

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:

Hong Kong Project Center C 2011

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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 paperwork for Hong Kong C2011 must be in the IGSD Office by Monday, November 22 2010 before 3:00 p.m.

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.

What can you expect to pay “out of pocket” toward your IQP while off-campus?

Current WPI policy states that students are expected to contribute \$50 per person per 1/3 unit of IQP work toward any out of pocket expenses encountered. This means that each student is expected to pay \$150.00 towards the completion of the IQP before asking for reimbursement of any kind. If you have a project team of 4 students, then the total contribution before being reimbursed is \$600. If you anticipate that your expenses will exceed this expectation, then you must submit a budget for your project. The on-site faculty advisor and Center Director must approve this budget prior to submission of any expenses to the IGSD. (Commuting costs are not reimbursable.)

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 doing your project in Thailand your faculty advisors and the IGSD will help you obtain your non-immigrant visas. In order to take advantage of this, you must be prepared to give the IGSD your passport, a completed visa application (available in the IGSD office) and a passport picture, by the date that your advisors determine. The IGSD will send all documentation with one cover letter to the appropriate embassy to expedite the visa process for your group. The single entry visa fee of has been built into your housing charge.

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.

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 Project Center and Term 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>

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.

Section 3 – Site Specific Information for Hong Kong

This guide has been produced to help you prepare for your project in Hong Kong, to show you what to expect and provide you with some basic logistic issues.

Housing in Hong Kong

WPI students will be living in Yesinspace serviced apartments in the Tai Kok Tsui district of Kowloon. There is a sign for Yesinspace serviced apartments outside the building. The location is near 2 MTR (subway) stations as well as other forms of public transportation such as buses. The neighborhood is residential with many places nearby to shop for groceries, fresh produce, household supplies and equipment and many other items. The “Taste” supermarket is located in the Olympic Mall next to the Olympic MTR station. There is a playground/sports park opposite from the apartment building where basketball and soccer can be played.

You will be able to cook in your apartments. They are fully furnished with two single beds, a full bathroom and a living room space with a kitchenette area, Please remember that all housing in Hong Kong will be smaller than what you may be used to in the US. The apartments will be cleaned once per week at which time linens will be changed as well. The kitchens will have only basic cooking equipment, which can easily be supplemented cheaply from local shops in the neighborhood, with one electric burner for cooking. The apartments have air conditioning.

Every apartment has satellite TV, free local phone service, and broadband internet access. Linens include sheets, towels, pillow and comforter for each bed. There is no laundry area in the building, but there are inexpensive laundry services available nearby.

There are two subway (MTR) stops near the apartments. One is the Mongkok stop on the Red line. Use Exit onto Fife Street. Walk north one small block to Mongkok Road and then walk west on Mongkok Road. After crossing Tong Mi Road, the street becomes Anchor Street. YesinSpace will be located between Ash and Oak streets on the north side of the street.

The other MTR station is the Olympic stop on the orange (Tung Chung) line. It is also about as close and is very convenient if you want to travel directly to Hong Kong’s Central District or to Lantau Island. It is located at the end of Cherry Street close to the HSBC Centre, Olympic City and the Olympic City mall.

Dates

The following dates should be used when making your travel arrangements to Hong Kong:

<i>Arrival</i>	<i>Thursday, January 6, 2011</i>
<i>Departure</i>	<i>Saturday, March 5, 2011.</i>

Your **mailing address** will be:

Your name
c/o Yesinspace SOHO
10, Anchor Street
Tai Kok Tsui, Kowloon
HONG KONG

Mail may be slow to reach the apartments, so communication by email is recommended for most purposes. There are numerous post offices in Hong Kong with a Main office not far from the Star Ferry terminal on the Hong Kong Island side of the harbor.

If there are problems with your housing, please notify the assistant manager, Sam Ling, at: +(852) 2881-7077. Email: sam@yesinn.com Please also notify your advisors.

If someone from home needs to contact a student for non-emergency reasons, please call Yesinspace directly at: +(852) 3427-6000, or call the student's apartment directly at the number that each student will be able to provide after moving in on 6 January 2011.

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, which can be purchased in Hong Kong. Alternatively, you can purchase a cell phone in Hong Kong for local use, and this should be able to accept calls from the U.S. with the appropriate SIM card. If you already own a three or four band cell phone that does not have a locked SIM card, you can purchase a SIM card in Hong Kong and replace your US SIM card with the local one. Using these SIM cards will be much cheaper than any other telephone call options. If you want to use the local SIM card for making international calls, make sure that the SIM card you purchase will allow you to make international calls. Rates may vary with different card issuing companies. We require you to carry a cell phone throughout your stay in Hong Kong as it will be very useful for practical and project purposes and for emergency use, when needed. Cell phones (called mobile phones in Hong Kong) are ubiquitous in Hong Kong, and coverage is very good in almost all places in the territory. Most local people carry them and expect us to carry them too.

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

Clothing

In January and February the weather in Hong Kong will be pleasantly cool. If the sun is shining, it may even get into the low 80s F, but most days it will be in the 60s and 70s. There will likely be at least one cool spell during your stay when the temperatures will get into the low 50s or even mid 40s. The wind can make it seem cooler than it is, and the humidity, while not too high at this time of year, will be higher than at WPI, making the cool temperatures less comfortable. Thus some warm clothing is advisable, especially if you plan to do any hiking.

During the week you will normally be wearing business attire or casual business dress, including a tie and sometimes a suit jacket for males and similar clothing for females. Professional people in Hong Kong dress up more than we do, so expect to wear business attire to all interviews. Dress can be more casual when no formal meetings are planned. If you don't own a suit before going to Hong Kong, plan on buying one when you are there. You will definitely need one for your final presentation, if not before. While tailored suits and other clothing can be easily made in Hong Kong, ready-made clothing is also of good quality and is much less expensive than individually tailored suits. Shop around for bargains, and always buy on sale.

Health Care

Hong Kong is generally a healthy place to live. The tap water is considered to be safe to drink, although many people drink bottled water instead. Bottled water is cheap and easy to get in supermarkets, pharmacies and convenience stores like 7/11. Traveler's diarrhea or other mild intestinal problems may occur near the beginning of your stay before your system gets used to the local food and water conditions. When eating out, always eat freshly prepared food. Avoid cafeteria style food that has been sitting around unheated for some time.

There are many pharmacies in Hong Kong with Manning's and Watson's being the two biggest chain stores. However, the names of medications and the standard dosages may not be the same as in the US. If you take any medications regularly, bring your own supply with enough for your eight week stay.

Emergencies

For general medical and dental problems WPI students should use the Caritas medical facilities. A Caritas dental clinic is located at 2 Caine Road on Hong Kong Island. Local tel: 2524-2071, ext.275. There are two Caritas hospitals in Kowloon. The largest, and preferred hospital is the Caritas Medical Center, 111 Wing Hong Street, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon; local tel.: +2746-7911; 24-hour hotline: +3408-5678. The other hospital is the Precious Blood Hospital, 113 Castle Peak Road, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon; local tel: +2386-4281. Caritas also has hospitals on Hong Kong Island and in other parts of the Hong Kong SAR.

If you are not in the Sham Shui Po area when you need medical help, we recommend the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, a full service hospital, located just off Wylie Road in the Yau Ma Tei district of Kowloon. It can be used in case of an emergency. Other hospitals not far from the Yesinspace are located on Argyle Street east of Waterloo Road and include: Kowloon Hospital and Evangelic Hospital. St. Teresa's Hospital is also located near these hospitals on Prince Edward Road West. Finally the Kwong Woh Hospital is located on Waterloo Road just east of Nathan Road and very near the Yau Ma Tei MTR stop. Of these hospitals the Queen Elizabeth Hospital should be the preferred choice. Always make sure to contact your project advisors immediately when emergency medical care is needed and never go to a hospital alone.

WPI Emergency Phone Numbers

Name	regular phone	home phone	cell phone
Natalie Mello	508-831-5852	508-793-9623	508-769-0117
Rick Vaz	508-831-5344	508-757-9738	508-340-6748
Leanne Johnson	508-831-6089	508-459-0433	310-703-2644

Health Information for Travelers to Hong Kong SAR (China)



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

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Safety and Security Abroad

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

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Preparing for Your Trip to Hong Kong

Before visiting Hong Kong, 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

Vaccination or Disease	Recommendations or Requirements for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases
	local population, or be exposed through medical treatment (e.g., for an accident).
Typhoid	Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in East Asia, especially if staying with friends or relatives or visiting smaller cities, villages, or rural areas where exposure might occur through food or water.
Japanese encephalitis	Recommended if you plan to visit rural farming areas and under special circumstances, such as a known outbreak of Japanese encephalitis, see country-specific information .

Rabies vaccination is only recommended for travelers involved in any activities that might bring them into direct contact with bats. These travelers include wildlife professionals, researchers, veterinarians, or adventure travelers visiting areas where bats 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.
- Sunblock and sunglasses for protection from harmful effects of UV sun rays. See [Basic Information about Skin Cancer](#) for more information.
- Antibacterial hand wipes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- To prevent insect/mosquito bites, bring:
 - Lightweight long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and a hat to wear outside, whenever possible.
 - Flying-insect spray to help clear rooms of mosquitoes. The product should contain a pyrethroid insecticide; these insecticides quickly kill flying insects, including mosquitoes.

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 East 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.

Dengue, filariasis, Japanese encephalitis, leishmaniasis, and plague are diseases carried by insects that also occur in East Asia. Tickborne encephalitis occurs in forested regions in northeastern China and in South Korea. Protecting yourself against insect bites (see below) will help to prevent these diseases.

Respiratory infections (origins often undefined) are common in travelers to East Asia.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1) continues to cause outbreaks in domestic and wild bird populations and has caused human cases in several East Asian countries. 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 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.

Measles remains endemic in the region, and infection has occurred in adopted children from China and in travelers to the region. Influenza may occur during all months of the year.

Do not swim in fresh water (except in well-chlorinated swimming pools) in East Asian countries. Schistosomiasis (*Schistosoma japonicum*) is present in focal areas in China, especially in the Yangtze River basin. Leptospirosis is a risk, especially in tropical areas of China and South Korea.

Rabies is widespread in China (not Hong Kong) and Mongolia.

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Staying Healthy During Your Trip

Prevent Insect Bites

Many diseases, like dengue, are spread through insect bites. One of the best protections is to prevent insect bites by:

- Using insect repellent (bug spray) with 30%-50% DEET. Picaridin, available in 7% and 15% concentrations, needs more frequent application. There is less information available on how effective picaridin is at protecting against all of the types of mosquitoes that transmit malaria.

- Wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and a hat outdoors.

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

Prevent Animal Bites and Scratches

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

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

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

Be Careful about Food and Water

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

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

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

Avoid Injuries

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

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

- Not getting on an overloaded bus or mini-bus.
- Hiring a local driver, when possible.
- Avoiding night driving.

Other Health Tips

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

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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.

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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.*

U.S. State Department Background Notes – Hong Kong

Geography

Area: 1,104.3 sq. km.; Hong Kong comprises Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, the New Territories, and numerous small islands.

Terrain: Hilly to mountainous, with steep slopes and a natural harbor.

Climate: Tropical monsoon. Cool and humid in winter, hot and rainy in spring and summer, warm and sunny in fall.

People

Population (July 2010 est.): 7.089 million.

Population growth rate (2010 est.): 0.476%.

Ethnic groups: Chinese 95%; other 5%.

Religions: About 43% participate in some form of religious practice.

Languages: Cantonese (a dialect of Chinese) and English are official.

Literacy: 97.1% (98.7% male, 95.4% female).

Health (2009): *Infant mortality rate*--1.6/1,000. *Life expectancy*--83 yrs. (overall); 79.8 yrs. male, 86.1 yrs. female

Work force (2009): 3.68 million.

Work force (by occupation, 2008): *Wholesale, retail, and import/export trades and restaurants and hotels*--33.5%; *finance, insurance, real estate, and business services*--16.6%; *manufacturing*--4.6%.

Government

Type: Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China, with its own constitution-like charter (the Basic Law).

Branches: *Executive*--Administration: Chief Executive selected in March 2007; Executive Council serves in an advisory role for the Chief Executive. *Legislative*--Legislative Council (LegCo) elected in September 2008. *Judicial*--Court of Final Appeal is the highest court; there are other lower courts.

Subdivisions: Hong Kong, Kowloon, New Territories.

Suffrage: Permanent residents 18 years or over who have lived in Hong Kong for the past seven years are eligible to vote in certain local elections and for LegCo members.

Economy

GDP (2009): \$209.3 billion (at current market prices).

GDP real growth rate (2009): negative 2.8%.

Per capita GDP (2009): \$29,879 (at current market prices).

Natural resources: Deepwater harbor.

Industry: *Types*--textiles, clothing, electronics, plastics, toys, watches, clocks.

Trade (2009): *Exports*--\$316.5 billion: clothing, electronics, textiles, watches and clocks, office machinery, electrical machinery, telecommunications equipment. *Major partners*--Mainland China 51.1%, U.S. 11.6%, EU 7.1%, Japan 4.4%. *Imports*--\$345.1 billion: consumer goods, raw materials and semi-manufactures, capital goods, foodstuffs, fuels. *Major partners*--Mainland China 46.4%, Japan 8.8%, Singapore 6.5%, Taiwan 6.5%, U.S. 5.3%.

PEOPLE

Hong Kong's population has increased steadily over the past decade, reaching 7.026 million in 2009. Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated areas in the world, with an overall density of some 6,339 people per square kilometer. Cantonese, the official Chinese dialect in Hong Kong, is spoken by most of the population. English, also an

official language, is widely understood and is spoken by more than one-third of the population. Every major religion is practiced freely in Hong Kong. All children are required by law to be in full-time education between the ages of 6 and 15. Starting in 2008, the Hong Kong Government expanded the length of free education it offers from 9 to 12 years. Preschool education for most children begins at age 3. Primary school begins normally at age 6 and lasts for 6 years. At about age 12, children progress to a 3-year course of junior secondary education; at age 15, they can choose to continue with 3-year senior secondary education or to join full-time vocational training. More than 90% of children complete upper secondary education or equivalent vocational education. In 2009, 296,000 students were enrolled in post-secondary education. Over 25% of the total population aged 15 and over have attended post-secondary educational institutions.

HISTORY

According to archaeological studies, human activity on Hong Kong dates back over five millennia. Excavated neolithic artifacts suggest an influence from northern Chinese stone-age cultures. The territory was settled by Han Chinese during the seventh century, A.D., evidenced by the discovery of an ancient tomb at Lei Cheung Uk in Kowloon. The first major migration from northern China to Hong Kong occurred during the Sung Dynasty (960-1279). The British East India Company made the first successful sea venture to China in 1699, and Hong Kong's trade with British merchants developed rapidly soon after. After the Chinese defeat in the First Opium War (1839-42), Hong Kong was ceded to Britain in 1842 under the Treaty of Nanking. Britain was granted a perpetual lease on the Kowloon Peninsula under the 1860 Convention of Beijing, which formally ended hostilities in the Second Opium War (1856-58). The United Kingdom, concerned that Hong Kong could not be defended unless surrounding areas also were under British control, executed a 99-year lease of the New Territories in 1898, significantly expanding the size of the Hong Kong colony.

In the late 19th century and early 20th centuries, Hong Kong developed as a warehousing and distribution center for U.K. trade with southern China. After the end of World War II and the communist takeover of Mainland China in 1949, hundreds of thousands of people fled from China to Hong Kong. Hong Kong became an economic success and a manufacturing, commercial, finance, and tourism center. High life expectancy, literacy, per capita income, and other socioeconomic measures attest to Hong Kong's achievements over the last five decades.

On July 1, 1997, China resumed the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong, ending more than 150 years of British colonial rule. Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China with a high degree of autonomy in all matters except foreign and defense affairs. According to the Sino-British Joint Declaration (1984) and the Basic Law, Hong Kong will retain its political, economic, and judicial systems and unique way of life for 50 years after reversion and will continue to participate in international agreements and organizations under the name, "Hong Kong, China."

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) is headed by Chief Executive Donald Tsang Yam-kuen, who first took office in 2005. Tsang won re-election in 2007, running against Alan Leong Kah-kit, a senior barrister and legislator for the pro-democracy Civic Party. Tsang's current term ends in 2012. The Election Committee that votes on the Chief Executive (CE) is made up of approximately 800 Hong Kong residents from four constituency groups: commercial, industrial, and financial interests; professionals; labor, social services, and religious interests; and the legislature, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and the P.R.C. National People's Congress.

In July 2002, the Hong Kong Government implemented the Principal Officials Accountability System, which was

designed to make the government more responsive to public concerns. Twelve political appointees, directly responsible to the Chief Executive, run the 12 policy bureaus. Three other senior civil service positions--the Chief Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Justice Secretary--are also filled by political appointments. This system was expanded in 2008 to include one Under Secretary and one Political Assistant position being filled by appointment in each bureau.

Hong Kong remains a free and open society where human rights are respected, courts are independent, and there is well-established respect for the rule of law. However, the right of residents to change their government peacefully is limited by the Basic Law, which provides for the selection of the CE by an 800-person election committee (composed of individuals who are directly elected, indirectly elected, and appointed). The Basic Law provides for the direct election of 30 of the 60 LegCo members. The other 30 seats in the LegCo are elected by 28 functional constituencies (FCs), which represent key economic and social sectors. As of 2008, the 28 FCs represented fewer voters than the electorate in a single geographic constituency. The vast majority of FC voters are represented by the three largest FCs, while the four smallest have fewer than 200 voters. FCs set their own voting rules, with some allowing heads of corporations to vote on behalf of their companies. Persons with interests in more than one sector represented by an FC may be able to cast three or more votes (one in their geographic constituency and one in each FC for which they meet eligibility requirements). In 2007 the CE Election Committee selected incumbent Donald Tsang Yam-kuen, and the P.R.C.'s State Council formally appointed him. In September 2008 voters in six geographic constituencies elected 30 legislators, half of the total LegCo, in elections that were generally free and fair.

In December 2005 the LegCo rejected a Hong Kong Government-proposed package of incremental reforms to the mechanisms for choosing the CE in 2007 and forming the LegCo in 2008. In July 2007, the Hong Kong Government's Commission on Strategic Development issued a Green Paper on Constitutional Development, which set out a myriad of options to reform the CE and LegCo electoral mechanisms, with the "ultimate aim" of universal suffrage as prescribed by the Basic Law.

On December 12, 2007, Chief Executive Donald Tsang submitted a report on the Green Paper to the central government. The report said more than half of local people wanted universal suffrage by 2012, but 2017 might be a more realistic date. In December 2007, the P.R.C. National People's Congress Standing Committee (NPCSC) issued a decision on Hong Kong's constitutional development which, while ruling out universal suffrage in 2012, appears to open the way for Hong Kong to achieve full universal suffrage for the CE in 2017, and full universal suffrage for LegCo in 2020. Any amendments to the Basic Law will require approval by the CE, at least two-thirds of LegCo, and then the NPCSC.

In November 2009, the Hong Kong Government began a public consultation for electing the CE and LegCo in 2012. The government has proposed expanding LegCo to 70 seats (five new geographic seats and five seats to be added to the District Councils Functional Constituency) and to expand the Election Committee for the CE to 1,200. In the spring of 2010, after dialogue between Beijing (through the Central Government Liaison Office in Hong Kong), the Hong Kong Government, and some pan-democrats, a compromise was reached. The five new functional constituency seats would be nominated by District Councilors, but elected by all Hong Kong voters not registered to vote in another functional constituency. This package passed the Legislative Council on June 24, 2010 by a vote of 46 to 13. Public concerns over the roadmap, the future of functional constituencies, and post-2012 constitutional development remain unresolved.

Principal Government Officials

Chief Executive--Donald Tsang Yam-kuen
Chief Secretary for Administration--Henry Tang Ying-yen
Financial Secretary--John Tsang Chun-wah
Secretary for Justice--Wong Yan-lung
Secretary for Education--Michael Suen Ming-yeung
Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development--Rita Lau Ng Wai-lan
Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs--Stephen Lam Sui-lung
Secretary for Security--Ambrose Lee Siu-kwong
Secretary for Food and Health--York Chow Yat-ngok
Secretary for the Civil Service--Denise Yue Chung-yee
Secretary for Home Affairs--Tsang Tak-sing
Secretary for Labour and Welfare--Matthew Cheung Kin-chung
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury--K C Chan (Chan Ka-keung)
Secretary for Development--Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor
Secretary for the Environment--Edward Yau Tang-wah
Secretary for Transport and Housing--Eva Cheng Yu-wah

ECONOMY

Hong Kong is one of the world's most open and dynamic economies. In 2009 Hong Kong's real economic growth fell by 2.8% as a result of the global financial turmoil. In response to the economic crisis, the Hong Kong Government unveiled several stimulus measures worth 5.2% of GDP that were targeted at the poorest Hong Kong residents. The government also offered guarantees for savings deposits and small-and medium-enterprise loans, and injected massive amounts of liquidity into the banking system to restore confidence. The banking system's high capital reserves and limited exposure to structured products protected it from the worst of the global financial crisis. External trade, a significant component of Hong Kong's economy, was severely hit as many of Hong Kong's major trading partners continued to struggle in 2009. Exports and imports of goods decreased by 12.6% and 11.0% respectively.

Despite the downturn, Hong Kong's economic strengths, including a sound banking system, virtually no public debt, a strong legal system, ample foreign exchange reserves, and an able and rigorously enforced anti-corruption regime, enable it to quickly respond to changing circumstances. The government promotes measures designed to improve its attractiveness as a commercial and trading center and is continually refining its financial architecture. The government is deepening its economic interaction with the Pearl River Delta in an effort to maintain Hong Kong's position as a gateway to China. These efforts include the conclusion of a free trade agreement with China, known as the "Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement" (CEPA), which applies zero tariffs to all Hong Kong-origin goods, gives preferential treatment in over 40 service sectors, and increases the scope for using the Chinese yuan in Hong Kong as a trade settlement currency, in savings deposits, and to purchase RMB (renminbi)-denominated bonds. Hong Kong, along with the Macau SAR, is also participating in a new pan-Pearl River Delta trade block with nine Chinese provinces, which aims to lower trade barriers among members, standardize regulations, and improve infrastructure.

Hong Kong's exports of goods and services rebounded strongly in the first quarter of 2010, by 21.6% and 17.9% respectively in real terms, fueled by quicker than expected recovery of the global economy and a massive Chinese fiscal and monetary stimulus program. Hong Kong's first-quarter 2010 GDP grew 8.2% from the previous year. The unemployment rate in the first quarter dropped to 4.4%, the lowest since the fourth quarter of 2008. The Hong Kong Government predicts GDP growth will exceed 5% in 2010.

U.S. companies have a generally favorable view of Hong Kong's business environment, including its legal system and the free flow of information, low taxation, and infrastructure.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

According to Article 13 of the Basic Law, Hong Kong's foreign relations and defense are the responsibility of China. However, Hong Kong is a customs territory and economic entity separate from the rest of China and is able to enter into international agreements on its own behalf in commercial and economic matters. Hong Kong, independently of China, participates as a full member of numerous international economic organizations including the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). It is an articulate and effective champion of free markets and the reduction of trade barriers.

U.S.-HONG KONG RELATIONS

U.S. policy toward Hong Kong is stated in the U.S.-Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992 and grounded in the determination to promote Hong Kong's prosperity, autonomy, and way of life. The United States maintains substantial economic and political interests in Hong Kong. The U.S. supports Hong Kong's autonomy under the "One Country, Two Systems" framework by concluding and implementing bilateral agreements; promoting trade and investment; broadening law enforcement cooperation; bolstering educational, academic, and cultural links; supporting high-level visits of U.S. officials; and serving the large community of U.S. citizens and visitors.

Hong Kong is active in counterterrorism efforts. Hong Kong has joined the Container Security Initiative and remains an important partner in efforts to eliminate funding for terrorist networks and combat money laundering. Hong Kong participated in the Secure Freight Initiative in a limited capacity from November 2007 to April 2009. Hong Kong has passed legislation designed to bring it into compliance with applicable UN anti-terror resolutions and with most Financial Action Task Force recommendations. In 2010, Hong Kong passed legislation allowing it to adopt the most recent globally recognized standards for exchange of tax information. It has subsequently signed bilateral tax agreements with Brunei, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Austria, and France.

The United States enjoys substantial economic and social ties with Hong Kong. There are some 1,400 U.S. firms, including 815 regional operations (289 regional headquarters and 526 regional offices), and over 60,000 American residents in Hong Kong. According to U.S. Government statistics, U.S. exports to Hong Kong totaled \$21.1 billion in 2009. The U.S. trade surplus with Hong Kong was the largest of any U.S. surplus in 2009, owing largely to Hong Kong imports of American aircraft and spacecraft, diamonds, and computer processors. According to Hong Kong statistics, U.S. direct investment in Hong Kong at the end of 2008 totaled about \$51.5 billion (2009 figures are not yet available), making the United States one of the largest investors in Hong Kong, along with China, the British Virgin Islands, Japan, and the Netherlands.

Hong Kong enjoys a high degree of autonomy as a separate customs territory, with no changes to borders, staffing, or technology export controls since the 1997 handover. Intellectual property rights (IPR) protection is relatively strong and Hong Kong continues to take steps to improve both its legislation and its enforcement regime. Amendments to improve protections for copyrighted materials were passed in 2007 and additional amendments to protect on-line content are expected in late 2010.

The Hong Kong Government maintains three **Economic and Trade Offices** in the United States. Addresses, telephone numbers, and web sites for these offices are listed below:

1520 - 18th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202) 331-8947
Fax: (202) 331-8958
Web Site: <http://www.hketowashington.gov.hk/dc/index.htm>

115 East 54th Street
New York, NY 10022
Tel: (212) 752-3320
Fax: (212) 752-3395
Web Site: <http://www.hketony.gov.hk/ny/index.htm>

130 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, CA 94104
Tel: (415) 835-9300
Fax: (415) 421-0646
Web Site: <http://www.hketosf.gov.hk/sf/index.htm>

Principal U.S. Officials

Consul General--[Stephen M. Young](#)
Deputy Principal Officer--Matt J. Matthews

The **U.S. Consulate General** is located at 26 Garden Road, Hong Kong. Tel: (852) 2523-9011 (general). Fax: (852) 2845-1598 (general); (852) 2147-5790 (consular); (852) 2845-9800 (commercial).

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.

STAT-USA/Internet, a service of the U.S. Department of Commerce, provides authoritative economic, business, and international trade information from the Federal government. The site includes current and historical trade-related releases, international market research, trade opportunities, and country analysis and provides access to the **National Trade Data Bank**.

Consular Information – Hong Kong



March 22, 2010

DESCRIPTION: Hong Kong, a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) since July 1, 1997, has a high degree of autonomy, except in the areas of defense and foreign policy, and retains its own currency, laws, and border controls. It is composed of three geographic areas: the New Territories, Kowloon Peninsula, and Hong Kong Island. Hong Kong SAR is cosmopolitan and highly developed. Tourist facilities and services are widely available. The Hong Kong SAR Government website provides [Hong Kong Fact Sheets on a comprehensive range of subjects](#). Read the Department of State [Background Notes on Hong Kong](#) for additional information.

REGISTRATION / EMBASSY LOCATION: U.S. citizens living or traveling in Hong Kong SAR are encouraged to register with the U.S. Consulate General at the [Department of State travel registration page](#), so that they can obtain updated information on local travel and security. U.S. citizens without Internet access may register directly with the U.S. Consulate General. Registration is important; it allows the State Department to assist U.S. citizens in an emergency.

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

U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong & Macau

26 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

Telephone: 852-2841-2211, 852-2841-2225, 852-2841-2323 (Direct lines to American Citizen Services during regular business hours)

Emergency after-hours telephone: 852-2841-9011

Facsimile: 852-2845-4845

ENTRY / EXIT REQUIREMENTS: A passport with a minimum of one-month validity after the period of intended stay, adequate funds to cover stay without working and evidence of onward/return transportation are required. Because many neighboring areas require six months validity remaining on the passport, U.S. citizens planning travel beyond Hong Kong should ensure that their passports are valid for at least six months from the date of their proposed entry into such areas. A visa is not required for tourist visits of up to 90 days by U.S. citizens. An extension of stay may be granted upon application to the Hong Kong SAR Immigration Department. Visas are required to work or study in Hong Kong. Visit [the Hong Kong SAR Immigration Department](#) or [the Embassy of the People's Republic of China web site](#) for the most current visa information.

U.S. citizens should obtain all required visas prior to departing the United States. Specifically, U.S. citizens wishing to travel to the PRC from Hong Kong require a PRC visa and should apply at the PRC embassy or consulate where they reside. Parents whose children hold U.S. passports should be aware that the PRC Visa Office may require certified birth certificates or other documentation for these children. Persons applying in Hong Kong for PRC visas for U.S.-born children have been unable to obtain PRC visas without the certified U.S. birth certificate. Parents should consider bringing their children's certified birth certificates if applying for a PRC visa in Hong Kong. Further information on travel to and around the PRC is available in our [China Country Specific Sheet](#).

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

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

SAFETY AND SECURITY: For the latest security information, U.S. citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department of State's, [Bureau of Consular Affairs' web site](#). It contains current [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#) as well as the [Worldwide Caution](#).

Up-to-date information on safety and security can also be obtained by calling 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).

The Department of State urges U.S. citizens to take responsibility for their own personal security while traveling overseas. For general information about appropriate measures travelers can take to protect themselves in an overseas environment, see the Department of State's extensive tips and advice on [traveling safely abroad](#).

CRIME: Hong Kong has a low crime rate. Even so, travelers should exercise caution when in congested areas and pay particular attention to personal belongings while in crowded markets and while traveling on public transportation. Violent crime, though rare, does occur.

A number of indiscriminate attacks using bottles filled with corrosive fluid have occurred in Hong Kong since December 2008. The incidents occurred mostly in popular outdoor shopping areas and resulted in injuries to the victims of the attacks. In all the cases, the attacker or attackers dropped one or more bottles containing corrosive fluid from a multi-story building onto the street. According to Hong Kong officials, the attacker or attackers were not

targeting specific individuals. For more information, please consult the U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong's [January 13, 2010 Warden Message](#).

In many countries around the world, counterfeit and pirated goods are widely available. Transactions involving such products may be illegal under local law. In addition, bringing them back to the United States may result in forfeitures and/or fines.

INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME: The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to the local police and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. If you are the victim of a crime while overseas, in addition to reporting to local police, please contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for assistance. The embassy/consulate staff can, for example, assist you to find appropriate medical care, contact family members or friends and explain how funds can be transferred. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime is 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. Hong Kong has a crime victim compensation program available to U.S. citizens who are legal residents or tourists in Hong Kong. For more detailed information on the program and its requirements, please see the [Hong Kong Social Welfare Department web page](#).

The local equivalent to the "911" emergency line in Hong Kong is 999.

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

CRIMINAL PENALTIES: While in a foreign country, a U.S. citizen is subject to that country's laws and regulations, which sometimes differ significantly from those in the United States and may not afford the protections available to the individual under U.S. law. Penalties for breaking the law can be more severe than in the United States for similar offenses. Engaging in sexual conduct with children or using or disseminating child pornography in a foreign country is a crime, [prosecutable in the United States](#).

Persons violating Hong Kong laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested or imprisoned. Penalties for possession or use of, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Hong Kong are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines. In Hong Kong, detained U.S. citizens have been surprised that they had been arrested for violations that would not have resulted in arrest in the U.S.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

Customs Regulations: Hong Kong SAR customs authorities enforce strict regulations concerning controlled items carried while transiting Hong Kong (temporary importation or exportation) such as firearms and ammunition, counterfeit goods or illegally produced copies of copyright items, ivory, narcotics, medications, television decoders requiring a subscription, animals and plants, meat and poultry, textiles, and sensitive high technology or military products. Travelers bringing such goods into Hong Kong without a license may be prosecuted and the goods may be seized. The penalty for trafficking in dangerous drugs can be life imprisonment and a heavy fine. Among the other items that travelers must declare to customs officials are liquors, tobacco, cigarettes and cigars, methyl alcohol, and merchandise imported for commercial purposes. There are no currency restrictions for travelers.

Travelers are liable to prosecution and possible detention if they bring into/out of Hong Kong any firearm or ammunition. Unless otherwise exempted by laws, possession of an "imitation firearm" is also an offense. "Arms"

means any firearm, air rifle/air gun/air pistol from which any shot, bullet or missile can be discharged with a muzzle energy greater than two joules, electric stunning device, gun/pistol or other propelling/releasing instrument from or by which a projectile containing any gas or chemical could be discharged, weapon for the discharge of any noxious liquid/gas/powder, and harpoon or spear gun. Paintball guns are included in this category.

Travelers are also liable to prosecution if they bring into/out of Hong Kong any "weapon," which includes Chinese-style throwing dart, gravity knife, gravity-operated steel baton, knuckleduster, Chinese-style fighting iron, spring-loaded steel baton, any knife the blade of which is exposed by a spring or other mechanical/electric device, and any bladed/pointed weapon. Please note that the fact that such items may be openly for sale in mainland China does not necessarily mean that they may be brought into Hong Kong.

Please visit the website of the [Hong Kong Department of Customs and Excise](#) for specific information regarding Hong Kong customs requirements.

Visitors to Hong Kong should be aware that the importation into the United States of counterfeit brand-name items, such as watches, compact discs, computer software, and clothing, is prohibited by U.S. law.

U.S. Customs officials encourage the use of an ATA (Admission Temporaire/Temporary Admission) Carnet for the temporary admission of professional equipment, commercial samples, and/or goods for exhibitions and fair purposes. For additional information, please visit the [U.S. Council for International Business web site](#), and the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol web page on [Traveling With Samples](#).

Dogs and cats may be brought into Hong Kong only with a special permit issued in advance. Dogs and cats imported from the United States may be exempted from quarantine when they have valid health and vaccination certificates and the pets have been in the United States for at least six months.

Additional [information on importing pets is available on the Hong Kong Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department web site](#).

Please see our [Customs Information](#) sheet.

Dual Nationality: According to [PRC nationality law](#), persons who are of Chinese descent and who were born in mainland China or Hong Kong are PRC citizens. However, under an agreement between the United States and the PRC, all U.S. citizens entering Hong Kong on their U.S. passports, including such persons as may be considered PRC nationals by the PRC authorities, are considered U.S. citizens by the Hong Kong SAR authorities for purposes of ensuring consular access and protection.

Dual nationals, who are or previously were Hong Kong residents, and who wish to ensure U.S. consular access and protection after the initial 90-day period of admission into Hong Kong, must declare their U.S. nationality by presenting their U.S. passport to the Hong Kong Immigration Department and completing an application for declaration of change of nationality. This declaration of change of nationality will ensure U.S. consular protection and may also result in loss of one's Chinese nationality (but not necessarily one's right of abode). Although such individuals' failure to declare U.S. nationality may jeopardize U.S. consular protection, such failure will not jeopardize their U.S. citizenship. Dual national residents of Hong Kong who enter Hong Kong on their Hong Kong identity cards rather than their U.S. passports and who desire to guarantee U.S. consular protection should declare their U.S.

nationality to the Hong Kong Immigration Department as soon as possible after entry. [Information on how to declare your citizenship to Hong Kong authorities](#) may be found on the Hong Kong Immigration Department's web site, on the page for declaration of change of nationality.

Dual nationals contemplating onward travel to (and exit from) PRC should be especially attentive to use of their U.S. passports, as the PRC authorities may require them to use the same document for entry into the PRC as they used to enter Hong Kong. The Nationality Law of the PRC does not recognize dual nationality. U.S. citizens, including such persons as may be considered Chinese nationals by the PRC authorities, who enter and depart the PRC using a U.S. passport and a valid PRC visa retain the right of U.S. consular access and protection under the U.S.-PRC Consular Convention. The ability of the U.S. Embassy or consulates general in the PRC to provide normal consular services would be extremely limited should a dual national enter the PRC on a non-U.S. passport. Therefore, travelers should carefully consider whether or not to use a passport or travel document other than their U.S. passport. For more information, please see the [China Specific Information](#).

For further information on consular protection and [dual nationality](#), please refer to our web site. [Information on Hong Kong permanent residence](#) may be obtained from the Hong Kong Immigration Department's right of abode webpage.

Typhoons: During the storm season (July through September), the [Hong Kong Observatory issues typhoon warnings](#) on an average of six times and heavy rainstorm alerts more frequently. The Hong Kong Observatory has a good notification and monitoring system in place. General information about natural disaster preparedness is available from the [U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#). Please be advised that if Typhoon Signal 8 or above or Black Rainstorm Warning is announced by the Hong Kong Government, the Consulate General will be closed. Additional information on typhoon and storm preparedness may be found in the [Hurricane Season-Know Before You Go](#) pamphlet, and on the [Natural Disasters](#) page of the Bureau of Consular Affairs' web site.

MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION: Good medical facilities are available, and there are many Western-trained physicians in Hong Kong. Prescription drugs are widely available, although they may have different names than those in the U.S. Hong Kong emergency service response times for police, fire, and ambulances are good. Doctors and hospitals require immediate cash payment for health services and generally do not accept credit cards.

Hong Kong authorities continue to monitor the H1N1 Influenza situation. In Hong Kong, individuals who are experiencing flu symptoms may go to one of the Hong Kong government's [designated flu clinics](#) for medical evaluation. Only high risk groups (pregnant women, elderly, etc.) will receive Tamiflu and only seriously ill patients will be admitted to hospitals.

The H5N1 virus ("avian flu") has been found in poultry and wild birds in Hong Kong, including most recently in December 2008 when the Hong Kong SAR Government responded by setting the alert level for Avian Influenza (AI) to "serious." While rare, human infection and death from H5N1 infection have been reported. Most reported cases of human infection with H5N1 viruses have occurred after contact with H5N1-infected poultry or birds, but a small number of cases may have occurred following close and prolonged contact with another person who is visibly ill from H5N1 infection. Further information about avian influenza is available from our [Avian Flu Fact Sheet](#), from the [U.S. avian/pandemic flu web site](#) and from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747) or via the [CDC web site](#). For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the infectious diseases section of the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) web site](#). The WHO web site also contains additional health information for travelers, including [detailed country-specific health information](#).

MEDICAL INSURANCE: The Department of State strongly urges U.S. citizens to consult their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad. Important questions are whether the policy applies overseas and whether it covers emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. 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. The information below concerning Hong Kong is provided for general reference only, and may not be totally accurate in a particular location or circumstance.

About 90 percent of the population in Hong Kong depends on public transport. Taxis, buses, and the mass transit railway (MTR) are readily available, inexpensive, and generally safe. The MTR is an underground railway network and is the most popular mode of public transport, carrying an average of 3.5 million passengers a day.

In Hong Kong, traffic moves on the left. During the daytime, traffic congests Hong Kong's urban areas. Each year there are, on average, about 15,000 traffic accidents in Hong Kong involving more than 19,000 drivers, passengers, and pedestrians. Speed limits are 50 kilometers per hour in urban areas, 80 kilometers per hour on highways and 110 kilometers per hour on expressways unless otherwise marked. The use of seat belts in vehicles, if so equipped, is mandatory both in the front and back seats. The maximum penalty for dangerous driving causing death can be a fine of \$50,000 HK (\$6,500 US), imprisonment for five years and disqualification from driving for not less than two years on first conviction. At the scene of a traffic accident, drivers are required to undergo alcohol level testing. Any driver found exceeding the prescribed limit of blood alcohol level may face prosecution under Hong Kong law. The use of hand-held cellular phones while driving in Hong Kong is strictly prohibited. A breach of this law can lead to a maximum fine of \$2,000 HK (\$260 US). However, motorists can use "hands-free devices," such as headphones and speakerphones. Hong Kong law requires that all registered vehicles carry valid third-party liability insurance.

A Hong Kong driver's license may be issued without a test to individuals who hold a valid U.S. driver's license, provided they have resided in the United States for not less than six months. U.S. citizen visitors who do not plan to stay in Hong Kong for more than 12 months can drive in Hong Kong on their valid U.S. driver's license. Visit the [Hong Kong Transport Department online](#) for further details.

Please refer to our [Road Safety page](#) for more information. Also, we suggest that you visit the web sites of the [Hong Kong Tourism Board](#) and the [Hong Kong Road Safety Council](#).

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

* * *

This replaces the Specific Information for Hong Kong SAR dated September 23, 2009, to update sections on Entry/Exit Requirements, Crime and Medical Facilities and Health Information.

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
10/25/2010

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: 12/16/2010

Return on or before: 3/09/2011

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.