plan to take adequate supplies of medications and copies of medical prescriptions with you. See the section *Traveling with Medication*.

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.
7. Remember that AIDS/HIV infection rates in other regions of the world can be significantly higher than in the US. Practice safe sex, or better yet, abstinence.
8. Beware that use of recreational drugs is illegal in most places and is not permitted under Pitzer College policies. Additionally, the strength and content of drugs overseas are different than what you may find in the US and may be deadly.
9. The Zika Virus is spreading rapidly worldwide. The situation is evolving quickly and there are still many unknowns about the potential effects of the virus, the mode and ease of transmission, how high in elevation the mosquitos that carry the virus can survive, and how long the virus may be present in someone who has been affected. We are monitoring the situation closely and will keep you updated as new information comes in. We also encourage you to keep informed by monitoring the relevant CDC and WHO websites: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/> and <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/zika/en/> and other reliable sources of information.



**Have complete physical and dental examinations before you go.**

## TRAVELING WITH MEDICATION

If you have a health condition that requires medication you will need to plan ahead for traveling. Usually it is necessary to take adequate supplies of medications and copies of prescriptions with you. Shipping may be unreliable and some medications may not be available even with a local physician's prescription. **Although many over-the-counter medicines may be carried internationally, some cannot. Medications prescribed in the US may be unlicensed or controlled substances not only in your destination country but in countries along your route.** Some medications have restrictions on the amount that can be carried through customs. For details of US regulations, consult the following web site: <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/know-before-you-go/prohibited-and-restricted-items>. You should also check with the consulate of your host country about any restrictions or special procedures required for transporting prescriptions into the country. Be sure to find out before you go. The following websites provide information to assist you in your research.

### US Department of State - Your Health Abroad

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go/health.html>

### OSAC US Department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security - Traveling with Medication

<https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=17386>

### US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2014/chapter-2-the-pre-travel-consultation/travel-health-kits>

### Transportation Security Administration - TSA Cares Help Line

<http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/travelers-disabilities-and-medical-conditions>

Travelers may call TSA Cares toll free 866.289.9673 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Weekends and Holidays 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time.

# INSURANCE

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## 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 College requires proof of insurance be provided to the College EACH year that you are an enrolled student. 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. 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. Providing insurance information to the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs does NOT meet the annual notification requirement. If proof of insurance is not provided to Student Affairs, the student's account may be charged with the current annual Student Health Insurance Premium. Visit the Pitzer College website or contact the Pitzer College Office of Student Affairs for questions about the Pitzer College health insurance.

## 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. The insurance coverage is in effect whether or not the card is in your possession.

**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 and will NOT be accepted in lieu of payment at medical facilities.** 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.

### Travel Insurance Coverage

- Trip Interruption – Return Air Only \$1,500
- Trip Delay Minimum 12 Hours Delay \$200 per Day, Maximum of \$500
- Emergency Accident and Emergency Sickness Medical Expense \$100,000, No Deductible
- Emergency Dental Only \$500
- Emergency Medical Evacuation \$500,000
- Repatriation of Remains \$50,000
- Emergency Non-Medical Evacuation Due to Catastrophe \$50,000
- Security or Political Evacuation \$50,000
- Accidental Death and Dismemberment Principal Sum \$25,000
- Accidental Death and Dismemberment – Common Carrier (Air Only) Principal Sum \$100,000
- Baggage Delay Minimum 12 Hours Delay \$200 per Day, Maximum of \$200
- Baggage and Personal Effects Including Lost Passport or Visa Replacement Expense per Item: \$250, per category (e.g. electronics) \$500 for a total maximum of \$2000

Coverage is underwritten by American Modern Home Insurance Company under **plan number AMT254032014**. Your Policy will govern the final interpretation of any provision or claim. A copy of your policy will be emailed to you when your card is ready for pick up. You may also request a copy from the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs.

**Emergency travel assistance services** are provided by April Travel Protection. If you need assistance, you can call toll free 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at one of these phone numbers:

**In the United States and Canada:**  
**855.743.6739**

**Worldwide Customer Call Collect:**  
**305.455.1571**

**Email for Claims:**  
[claims@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:claims@apriltravelprotection.com)

**Email for Travel Assistance and Concierge Services:**  
[assistus@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:assistus@apriltravelprotection.com)

**SMS Text Short Code for all Services: 51303**

**Skype for All Services: april\_us**

## **SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

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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 that look after our students as if they were their own children.

Our program directors are dedicated to the care and education of our students. Their labors extend beyond the operation of our programs to on-going professional training in international education. That kind of commitment, rare in external studies 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. Among our key contacts are the families that take our students into their homes, feed them, teach them, and make them a part of their lives. Pitzer programs are an integral part of the communities that host our programs and the families that host our students are an active and involved component of our education programs and safety networks. The host fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers of Pitzer students are as committed to the wellbeing of our students as our field staff. Host families provide students with a low profile safe harbor during sensitive political events, careful immediate attention during a period of illness, and the practical and emotional support of a true home away from home.

### **OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFETY**

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

1. Pitzer regularly monitors US State Department 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 external study 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 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.

11. Students are asked to register with the US embassy or the embassy of their home country, before departure through the STEP program. Program staff maintains regular contact with the US embassy regarding safety concerns.
12. 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 internship, on independent travel, etc.)

## **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 - GENERAL GUIDELINES**

You can have a major impact on your own health and safety through the decisions you make before and during your external study 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 orientation.
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 wellbeing 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.

## **SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR ECUADOR**

- Reduce risk of robbery or assault by integrating into the local culture as much as possible: spend significant time with your host family; dress, behave and interact in ways that respect local cultural values and do not call attention to being American or a tourist.
- Do not carry valuables (passport, credit cards, laptops, large sums of money, etc.) with you when you walk around town. If you must carry valuables around with you for certain purposes, be discrete, travel with a group of friends, wear a money belt, take a taxi, etc.
- When you exchange at an ATM, use discretion. Do not, for instance, exchange money and walk away into a mall or street. That will make you a likely target. Try to go with friends and leave in a taxi.
- Do not travel alone, especially after dark, in isolated areas of the city, or when leaving clubs or bars.
- Do not hitch hike.
- Bicycle riding in Quito is not permitted.
- If it's getting late at night, and the streets are getting deserted, take a taxi home, even if you are with friends. If taking a taxi is a financial burden, collect the receipt and Pitzer will reimburse you.
- If you are involved in a robbery, do not risk injury by trying to resist or fight off the perpetrator.
- Carry a list of emergency phone numbers with you at all times so that you can contact program staff at the office or at home in case of an emergency.
- Avoid areas of the country or your host community not considered safe. Your host family will provide valuable advice in this regard. Program staff will also provide guidelines on this.
- Avoid large crowds, demonstrations or political rallies. These gatherings can easily turn violent.

- If you do go to a club or bar, do so with a group of fellow students or friends from the host community. Keep an eye on each other. Never, ever accept a ride home with a stranger or someone you just met that evening, and never allow one of your friends to leave with a stranger.
- When ordering drinks, ask for the bottle to be brought to your table. Do not leave drinks unattended. These simple steps will minimize the chance that your drink can be tampered with (Ruffies, Micky Finns, etc.)
- Refrain from impairing your judgment, and risking assault, robbery or arrest, with the use of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Stay in regular contact with program staff when you travel. You must receive permission from the program coordinator for independent (overnight) travel away from your host family. When traveling on an overnight trip or even outside the local area on a long day trip, provide your itinerary and contact information for your destination. Let your host families know of any plans for overnight travel and make a courtesy phone call to your host family once you safely arrive at your destination.
- If you go to the beach, be aware of dangerous currents and riptides. Follow water safety guidelines – refrain from going into heavy surf unless you are an extremely experienced ocean swimmer or surfer. Always enter the water with a buddy and only swim or surf on beaches that have a life guard on duty.
- The program director will provide additional safety guidelines for you during the on-site orientation. Understand and faithfully follow the program guidelines for health and safety, including guidelines for extreme sports and prohibited activities.

## **EXTREME SPORTS AND OTHER PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES**

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, No hitch hiking or night buses. Additional details will be provided during your on-site orientation. Students who choose to participate in such activities during the program are subject to dismissal (see conditions of participation). 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.

## **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 and International Programs 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 or he 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 ON PITZER DIRECT RUN PROGRAMS**

Although extremely rare on Pitzer direct-run programs, problems of sexual harassment or abuse, racist comments or behavior, homophobia, theft and related issues 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. Host families are carefully selected with an eye toward minimizing these types of problems, and providing students with a safe and nurturing environment. 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, and homophobic or racist behavior or comments) that will be considered inappropriate.
2. Students should express any concerns or preferences they may have regarding host families to the study abroad office before departure for their program so that the in-country director can select host families with individual student needs and concerns in mind. Examples of things you might want to share: allergies, desire for a LGBTQ friendly family, health concerns with smoking or certain foods, desire for a family that welcomes students of color, etc.
3. 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 you may see in your family situation which, while not inappropriate in the host culture, may lead to potential misunderstandings.

4. As you know, Pitzer programs expect a strong commitment to cultural immersion and cultural appropriateness but this does not require you to endure behavior or comments that make you feel unsafe or that you believe puts your safety, health or emotional wellbeing in jeopardy.

Romantic or sexual behavior between a student and a host family member is never appropriate; you have the right to politely ask a host family member to stop any physical contact or behavior that is questionable or makes you feel uncomfortable. Similarly, racist or homophobic actions or comments that make you feel uncomfortable or unsafe are never appropriate. You have the right to notify family members that this type of behavior or language is painful or uncomfortable to you, and that you would like them to stop. In these types of situations, we strongly encourage you to immediately seek, support, clarification and guidance from your program director. In some cases, there may be a cultural or linguistic misunderstanding that can be easily worked out, or adjusted to, but in other cases, the behavior may in fact be clearly inappropriate and something your program director needs to address immediately. Early on in your program, you will not necessarily know the difference, thus the importance of communicating immediately with your program director when anything of this nature comes up, especially when you are confused or unsure about something.

5. Coming forward with questions or concerns about your host family behavior will never 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. While students tend to want to call parents in such situation, 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. Please know that you are welcome to call Pitzer staff in Claremont (mobile and work numbers are provided in the handbook) or your own study abroad director in situations where you might feel uncomfortable contacting the program director 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.

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. 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.

Living with a host family requires perseverance and effort as in any relationship. It is not always easy. We do not want you to give up on your host family simply because adjusting to the new culture, language and living situation is challenging. On the other hand, we want you to feel safe, welcomed, and part of the family, so that warm relationships can develop and language and culture learning can be maximized. Open communication with your program director in which you share challenges and concerns early on, as well as triumphs and high points will assure that this happens for you.

## 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. If you do not receive this information, ask for it. There is also emergency contact information inside the back cover of this handbook. While you are certainly free to contact your parents and families in any emergency, and indeed you should, please **inform the program staff first** since they can address your concerns immediately. Calling home only delays the process for intervention and may put undue stress on families who feel as though they are unable to help their sons or daughters abroad.

Pitzer provides the ISIC, which includes insurance to cover emergency 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 and other embassies (if you are not a US citizen) to facilitate your return home.

Provide your contact information abroad to your family and friends. Your family should also be advised to contact the Pitzer College staff members listed in the *Contact Information* section of this handbook.

True emergencies are actually quite rare. While losing luggage, tickets or even a passport is inconvenient and upsetting, it is not an emergency. Emergencies are situations in which there is an immediate threat to a student's health or safety.

## 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.

## US DEPARTMENT OF STATE TRAVEL SAFETY INFORMATION

### Students Abroad

<http://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en.html> 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://step.state.gov/step/> STEP is a free service provided by the US 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 address to use to register with STEP is 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.**

## PREPARE TO GO

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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 documents** to the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs.
- Email a scanned image or send a photocopy of your **passport** to the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs. 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, phone numbers, postal and email addresses of faculty and staff on campus who you may need to **contact** while abroad.
- Provide a **forwarding address** to the Pitzer College mail room. Include start and stop dates. Understand you will have a new mail box number upon your return to campus.
- 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, if applicable, 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. You must have **proof of yellow fever vaccination** to return to Ecuador after the Amazon study trip.
- Register** with the **US Department of State** Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://step.state.gov/step/> before you depart the US. Review **travel warnings**, if applicable.
- Complete 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://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.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/content/passports/english/passports/lost-stolen.html>.

For assistance in replacing your passport, call the International Student Identity Card (ISIC) emergency number. See the *Insurance* section 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

Visa and immigration requirements often obligate you to have a round trip ticket for entrance into the country. 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.**

Visa regulations in Ecuador are evolving. Information about the student visa will be provided when it becomes available.

If you plan to travel to other countries after the end of the program obtain your additional visa(s) 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.

### 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 and International Programs 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 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. Speak with your international student adviser. Check before you go!**

# TRANSPORTATION

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## PROGRAM DATES



**The Pitzer in Ecuador program runs from Tuesday, January 9 (arrival date) to Saturday, May 19, 2018 (departure date).** Pitzer requires you to participate in the entire program. Late arrivals or early departures are unacceptable. Loss of credit or lowering of grades may result if you arrive late or depart early.

## FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

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. 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.

Allow ample time to work with our travel agent to arrange your flight. When you contact the travel agent, identify yourself as a student on the Pitzer in Ecuador program.

### Pitzer's Designated Travel Agent

**KIM RUDD at Corniche Travel**

**Email:** [pitzer@corniche.com](mailto:pitzer@corniche.com)

**Phone:** 951.698.0089 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Additional agents are available from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., (Pacific time zone)

Phone: 310.854.6000 Monday through Friday, closed major holidays

Office: 8721 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 200, West Hollywood, CA 90069

[www.corniche.com](http://www.corniche.com)

For emergency after hours service, Please call 800.242.7274 within the US or call collect 203.787.6266 outside the US. Advise the agent of your executive code 6TAO (six tango alpha zero).

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

## Airfare Policy



**Program participants are REQUIRED to work directly with the travel agent designated by Pitzer College to finalize their tickets by the date indicated in their acceptance letters.** (If you are a student from Bard College or Sarah Lawrence College, please contact your study abroad office for the policy that applies to you as it is different.) Tickets not purchased through the Pitzer designated travel agent will NOT be reimbursed or credited to student accounts. Frequent flier miles may NOT be used to book flights.

**The maximum airfare Pitzer College will pay is based upon the cost of a round trip ticket from the closest major international airport to the student's permanent address city in the US to the designated international airport near the program site for the exact dates of the program.** For international students, the maximum airfare is based upon the cost of a round trip ticket from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The travel agent will bill Pitzer for the approved ticket. Students will pay the travel agent directly for the additional costs of an itinerary that is more expensive than the approved flight. No refund or credit is given if the ticket costs less than the maximum.

The following items may increase the cost of a ticket. Students will only be charged for actual overages.

- Finalizing travel arrangements after the due date listed in the student's acceptance letter
- Travel dates that vary from the dates of the program, including going early or staying after the program ends
- Special requests for routing or stopovers through specific cities or countries
- Open return tickets - these are discouraged and may not be possible due to visa requirements
- Extra luggage charges - airlines may change luggage restrictions without notice.
- Changing the ticket after it is issued. These costs include change fees and any increase in airfare.



- Replacing lost tickets



If for any reason, you are not able to use an airline ticket, the **airline must be notified prior to the departure of the first 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.

## 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.

## 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. Pitzer can assume no responsibility for students who stay on past the departure date.

## Flight Changes

If you choose to change the date of your return once you are in the host country, this can be a frustrating, complicated, and costly procedure. Check with the airline and the travel agent to research 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.

## E-Tickets, and Paper Tickets

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.

## ARRIVAL

### Baggage Claim

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

### Customs

Proceed to customs after collecting your bags.

### Where to Meet the Program Staff

**A program representative will be at the airport in Quito to meet you.** We will get your flight itinerary from the Pitzer designated travel agent and forward it to Sebastián Granda, the program director who will meet you at the Quito airport. After you collect your baggage and go through customs there is only one exit from the airport. Wait there for him to meet you.

If something unexpected occurs and you are not able to meet any portion of your flight or are unable to find the program representative at the airport, you should 1. call the Program Director Sebastián Granda's mobile phone or 2. call Sebastián Granda's home phone or 3. contact the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs in Claremont. Phone numbers are listed in the *Emergency Contact Information* inside the back cover of this handbook.

You and the other students on the program will stay in a local hotel for a night or two then meet and move in with your host families.

# MONEY MATTERS

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## HOW MUCH TO BRING AND HOW TO BRING IT

Generally speaking, most students spend the same amount of money (or slightly less) in Ecuador 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 Ecuador, 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 at least US \$1000.00 to cover personal and emergency expenses.**



Pitzer will cover your room and board for the entire program. This means room, three meals a day with your Ecuadorian family and meals on your overnight study trips. (See *Meals* below.)

We recommend you use credit cards or ATM cards for most of your personal expenses and for acquiring cash. You should have at least \$800 in your ATM account. If you bring cash bring \$10 and \$20 bills since \$50 and \$100 bills may be difficult to change.

## ATMs



ATMs with the Cirrus and Star symbols are accepted in Quito. Your bank will usually charge you a small fee for withdrawing funds from an international ATM.

## Credit Cards

Credit cards are also widely accepted in Ecuador and can be very handy in case of emergency. MasterCard and Visa are best. In some parts of the world, credit cards are usually chip and pin which is different than the chip and signature cards in the US. There are locations and businesses that may only accept chip and pin cards. If you do bring a credit card, be sure to leave your card number and its "Lost or Stolen" phone number at home. In the unlikely event that your credit card is lost or stolen, 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 Ecuador 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 Ecuador 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 Quito 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 to Pitzer College plus the \$550 travel will cover your program tuition, housing, meals, visas, travel insurance and airfare for the length of the international program 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 International Programs and the Office of Academic Affairs at Pitzer College. Money to cover in-country costs, such as accommodation, school fees or tuition, ISP 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 \$550 travel contribution for airfare and travel insurance for an international semester study abroad program. This charge will be placed on your student account for the semester you are abroad. For Pitzer students, Pitzer designates a travel agent for the student to book a round-trip airline ticket. (Refer to the *Transportation* section of this handbook for information on flight Arrangements and the airfare policy. See also the section on *Insurance*.)

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 adviser at your home school or with Jamie Francis at Pitzer for specific information.

## Additional Expenses

The items below are **NOT COVERED** in the semester comprehensive fees plus travel contribution or the summer study abroad fee and should be considered in your budget planning.

- Passport
- Photos required for applications and visas
- Cost of required immunizations
- Cost of the medical exam required prior to participation
- Comprehensive medical insurance coverage is required. (Fees for additional insurance, if required by the program or the host country, may be covered by Pitzer College. Ask the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs.)
- Additional costs incurred for airfare that costs more than the standard round-trip ticket (see Airfare Policy) or if arriving before or extending after the program dates, changing a ticket, or if participating on a domestic program
- Cost of housing and meals before or after the program or during school breaks (e.g. breaks between terms or semesters, spring break)
- Refundable deposits
- Expenses for items or services that are not typically provided on the program but to which students may be accustomed (e.g. email or internet access, access to computer labs, athletic facilities, etc.)
- Expenses for items or services that are not provided for in fees paid to Pitzer (e.g. personal entertainment, toiletries, independent travel during school breaks, field trips that are not a required part of a course, mobile phone charges, laundry charges, etc.)
- Clothing (e.g. winter jackets, boots, rain gear, formal attire, etc.) needed for climate conditions, cultural reasons or activities at the program site
- Course fees, lab fees and supplies
- Textbooks

- Expenses resulting from a difference in the cost of living. Expenses in your study abroad location may be the same, higher or lower than in Claremont.

## Exchange Rates

Exchange rates can change daily. Keep the exchange rate in mind when budgeting. The exchange rates can vary between now and your program departure. A handy website for tracking these rates is [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com).

## BILLING

### Pitzer College Students

Pitzer College students will be billed by the Student Accounts office for Pitzer College's comprehensive semester fee plus the \$550 travel contribution in the same manner as all other semesters.

### Student Accounts

Charges for your semester abroad will be available via CASHNet. **Students who will be abroad are strongly encouraged to provide authorization to parents or other parties to view and/or make payments on their account.** For further assistance or to report problems with the CASHNet site, please contact the Office of Student Accounts at 909.621.8191.

### Financial Aid

Pitzer financial aid can be applied toward the fees of any approved program. Please consult the financial aid office for specific details on how your financial aid, including the travel contribution, will be handled.

### Withdrawal Fee

If a student withdraws after accepting a place on the program, Pitzer will bill the student's account for a withdrawal fee of \$350 plus any non-recoverable expenses paid on the student's behalf. Please refer to the *Conditions of Participation* for full information on when or if a refund is due to the student. Note that there may be other withdrawal charges assessed by the exchange sponsor and these fees are the responsibility of the student.

### 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. Pitzer College does not offer financial aid for visiting students. Please contact our Office of Study Abroad and International Programs and/or your home institution's 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

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## PHONE, EMAIL AND MAIL

### Contact Information in Claremont

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

**Phone** 909.621.8104  
**Email** [studyabroad@pitzer.edu](mailto:studyabroad@pitzer.edu)

**Mailing address**  
West Hall, Suite Q100  
1050 North Mills Avenue  
Claremont, CA 91711

**Office hours**  
Monday through Friday  
8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
except holidays

### Ways to Make Contact While Abroad

Email, mail, Skype, Facetime, Whatsapp, text, and mobile phone calls are all options for contacting the US from abroad or for family and friends to reach you. Email is not available through the program office, but most of the families will provide you an internet connection, or you will find cybercafés around the city.

### Emergency Phone Numbers for Students in Ecuador - see inside back cover

In an emergency, students in Ecuador 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 hardcopy of this Handbook.

### In Case of an Emergency at Home - Family and Friends

In case of emergency, parents or friends should contact the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs 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 they call the office number and we are closed they 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.

### Mobile Phones

You are free to bring your own mobile phone and purchase a local SIM card once in country. However, if you choose not to bring your own phone, or if your own phone doesn't work once outside the US, the program will make arrangements to provide you with a mobile phone. Whether you use a program mobile phone or your own, you will be responsible for keep a working phone (charged, paid up and ready to use in an emergency) on your person throughout the program.



Pitzer expects all students to use mobile phones in ways that are appropriate and responsible. In particular, mobile 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 mobile 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.

### Mailing and Shipping to Ecuador

Family and friends may send your mail to your new Ecuadorian home family address as soon as you are able to provide it.



Usually, regular mail takes between 10 and 14 days to arrive. If your family or friends need to send you a package urgently they should use express mail for speed and reliability, such as DHL. Although you can ship almost anything to Ecuador, please keep in mind that most items will require a special tax in order to clear customs. Think twice before shipping expensive items, such as computers or electric gadgets, the exorbitant taxes will make it preferable to leave them in customs. Always make sure to write on the package "NO COMMERCIAL VALUE".

Please be aware that packages sent from the US to Ecuador could get lost. This is an unfortunate reality, so family and friends should take this into account when mailing you a package. In lieu of sending a package (e.g. care package, birthday gift), we recommend families and loved ones simply deposit something extra in your ATM account and send you a note with best wishes to enjoy a nice dinner out on the town with your friends or host family.

## STUDENT COMMUNICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

### Read your Email

Before, during, and after your study abroad experience someone from the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs or another Pitzer College office may contact you with information about orientation, health, safety, academic, finances, or other matters. Faculty may need to contact you about academic issues, invitations to do a senior thesis, etc. **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](http://www.pitzer.edu/pitpass) or contact the Pitzer Helpdesk at [help@pitzer.edu](mailto:help@pitzer.edu).

### Keep your Student Contact and Emergency Information Current

We may also try to reach you via your mobile phone, home phone, 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 Pitzer College database or in your Study Abroad file. It is important that you notify the Office of Study Abroad and International Programs AND the Office of the Registrar at [registrar@pitzer.edu](mailto:registrar@pitzer.edu) (to update the College database) of any changes to your personal information.

When you leave campus for a semester your Pitzer College student mail box is assigned to another student. You will have a different box number upon your return to Claremont. Before you leave campus provide forwarding information to the Pitzer College Mail Center. A forwarding address in the US is strongly recommended. Contact Kathleen Kile, Mail Center Supervisor, at [Kathleen\\_kile@pitzer.edu](mailto:Kathleen_kile@pitzer.edu) for more information.



# WHAT TO BRING

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## 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 Ecuador **visa letters**
- Your **airline ticket**
- Credit and ATM cards**
- An official **immunization record** from your doctor or health clinic and a photocopy.
- International Student Identity Card (ISIC).**
- Your **medical insurance information.**
- Important **contact information** for your home institution.
- This **handbook** and any other pre-departure reading materials



## Clothing, Medicine and Miscellaneous

What you bring is an individual matter. It depends upon what you may want to buy in Quito, how much you want to carry (the lighter the better), and what you plan to do during your semester. Everything you might need is available in Quito, but you may not have access to your favorite brands. We suggest you come **as light as possible** and buy anything else you need in Ecuador. Traveling becomes much more enjoyable as the weight of your bags decrease. Whether you bring it with you or buy it, the following items are suggested:

### Clothing

You should have at least an 8-day supply of clothing (made up of a mixture of the following). Keep in mind that Quito has an average temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and is cooler at night (the rainy season begins in November and continues through April, and you will need warmer clothing in Quito). You should bring a few sets of more formal attire for occasional social necessities and warm and light mountain clothes for trekking. People dress slightly more conservatively than in other big cities. For example, legs are hardly ever exposed above the knee in Quito.

- 2 pairs of **shorts** (not short shorts, and **no shorts in Quito** – running pants are better for jogging)
- 1 or more pairs nice, dark **dress pants**
- 2 nice **dresses**
- 2 **dress shirts with collars**
- 1 **tie**
- Jeans** or long cotton pants
- T-shirts** (American logos are common)
- Long sleeve shirts**
- Underwear**
- Socks** (wool, stockings, tights, leggings)
- 1 pair of **walking shoes**
- 1 pair of **sandals**
- 1 pair **dress shoes** (flats or low heel and preferably black)

- Sweatshirts or sweaters** with hoods
- Rain jacket** (with hood, if possible)
- Scarf** and **hat**
- Light **bathrobe**, below knee
- Bathing suit**

## Toiletries

You will need items similar to those you would use in the States (e.g. soap, razors, nail clippers, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, comb and brush, shampoo, etc.). Most items are available in Ecuador but if you're attached to a particular brand you should bring it with you. You should not pack razors or any other potential weapon-like accessories in your carry-on luggage.

## Medicines

- Antibiotics** Most medicines are available in Ecuador, but in consultation with your doctor, you may wish to bring your own selection of antibiotics, especially if you are prone to certain respiratory infections (Amoxil is a good choice).
- Insect repellent** and an after-bite ointment such as hydrocortisone
- Nasal decongestant**
- Malaria prophylaxis**, depending on your travel plans.
- Asthma medicine** (If required. If you have attacks of chronic asthma and use an inhaler, you should bring enough for the entire semester.)
- Pain-reducing pills** Pain-reducing pills: Aspirin is available in Ecuador, but you may want to bring your favorite aspirin substitutes such as Tylenol or Advil (also available in Ecuador).
- Bring **prescription medicines** in their original containers and copies of your prescriptions. You may also wish to bring a physician's note explaining the need for the medication. We recommend bringing enough for the entire semester. Shipping may be unreliable. Some medications may not be available even with a local physician's prescription. Be aware that some medicines are controlled substances and may be illegal in some countries. Refer to the information on Traveling with Medication in this handbook.
- If you wear contact lenses bring **eye drops** and multiple pairs of **contact lenses**

## Miscellaneous Items

- Small towel, large towel, washcloth, and scrub brush** (A past participant recommended a light weight camping towel that takes up less space in your luggage and dries quickly.)
- TSA approved locks for your baggage**
- Sunglasses**
- Locks** for your baggage
- Two standard size **notebooks** with at least three dividers
- Favorite **pens**
- Batteries**
- Small tape recorder** (for interviews or recording music)
- Pictures** of family and friends to share and give away
- Small **folding umbrella**
- Stationary** - including book for personal diary
- USB Flash drive**

## Galápagos study trip

The following items are on the tour company's suggested packing list. Many of these items are already listed elsewhere.

- Night: Cruise-Casual attire for dining; no shorts, swimwear or tank tops.
- On Shore: shorts or fast-drying slacks, T-shirts, or long sleeved cotton shirts.
- Walking shoes
- Thongs or sandals
- Wind breaker
- Hat with brim
- Bathing suits
- Bandana to cover the back of your neck from the sun's rays
- Sunglasses (with holding strap)
- Extra set of glasses or contact lenses + lens solution
- Sun block (SPF30 or higher)
- Insect repellent (Mosquitoes are NOT malaria carrying)
- Grooming kit
- Personal medication
- Multi-purpose Zip-loc bags
- Camera gear, extra memory and charger (or extra batteries)
- Lip balm (SPF30 or higher)
- Portable computer or Tablet (intermittent and low-bandwidth WiFi available onboard)

## Baggage

- 1 or 2 suitcases** 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
- Backpack** for trekking and trips.
- On regulation size **carry-on bag**.



**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/traveler-information/prohibited-items>

## Laptops: To Bring or Not to Bring?



The program strongly recommends you bring a laptop if you have one for your convenience in writing your assignments that must be typed. There are numerous, inexpensive internet cafes in Quito where you can type assignments if necessary, but these do cost and are not as convenient as having your own computer. Previous students recommend bringing a wireless internet card for possible free Internet use in certain areas of Quito. Ecuador voltage is the same as in the US; it is recommended that you bring one or two three-pronged plug adapters for your computer or any other electronic with a grounding plug.

## GIFTS

It's always nice to bring several small gifts from home for your Ecuadorian family members. 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 are very much appreciated. Calendars, chocolate, candy or t-shirts with slogans from home would also be nice.



# PREPARE TO RETURN HOME

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## Saying Goodbye

The bonds you form with people you meet when abroad go both ways. In most cases it would be impolite to just disappear. Customs vary from culture to culture, and how you say goodbye can be just as important as the proper greeting when you first met.

- Plan ahead if you have exams to take or papers and projects due at the end of the program. Give yourself a couple days to say goodbye, pack and visit your favorite places one last time.
- Find out what is expected of you before your last week in the host country. If you are expected to give parting gifts you may wish to purchase them during the semester as you explore and have more time to choose.
- Do not make promises lightly. If you invite someone to visit you at home, be prepared to be a gracious host. Be aware that customs restrictions, fees or shipping costs may make sending certain items from home impractical. If you promise to mail an item once you return, make every effort to do so. Keep in touch; send a note.

## What to Bring Home

- Souvenir is the French word for memory. If you want to bring home small items for yourself or your family and friends you may want to purchase them during the semester rather than in a rush at the end of the program. Check customs restrictions and duties before you buy: <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/>.
- If you cannot take something with you, take a photo. Include photos of your homestay or dorm room, your classrooms, local shops, people you meet (with their permission), local plants, animals, cultural items, monuments, foods, study trips, etc. Do you have a photograph for the cover of the next Pre-departure Orientation Handbook or the study abroad website?
- Collect names, addresses, email, phone numbers, host family information, etc. so that you can keep in touch with people you met while abroad. In addition, study abroad students undergoing background checks and security clearances years later have been asked to provide their home stay addresses. The Office of Study Abroad and International Programs does not have this information for prior years.
- Make notes on any research you may wish to continue or use for your thesis or a grant or fellowship application such as the Fulbright. Collect source data and the contact information for people and organizations.
- To get credit towards your major or another graduation requirement for work done abroad, be sure to bring home any syllabi, assignments, course catalogs or other information for faculty to make a determination.

## Culture Learning Workshop - Preparing to Return Home and After you are Home

Your experiences abroad are now part of you and it is not unusual to experience reverse culture shock after your return home. Working through Module 2 - Welcome Back! Now What? of the on-line culture learning workshop a few weeks before the end of your program will help you prepare to say goodbye and better understand reverse culture shock. Modules include 2.1 - Preparing to Come Home; 2.2 - If you are Preparing to Return Home Soon; 2.3 - Back Home: Neither Here nor There; 2.4 - What Did You Learn Abroad? and 2.5 - Say No to Shoeboxing The on-line culture learning workshop may be found at <http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/>. No written responses are required.

# REGISTRATION FOR NEXT SEMESTER'S COURSES

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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 are a Pitzer student who 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 contact information for anyone you may need to consult with 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

For instructions and course schedules visit the Registration Information and Resources website page at <https://www.pitzer.edu/registrar/registration-information-resources/> **Email your registration to [regabroad@pitzer.edu](mailto:regabroad@pitzer.edu) PRIOR to your assigned registration day and time. Remember to account for different time zones.**

In your email, please include the following:

**Subject line** - please put your name. Example: "Your Name - Fall 2016 Registration"

**Name**

**Student ID Number**

**Adviser**

**Major**

Course ID Number

Section Number

Course Title

Instructor

Day and Time

Please be assured that you will be registered with your class if we receive your registration request prior to your registration time. 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 email confirmation of classes. If a class you have requested is full or has been cancelled, you will be notified. Email 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. 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.

## APPENDIX A: SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND PREVENTION

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

## 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.

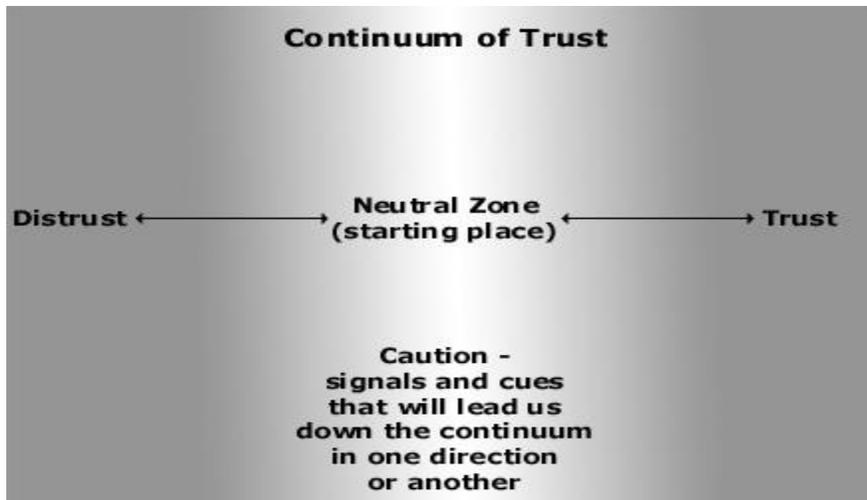
## Persistent People

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 they are 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.

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## **APPENDIX B: PITZER COLLEGE STUDY ABROAD OVERVIEW OF ETHICAL PRACTICES OF RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY**

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### **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 adviser 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 adviser.

### **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 C: ANSWERS TO CROSS-CULTURAL QUESTIONNAIRE

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The following statements are based on expectations commonly held by US students planning to study in Ecuador 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 - The city of Quito, being in a developing and poor country, cannot offer commodities found in the US, such as televisions, cars or shopping malls.**

Quito, the capital of Ecuador, is a city with close to two million inhabitants and offers all the commodities listed above, and many more, common to our modern, globalized world. However, it has also maintained a rich Spanish and Indian cultural heritage that gives it a unique character within the Andean region.

**2. FALSE - The most difficult physical adjustment for many students is getting used to the heat in Ecuador.**

The average temperature in Quito ranges from the 70's during the day, to the 50's during the night. These cool temperatures are due to the high altitude of the city, 9300ft. above sea level, making Quito the second highest capital in the world, after La Paz, Bolivia.

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

Whatever your religious beliefs, you will find that most Ecuadorians will respect them. There are many other Christian religions practiced in Ecuador and a small Jewish community. Some Indian ethnic groups still maintain some ancestral religious rituals.

**4. TRUE - When students arrive in Ecuador, they will be expected to communicate solely in Spanish with all members of their host families take a normal load of academic courses in Spanish and engage in the Pitzer Seminar, which has a community service component.**

The Pitzer Program in Ecuador emphasizes cultural immersion, along with the practice of the Spanish language in many different contexts. During Program Seminar activities, all students are required to speak Spanish with other fellow participants in the Program. This might require a lot of effort and concentration on your part, but the improvement of your communicative skills by the end of the semester will prove worthwhile.

**5. FALSE - Students will need a large amount of anti-malaria pills on hand during their semester in Ecuador.**

Because of Quito's high location and climatic conditions, it offers no malaria risks. Students traveling with the program to the Amazon Jungle, or traveling on their own to the Coast, will need to take anti-malaria pills only for these occasions.

**6. 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 Ecuadorian culture, their position needs to be stated very firmly. A weak refusal will only serve as an encouragement for more advances.

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

Even though there is a general belief that being North American means being rich, this does not imply that you need to establish a paternalistic relation with Ecuadorians of low-income levels. What would be most appreciated in the long run, and beneficial for both sides, is establishing human relations where there is 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 problems Ecuador faces today.

**8. 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 most part, they will find indirect means to make you aware of inappropriate conduct.

**9. 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.**

The problem has occurred frequently enough that the 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 host families.

**10. FALSE - Turning down food would be a great offense in a society where there are so many hungry people.**

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 Ecuadorian 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.

**11. TRUE - The dress code in Quito is more conservative than it would be in a coastal city with warmer weather. People do not wear shorts in the city and tank tops are not appropriate, especially if you are using public transportation.**

A practical way to find out what is appropriate in the dress code would be to observe your family members or other Ecuadorians 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.

**12. TRUE - Trekking or camping on Ecuadorian mountains and walking along beaches present a high personal risk.**

Hiking on Ecuadorian mountains should always be done in a group and accompanied by a well-trained guide. People that practice sports alone are easy victims of assaults or can get lost when weather conditions change. Camping in any public area and walks on lonely beaches are prohibited by the Pitzer program in Ecuador because of the risks entailed. Technical mountain climbing is prohibited during the program.

**13. 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 Saturday mornings at the Otavalo Indian market, only one and a half hours North of Quito by bus.

**14. TRUE - Students are often shocked by the unsanitary conditions found in some urban and rural settings in Ecuador.**

With more than half of its population at poverty level, Ecuador faces a chronic lack of appropriate sanitary infrastructure and its Government is unable to attend basic public needs in the area of education and health. These factors, along with other cultural factors which you will be able to discover when working close to the underprivileged classes, will help you see beyond the surface and understand the overall conditions in which their lives develop.

**15. FALSE - Americans do not make distinctions between social classes, thus US students should oppose any class distinctions practiced in Ecuador.**

How each society establishes these differences varies from culture to culture. Learning about this aspect of the culture can be quite challenging because it creates a natural conflict in the students normal perception of what is right and wrong within his normal cultural patterns. This brings about a judgmental attitude that doesn't take into consideration the historical factors behind the structure of the Ecuadorian social weave and the way it functions.

**16. FALSE - Since most Ecuadorian families have maids, students are not 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.

**17. FALSE - The Andean mountains will provide you with great skiing opportunities all year around.**

Glaciers cover Ecuador's high Andean peaks and the steep terrain often hides dangerous crevasses that make it impossible to practice skiing. For hiking mountains, you could join a mountaineering club. Technical mountain climbing is prohibited during the program.

**18. FALSE - Whatever cannot be bought in Ecuador could be sent to the student by parcel post.**

It will not be a good idea to ask for objects to be mailed to you, because sometimes packages can get lost, damaged or stolen. If you must have something mailed, it should be sent under your name, and it should be clearly stated on the package that it has "no commercial value" ("Sin valor comercial"). On most imports, custom taxes can be so high that it might be preferable to leave the package at the Ecuadorian Post Office, than to pay the exorbitant taxes.

**19. TRUE - Students diets, while in Ecuador, 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 Ecuador. The country's great variety of climatic zones and a wealth of agricultural produce, added to its fishing resources, allow many Ecuadorians to enjoy a varied diet. If you had especial dietary limitations or needs, your host family will try to be flexible and helpful in this respect.



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