

Going Global @ WPI



A handbook developed by the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division at Worcester Polytechnic Institute for students going to the residential project site:

Budapest D 2011

Prof. Gabor Sarkozy, Center Director
Budapest Project Center

Natalie A. Mello, Director of Global Operations
Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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Section 1 – WPI and IGSD Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! You are beginning to prepare for one of the most meaningful experiences that you will encounter while at WPI. In order to ensure that you have a successful experience, the *Going Global at WPI Handbook* has been compiled from a number of sources to provide as much practical information as possible that may be applicable to all project sites. The Handbook was prepared to inform the student who has been accepted to participate in the Global Perspective Program during the 2010-2011 academic year.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute has been practicing innovative, project-based technological education for over 30 years. WPI requires all undergraduates to complete a series of projects, including one in which they examine how science or technology interacts with societal structures and values - the Interactive Qualifying Project. Because of its commitment to a global perspective, the university offers its students opportunities to complete this unique degree requirement at locations around the world. WPI operates more than ten international project programs where students, with resident faculty advisors, live and work full time solving real-world problems for public and private agencies and organizations. WPI sends more engineering and science students overseas for experiential learning than any other U.S. college or university; during the 2010-2011 academic year, approximately 625 WPI students -- including over half of the junior class -- will travel to a global project site to complete one of these interdisciplinary projects.

A successful off-campus experience does not just occur; it requires careful consideration of things you will need to do before you leave, and while at your off-campus site. The Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division (IGSD) has developed this document to outline these considerations.

For the mutual protection of WPI, the students, and their families, the obligation assumed by each must be carefully defined and understood. You should recognize the fact that you have entered into a contractual agreement with WPI that states the obligations and responsibilities of both the university and yourself. This Handbook was created as the document that should be read carefully and thoroughly to avoid misunderstandings.

The following text is taken from the NAFSA: Association of International Educators' website. NAFSA is the predominant professional association in the world dealing with international education, and the section of the Association that deals specifically with study abroad currently known as the Education Abroad Knowledge Community. A committee of study abroad professionals (the Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad) developed the following document and is included here for your reference. Please keep in mind that while WPI's off campus program is unique in its structure, the University is committed to uphold the standards of the profession.

RESPONSIBLE STUDY ABROAD: GOOD PRACTICES FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Because the health and safety of study abroad participants are primary concerns, these statements of good practice have been developed to provide guidance to institutions, participants (including faculty and staff), and parents/guardians/families. These statements are intended to be aspirational in nature. They address issues that merit attention and thoughtful consideration by everyone involved with study abroad. They are intentionally general; they are not intended to account for all the many variations in study abroad programs and actual health, safety and security cases that will inevitably occur. In dealing with any specific situation, those responsible must also rely upon their collective experience and judgment while considering their specific circumstances.

I. Responsibilities of Program Sponsors

The term "sponsors" refers to all the entities that together develop, offer, and administer study abroad programs. Sponsors include sending institutions, host institutions, program administrators, and placement organizations. To the extent reasonably possible, program sponsors should consider how these statements of good practice may apply. At the same time, it must be noted that the structure of study abroad programs varies widely. Study abroad is usually a cooperative venture that can involve multiple sponsors. Because the role of an organization in a study abroad program may vary considerably from case to case, it is not possible to specify a division of efforts that will be applicable to all cases. Each entity should apply these statements in ways consistent with its respective role.

In general, practices that relate to obtaining health, safety and security information apply to all parties consistent with their role and involvement in the study abroad program. Much of the basic information is readily available and can be conveyed to participants by distributing it and/or by referring them to, or utilizing materials from, recognized central sources. Statements of good practice that refer to the provision of information and the preparation of participants are intended for parties that advise, refer, nominate, admit, enroll, or place students. Statements of good practice that suggest operating procedures on site apply to entities that are directly involved in the operation of the overseas program.

It is understood that program sponsors that rely heavily on the collaboration of overseas institutions may exercise less direct control over specific program components. In such cases, sponsors are urged to work with their overseas partners to develop plans and procedures for implementing good practices.

The use of letters is provided for ease of reference only and does not imply priority.

Program sponsors should:

- A. Conduct periodic assessments of health and safety conditions for their programs, and develop and maintain emergency preparedness processes and a crisis response plan.
- B. Provide health and safety information for prospective participants so that they and their parents/guardians/families can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation and behavior while on the program.
- C. Provide information concerning aspects of home campus services and conditions that cannot be replicated at overseas locations.

- D. Provide orientation to participants prior to the program and as needed on site, which includes information on safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country. In addition to dealing with health and safety issues, the orientation should address potential health and safety risks, and appropriate emergency response measures.
- E. Consider health and safety issues in evaluating the appropriateness of an individual's participation in a study abroad program.
- F. Determining criteria for an individual's removal from an overseas program taking into account participant behavior, health, and safety factors.
- G. Require that participants be insured. Either provide health and travel accident (emergency evacuation, repatriation) insurance to participants, or provide information about how to obtain such coverage.
- H. Conduct inquiries regarding the potential health, safety and security risks of the local environment of the program, including program-sponsored accommodation, events, excursions and other activities, prior to the program. Monitor possible changes in country conditions. Provide information about changes and advise participants and their parents/guardians/families as needed.
- I. Hire vendors and contractors (e.g. travel and tour agents) that have provided reputable services in the country in which the program takes place. Advise such vendors and contractors of the program sponsor's expectations with respect to their role in the health and safety of participants.
- J. Conduct appropriate inquiry regarding available medical and professional services. Provide information about these services for participants and their parents/guardians/families, and help participants obtain the services they may need.
- K. Develop and provide health and safety training for program directors and staff, including guidelines with respect to intervention and referral that take into account the nature and location of the study abroad program.
- L. Develop codes of conduct for their programs; communicate codes of conduct and the consequences of noncompliance to participants. Take appropriate action when aware that participants are in violation.
- M. In cases of serious health problems, injury, or other significant health and safety circumstances, maintain good communication among all program sponsors and others who need to know.
- M. In the participant screening process, consider factors such as disciplinary history that may impact on the safety of the individual or the group.
- N. Provide information for participants and their parents/guardians/families regarding when and where the sponsor's responsibility ends and the range of aspects of participants' overseas experiences that are beyond the sponsor's control.

In particular, program sponsors generally:

- A. Cannot guarantee or assure the safety and/or security of participants or eliminate all risks from the study abroad environments.
- B. Cannot monitor or control all of the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of participants.
- C. Cannot prevent participants from engaging in illegal, dangerous or unwise activities.
- D. Cannot assure that U.S. standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings or provide or pay for legal representation for participants.
- E. Cannot assume responsibility for actions or for events that are not part of the program, nor for those that are beyond the control of the sponsor and its subcontractors, or for situations that may arise due to the failure of a participant to disclose pertinent information.
- F. Cannot assure that home-country cultural values and norms will apply in the host country.

II. Responsibilities of Participants

In study abroad, as in other settings, participants can have a major impact on their own health and safety through the decisions they make before and during their program and by their day-to-day choices and behaviors.

Participants should:

- A. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for their personal preparation for the program and participate fully in orientations.

- B. Read and carefully consider all materials issued by the sponsor that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country(ies).
- C. Conduct their own research on the country(ies) they plan to visit with particular emphasis on health and safety concerns, as well as the social, cultural, and political situations.
- D. Consider their physical and mental health, and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program, and make available to the sponsor accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary in planning for a safe and healthy study abroad experience.
- E. Obtain and maintain appropriate insurance coverage and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers.
- F. Inform parents/guardians/families and any others who may need to know about their participation in the study abroad program, provide them with emergency contact information, and keep them informed of their whereabouts and activities.
- G. Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures of the program.
- H. Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals before and/or during the program.
- I. Accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions.
- J. Obey host-country laws.
- K. Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well being of others, and encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
- L. Avoid illegal drugs and excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol.
- M. Follow the program policies for keeping program staff informed of their whereabouts and well being.
- N. Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and legal system services in the host county.

III. Recommendations to Parents/Guardians/Families

In study abroad, as in other settings, parents, guardians, and families can play an important role in the health and safety of participants by helping them make decisions and by influencing their behavior overseas.

Parents/guardians/families should:

- A. Be informed about and involved in the decision of the participant to enroll in a particular program.
- B. Obtain and carefully evaluate participant program materials, as well as related health, safety and security information.
- C. Discuss with the participant any of his/her travel plans and activities that may be independent of the study abroad program.
- D. Engage the participant in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues, insurance needs, and emergency procedures related to living abroad.
- E. Be responsive to requests from the program sponsor for information regarding the participant.
- F. Keep in touch with the participant.
- G. Be aware that the participant rather than the program may most appropriately provide some information.

NAFSA: Association of International Education

Responsible Study Abroad: Good Practice for Health and Safety

Guidelines, Revised November 8, 2002

http://www.nafsa.org/knowledge_community_network.sec/education_abroad_1/developing_and_managing/practice_resources_36/guidelines_for_health

MANDATORY PAPERWORK

The following forms must be on file in the IGSD office before students leave WPI for their off-campus project experience. If any forms are missing, students are in jeopardy of not being allowed to participate at off-campus programs.

Paperwork Deadline:

All mandatory paperwork for Budapest D 2011 must be turned in completed to the IGSD by **Monday, February 7, 2011 by 3:00 pm.**

Participant Statement of Agreement

Once accepted to the Global Perspective Program at WPI, every student is required to submit to the IGSD along with his or her housing deposit a signed and dated "Participant Statement of Agreement". The text of that document is included below for your convenient referral. Of course, you may request a photocopy of your signed "Participant Statement of Agreement" at any time.

I understand that my participation in the WPI Global Perspective Program is subject to my agreement to accept and abide by the following conditions of participation:

A. Financial Responsibility

- 1) I understand that my deposit of \$400 is used to secure my place in the program and will be credited toward my housing cost.
- 2) I understand that charges for any damages to housing, WPI property on site, the property of our host institutions, or project sponsors will be charged to my WPI account. When responsibility for damages to housing cannot be assigned to an individual student, all students in the housing unit will be charged an equal share of the cost. I also realize that an official hold will be placed on my records until all payment responsibilities are satisfied.
- 3) I agree to pay all housing charges as requested. The accounting office normally bills housing costs at program sites at the time of the usual billing for Spring, Fall, and Summer terms.

B. Withdrawal, Cancellation, or Dismissal

- 1) I understand that the \$400 acceptance deposit is fully refundable up to 120 business days before the beginning of the program. Notice of withdrawal must be made in writing to the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division. Withdrawals after this time are subject to forfeiture of the entire deposit, plus any unrecoverable portion of the housing costs or other program expenses advanced on my behalf.
- 2) WPI makes every effort to deliver every program offered. However, many circumstances beyond our control could affect the welfare and safety of our participants. WPI, therefore, reserves the right to cancel a program in the event of changes that adversely affect our ability to deliver a quality academic program in which we can reasonably safeguard the health, safety, and well-being of all participants. In the event of cancellation by WPI, all *recoverable* deposits, tuition, and housing costs will be fully refunded.
- 3) Students who are dismissed from a program for any reason will receive no refund of any costs involved and are subject to charges for any unrecoverable housing costs or program expenses advanced on their behalf.

C. Behavioral Responsibilities

- 1) I understand that all policies governing acceptable behavior as printed in The Policies section of *The Campus Planner & Resource Guide* apply to me during my participation at an off-campus program site. Failure to abide by these policies, either before or during my participation in an off-campus program, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including my immediate dismissal from the program. I recognize that the authority for adjudicating alleged violations of the WPI Code of Conduct while at an off-campus program site lies with the on-site WPI representative in accordance with basic due process.
- 2) I further understand that as a WPI student at an off-campus program site, I represent my institution and my country and will behave as an ambassador for both. I understand that grounds for dismissal may also be found in behavior disruptive to the group as a whole, or offensive within the host culture: disruptive sexual behavior, or behavior deemed offensive to the host culture; or disruptive, violent, or destructive behavior in student housing.
- 3) I understand that WPI must take steps to ensure that no offensive, disruptive or potentially dangerous conduct occurs while WPI students and faculty are abroad. Accordingly, WPI reserves the right to dismiss a student from

the program on the basis of any observed conduct or behavior which causes WPI concern for the safety and well-being of students or others. The Dean of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies shall have the authority to make the final decision on dismissal from the program.

D. Academic Responsibilities

- 1) I understand that my participation in this program is subject to successful completion of all required preparation classes. I agree to attend all required orientation and re-entry meetings.
- 2) I understand that if I am placed on academic probation, I am no longer eligible to participate. The withdrawal refund policy stated above will apply.
- 3) WPI reserves the right to withdraw acceptance to students who are subsequently placed on academic warning. The withdrawal refund policy stated above will apply.

E. Medical Issues

- 1) I understand that there are certain risks inherent in travel to an off-campus program site and WPI cannot assume responsibility for all of my activities or medical needs. I understand that it is my responsibility to carry medical insurance that is valid at the off-campus site for the length of my stay.
- 2) I accept all financial responsibility for any medical treatment I receive while at the program site and understand that to obtain medical care abroad it is usually necessary to pay when the care is administered and seek reimbursement from my insurance company when I return home.

F. Legal Issues

- 1) I understand that as a non-citizen in a foreign country, I will be subject to the laws of that country. The use or possession of illegal drugs or other substances in violation of the laws of the host country or The Policies section of *The Campus Planner & Resource Guide*, before or during my participation in the program, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including my immediate dismissal from the program and legal action under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and / or the laws of the host country.

G. Travel Issues

- 1) I understand that I am responsible for making my own travel arrangements and for arriving at the program site on the designated arrival date and remaining until the official departure date.
- 2) I understand that while WPI encourages students to travel during their free time, the university can take no responsibility for my safety during independent travel. I further understand that I must inform the faculty-in-residence of my travel plans.

H. Federal Compliance Issues

- 1) I understand there are Federal regulations regarding the export of information to foreign countries or foreign citizens, with which all of us at WPI must comply. WPI's emphasis on engineering programs makes us particularly sensitive to these regulations. If I take a laptop computer (or other type of computer digital storage device, I hereby assure WPI that I will not have any restricted information on that device as such action may be considered an export.

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the above stated conditions of participation.

Participant Signature	date	site	term
Printed Name	student number	date of birth*	

**If participant is under 18 years of age, both parents and/ or legal guardian must also read and sign this form.*

I am the parent or legal guardian of the above Participant, have read the foregoing Participant Statement of Agreement Form (including such parts as may subject me to personal financial responsibility), and will be legally responsible for the obligations and acts of the Participant as described in this Participant Statement of Agreement Form, and agree, for myself and for the participant, to be bound by its terms.

Travel Information Form (Appendix A)

The IGSD must have a completed Travel Form and itinerary from you on file before you leave for their site. The IGSD keeps a copy of the form and itinerary and we send a copy with the faculty advisor. By doing this, the IGSD staff and the advisor(s) all will know when and where every student will arrive and will be alerted if there is a problem arises. Whenever possible, you will be met at a pre-agreed location depending on your itinerary.

You should understand that you are responsible for making your own travel arrangements, arriving at the program site on the designated arrival date, and remaining until the official departure date. If you are traveling by air, you must have confirmed reservations. Flying stand-by is not acceptable.

You and your family should also understand that while WPI encourages you to travel during your free time, the university can take no responsibility for your safety during independent travel. *You must inform your advisor of all travel plans and when you should be expected back on site.*

You may not take vacation days off from your project work, even if you have the permission of your project mentor. If you have an urgent family or academic or job-related need to travel away from the project site on a project work day, consult with the faculty member in residence before making any travel plans.

Health Update and Records Release Form (Appendix B)

The IGSD must have a completed Health Update and Records Release Form on file for you before you leave for your site. The IGSD keeps a copy and sends a copy with the faculty advisor in case of an emergency. You should list any medical conditions that could affect you while off-campus (i.e. epilepsy, diabetes, depressive episodes, etc.) Also, you must list any changes in your health not noted on medical records on file with WPI Health Services. Medical allergies must be listed, as well as prescription medications.

Two people need be listed as emergency contacts. These contacts should be people empowered to make a medical or legal decision on behalf of the participant (i.e., parent, guardian, living adult relative). Contact information for each must also be provided to the IGSD on this form: name, relationship, address, phone (home and work), and email.

You and your family should understand that there are certain risks inherent in travel to an off-campus program site and WPI cannot assume responsibility for every activity or medical need. It is your responsibility to carry medical insurance that is valid at the off-campus site for the length of the stay. You must accept all financial responsibility for any medical treatment received while at the program site.

All students traveling off-campus to participate in a WPI program are required to carry medical insurance that is valid at the program site for the entire length of the program. The IGSD must have the name of your insurance provider and your subscription number. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are covered for the entire length of the program while you are off-campus.

Voluntary Acknowledgment Form

All participants are required to sign a Voluntary Acknowledgment Form, which will be kept on file in the IGSD. The text of the form is below for your convenient referral. We hope that by asking participants to read and sign such a form that we remind them of the nature of their participation and the responsibilities which are assumed by the individuals.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT and RELEASE

I acknowledge that I am voluntarily participating in the _____ (the "Program"), which is being offered by Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI). I further acknowledge that WPI has provided me with adequate information about the Program, both verbally and through written materials, and that I have read and understand such information. I agree to comply with any immunization or medical treatment necessary to participate in this program. I also acknowledge that any laptop computer (or other form of computer or digital storage device) that I may take abroad cannot contain any restricted information as such action may be considered an export subject to Federal control and regulation.

Assumption of Risk and Release of Claims. Knowing the risks described, and in consideration of being permitted to participate in the Program, I agree, on behalf of my family, heirs, and personal representative(s), to assume all the risks and responsibilities surrounding my participation in the Program. To the maximum extent permitted by law, I release and indemnify Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and its officers, employees and agents, from and against any present or future claim, loss or liability for injury to person or property which I may suffer, or for which I may be liable to any other person, during my participation in the Program (including periods in transit to or from any site in country where the Program is being conducted).

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS.

Participant Signature

date

Printed Name

date of birth*

*If participant is under 18 years of age, both parents and/or legal guardians must also read and sign this form.

I am the parent or legal guardian of the above Participant, have read the foregoing Acknowledgement and Release Form (including such parts as may subject me to personal financial responsibility), and will be legally responsible for the obligations and acts of the Participant as described in this Acknowledgement and Release Form, and agree, for myself and for the Participant, to be bound by its terms.

X

Signature of Parent / Guardian

Date

X

Signature of Parent / Guardian

Scan of Passport

You are required to bring your passport to the IGSD office so that staff can scan a copy of the face and information pages. IGSD keeps this on file.

International Student Identity Cards (ISIC)

All WPI students completing course requirements abroad are required to get the ISIC. As you have been charged the \$24.00 cost of the card, it makes the most sense to get yours from the IGSD. If you choose to purchase a card elsewhere you will forfeit the \$24.00. In some countries, the student discount network is highly developed, and an ISIC will entitle students to reduced entrance fees at museums and theaters, special rail or bus passes, and even discounts at hotels and shops. While it cannot be guaranteed that you'll get discounts wherever you go, the ISIC is the most accepted card for international access to all student discounts that are available.

With the ISIC, you gain access to a 24-hour, toll free help line that can provide aid in the case of a medical, financial or legal emergency while abroad. You can call the ISIC Help Line from the United States at (877-370-4742). Outside of the United States, call collect 715-342-4104. The call is free, but be prepared to provide your card number to the ISIC Help Line.

The most important reason for the ISIC requirement is the additional insurance coverage that you get. The ISIC provides a basic sickness and accident insurance policy to students while traveling outside the United States. ISICs also provide students with emergency evacuation insurance, if due to injury or sickness, a legally licensed physician certifies the severity of your condition is such that you must be evacuated for medical treatment. In addition, cardholders are eligible to have expenses covered for the repatriation of remains in the unlikely event of death while abroad. (For more specific coverage information, contact American Home Assurance Company 70 Pine St. New York, New York 10270).

Again, the cost of this card is built into the expenses associated with going off-campus and does not require additional fees to be charged to the student. However, students must supply the IGSD with two photos in order to process the card. These photos can be taken at the IGSD Office.

You are required to come to the IGSD, located in the Project Center, to fill out an application form for the ISIC and turn in your photos (extra passport photos will suffice as well, but please keep in mind the need to carry two other passport photos with you when traveling). IGSD staff will process your card, which will be given to you when all mandatory paperwork mentioned previously has been completed and turned in to the IGSD. If you need the number from your ISIC to book your flight, a photocopy of your card can be provided to you at your request. For more specific information about discounts, go to www.isic.org.

ATC Laptop Form (Appendix C)

WPI will provide one laptop per team if you request it. You do not have to use a WPI laptop – you are welcome to take your own. If you do, however choose to sign out a WPI laptop, you will need to complete the form and turn it in to the IGSD with the rest of your mandatory paperwork.

WPI POLICIES AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS AT OFF-CAMPUS SITES

Informal Hearing Procedure at Off-Campus Residential Program Sites

Students at off-campus residential program sites, accused of violating the WPI code of conduct or any other WPI policy as outlined in the annual Campus Planner and Resource Guide shall be accorded an informal on-site hearing before a WPI representative designated by the dean of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division. The following guidelines will be applicable.

- a. Students will be informed of the complaint pending and the time, date and location of the informal hearing, in writing, at least two (2) days prior to the hearing. This notice should include a full description of the incident, names of witnesses, if any, and a reference to the section(s) of the campus code allegedly violated.
- b. The informal hearing shall be conversational in nature and non-adversarial.
- c. Before the hearing, the student shall be given the opportunity to consult with an on-site advisor of their choice or a member of the WPI community.
- d. During the hearing, the WPI representative shall elaborate on the nature of the complaint and present any evidence or witnesses in support of that complaint.
- e. The accused student shall have an opportunity to respond to the complaint and present any evidence or witnesses in response to the complaint.
- f. The WPI representative will make a determination of the student's responsibility for the complaint based on the outcome of the informal hearing.
- g. If the student is found responsible, the WPI representative must contact the dean of students or her/his designee to review the student's past record, if any, before a sanction is determined. The WPI representative must then consult with the Dean of Students Office and the director of global operations in the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division to determine an appropriate sanction for the offense.
- h. All decisions shall be final and not subject to appeal on site. The decision may be appealed to the dean of Interdisciplinary Studies Division once the student has returned to the WPI campus. Appeals may be submitted in writing to the dean of the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division within five (5) days of the start of classes of the term following the off campus project experience. The appeal must be specific and contain a full description of the basis for the appeal. Grounds for an appeal must be based on one or more of the following criteria:
 - i. Failure to follow the procedures outlined in the Campus Planner and Resource Guide;
 - ii. Inappropriate gravity of the sanction in relationship to the offense;
 - iii. That no reasonable person could conclude, on the basis of the evidence presented, that the accused was responsible.

The appeal will not be reviewed until after the start of the term following the off campus project experience when all parties involved have returned to the WPI campus.

- i. If the on-site WPI representative determines that continued presence at the project center by the student would constitute a danger to the safety of persons or property on the premises of the project center, a recommendation for interim suspension may be made to the vice president for student affairs or his/her designee.

Note: WPI's Academic Honesty Policy and the procedures described therein also apply to the off campus residential programs. The WPI representative must communicate with the dean of Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division and Dean of Students Office before taking action.

General Policies and Important Things to Remember

- There can be *no overnight guests* in any accommodations acquired and provided by WPI for use by the Project Center students.
- Charges for any damages to housing, WPI property on site, the property of our host institutions, or project sponsors will be charged to your WPI account. When responsibility for damages to housing cannot be assigned to an individual student, all students in the housing unit will be charged an equal share of the cost. An official hold will be placed on all records until all payment responsibilities are satisfied.
- If you are dismissed from a program for any reason, you will not receive a refund of any costs involved and will be subject to charges for any unrecoverable housing costs or program expenses advanced on your behalf.
- All policies governing acceptable behavior as printed in The Policies section of *The Campus Planner & Resource Guide* apply to participants at an off-campus program site. The authority for adjudicating alleged violations of the WPI Code of Conduct while at an off-campus program site lies with the on-site WPI representative in accordance with basic due process.
- You must always keep the resident faculty advisors informed of your whereabouts. If you plan to travel during the term, you must give your advisor a written itinerary.
- **The IGSD will notify your parents if you fail to return from a weekend excursion at the predetermined time. If you are delayed you MUST contact your resident faculty advisor to inform them that you are safe.**
- As a WPI student at an off-campus program site, you represent your institution and your country and will behave as an ambassador for both. Grounds for dismissal may also be found in behavior disruptive to the group as a whole, or offensive to the host culture: disruptive sexual behavior, or disruptive, violent, or destructive behavior in student housing.
- You may not take vacation days off from your project work, even if you have the permission of your project mentor. If you have an urgent family or academic or job related need to travel away from the project site on a project work day, consult with the faculty member in residence before making any travel plans.

Violations of any of these policies can result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal from the program.

Travel Documents and Competencies

Passports

Who needs a passport?

A U.S. citizen needs a passport to depart or enter the United States and to depart and enter most foreign countries. U.S. Immigration requires you to prove your U.S. citizenship and identity when you reenter the United States.

If you are not a U.S citizen, contact the embassy or consulate of the country you are planning to travel to, as well as the U.S. Embassy in order to receive specific entry instructions. International students should consult with Mr. Tom Thomsen, Director of the International Students and Scholars Office, about these issues. His contact information is listed under the heading WPI Offices.

Beware of a passport that is about to expire. Certain countries will not permit you to enter and will not place a visa in your passport if the passport is valid for less 6 months. If your passport is expiring in less than the 6 months, you will need to get a new one. If you return to the United States with an expired passport, you are subject to a passport waiver fee of \$100, payable to U.S. Immigration at the port of entry.

It is your responsibility to acquire your passport. The IGSD does not administer this process for students.

How to get your passport

1. You can get passport photos taken at the U.S. Post Office, or other local stores such as CVS.
2. Pick up a passport application form from the U.S. Post Office or download from:
http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html
3. Turn in all required documentation to the nearest federal post office with the appropriate fee.

For Immediate Release

April 2, 2002

**STATEMENT BY PHILIP T. REEKER, DEPUTY SPOKESMAN
U.S. Passports Will No Longer be Issued Abroad**

All passports, except those required for urgent travel, will be issued in the United States using the new more secure photo-digitized imaging system.

Effective April 8, 2002, American citizens residing or traveling abroad, who require issuance of a U.S. passport, will be issued the latest, state-of-the-art passport. It incorporates a digitized image with other enhanced security features. Because this technology is not available at U.S. embassies and consulates, overseas passport issuance is being transferred to the National Passport Processing Center in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Travel documents in the post-September 11 world have become even more important. The new passport has many features that make it one of the most secure travel documents produced anywhere in the world. Getting these more secure passports into circulation will help minimize the misuse of American passports by criminals, terrorists, and others.

This new procedure will increase processing time at U.S. embassies and consulates, but the Department is committed to ensuring that American citizens receive secure documents in a timely manner. American citizens overseas are encouraged to apply early for renewal of expiring passports.

U.S. embassies and consulates will continue to issue passports that are needed for urgent travel. However, such passports will be limited in validity, and cannot be extended. Bearers will be required to exchange, at no additional cost, their limited-validity passport for a full-validity digitized passport upon completion of their urgent travel.

Information on applying for a U.S. passport, passport application forms and requirements, and other travel-related information can be accessed through the Department of State's web site at: <http://travel.state.gov>.

Visas

A visa is an endorsement or stamp placed in your passport by a foreign government that permits you to visit that country for a specified purpose and a limited time. You should obtain all necessary visas before you leave the United States, because you will not be able to obtain visas for some countries once you have departed. Apply directly to the embassy or nearest consulate of each country you plan to visit. Passport agencies *cannot* help you obtain visas.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, it is your responsibility to determine what other documentation you will need to file to obtain your visa. Please do so in consultation with IGSD. Do not submit your visa application before checking in with IGSD to ensure that you're submitting the appropriate application.

How to Take Money

You should take a sufficient amount of living/spending money with you. The IGSD recommends the following modes of carrying money.

Travelers Checks

Rather than carrying large amounts of cash, it is always safer to take most of your money in travelers' checks. Remember to record the serial number, denomination, and the date and location of the issuing bank or agency. Keep this information in a safe and separate place. In case your checks are lost or stolen, you can get replacements quickly with this information.

Credit Cards

Some credit cards can be used worldwide, even for cash advances. However, be sure to monitor your charges carefully, so as not to exceed your limit -- do not forget to account for the exchange rate! Leave all unnecessary cards at home. Record the numbers and expiration dates for the cards you take in a separate place. Always report the loss or theft of your credit cards immediately to the issuing companies and notify the local police.

ATM info:

Making withdrawals from an ATM is generally considered to be the easiest and least expensive way of accessing money while abroad. The biggest advantage is that regardless of the size of your withdrawal, you will receive the wholesale exchange rate which banks use. ATM networks like the Global ATM Alliance, Cirrus and PLUS are used widely around the globe, although you should be sure to verify that your network operates in the country to which you're going. The following websites provide links to ATM locator services for each network:

<http://www.mastercard.com/us/personal/en/cardholderservices/atmlocations/index.html>

<http://visa.via.infonow.net/locator/global/jsp/SearchPage.jsp>

http://www.scotiabank.com/cda/content/0,1608,CID8040_LIDen,00.html

Before you leave, you should contact your bank to let them know where you will be and for how long. Many banks view activity such as withdrawals in another country as an alert to possible fraudulent activity on your account. Telling them ahead of time, may prevent your accounts from being frozen -- a massive inconvenience when you're abroad.

Things to consider when using ATMS abroad include the following:

1. Be sure you know the numeric equivalent of your PIN if it contains letters as well as numbers. ATMs abroad may only provide numbers.
2. Some ATMs (especially in Europe) do not accept PINs longer than 4 numbers. You may wish to contact your bank to change your PIN if it is longer than four digits.

There are of course fees associated with using most ATMs, and some of these can be significantly higher than the fees you are used to paying in the U.S. You should check with your bank (be sure to ask if they assess extra fees for international ATM use), and plan for these extra expenses in your budget.

Finally, be sure to keep your ATM card and your money in a safe place. When withdrawing cash from an ATM be sure to do so in a well lighted, safe location so that you decrease your profile as a potential target for theft.

Source: www.independenttraveler.com

Foreign Currency

Before departing, it is recommended that you purchase some foreign currency to use for buses, taxis, food, phones or tips when you first arrive. You can purchase several currencies at the airport, but be advised that they only carry major currencies and that exchange windows may be closed depending upon your time of departure. You may be able to purchase foreign currency at one of your local banks. Do not change all of the money you plan to take while still in the U.S. The exchange rate is always better in the host country.

Section 2 - Health & Safety Information

SAFETY

When traveling to an off-campus project site, there are a number of precautions you should follow in order to travel safely:

- Do not leave your bags or belongings unattended at any time. Security in airports and train stations are instructed to remove or destroy any unattended baggage. Do not agree to carry or look after packages or suitcases for individuals you do not know well. If someone approaches you to make such a request, tell security immediately. Make sure that no one puts anything in your luggage without your knowledge. Take all questions from airport personnel seriously and do not make jokes in response to security questions.
- Safeguard your passport! Your passport is the most valuable document you will carry abroad. It is your best form of identification and confirms your citizenship. You must guard it carefully. Do not lend it to anyone or use it as collateral for a loan of any sort. You will need it when you check into hotels, embassies or consulates, or when cashing travelers' checks. Some countries require that you carry it with you at all times as a means of identification. When you carry your passport, hide it securely on your person. Do not leave it in a handbag, book-bag, backpack or in an exposed pocket.
- Never keep all of your documents and money in one place or suitcase. You should make a list of all of your important numbers - your passport information as well as credit cards, travelers' checks and airline ticket numbers. Leave a copy at home, and carry a copy with you, separate from your valuables.
- **Always keep the resident faculty advisors informed of your whereabouts. If you plan to travel during the term, you must give your advisor an itinerary in writing. All student need to be accounted for every weekend whether you are traveling or not, see Appendix D.**
- **The IGSD will notify the parents of students who fail to return from a weekend excursion at the predetermined time. If you are delayed you MUST contact your resident faculty advisor to inform them that you are safe.**
- Have sufficient funds or a credit card on hand to purchase emergency items such as train or airline tickets.
- Always be careful about traveling alone.
- **All WPI students who are participating in the Budapest D 2011 Project Program are expected to behave in a manner so as to not put themselves at risk.**
- **All students have an obligation to look out for each other and themselves. This means that if one student observes another engaging in risky behavior, that student should report the behavior to either of the faculty advisors. The faculty advisor must then address the issue with the student at risk. Repeated behavior identified as risky will be cause to be sent home.**
- Be as inconspicuous in dress and demeanor as possible. If the host country nationals do not wear baseball caps and sneakers, you will stand out as a foreigner if you do.
- Do not flash money or documents in public places. Be discreet in displaying your passport.

AVOIDING TRAVEL RISKS

Prepared By:

William L. Granahan CIC,LIA,CMC, Senior Consultant

J.H. Albert International Insurance Advisors, Inc.

Two Chestnut Place

72 River Park

Needham Heights, MA 02494-2631

Planning and Preparing:

Do not display provocative luggage tags, overly patriotic displays or any other indications that you are from the United States;

Do not pack anything that could be construed as a weapon, including knives, nail files, razors or other sharp instruments;

Arrive at the airport at least three hours in advance of your flight.

Air and Ground Travel:

Dress casual and look like a traveler; do not dress like a “flamboyant” US patriot;

Spend little time in foreign airports or public transportation areas that carry a high risk of or invite terrorist attacks;

Avoid air, rail and local ground carriers from countries where terrorist groups are based or have grievances;

Avoid flights or trains with intermediate stops, especially stops in hostile countries, which would allow terrorists to board;

In the Country;

Avoid countries, areas of countries and regions, even for leisure travel on weekends, that are hostile or likely to be hostile to Americans;

Study and understand the customs and political environment of the country(s) you are visiting;

Be prudent in your choice of eating and drinking establishments;

Avoid political discussions, confrontation and arguments;

Do not reveal personal information to casual acquaintances;

Beware of overly friendly or flirtatious persons;

Always travel in groups of two or more people;

Should you find yourself present during a coup, uprising or riot, remain in a safe harbor, such as your hotel or residence, that is not apt to be a military target;

Carry the phone number and address of the American Embassy and local police – and a cell phone if possible;

Return to your apartment or living quarters at a reasonable, early hour every night.

SAFETY TIPS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Crime in many parts of the world seems to be increasing.

Visitors should take common sense precautions:

- Safety begins when you pack. Leave expensive jewelry behind. Dress conservatively; a flashy wardrobe or one that is too casual can mark you as a tourist. Use travelers' checks, not cash. Leave photocopies of your passport personal information page and your airline tickets with someone at home and carry an extra set with you.
- Use a money belt or a concealed money pouch for passports, cash and other valuables.
- In a car, keep doors locked, windows rolled up and valuables out of sight. A common trick is for a thief to reach through a car window and grab a watch from a persons' wrist or a purse or package from the seat while you are driving slowly or stopped in traffic.
- When you leave your car, try to find a guarded parking lot. Lock the car and keep valuables out of sight.
- When walking, avoid marginal areas of cities, dark alleys and crowds. Do not stop if you are approached on the street by strangers, including street vendors and beggars. Be aware that women and small children, as well as men, can be pickpockets or purse-snatchers. Keep your billfold in an inner front pocket, carry your purse tucked securely under your arm, and wear the shoulder-strap of your camera or bag across your chest. To guard against thieves on motorcycles, walk away from the curb, carrying your purse away from the street.
- Use official taxi stands rather than cruising taxis. Illegal taxis can be decoys for robbers.
- Whenever possible, do not travel alone. If you travel in isolated areas, go with a group or a reputable guide.
- Avoid travel at night.
- Money exchangers on the street pass off counterfeit U.S. dollars and local currency. Credit card fraud is growing.
- Do not take valuables to the mountains or on excursions.

Any U.S. citizen who is criminally assaulted should report the incident to the local police and to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

The U.S. department of State has produced a website specifically for students going abroad. This site provides student specific travel tips and advice, and we strongly encourage you to visit it: www.studentsabroad.state.gov.

DRUGS AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM

When you are in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws. Learn about local laws and regulations, preferably before you arrive on site, and obey them. Deal only with authorized outlets when exchanging money or buying items such as airline tickets and travelers checks. Adhere strictly to the local laws because the penalties you risk are severe.

About 3,000 Americans are arrested overseas each year. Of these, approximately one-third are held on drug-related charges. Despite repeated warnings, drug arrests and convictions are still a common occurrence. Many countries have stiff penalties for drug violations and strictly enforce drug laws. You are subject to foreign, not U.S. laws while overseas, and you will find, if arrested, that:

- because you are subject to local laws abroad, there is very little that a U.S. consul can do for you if you encounter legal difficulties
- few countries provide jury trial
- most countries do not accept bail
- prisons may lack even minimal comforts: bed, toilet, wash basin
- officials may not speak English
- nutrition is often inadequate
- physical abuse, confiscation of personal property and inhumane treatment are possible

In other words, it is not worth imprisonment or extradition to break local laws. Be mature. Remember that laws are established for reasons (and you don't need to agree with those reasons), and that you are a guest, and should behave as such.

WPI Code of Conduct

As articulated in the Drug and Alcohol Policy in the WPI Code of Conduct, students may not possess, use, or distribute illicit drugs or possess drug related paraphernalia. If there are any complaints or evidence of illicit drug use, your Faculty Advisor(s) and the Director of Global Operations in the IGSD will initiate and follow the steps outlined in the "Informal Hearing Procedure at Off-Campus Residential Program Sites" to fairly investigate and adjudicate the matter. Drug policy violations are taken very seriously and could result in sanctions up to and including dismissal from the program.

HEALTH ISSUES: HIV AND AIDS INFORMATION

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is a severe, often life-threatening, illness caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The incubation period for AIDS is very long and variable, ranging from a few months to many years. Some individuals infected with HIV have remained asymptomatic for more than a decade. Currently, there is no vaccine to protect against infection with HIV. Although there is no cure for AIDS, treatments for HIV infection and prophylaxis for many opportunistic diseases that characterize AIDS are available.

The universal precaution to prevent infection of either AIDS and/or HIV is to assume that everyone you meet has these diseases. While this may seem extreme, there is no way to judge from looking at someone whether or not they have been exposed to these illnesses or if, in fact, they are infected.

HIV infection and AIDS have been reported worldwide. The number of persons infected with HIV is estimated by WHO to be approaching the range of 18 million worldwide. Because HIV infection and AIDS are globally distributed, the risk to international travelers is determined less by their geographic destination than by their sexual and drug using behaviors.

Transmission and Prevention Information

The global epidemic of HIV infection and AIDS has raised several issues regarding HIV infection and international travel. The first is the need of information for international travelers regarding HIV transmission and how HIV infection can be prevented.

HIV infection is preventable. HIV is transmitted through sexual intercourse, needle or syringe sharing, by medical use of blood or blood components, and perinatally from an infected woman to her baby. HIV is not transmitted through casual contact; air, food, or water routes; contact with inanimate objects; or through mosquitoes or other arthropod vectors. The use of any public conveyance (e.g., airplane, automobile, boat, bus, train) by persons with AIDS or HIV infection does not pose a risk of infection for the crew or other passengers.

Increased risk for contracting AIDS and HIV

Travelers are at risk if they:

- have sexual intercourse (heterosexual or homosexual) with an infected person;
- use or allow the use of contaminated, unsterilized syringes or needles for any injections or other skin-piercing procedures including acupuncture, use of illicit drugs, steroid or vitamin injections, medical/dental procedures, **ear or body piercing, or tattooing;**
- use infected blood, blood components, or clotting factor concentrates. HIV infection by this route is a rare occurrence in those countries or cities where donated blood/plasma is screened for HIV antibody.

People should avoid sexual encounters with a person who is infected with HIV or whose HIV infection status is unknown. This includes avoiding sexual activity with intravenous drug users and persons with multiple sexual partners, such as male or female prostitutes. Condoms, when used consistently and correctly, prevent transmission of HIV. Persons who engage in vaginal, anal, or oral-genital intercourse with anyone who is infected with HIV or whose infection status is unknown should use a condom.

For the information made available by the Center for Disease Control, please go to the following web address

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/yellowBookCh4-HIVAIDS.aspx>

RENTAL CAR ISSUES

WPI students working on an academic project while on-site are strongly discouraged from renting a car during their time in the program. Known risks include road safety, familiarity with road conditions, and the condition of the vehicles available for rent the possibility of standing out as a tourist/foreigner. If students choose to rent a car, they do so at their own risk.

Safety If You Rent a Car¹

When you rent a car, don't go for the exotic; choose a type commonly available locally. Where possible, ask that markings that identify it as a rental car be removed. Make certain it is in good repair. If available, choose a car with universal door locks and power windows, features that give the driver better control of access to the car. An air conditioner, when available, is also a safety feature, allowing you to drive with windows closed. Thieves can and do snatch purses through open windows of moving cars.

- Keep car doors locked at all times. Wear seat belts.
- As much as possible, avoid driving at night.
- Don't leave valuables in the car. If you must carry things with you, keep them out of sight locked in the trunk.
- Don't park your car on the street overnight. If the hotel or municipality does not have a parking garage or other secure area, select a well-lit area.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Don't get out of the car if there are suspicious looking individuals nearby. Drive away.

Patterns of Crime against Motorists

In many places frequented by tourists, including areas of southern Europe, victimization of motorists has been refined to an art. Where it is a problem, U.S. embassies are aware of it and consular officers try to work with local authorities to warn the public about the dangers. In some locations, these efforts at public awareness have paid off, reducing the frequency of incidents. You may also wish to ask your rental car agency for advice on avoiding robbery while visiting tourist destinations. Carjackers and thieves operate at gas stations, parking lots, in city traffic and along the highway. Be suspicious of anyone who hails you or tries to get your attention when you are in or near your car. Criminals use ingenious ploys. They may masquerade as good Samaritans, offering help for tires that they claim are flat or that they have made flat. Or they may flag down a motorist, ask for assistance, and then steal the rescuer's luggage or car. Usually they work in groups, one person carrying on the pretense while the others rob you. Other criminals get your attention with abuse, either trying to drive you off the road, or causing an "accident" by rear-ending you or creating a "fender bender."

In some urban areas, thieves don't waste time on ploys, they simply smash car windows at traffic lights, grab your valuables or your car and get away. In cities around the world, "defensive driving" has come to mean more than avoiding auto accidents; it means keeping an eye out for potentially criminal pedestrians, cyclists and scooter riders.

Annual Global Road Crash Statistics²

- Nearly 1.3 million people die in road crashes each year, on average 3,287 deaths a day.
- An additional 20-50 million are injured or disabled.
- More than half of all road traffic deaths occur among young adults ages 15-44.
- Road traffic crashes rank as the 9th leading cause of death and account for 2.2% of all deaths globally.
- Road crashes are the leading cause of death among young people ages 15-29, and the second leading cause of death worldwide among young people ages 5-14.
- Each year nearly 400,000 people under 25 die on the world's roads, on average over 1,000 a day.
- Over 90% of all road fatalities occur in low and middle-income countries, which have less than half of the world's vehicles.

¹ This information was taken from the U.S. State Department's website.

² This information was taken from the Association for Safe International Road Travel's (ASIRT) website: www.asirt.org
Going Global at WPI Handbook Use and adaptation welcome, but please acknowledge WPI and
3/18/2011 Natalie Mello and tell us of your use (nmello@wpi.edu)

- Road crashes cost USD \$518 billion globally, costing individual countries from 1-2% of their annual GDP.
- Road crashes cost low and middle-income countries USD \$65 billion annually, exceeding the total amount received in developmental assistance.
- Unless action is taken, road traffic injuries are predicted to become the fifth leading cause of death by 2030.

Annual United States Road Crash Statistics

- Over 37,000 people die in road crashes each year
- An additional 2.35 million are injured or disabled
- Over 1,600 children under 15 years of age die each year
- Nearly 8,000 people are killed in crashes involving drivers ages 16-20
- Road crashes cost the U.S. \$230.6 billion per year, or an average of \$820 per person
- Road crashes are the single greatest annual cause of death of healthy U.S. citizens traveling abroad

WPI OFFICES

Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division
Project Center, 2nd Floor

T 508-831-5547

F 508-831-5485

- Prof. Rick Vaz, Dean
x 5344, vaz@wpi.edu
- Natalie A. Mello
Director of Global Operations
x 5852, nmello@wpi.edu

Academic Advising & Disability Services
Daniels Hall

T 508-831-5381

F 508-831-5486

- Dale Snyder, Director
X5281, dsnyder@wpi.edu

Accounting Office
Boynton Hall, 2nd Floor

T 508-831-5754

F 508-831-5064

- Lynn Beauregard, Bursar
x 5741, lbeauregard@wpi.edu

Central Mailing Services
Campus Center, 1st Floor

T 508-831-5523

F 508-831-5753

- Celia McLaren, Supervisor
x 5683, cmclaren@wpi.edu

Financial Aid
Boynton Hall, Lower Level

T 508-831-5469

F 508-831-5039

- Monica Blondin, Director
x 5469, mmlucey@wpi.edu

International Students and Scholars Office
28 Trowbridge Road

T 508-831-6030

F 508-831-6032

- Mr. Tom Thomsen, Director
x6030, hartvig@wpi.edu

Academic Technology Center
Fuller Labs, 1st Floor

T 508-831-5220

F 508-831-5881

- Mary Beth Harrity, Director
X5223, mharrity@wpi.edu

Registrar's Office
Boynton Hall, 1st Floor

T 508-831-5211

F 508-831-5931

- Heather Jackson, Registrar
x 5211, hjackson@wpi.edu
- Marjorie Roncone
x 5457, mroncone@wpi.edu

Residential Services
Ellsworth Residence, Institute Road

T 508-831-5175

F 508-831-5870

- Naomi Carton, Director
x 5175, letendre@wpi.edu

Student Development and Counseling Center
157 West Street

T 508-831-5540

F 508-831-5139

- Charles Morse, Director
x 5540, cmorse@wpi.edu

Student Life Office
Campus Center, Main Level

T 508-831-5520

F 508-831-5581

- Philip Clay, Dean of Students
X 5507, pclay@wpi.edu

Internet Addresses

The following are web addresses that you may find helpful, particularly before you leave for your site.

Health & Safety Sites

Center for Disease Control (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>

American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH)

<http://www.astmh.org>

Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE)

<http://www.ciee.org>

Travel Safe: AIDS and International Travel

http://www.ciee.org/health_safety/health/AIDS_intl_travel.aspx

Lonely Planet

http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services/flights/singapore_return.cfm

The Travel Clinic

<http://www.drwisetravel.com/index.html>

Travel Health Online

<https://www.tripprep.com/scripts/main/default.asp>

U.S. State Department

<http://travel.state.gov>

Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT)

<http://www.asirt.org/>

StudyAbroad.com Handbook

<http://www.studentsabroad.com/contents.asp>

NAFSA: Association of International Educators

<http://www.nafsa.org/>

Travel Sites

U.S. State Department

http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/index.html

Travel Warnings and Consular Information Sheets

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html

Links to U.S. Embassies and Consulates Worldwide

http://travel.state.gov/visa/questions/questions_1253.html

Services and Information for American Citizens Abroad

<http://travel.state.gov/travel/abroad.html>

Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad

http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/drugs/drugs_1237.html

Women's Sites

Journeywoman

<http://www.journeywoman.com>

Disability Sites

Access-Able

<http://www.access-able.com/tips/>

Air Travel Tips and Resources

<http://www.miusa>

ADVICE FROM THE CDC: GENERAL TRAVEL PRECAUTIONS

The following web address should be accessed for health information specific to where you will be traveling: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>. We strongly encourage all students to review these guidelines, advice and suggestions carefully. If vaccines are recommended then you should consult with your own personal health care professional (who has knowledge of your medical history) to determine what the best course of action is for you. The IGSD cannot provide medical advice. Any opinions expressed by students, advisors, or center directors with regard to medical issues are only opinions and should not be taken as authoritative.

The preventive measures you need to take while traveling depend on the areas you visit and the length of time you stay. All travelers should take the following precautions, no matter the destination:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Because motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury among travelers, walk and drive defensively.
- Avoid travel at night if possible and always use seat belts.
- Always use latex condoms to reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Don't eat or drink dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't share needles with anyone.
- Never eat undercooked ground beef and poultry, raw eggs, and un-pasteurized dairy products. Raw shellfish is particularly dangerous to persons who have liver disease or compromised immune systems.
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. If this is not possible, make water safer by BOTH filtering through an "absolute 1-micron or less" filter AND adding iodine tablets to the filtered water. "Absolute 1-micron filters" are found in camping/outdoor supply stores.
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Remember: boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.
- If you visit an area where there is risk for malaria, take your malaria prevention medication before, during, and after travel, as directed. (See your doctor for a prescription.)
- Protect yourself from insects by remaining in well-screened areas, using repellents (applied sparingly at 4-hour intervals), and wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants from dusk through dawn.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot.

To Avoid Getting Sick

- Don't eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Don't drink beverages with ice.
- Don't eat dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't share needles with anyone.
- Don't handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs, and cats), to avoid bites and serious diseases (including rabies and plague).
- Don't swim in fresh water. Salt water is usually safer.

What You Need To Bring with You

- Long-sleeved shirt and long pants to wear while outside whenever possible, to prevent illnesses carried by insects (e.g., malaria, dengue, filariasis, and Japanese encephalitis).
- Insect repellent containing DEET (diethylmethyltoluamide), in 30%–35% strength for adults and 6%–10% for children.
- Over-the-counter antidiarrheal medicine to take if you have diarrhea.
- Iodine tablets and water filters to purify water if bottled water is not available. See Do's above for more detailed information about water filters.
- Sunblock, sunglasses, hat.

- Prescription medications: make sure you have enough to last during your trip, as well as a copy of the prescription(s).

After You Return Home

- If you have visited an area where there is risk for malaria, continue taking your malaria medication weekly for 4 weeks after you leave the area.
- If you become ill after travel—even as long as a year after your trip—tell your doctor the areas you have visited.

Health Information for Travelers to Hungary

Travel Notices in Effect

- [2010 Measles Update](#) September 09, 2010
- [Guidelines and Recommendations: Interim Guidance about Avian Influenza \(H5N1\) for U.S. Citizens Living Abroad](#) November 04, 2008
- [Human Infection with Avian Influenza A \(H5N1\) Virus: Advice for Travelers](#) November 04, 2008

Safety and Security Abroad

- [Registration of Traveler Emergency Contact and Itinerary Information](#) June 18, 2007
- [Transportation Security Administration](#)
- [U.S. Department of State](#)

Preparing for Your Trip to Hungary

Before visiting Hungary, you may need to get the following vaccinations and medications for vaccine-preventable diseases and other diseases you might be at risk for at your destination:

(Note: Your doctor or health-care provider will determine what you will need, depending on factors such as your health and immunization history, areas of the country you will be visiting, and planned activities.)

To have the most benefit, see a health-care provider at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for your vaccines to take effect.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

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

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

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

Items to Bring With You

Medicines you may need:

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

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

Other items you may need:

- Iodine tablets and portable water filters to purify water if bottled water is not available. See [A Guide to Water Filters](#), [A Guide to Commercially-Bottled Water and Other Beverages](#), and [Safe Food and Water](#) for more detailed information.
- Antibacterial hand wipes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- To prevent insect/mosquito bites, bring:
 - Lightweight long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and a hat to wear outside, whenever possible.
 - Flying-insect spray to help clear rooms of mosquitoes. The product should contain a pyrethroid insecticide; these insecticides quickly kill flying insects, including mosquitoes.

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

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

Other Diseases Found in Eastern Europe and Northern Asia
Risk can vary between countries within this region and also within a country; the quality of in-country surveillance also varies.

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

[Tickborne encephalitis \(TBE\)](#) is widespread, occurring in warmer months in the southern part of the nontropical forested regions of Europe and Asia. Most intense transmission has been reported in Russia, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia. The annual incidence rate of [tuberculosis](#) is high in some countries in the region. High rates of drug-resistant TB are found in Estonia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, parts of Russia, and Uzbekistan. Cases of [diphtheria](#) have declined (after a large outbreak in the 1990s) with improved rates of immunization.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza virus H5N1 has been documented in wild birds or other avian species in several of the countries in Eastern Europe. Human cases and death were reported from Azerbaijan in 2006. Avoid all direct contact with birds, including domestic poultry (such as chickens and ducks) and wild birds and avoid places such as poultry farms and bird markets where live birds are raised or kept. For a current list of countries reporting outbreaks of H5N1 among poultry and/or wild birds, view updates from the [updates from the World Organization for Animal Health \(OIE\)](#), and for total numbers of confirmed human cases of H5N1 virus by country, see the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) Avian Influenza website](#).

Staying Healthy During Your Trip

Prevent Insect Bites

Diseases, like tickborne encephalitis (TBE), are spread through tick bites. One of the best protections is to prevent these bites by:

- Using insect repellent with 30%-50% DEET. Picaridin, available in 7% and 15% concentrations, needs to be applied more frequently. There is less information available on how effective picaridin is at protecting against all of the types of mosquitoes that transmit malaria.
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts which should be tucked in, long pants, and hats to cover exposed skin. When you visit areas with ticks and fleas, wear boots, not sandals, and tuck pants into socks.

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

Prevent Animal Bites and Scratches

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

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

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

Be Careful about Food and Water

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

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

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

Avoid Injuries

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

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

Other Health Tips

- To avoid infections such as HIV and viral hepatitis do not share needles for tattoos, body piercing, or injections.
- To reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases always use latex condoms.

After You Return Home

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

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

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

Section 3 – Site Specific Information for Budapest

Dates and Travel

You should plan to fly to Budapest Airport. The following dates should be used when making your travel arrangements to Budapest:

Arrival	Saturday, March 12, 2011
Departure	Wednesday, May 4, 2011

Communication

To call any Budapest telephone number listed in this section from the US, first dial the US international access code 011, plus the entire number shown. To call from another country, follow the same procedure, using the international access code for that country. To call from within Hungary but outside the Budapest area, omit the country code 36 and add a 06 instead. To call from the Budapest area, omit the country and city code 36 1

Local Coordinator

Gabor Sarkozy
Computer and Automation Research Institute
Hungarian Academy of Sciences
H-1518 Budapest, P.O. Box 63
HUNGARY

gsarkozy@sztaki.hu

Work telephone: +36 1 279 6217

Mobile phone: +36 30 274 9643

Consistent with WPI's Residence Hall policy there are no pets allowed in project center housing. Violation of this policy can result in your termination from a residential project center.

Calling Home

Calling home from a foreign country can be a difficult and frustrating experience. Phones may not be familiar and the costs of calling overseas with local currency may be very high. For these reasons, it is highly recommended that you carry some sort of calling card.

For emergency medical attention and mental health needs:

Medical Facilities

National Sport Hospital
Budapest, Alkotas ut 48, H-1123
Hungary

Dental Facilities:

Available at the above hospital

Mental Health Facilities

Available at the above hospital

Housing and Transportation

Budapest, Liszt Ferenc Ter 11
H-1061

Detailed information about the projects will be available in January 2010. Housing locations will be near supermarkets, shops, public transport, and other conveniences.

There is a reasonably reliable and inexpensive public metro and bus system serving Budapest and beyond. The cost of the public transportation pass is included in the housing bill and will be provided.

July 02, 2010

Country Specific Information

COUNTRY DESCRIPTION: Hungary is a stable democracy with a market economy. Tourist facilities outside Budapest are widely available, but may not be as developed as those found in Western Europe. If you are considering a trip to Hungary please read the American citizen services information on the [U.S. Embassy's website](#). You should also read the Department of State [Background Notes on Hungary](#).

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

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

[The U.S. Embassy in Budapest](#)

Szabadság tér 12

H-1054 Budapest

Telephone: (36)(1) 475-4400

After-hours emergency calls -- for U.S. citizens only: (36)(1) 475-4703/4924

The Consular Section's fax is (36)(1) 475-4188 or (36)(1) 475-4113

ENTRY / EXIT REQUIREMENTS: A valid passport is required for everyone entering Hungary. The passport should be valid for at least three months beyond the day you plan to finish your trip. You may visit Hungary for up to 90 days for tourism or business without a visa. Hungary is part of the [Schengen Agreement](#) along with 23 other European countries. The maximum stay for tourism or business to any single country or combination of countries in the Schengen zone is 90 days. For further details about travel into and within Schengen countries, please see our [Schengen Fact Sheet](#).

If you want to visit Hungary for any reason other than business or tourism, or if you want to get a residence or work permit, please contact the Embassy of the Republic of Hungary at 3910 Shoemaker Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, telephone (202) 362-6730. More information can be found on the [Hungarian Embassy's website](#), or at the Hungarian Consulates in Los Angeles and New York.

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

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

SAFETY AND SECURITY: Although Hungary is a relatively safe place to visit, you should use caution and stay alert. Be especially careful in train stations and crowded tourist areas. In addition, you should avoid demonstrations and

political rallies. In recent years several peaceful demonstrations have turned violent, and authorities have used riot police and water cannons to control crowds.

In recent years a group calling itself the [Magyar Garda \(Hungarian Guard\)](#) has gained popularity in Hungary due to its radical nationalist message of intolerance towards Jews, Roma, and homosexuals. Although the group is not explicitly anti-American, you should avoid its public demonstrations and confrontations with its members. The Embassy routinely issues [public announcements](#) when the group plans a demonstration that will help you avoid trouble.

Stay up to date by bookmarking our [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#), which contains the current [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#) as well as the [Worldwide Caution](#).

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

You should always try to ensure your safety when traveling overseas. Take some time before travel to improve your personal security—things are not the same everywhere as they are in the United States. Here are some useful tips for [traveling safely abroad](#).

CRIME: Crime in Budapest is a concern. You should be careful during your visit, and exercise the same caution you would in any big city or tourist area at home. You should not walk alone at night and keep your belongings secure at all times. Passports, cash, and credit cards are favorite targets of thieves. Keep these items with you when you leave your hotel or residence, but carry them in a safe place. Pockets, purses and backpacks are especially vulnerable, even if they close with a zipper. We recommend you use a travel money belt that keeps your cash and passport under your outer clothing and well out of view. Be sure to secure these items when you get back to your hotel or residence.

The U.S. Embassy's Consular Section has a special [website with further details on common scams and crimes in Hungary](#).

If you drive, be careful at gas stations and rest areas, or while fixing flat tires or other mechanical problems, especially at night. One scam involves someone who attracts your attention by saying that there is something wrong with your car to get you to pull over and then robs you. Do not leave your luggage and valuables unattended inside any vehicle.

Another common scam involves young women asking foreign men to buy them drinks. When the bill arrives the drinks cost hundreds of dollars each. You should avoid bars and restaurants suggested by cab drivers or people on the street. Every bar and restaurant should provide a menu with prices on it. Look at the prices before you order anything, including drinks. The Embassy [maintains a list](#) of bars and restaurants are known to engage in this scam.

Don't buy counterfeit and pirated goods, even if they are widely available. Not only are the bootlegs illegal to bring back into the United States, but you may also be breaking local law.

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

and rape, we can, for example, help you find appropriate medical care, contact family members or friends, and help you get money from them if you need it. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime are solely the responsibility of local authorities, consular officers can help you to understand the local criminal justice process and to find an attorney if needed.

The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Hungary is 112. The operator will speak English.

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

CRIMINAL PENALTIES: While you are traveling in another country, you are subject to its laws even if you are a U.S. citizen. Foreign laws and legal systems can be vastly different than our own. Criminal penalties vary from country to country. There are also some things that might be legal in the country you visit, but still illegal in the United States, and you can be prosecuted under U.S. law if you buy pirated goods or engage in child pornography. While you are overseas, U.S. laws don’t apply. If you do something illegal in your host country, your U.S. passport won’t help you avoid prosecution. It’s very important to know what’s legal and what’s not where you are going.

You should carry your passport with you at all times when you are in Hungary. Hungarian law requires all visitors to carry their passports; a photocopy is not a valid substitute. You could be arrested or fined if you do not have your passport with you. Since expert pickpockets frequent tourist areas and train stations, it is a good idea to keep your passport in a safe place. Pockets, purses, and backpacks are especially vulnerable, even if they close with a zipper. We recommend you use a travel money belt that keeps your cash and passport under your outer clothing and well out of view.

Hungary has a “zero tolerance” policy on drinking and driving. You should not drive after drinking, regardless of the amount of alcohol you have had.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: Traveler’s checks are not universally accepted in Hungary. The presence of ATMs is increasing in Budapest and other major cities.

Hungary’s custom authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Hungary of firearms, antiquities, prescription medications, and other items. You should contact the [Hungarian Embassy](#) in Washington or one of Hungary’s consulates in either New York or Los Angeles for specific information regarding customs. You can also visit the [Hungarian Customs website](#).

MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION: Medical treatment in Hungary is adequate, but hospital facilities are not always comparable to what you may find in the United States. Doctors are generally well-trained, but there is a lack of adequate emergency services. Some doctors speak English. The Embassy maintains a website with [more details about specific medical care providers](#).

Good information on vaccinations and other health precautions can be found via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC website](#)). For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) website](#). The WHO website also contains additional health information for travelers, including [detailed country-specific health information](#).

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

- Does my policy apply when I'm out of the U.S.?
- Will it cover emergencies like a trip to a foreign hospital or an evacuation?

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

TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CONDITIONS: While in a foreign country, U.S. citizens may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in the United States. In Hungary, there are approximately 1,200 fatal traffic accidents per year, with about 7,000 traffic accidents per year resulting in serious injuries. Roadside assistance, including medical and other services, is generally available. English is usually spoken at the emergency numbers listed below. In case English is not spoken, dial 112.

Ambulance: 104 or 350-0388

Police: 107

Fire: 105

24-hour English speaker: 112

Hungarian motorways and highways are generally in good condition. Urban roads and road maintenance are also good, although areas under construction are not always adequately marked or blockaded. In Budapest, many roads are often under construction. Outside the city, roads are often narrow, badly lighted, and can be in a state of poor repair in some areas. Pedestrians, tractors, and farm animals often use these small rural roads, so stay alert. Additional information on road conditions is available from "Útinform" at phone number (38)(1)336-2400.

Hungary has zero tolerance for driving under the influence of alcohol. Police often conduct routine roadside checks where breath-analyzer tests are administered. If you drive after drinking, you will face jail and fines. Penalties for a car accident involving injury or death are one to five years in prison. Police stop vehicles regularly to check documents. It is against the law to use a hand-held cell phone while driving anywhere in Hungary.

You can drive in Hungary with a valid U.S. driver's license as long as you have a certified Hungarian translation of the license attached to the license. Hungary also recognizes international driver's permits (IDP) issued by the American Automobile Association (AAA) and the American Automobile Touring Alliance when used along with a valid state driver's license. If you have an IDP you do not need to have the license translated, but must carry the IDP and state driver's license together. After one year in Hungary, U.S. citizens must obtain a Hungarian driver's license. For further information on this procedure visit the [U.S. Embassy's website](#).

The speed limit for cars and motorcycles on the motorway is 130 km per hour (approximately 80 mph); on highways, the limit is 110 km per hour (approximately 65 mph); and in town and villages the speed limit is 50 km per hour (approximately 30 mph). Many drivers do not observe the speed limits, and you should be extra careful on two-way roads where local drivers pass each other frequently and allow for less space than you may be used to. Car seats are required for infants. Children under age 12 may not sit in the front seat. Seats belts are mandatory for everyone in the car. You may not turn right on a red light. The police issue tickets for traffic violations and charge fines on the spot. The police will give you a postal check (money order) on which the amount of the fine to be paid is written, and

this postal check may be presented and paid at any Hungarian post office. Sometimes in disputes about fines or the offense, the police will confiscate your passport and issue a receipt for the passport with an “invitation letter” to appear at the police station the next day or day after to resolve the dispute. Your passport is returned after resolution and/or the payment of the fine.

As in most European countries, you must pay to use Hungary’s motorways. Payments must be made either at a gas station or [through the Internet](#).

For specific information about Hungarian driver’s permits, vehicle inspection, road taxes, and mandatory insurance, visit the [Hungarian National Tourist Organization Office in New York website](#).

Please refer to our [Road Safety page](#) for more information.

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

* * *

This replaces the Country Specific Information for Hungary dated December 7, 2009, to update all sections

Background Notes

Official Name: **Republic of Hungary**



PROFILE

Geography

Area: 93,030 sq. km. (35,910 sq. mi.); about the size of Indiana.

Cities: *Capital*--Budapest (est. pop. 2 million). *Other cities*--Debrecen (220,000); Miskolc (208,000); Szeged (189,000); Pécs (183,000).

Terrain: Mostly flat, with low mountains in the north and northeast and north of Lake Balaton.

Climate: Temperate.

People

Nationality: *Noun and adjective*--Hungarian(s).

Population (December 2009 est.): 10,011,000.

Ethnic groups: Magyar 89.9%, Romany 4% (est.), German 2.6%, Serb 2%, Slovak 0.8%, Romanian 0.7%.

Religions (2001 census): Roman Catholic 51.9%, Calvinist 15.9%, Lutheran 3%, Greek Catholic 2.6%, Jewish 1%, others, including Baptist Adventist, Pentecostal, Unitarian 3%.

Languages: Magyar 98.2%, other 1.8%.

Education: Compulsory to age 16. *Attendance*--96%. *Literacy*--99.4%.

Health (2007 est.): *Infant mortality rate*--8.21/1,000. *Life expectancy*--men 68.73 yrs., women 77.38 yrs.

Work force (2006 est., 4.21 million): *Agriculture*--5.5%; *industry and commerce*--33.3%; *services*--61.2%.

Government

Type: Republic.

Constitution: August 20, 1949. Substantially rewritten in 1989, amended in 1990.

Branches: *Executive*--president (head of state), prime minister (head of government), Council of Ministers.

Legislative--National Assembly (386 members, 4-year term). *Judicial*--Supreme Court and Constitutional Court.

Administrative regions: 19 counties plus capital region of Budapest.

Principal political parties: Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party--center-right; Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP)--center-right; Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP)--center-left; Politics Can Be Different (LMP)--Green party; Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik)--far-right.

Economy

GDP: HUF 26,095 billion (approx. \$129 billion, at \$1=HUF 202.26 - average exchange rate Jan.-Dec. 2009).

Annual growth rate (2009 est.): -6.3%.

Per capita GDP (2009 est.): \$12,866.

Natural resources: bauxite, coal, natural gas, and arable land.

Agriculture/forestry (2008 est., 3.4% of GDP): *Products*--meat, corn, wheat, sunflower seeds, potatoes, sugar beets, and dairy products.

Industry and construction (2008 est., 45.4% of GDP): *Types*--machinery, vehicles, chemicals, precision and measuring equipment, computer products, medical instruments, pharmaceuticals, and textiles.

Trade (2009): *Exports* (\$83.0 billion)--machinery, vehicles, food, beverages, tobacco, crude materials, manufactured goods, fuels and electric energy. *Imports* (\$77.4 billion)--machinery, vehicles, manufactured goods, fuels and electric energy, food, beverages, and tobacco. *Major markets*--EU (Germany, Austria, Italy, France, U.K., Romania, Poland). *Major suppliers*--EU (Germany, Austria, Italy, France, Netherlands, Poland), Russia, and China.

PEOPLE AND HISTORY

Ethnic groups in Hungary include Magyar (nearly 90%), Romany, German, Serb, Slovak, and others. The majority of Hungary's people are Roman Catholic; other religions represented are Calvinist, Lutheran, Jewish, Baptist, Adventist, Pentecostal, and Unitarian. Magyar is the predominant language. Hungary has long been an integral part of Europe. It converted to Western Christianity before AD 1000. Although Hungary was a monarchy for nearly 1,000 years, its constitutional system preceded by several centuries the establishment of Western-style governments in other European countries.

Following the defeat of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy (1867-1918) at the end of World War I, Hungary lost two-thirds of its territory and one-third of its population. It experienced a brief but bloody communist dictatorship and counterrevolution in 1919, followed by a 25-year regency under Admiral Miklos Horthy. Although Hungary fought in most of World War II as a German ally, it fell under German military occupation following an unsuccessful attempt to switch sides on October 15, 1944. Under Nazi occupation, the Hungarian Government deported or executed and seized the property of hundreds of thousands of its minority citizens, mostly members of the Jewish community. On January 20, 1945, a provisional government concluded an armistice with the Soviet Union and established the Allied Control Commission, under which Soviet, American, and British representatives held complete sovereignty over the country. The Commission's chairman was a member of Stalin's inner circle and exercised absolute control.

Communist Takeover

The provisional government, dominated by the Hungarian communist party (MKP), was replaced in November 1945 after elections which gave majority control of a coalition government to the Independent Smallholders' Party. The government instituted a radical land reform and gradually nationalized mines, electric plants, heavy industries, and some large banks. The communists ultimately undermined the coalition regime by discrediting leaders of rival parties and through terror, blackmail, and show trials. In elections tainted by fraud in 1947, the leftist bloc gained control of the government.

By February 1949, all opposition parties had been forced to merge with the MKP to form the Hungarian Workers' Party. In 1949, the communists held a single-list election and adopted a Soviet-style constitution, which created the Hungarian People's Republic. Between 1948 and 1953, the Hungarian economy was reorganized according to the Soviet model. In 1949 and the country joined the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA, or Comecon.) All private industrial firms with more than 10 employees were nationalized. Freedom of the press, religion, and assembly were strictly curtailed. The head of the Roman Catholic Church, Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty, was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Forced industrialization and land collectivization soon led to serious economic difficulties, which reached crisis

proportions by mid-1953. Imre Nagy replaced Rakosi as prime minister in 1953 and repudiated much of Rakosi's economic program of forced collectivization and heavy industry. He also ended political purges and freed thousands of political prisoners. However, the economic situation continued to deteriorate, and Rakosi succeeded in disrupting the reforms and in forcing Nagy from power in 1955 for "right-wing revisionism." Hungary joined the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact Treaty Organization the same year.

1956 Revolution

Pressure for change reached a climax on October 23, 1956, when security forces fired on Budapest students marching in support of Poland's confrontation with the Soviet Union. The ensuing battle quickly grew into a massive popular uprising. Fighting did not abate until the Central Committee named Imre Nagy as prime minister on October 25. Nagy dissolved the state security police, abolished the one-party system, promised free elections, and negotiated with the U.S.S.R. to withdraw its troops.

Faced with reports of new Soviet troops pouring into Hungary, despite Soviet Ambassador Andropov's assurances to the contrary, on November 1 Nagy announced Hungary's neutrality and withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. In response, the Soviet Union launched a massive military attack on Hungary on November 3. Some 200,000 Hungarians fled to the West. Nagy and his colleagues took refuge in the Yugoslav Embassy. Party First Secretary Janos Kadar defected from the Nagy cabinet, fleeing to the Soviet Union. On November 4 he announced the formation of a new government. He returned to Budapest and, with Soviet support, carried out severe reprisals; thousands of people were executed or imprisoned. Despite a guarantee of safe conduct, Nagy was arrested and deported to Romania. In June 1958, Nagy was returned to Hungary, and, following a secret trial, was executed by the communist government.

Reform Under Kadar

In the early 1960s, Kadar announced a new policy under the motto of "He Who is Not Against Us is With Us," and introduced a relatively liberal cultural and economic course aimed at overcoming the post-1956 hostility toward him and his regime. In 1966, the Central Committee approved the "New Economic Mechanism," through which it sought to overcome the inefficiencies of central planning, increase productivity, make Hungary more competitive in world markets, and create prosperity to ensure political stability. By the early 1980s, it had achieved some lasting economic reforms and limited political liberalization and pursued a foreign policy which encouraged more trade with the West. Nevertheless, the New Economic Mechanism led to mounting foreign debt incurred to shore up unprofitable industries.

Transition to Democracy

Hungary's transition to a Western-style parliamentary democracy was the first and the smoothest among the former Soviet bloc. By 1987, activists within the party and bureaucracy and Budapest-based intellectuals were increasingly pressing for change. Young liberals formed the Federation of Young Democrats (Fidesz); a core from the so-called Democratic Opposition formed the Association of Free Democrats (SZDSZ), and the neo-populist national opposition established the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF). Civic activism intensified to a level not seen since the 1956 revolution.

In 1988, Kadar was replaced as General Secretary of the MSZMP (the communist party), and that same year, the Parliament adopted a "democracy package," which included trade union pluralism; freedom of association, assembly, and the press; a new electoral law; and a radical revision of the constitution, among others. The Soviet Union reduced its involvement by signing an agreement in April 1989 to withdraw Soviet forces by June 1991.

National unity culminated in June 1989 as the country reburied Imre Nagy, his associates, and, symbolically, all other victims of the 1956 revolution. A national roundtable, comprising representatives of the new parties and some recreated old parties--such as the Smallholders and Social Democrats--the communist party, and different social groups, met in the late summer of 1989 to discuss major changes to the Hungarian constitution in preparation for free elections and the transition to a fully free and democratic political system.

Free Elections and a Democratic Hungary

The first free parliamentary election, held in March-April 1990, was a plebiscite of sorts on the communist past with the Democratic Forum (MDF) winning 43% of the vote and the Free Democrats (SZDSZ) capturing 24%. Under Prime Minister Jozsef Antall, the MDF formed a center-right coalition government with the Independent Smallholders' Party (FKGP) and the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) to command a 60% majority in the Parliament. Parliamentary opposition parties included SZDSZ, the Socialists (MSZP--successors to the Communist Party), and the Alliance of Young Democrats (Fidesz). Peter Boross succeeded as Prime Minister after Antall died and the Antall/Boross coalition governments achieved a reasonably well-functioning parliamentary democracy and laid the foundation for a free market economy.

In May 1994, the Socialists came back to win a plurality of votes and 54% of the seats after an election campaign focused largely on economic issues and the substantial decline in living standards since 1990. A heavy turnout of voters swept away the right-of-center coalition but soundly rejected extremists on both right and left. The MSZP continued economic reforms and privatization, adopting a painful but necessary policy of fiscal austerity (the "Bokros plan") in 1995. However, dissatisfaction with the pace of economic recovery, rising crime, and cases of government corruption convinced voters to propel center-right parties into power following national elections in May 1998. Fidesz captured a plurality of parliamentary seats and forged a coalition with the Smallholders and the Democratic Forum. The new government, headed by 35-year-old Prime Minister Viktor Orban, promised to stimulate faster growth, curb inflation, and lower taxes. Although the Orban administration also pledged continuity in foreign policy, and continued to pursue Euro-Atlantic integration as its first priority, it was a more vocal advocate of minority rights for ethnic Hungarians abroad than the previous government. During Orban's tenure, Hungary acceded to NATO on March 12, 1999.

In April 2002, the country voted to return the MSZP-Free Democrat coalition to power with Peter Medgyessy as Prime Minister. The Medgyessy government placed special emphasis on solidifying Hungary's Euro-Atlantic course, which culminated in Hungary's accession to the European Union on May 1, 2004. Prime Minister Medgyessy resigned in August 2004 after losing coalition support following an attempted cabinet reshuffle. Ferenc Gyurcsany succeeded Medgyessy as Prime Minister in September 29, 2004.

In the April 2006 election, Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany and his Socialist-liberal coalition were re-elected, the first time since communism that a sitting government renewed its mandate. The SZDSZ pulled out of the coalition in April 2008, leaving the MSZP to govern alone. After the dissolution of the coalition with SZDSZ, Prime Minister Gyurcsany reduced the number of ministries in the cabinet from 17 to 13.

The global economic crisis spilled over into Hungary in autumn 2008, and severely impacted the country. Prime Minister Gyurcsany resigned in March 2009 and was succeeded by a technocratic crisis management government led by Gordon Bajnai, the former Minister of Economy and National Development.

Parliamentary elections in April 2010 brought a Fidesz-KDNP coalition back to power with a two-thirds majority (263

seats). Viktor Orban became Prime Minister. Joining the MSZP (59 seats) in opposition were the newly elected far-right Jobbik party (47 seats) and the Green party, Politics Can Be Different (LMP) (16 seats). There is one independent member of Parliament. The Fidesz-dominated Parliament quickly launched an ambitious legislative agenda that has reduced the overall number of seats in Parliament to 200 effective for the next election in 2014, cut by half the number of local representatives, and extended citizenship rights to ethnic Hungarians living beyond the country's present borders.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

The president of the republic, elected by the National Assembly every 5 years, has a largely ceremonial role, but powers also include appointing the prime minister. The prime minister selects cabinet ministers and has the exclusive right to dismiss them. Each cabinet nominee appears before one or more parliamentary committees in consultative open hearings and must be formally approved by the president. The unicameral, 386-member National Assembly is the highest state legislative body and initiates and approves legislation sponsored by the prime minister. A party must win at least 5% of the national vote to enter Parliament. National parliamentary elections are held every 4 years (the last in April 2010). An 11-member Constitutional Court has power to challenge legislation on grounds of unconstitutionality.

Principal Government Officials

President--Pal Schmitt

Prime Minister--Viktor Orban (Fidesz)

Minister of Foreign Affairs--Janos Martonyi

Ambassador to the United States--Bela Szombati

Ambassador to the United Nations--Csaba Korosi

The Hungarian [Embassy](#) is located at 3910 Spring of Freedom St. NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel. 202-362-6730). Hungary has consulates in New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

ECONOMY

Prior to World War II, the Hungarian economy was primarily oriented toward agriculture and small-scale manufacturing. Hungary's strategic position in Europe and its relative lack of natural resources dictated a traditional reliance on foreign trade. In the early 1950s, the communist government forced rapid industrialization following the standard Stalinist pattern in an effort to encourage a more self-sufficient economy. Most economic activity was conducted by state farms and state-owned enterprises or cooperatives. In 1968, Stalinist self-sufficiency was replaced by the "New Economic Mechanism," which gave limited freedom to the workings of the market, reopened Hungary to foreign trade, and allowed a limited number of small businesses to operate in the services sector.

Although Hungary enjoyed one of the most liberal and economically advanced economies of the former Eastern Bloc, both agriculture and industry began to suffer from a lack of investment in the 1970s. Belated reaction to the economic crisis of the early 1970s and deteriorating terms of trade resulted in increasing indebtedness. In response, the Hungarian Government launched a restrictive economic policy in the late 1970s and early 1980s, followed by the "Dynamization Program of 1985," which increased consumer subsidies and investments--mainly in unprofitable state enterprises--eventually leading to a doubling of foreign debt levels. By 1993, Hungary's net foreign debt rose significantly--from \$1 billion in 1973 to \$15 billion. Liberalization of the economy continued, however, and in 1988-89 Hungary passed a joint venture law, adopted tax legislation, and joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. By 1988, Hungary developed a two-tier banking system and enacted significant corporate legislation

which paved the way for the ambitious market-oriented reforms of the post-communist years.

The Antall government of 1990-94 began market reforms with price and trade liberation measures, a revamped tax system, and a nascent market-based banking system. As a result of the collapse of Eastern markets and the inability of state-owned companies to compete with foreign competitors, industrial production fell by 50% between 1989 and 1994, and the country faced high unemployment and inflation rates, as well as a deteriorating trade balance. By 1994, the costs of government overspending and hesitant privatization had become clearly visible. In 1996, austerity measures referred to as the “Bokros package” (for then-Finance Minister Lajos Bokros) improved both the fiscal and external balance situation, and increased investor confidence. Simplified and accelerated privatization led to significant inflow of foreign capital in industry, energy, and telecommunications sectors, and a number of greenfield investments were launched. Hungary's early openness to foreign direct investment (FDI) led to a sustained period of high growth and made Hungary a magnet for FDI in the late 1990s and early parts of this century.

In 1995, Hungary's currency--the forint (HUF)--became convertible for all current account transactions, and subsequent to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) membership in 1996, for almost all capital account transactions as well. In 2001, the Orban government lifted remaining currency controls and broadened the band around the exchange rate, allowing the forint to appreciate by more than 12% in a year. Trade with European Union (EU) and OECD countries now comprises over 75% and 85% of Hungary's total trade, respectively. Germany is Hungary's most important trading partner, followed by Italy and France. The United States has become Hungary's sixth-largest export market, while Hungary is ranked as the 72nd-largest export market for the United States. Bilateral trade between the two countries has increased to more than \$1 billion per year.

With more than \$60 billion in FDI since 1989, Hungary has been a leading destination for FDI in central and eastern Europe, although this level is beginning to decline. The largest U.S. investors include GE, Alcoa, General Motors, Coca-Cola, Ford, IBM, and PepsiCo, with the overall level of direct U.S. investment estimated at \$9 billion. As a result of extensive and continuing liberalization, the private sector produces about 80% of Hungary's output.

Close relationship with the economies of the EU helped pave the way for Hungary's EU accession in 2004. As part of its EU membership agreement, Hungary agreed to meet the economic criteria necessary to adopt the euro. In 2005 and 2006, however, it became clear that not only was a high budget deficit hurting the economy (nearly surpassing 10% of GDP in 2006), but that Hungary was moving away from meeting euro entry requirements, and would be subject to EU excessive deficit procedures. Against this backdrop, in fall 2006, Prime Minister Gyurcsany launched a program of fiscal consolidation by raising taxes, decreasing subsidies, and streamlining the public sector. Businesses complained, however, that increased taxes, particularly on labor, decreased Hungary's economic competitiveness compared to other countries in the region. Greater fiscal discipline allowed the government to reduce its deficit to 3.4% of GDP by 2008, but decreasing government spending during this period also reduced domestic consumption and contributed to a decrease in Hungary's GDP growth.

In October 2008, the effects of the global financial crisis spilled into Hungary. Despite its success in reducing its fiscal deficit, years of high budget deficits and Hungary's high external debt levels fueled investor risk aversion, and negatively affected the foreign exchange, government securities, and equity markets in Hungary. The country was hit hard by global de-leveraging, and weak demand for government bonds. A sharp decline in the share of non-resident investors in the government securities market raised concerns that Hungary would be unable to meet its external financing requirements. In order to increase investor confidence and ensure liquidity in domestic financial markets, Hungary concluded a \$25 billion financial stabilization package with the IMF, EU, and World Bank in November 2008.

Under the agreement, Hungary committed to further fiscal consolidation, financial sector reforms, and enacting banking sector support measures. Terms also included periodic assessment of macroeconomic and fiscal targets. Taking into consideration the worsening global economic and financial crisis, the IMF and the EU revised their projections of Hungary's GDP decline in 2009 to minus 6.7%, and agreed to increasing the 2.9% deficit target to 3.9% for 2009. Public debt was expected to increase to 83% of GDP in 2009 before returning to more sustainable levels through fiscal tightening.

To respond to the crisis, the Bajnai government in 2009 enacted a series of economic reforms and spending cuts intended to reduce the tax burden on labor, encourage employment, improve Hungary's economic competitiveness, and offset lost government revenue due to the deeper-than-expected recession. These measures included reforms to the pension and entitlement systems, as well as tax changes to shift the tax burden from labor to wealth and consumption. In addition to cuts in taxes for businesses and employees, tax changes included raising the value added tax (VAT), and a proposal for the introduction of a property tax. In 2009 GDP declined by 6.3%, and the Hungarian Government was able to meet the 3.9% deficit target.

The Orban government elected in 2010 has pledged to meet the 3.8% budget deficit target and launched a 29-point economic program designed to promote growth by reducing administrative burdens on businesses and lowering the tax burdens on small businesses. The plan also includes strict control of budgetary expenditures, and a tax on the financial sector of HUF 200 billion (about \$850 million), which would remain in effect for 2 years.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Hungary's key national security focus since joining NATO in 1999 has been contributing to the stability of the region while integrating its armed forces into NATO's force structure. Hungary takes a keen interest in NATO expansion and in the transatlantic link. It shares a more acute sense of the threat than many other European countries and is watching events in the Balkans, Ukraine, and Russia with great interest. Hungarians believe that Hungary's own security and that of its ethnic minorities in neighboring countries will be best served by a peaceful, unified region, which will be achieved when EU and NATO membership is extended to the entire region.

Hungary has been slowly modernizing and downsizing its armed forces since it left the Warsaw Pact in 1990. Transitioning from a heavy, slow-moving Warsaw Pact force to a lighter, versatile NATO force, the Hungarian military went from 130,000 in 1989 to approximately 24,000 combat and combat support forces in 2008. Implementing a new training, logistics, and leadership system and a new Joint Forces Command structure, the Hungarian military has gained considerable practical experience working with NATO and other forces serving in international military missions (about 1,000 at any given time). Hungary was especially helpful during the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords in the Balkans from 1995-2004, when its airbase at Tazsar was used by coalition forces transiting the region. Hungary currently leads a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan, and deployed an additional Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT), which operates in partnership with the Ohio National Guard, as well as Special Forces personnel in Afghanistan in 2009. The Hungarian military took over command of a joint battalion in the Balkans in 2008. Hungary's Papa Airbase is the home base of the Strategic Airlift Consortium's C-17 operations, expanding its contribution to NATO and other European partners. Hungary's military still faces numerous challenges to its modernization program, as reflected in the 2008 Hungarian defense budget, which was set at 1.17% of GDP, well below the NATO target of 2%.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Except for the short-lived neutrality declared by Imre Nagy in November 1956, Hungary's foreign policy generally followed the Soviet lead from 1947 to 1989. During the communist period, Hungary maintained treaties of friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance with the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Romania, and Bulgaria. It was one of the founding members of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact and Comecon, and it was the first central European country to withdraw from those now defunct organizations.

As with any country, Hungarian security attitudes are shaped largely by history and geography. For Hungary, this is a history of more than 400 years of domination by great powers--the Ottomans, the Habsburgs, the Germans during World War II, and the Soviets during the Cold War. Hungary's foreign policy priorities, largely consistent since 1990, represent a direct response to these factors. Since 1990, Hungary's top foreign policy goal has been achieving integration into Western economic and security organizations. To this end, Hungary joined NATO in 1999 and the European Union in May of 2004. Hungary also has improved its often-chilled neighborly relations by signing basic treaties with Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine. These renounce all outstanding territorial claims and lay the foundation for constructive relations. However, the issue of ethnic Hungarian minority rights in Slovakia and Romania periodically causes bilateral tensions to flare, including in June 2010 when the Parliament offered Hungarian citizenship to ethnic Hungarians living outside its borders. Hungary was a signatory to the Helsinki Final Act in 1975, has signed all of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)/ Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) follow-on documents since 1989, and served as the OSCE's Chairman-in-Office in 1997. Hungary's record of implementing CSCE Helsinki Final Act provisions, including those on reunification of divided families, remains among the best in eastern Europe. Hungary has been a member of the United Nations since December 1955.

U.S.-HUNGARIAN RELATIONS

Relations between the United States and Hungary following World War II were affected by the Soviet armed forces' occupation of Hungary. Full diplomatic relations were established at the legation level on October 12, 1945, before the signing of the Hungarian peace treaty on February 10, 1947. After the communist takeover in 1947-48, relations with Hungary became increasingly strained by the nationalization of U.S.-owned property, unacceptable treatment of U.S. citizens and personnel, and restrictions on the operations of the American legation. Though relations deteriorated further after the suppression of the Hungarian national uprising in 1956, an exchange of ambassadors in 1966 inaugurated an era of improving relations. In 1972, a consular convention was concluded to provide consular protection to U.S. citizens in Hungary.

In 1973, a bilateral agreement was reached under which Hungary settled the nationalization claims of American citizens. In January 1978, the United States returned to the people of Hungary the historic Crown of Saint Stephen, which had been safeguarded by the United States since the end of World War II. Symbolically and literally, this event marked the beginning of improved relations between the two countries. A 1978 bilateral trade agreement included extension of most-favored-nation status to Hungary. Cultural and scientific exchanges were expanded. As Hungary began to pull away from the Soviet orbit, the United States offered assistance and expertise to help establish a constitution, a democratic political system, and a plan for a free market economy.

Between 1989 and 1993, the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Act provided more than \$136 million for economic restructuring and private sector development. The Hungarian-American Enterprise Fund offered loans, equity capital, and technical assistance to promote private-sector development. The U.S. Government has provided expert and financial assistance for the development of modern and Western institutions in many policy areas, including national security, law enforcement, free media, environmental regulations, education, and health care.

American direct investment has had a direct, positive impact on the Hungarian economy and on continued good bilateral relations. When Hungary acceded to NATO in April 1999, it became a formal ally of the United States. This move has been consistently supported by the 1.5 million-strong Hungarian-American community. The U.S. Government supported Hungarian European Union accession in 2004, and continues to work with Hungary as a valued partner in the transatlantic relationship. Hungary joined the Visa Waiver Program on November 17, 2008.

Principal U.S. Embassy Officials

Ambassador--**Eleni Tsakopoulos Kounalakis**

Deputy Chief of Mission--Timothy Betts

Public Affairs Counselor--Edward Loo

Political/Economic Counselor--Paul C. O’Friel

Management Counselor--Paul Gilmer

Regional USAID Mission Director--David Leong

Commercial Counselor--Robert Peaslee

Senior Defense Official and Defense Attaché--Col. Robert Duggleby, USA

Consul General--Jeffrey Lodinsky

Environment/Science/Technology Attaché--Mark Canning

The **U.S. Embassy** in Hungary is located at Szabadsag Ter 12, Budapest 1054 (tel. (36) 1-475-4400).

TRAVEL AND BUSINESS INFORMATION

The U.S. Department of State’s Consular Information Program advises Americans traveling and residing abroad through Country Specific Information, Travel Alerts, and Travel Warnings. **Country Specific Information** exists for all countries and includes information on entry and exit requirements, currency regulations, health conditions, safety and security, crime, political disturbances, and the addresses of the U.S. embassies and consulates abroad. **Travel Alerts** are issued to disseminate information quickly about terrorist threats and other relatively short-term conditions overseas that pose significant risks to the security of American travelers. **Travel Warnings** are issued when the State Department recommends that Americans avoid travel to a certain country because the situation is dangerous or unstable.

For the latest security information, Americans living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department’s Bureau of Consular Affairs Internet web site at <http://www.travel.state.gov>, where the current **Worldwide Caution**, **Travel Alerts**, and **Travel Warnings** can be found. **Consular Affairs Publications**, which contain information on obtaining passports and planning a safe trip abroad, are also available at <http://www.travel.state.gov>. For additional information on international travel, see <http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel/International.shtml>.

The Department of State encourages all U.S. citizens traveling or residing abroad to register via the **State Department’s travel registration** website or at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate abroad. Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact you in an emergency and will enable you to receive up-to-date information on security conditions.

Emergency information concerning Americans traveling abroad may be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S. and Canada or the regular toll line 1-202-501-4444 for callers outside the U.S. and Canada.

The **National Passport Information Center** (NPIC) is the U.S. Department of State’s single, centralized public contact center for U.S. passport information. Telephone: 1-877-4-USA-PPT (1-877-487-2778); TDD/TTY: 1-888-874-7793.

Passport information is available 24 hours, 7 days a week. You may speak with a representative Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Eastern Time, excluding federal holidays.

Travelers can check the latest health information with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. A hotline at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) and a web site at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx> give the most recent health advisories, immunization recommendations or requirements, and advice on food and drinking water safety for regions and countries. The CDC publication "Health Information for International Travel" can be found at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/contentYellowBook.aspx>.

Further Electronic Information

Department of State Web Site. Available on the Internet at <http://www.state.gov>, the Department of State web site provides timely, global access to official U.S. foreign policy information, including **Background Notes** and **daily press briefings** along with the directory of **key officers** of Foreign Service posts and more. The Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) provides security information and regional news that impact U.S. companies working abroad through its website <http://www.osac.gov>

Export.gov provides a portal to all export-related assistance and market information offered by the federal government and provides trade leads, free export counseling, help with the export process, and more.

Section 4 - Transition

Experiences in Transition

adapted from an article by Janet Bennett, Intercultural Communication Institute, Portland OR

Culture Surprise

Culture surprise are the reactions which occur shortly after arrival in a different culture when we see things that are different than we are used to. It usually occurs within the first few days after arrival as we become aware of superficial differences: modes of dress, signs in a different language, nonverbal behaviors.

Culture Stress

Culture stress manifests itself in the fatigue that occurs when we practice new behaviors in a different culture. This occurs as we respond to the behavior of the new culture and try to fit in by doing our own shopping, understanding comments made about us in the local language, learning to navigate public transportation and other attempts to adjust to the new culture.

Culture Shock

Culture shock is a state of loss and disorientation precipitated by a change in our environment that requires adjustment. It results from confronting values different from our own and from the loss of a familiar network and environment. It is a normal healthy reaction to the stress of living in a different culture. Everyone who has spent time living in another culture experiences some form of culture shock.

Symptoms of Culture Shock

Symptoms can be both physical and psychological, and can include: headaches, stomach aches, dizziness, rashes, nausea, irritability, insomnia or excessive sleepiness, depression, loneliness, withdrawal paranoia, anger, aggression, hatred, fear, crying, complaining, self-doubt, boredom, helplessness, confusion, and feelings of inadequacy. This list is not exhaustive.

Prescription for Culture Shock

adapted from an article by Bruce LaBrack, Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication

1. Understand the symptoms and recognize the signs of culture stress.
2. Realize that some degree of discomfort and stress is natural in a cross-cultural experience.
3. Recognize that your reactions are largely emotional and not easily subject to rational management.
4. Gather information *before* you go so at least the differences will be anticipated. Knowledge is power.
5. Look for the logical reasons behind host culture patterns. Discover why things are done the way they are.
6. Relax your grip on your normal culture and try to cheerfully adapt to new rules and roles.
7. Don't give in to the temptation to disparage what you do not like or understand. It probably won't change.
8. Identify a support network among peers, team members, other students and faculty advisor. Use this network, but do not rely on it exclusively.
9. Understand that this is a passing phase of what will be, in retrospect, a time of great learning and personal growth.
10. Give yourself quiet time, some private space, and don't be too hard on yourself.

In Preparation to Return Home

“In a sense, it is the coming back, the return, which gives meaning to the going forth. We really don't know where we've been until we come back to where we were - only where we were may not be as it was because of who we've become, which, after all is why we left.” - Bernard, *Northern Exposure*

Reentry Challenges and Suggestions

adapted from articles by Dr. Bruce LaBrack, School of International Studies, University of the Pacific

There are lots of reasons to look forward to going home, but there are also a number of psychological, social and cultural aspects that prove difficult - often because they are unanticipated. Re-entry into your home culture can be both as challenging and frustrating as living overseas, mostly because our attitude toward going home is that it should be a simple matter of getting resettled, resuming earlier routines, and reestablishing your relationships. Research has shown that re-entry has its own set of special social and psychological adjustments which can be facilitated by being aware of the process and following some advice from those who have already returned.

Interviewing students who have been through the experience of off-campus study generated the following list of issues and suggestions. Their advice is to take the process seriously by being realistic and thinking about it and your possible reactions.

Prepare for the adjustment process and allow enough time

The more you think about what is to come, and know how returning home is both similar to and different from going away, the easier the transition will be. Anticipating is useful. The process of re-entry will take time, just like adjusting to the new culture did. Give yourself time to relax and reflect on what is going on around you, how you are reacting to it, and what you might like to change.

Overcoming boredom

After all the newness and stimulation of your time away, a return to family, friends, and old routines (however nice and comforting) can seem very dull. It is natural to miss the excitement and challenges which characterize project work off-campus, but it is up to you to find ways to overcome such negative reactions - remember a bored person is also boring.

“No one wants to hear”

One thing you can count on upon your return: no one will be as interested in hearing about your adventures as you will be in sharing those experiences. This is not a rejection of you or your achievements, but simply the fact that once others have heard the highlights, any further interest on their part is probably unlikely because they have no frame of reference for your experiences. Be realistic in your expectations of how fascinating your journey is going to be for everyone else. Be brief.

Cultivate sensitivity and interest

Showing an interest in what others have been doing while you have been gone is the surest way to reestablish your rapport. Much frustration can be avoided if you become as good a listener as a talker.

You can't explain

Even when given a chance to explain all the things you saw, felt and experienced while off-campus, it is likely to be at least a bit frustrating to relay them coherently. It is very difficult to convey this kind of experience to people who do not have similar frames of reference, no matter how sympathetic they are as listeners. You can tell people about your trip, but you may fail to make them understand exactly how or why you felt a particular way. It's okay.

Reverse homesickness

Just as you probably missed home for a time after leaving campus, it is just as natural to experience some “reverse” homesickness for the people, places and things that you grew accustomed to while away from WPI. Feelings of loss are an integral part of returning from an off-campus sojourn and must be anticipated and accepted as a natural result of study away.

Beware of comparisons

Going Global at WPI Handbook
3/18/2011

Use and adaptation welcome, but please acknowledge WPI and
Natalie Mello and tell us of your use (nmello@wpi.edu)

Making comparisons between cultures is natural, particularly after residence abroad; however, the tendency to be an “instant expert” is to be avoided at all costs.

Relationships have changed

It is inevitable that when you return you will notice that some relationships with friends and family will have changed. Just as you have altered some of your ideas and attitudes while away, the people at home are likely to have experienced some changes as well. These changes may be positive or negative, and may seem even trivial to you, but expecting no change is unrealistic. The best preparation is flexibility, openness, minimal preconceptions, and tempered optimism.

Feelings of alienation

Sometimes the reality of being back home is not as natural or enjoyable as the place you had imagined. When real daily life is more demanding than you remembered, it is natural to feel some alienation, see faults you never noticed before, or even become quite critical of everyone and everything for a time. Mental comparisons are fine, but keep them to yourself until you regain both your cultural balance and a balanced perspective.

Remain flexible

Keeping as many options open as possible is an essential aspect of a successful return home. Attempting to re-socialize totally into old patterns and networks can be difficult, but remaining isolated and aloof is counterproductive.

Loss/compartmentalization of experience

Being home, along with the pressures of schoolwork, family and friends, often combine to make returnees worried that somehow that will “lose” the experience; somehow becoming compartmentalized like souvenirs only occasionally taken out and looked at. You do not have to let that happen. Maintain your contacts. Talk to people who have experiences similar to yours. Practice your skills. Remember your hard work and the fun you had while off-campus. There are lots of people on campus who have gone through their own re-entry and have had experiences similar to yours. Seek out other returned students from other sites, and look into becoming involved with the Global Ambassadors.

Appendix A - WPI Off-Campus Study Travel Information Form

All students intending to complete a project at a WPI project site are asked to provide the IGSD with information about their travel arrangements. This will notify the faculty advisor, on-site coordinator and IGSD staff of your expected arrival date and time and alert them if a problem arises. *For some sites* this information is needed in order to arrange to have students met at the airport.

You must bring your passport into the IGSD to be scanned, unless you are participating in a project program within the U.S.

Name:	Site:	Term:
Arrival Date on site:	Arriving from (city):	
Mode of travel (air, train, bus, car):		
If traveling by air:		
Airline:	Flight Number:	Airport Destination:
Departure time:	Arrival time:	
Scheduled return date:		
Airline:	Flight Number:	Airport Destination:
Departure time:	Arrival time:	
If you plan to travel independently either before or after the program, please tell us your tentative plans:		

You must **attach a copy of your travel itinerary** provided by your travel agent or airline, in addition to completing this form. No handwritten itineraries will be accepted.

London Project Center Only

Bus transportation will be coordinated for students arriving at Heathrow before 7:45 am on Saturday. Students who arrive at Heathrow Airport before 7:45 a.m. will be taken by bus directly to IES. Bus drivers are not authorized to take passengers not on their list.

Bus Transportation: () Yes () No

(Please make sure you check one of these options for transportation from Heathrow Airport to IES)

Appendix B - Off-Campus Students' Health Update and Records Release Form

Name _____ Project Site _____ Term _____

All students traveling off-campus to participate in a WPI program are required to carry medical insurance that is valid at the program site for the entire length of the program. Please verify this with your insurance company and list the name of your carrier and your policy number.

Carrier _____ Policy Number: _____

Do you have any medical conditions that could affect you while off-campus of which you would like to make the IGSD aware? (i.e. epilepsy, diabetes, depressive episodes, etc.) Also, please list any changes in your health not noted on your medical records on file with WPI Health Services.

Are you allergic to any medications? If so, please list them.

List any prescription medicines you are currently taking.

When traveling off-campus it is a good idea to take a supply of your prescription medications sufficient to last for the length of the trip. Prescription medicines should always be kept in the original containers with the prescription label to avoid problems with customs. It is also important to take along a copy of the prescription from your physician, clearly written, in generic terms, and with an indication of the condition being treated.

In the event of an emergency, please contact:

1. Name _____ Relationship to Student _____

Address _____

email _____

Cell Phone #: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Work Telephone: _____

2. Name _____ Relationship to Student _____

Address _____

email _____

Cell Phone #: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Work Telephone: _____

I hereby authorize WPI health services to release my medical records to the Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division in the event of a medical emergency while studying off-campus. *I hereby acknowledge that it is my responsibility to contact my health insurance provider to determine that I am covered while at an off-campus project site.*

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix C - ATC Team Form

(One Per Team)

After you have turned in this completed form to the IGSD, at least one member of your group (although we suggest the entire group come so that the entire group takes equal responsibility for the equipment) is required to go to the ATC and reserve a laptop BEFORE pick-up on the specified date.

Project Site: _____

Pickup person: _____

Return person: _____

names of
team members: _____

If you can not pick up and return this PC within the specified dates, then you will need to make alternative arrangements: the ATC can *not* accommodate you.

Dates: pick up on or after: March 8, 2011

Return on or before: May 10, 2011

Pick-up Person

Return Person

Student Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Address: _____

Student Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Phone #: _____

Student ID#: _____

Student ID#: _____

Student Email: _____

Student Email: _____

Appendix D - Onsite Travel Form

Name	Cell phone number
Destination	
Date & time of departure	Date & time of return

Mode of Transportation – Roundtrip

Train Bus Air Car

Departing from the Site Information			
Time of Departure			
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from (name of airport, station, terminal)			
<i>* Connection Information if applicable:</i>			
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from	time	Arriving to	time
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from	time	Arriving to	time

Returning to the Site Information			
Returning from:			
Time of Departure			
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from (name of airport, station, terminal)			
<i>* Connection Information if applicable:</i>			
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from	time	Arriving to	time
Number of flight/train/bus		Airline/train/bus carrier	
Departing from	time	Arriving to	time

Lodging (please call advisor with any changes to your reservations)	
Name of hotel	Name of hotel
Address	Address
City and country	City and country
Phone number	Phone number

List other students who are traveling with you on this *exact* itinerary:

Check this box if you are staying on site in WPI provided housing for the entire weekend.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Every student or group of students must turn this form into an advisor before 12:00 noon every Friday – in other words, every student must be accounted for,