

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:
A Student's Guide to Going Abroad



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

PROGRAMS ABROAD

Revised Spring 2023

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T PROGRAMS ABROAD **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**
Use this to guide your decision-making until the situation has been resolved

EMERGENCY ABROAD
Situations where health and/or safety are an imminent concern

Call the local 911-equivalent for immediate assistance

Communicate with the program leader/in-country program contact

Call International S.O.S.
+001-215-942-8478
Membership Number: 11BCAS080063

Call the Programs Abroad 24/7 Emergency Hotline
+001-865-789-2982

In **NON-EMERGENCY** Cases
Situations of missed flights, mild illness or lost/stolen possessions

Notify the program leader/in-country program contact and then our office of the situation and action taken

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Please use this guide in conjunction with the information shared in Pre-Departure Orientation hosted each semester by the Programs Abroad Office to prepare for your abroad experience.

If you are unable to attend, please reach out to the Programs Abroad Office for access to the accompanying Pre-Departure Orientation recording and mandatory assessment. It is your responsibility to review the materials and complete the mandatory assessment to be checked off for Pre-Departure Orientation.



CONTACT:

volsabroad@utk.edu | 865-974-3177

ACADEMICS **ABROAD**

Studying comes first in study abroad!



In this section, we will review the difference between UTK and transfer credits, academic expectations and a few Vol success tips. Before we proceed, it is important for you to understand the type of program you are participating in so you know what information is relevant to you.

Overview of Types of Programs

UT offers students interested in studying abroad five different types of programs: faculty-directed, affiliate, exchange, direct, and academic internships.

UT Faculty-Directed Programs

UT faculty-directed programs allow you to study abroad under the guidance and supervision of a faculty member with a group of other UT students.

Example: UTK ... [in Bologna], [in Ghana], [Engineering in London], etc.

UT Affiliate Programs

Affiliate programs are coordinated by study abroad organizations and other universities that are in the business of facilitating study abroad experiences for students.

Example: CIEE, ISA and SIT are examples of affiliate partners our office works with to facilitate abroad programs for students.

UT Exchange Programs

For programs designated “Exchange,” you study at University X, and a student from University X comes to Knoxville to study at UT.

UT Direct Programs

These programs allow you to enroll directly into a foreign university.

UT Academic Internships

Academic internships enable you to gain practical work experience in a wide variety of fields while earning academic credit.

Example: Absolute Internship, CIEE and ISA all provide internship opportunities to UTK students.

Resource: <https://programsabroad.utk.edu/students/types-of-programs/>

UNDERSTANDING CREDITS (UTK vs Transfer credits)

	UT Academic Internship or UT Faculty-directed	UT Direct, Exchange or Affiliate
Type of Credit	UT Credit	Transfer Credit
GPA Affected by Grades	UT & HOPE*	HOPE *
Request for Transfer Credit Form Required?	No**	Yes

**If Applicable. Other scholarships may be affected as well.*

***Some exclusions apply*

If you will be participating in a **UT Academic Internship or Faculty-directed** program, your grades will count toward your cumulative UT GPA, HOPE Scholarship GPA and attempted hours.

If you will be participating in a **UT Affiliate, Direct or Exchange** program, your grades will count toward your HOPE Scholarship GPA and attempted hours, but not your cumulative UT GPA. Courses are NOT pass or fail, so the letter grade you receive abroad will be reflected on your academic history and official transcript. In order for the course(s) taken abroad to count towards your UT attempted hours, you must pass the class according to the course's passing grade indication which varies by program/host country's grading system.

Example: See table below

US Equivalent	Example: Italy International Grade	Example: Chile International Grade	Example: Japan International Grade
A (90+)	29-30 (excellent)	6.0-7 (muy bueno)	S/A+
B (80-90)	27-28 (very good)	5.0-5.9 (bueno)	A
C (70-79)	24-26 (good)	4.0-4.9 (suficiente)	B
D (60-69)	18-23 (satisfactory)	N/A	C
F (40-59)	>18 (not passed)	0-3.9 (insuficiente)	F/D
			F/E

Resource:

<https://foundation.ifma.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/International-Grade-Equivalencies.pdf>

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Regardless of your program type, you are expected to follow all academic procedures and guidelines set by your program.

Responsibilities of the Student:

- Understand how the course(s) you are taking abroad will count towards your degree and if applicable, transfer back to UT. This is something that should be done before you go abroad, or in some cases, before you even apply to your program.
 - ***For Direct, Exchange, or Affiliate:*** Completing the Request for Transfer Credit form inside your VolsAbroad application and regularly monitoring it's progress at tiny.utk.edu/df and checking in when delayed
 - ***For Faculty-Directed or Internships:*** Enrolling in the appropriate courses on MyUTK, as instructed by your faculty leader/academic advisor
- Attend class, participate in all program activities & follow academic procedures

Resource: <https://programsabroad.utk.edu/returnees-alumni/transfer-credit-process/>

Transfer Credit Process

This process is applicable only to Direct, Exchange and Affiliate programs. It does not apply to UT Faculty-Directed or Internship programs.

1. **Before Departure:** Submit your Request for Transfer Credit Form
2. **While Abroad:** Complete pre-approved abroad courses
3. **While Abroad/Upon Re-entry:** Have your abroad transcript sent **directly** to our office from the abroad institution through electronic or physical mail

Before departure, the student must complete the Request for Transfer Credit Form and before reentry, must make arrangements for the abroad institution to send academic transcripts directly to our office. Failure to complete these steps could result in delays in the disbursement of the student's financial aid and scholarship package and/or create a potential delay in financial aid/graduation eligibility.

Request for Transfer Credit Form

While the Programs Abroad Office is not an academic department and cannot determine how coursework can/will transfer back to UT, PAO Program Coordinators can assist in evaluating course summaries to determine possible course equivalencies.

To capture advisor course approval and equivalencies, all students should complete the Programs Abroad Office Request for Transfer Credit Form.

The Request for Transfer Credit Form serves two purposes:

1. To determine how your selected preferred and backup courses abroad will transfer back to UT and satisfy graduation requirements for the student
2. To determine how your current financial aid package and scholarship will be applied to the cost of your program abroad and disperse the appropriate aid

Please confer with your academic advisor and check your DARS report to determine courses still needed to graduate. Then, check your abroad program brochure/course summaries to identify possible alignment. **It is imperative that the student completes the Request for Transfer Credit Form accessed within the VolsAbroad application before departure.**

Failure to complete this form in a timely manner could result in delays in the disbursement of the student's financial aid and scholarship package. It is the student's responsibility to submit the form accurately and timely and to monitor its progress. Students should be routinely checking to see if the form is delayed or stalled in the workflow process.

If you have successfully submitted your digital form, **you should be able to access and view it's progress by following these steps:**

- Access your form using the Dynamic Forms software at <https://tiny.utk.edu/df>.
- Login with your UT NetID and password.
- Click on the 'My Forms' section at the top left of the screen, and then you will see two options: Pending/Draft Forms and Forms History.
- Click 'Pending Forms' to view your forms submitted and in process.
- Click on the PDF icon to view the document in its current process and any outstanding requirements.
 - If course reviews have been done, a 'requirement met' line will appear under the course with the advisor review. Comments may also be added at the bottom of the document.
 - Digital signatures will appear at the bottom of the document which can help you to see which individuals have signed and what is left.

Abroad Transcripts

Prior to returning to the United States from your study abroad program you must arrange to have your transcript sent **directly** from your host institution/affiliate to the Programs Abroad Office either electronically using the email abroadtranscripts@utk.edu or by mail at:

1620 Melrose Avenue
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996-3531

For more information, please see the Transfer Credit Process at <https://programsabroad.utk.edu/returnees-alumni/transfer-credit-process/>

VOL SUCCESS TIPS

<https://studentsuccess.utk.edu/vol-success-tips/>

- Show up & Show out: It's your responsibility as a student to show up and show out by:
 - Showing up for classes
 - Engaging with faculty
 - Completing coursework
- Navigating Classes
 - Understand how your instructors are going to deliver course content. Each instructor may use different tools, so spend some time getting comfortable with the new learning environment.
- Communication
 - Check Canvas and Email Regularly. **You are also responsible for maintaining communication with your host institution/affiliate (if applicable).
 - Communicate potential challenges early
- Study Habits
 - Maintain your good academic habits & create new ones. Recreate your favorite study routine at home—curl up in an armchair, enjoy a cup of coffee, or turn on your favorite study music.

FINANCES **ABROAD**



Another important aspect of your study abroad program is your financial awareness and preparedness. In this section we will give an overview of financial aid and scholarships, highlight important dates/deadlines to remember and give a few money management tips while you're abroad.

FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS

<https://onestop.utk.edu/study-abroad-aid/>

You may receive financial aid for a study abroad program if you meet these conditions:

- The program is evaluated and approved by UT Programs Abroad Office (find programs using the Programs Abroad Office's [Program Search](#)).
- ***For Direct, Exchange, or Affiliate:*** The credits earned while you are abroad are eligible to be transferred back to UT and will count toward your degree requirements.
- ***For Direct, Exchange, or Affiliate:*** You are registered in the study abroad course through the Programs Abroad Office and have completed the Request for Transfer Credit Form in your program application.

NOTE: If you enroll in a faculty directed program, you receive UT credit and are not required to complete the Request for Transfer Credit Form.

To access your UT financial aid and scholarship package, you must be enrolled in the minimum number of credit hours (depending on the term). Generally speaking, the minimum required credit hours by term are:

- Fall semester: 12 Credits
- Spring semester: 12 Credits
- Summer: 6 credits
- Winter mini-term: 3 credits (counts towards Spring aid eligibility)
- May mini-session: 3 credits (counts towards Summer aid eligibility)

Using financial aid for summer study abroad:

- Most financial aid requires 6 credit hours at minimum in order to be eligible. Credit hours both abroad and at UTK can combine across summer sessions to determine your eligibility. *(Example: You take 3 credit hours abroad during May mini-session + 6 hours at UTK during Summer 2 session for a total of 9 credit hours).* Please check with OneStop to see if your specific awards are eligible for summer.
- To apply for financial aid for summer study abroad programs, you should complete the FAFSA as if you will be attending UT. UT's federal school code is 003530.
- As you work with Programs Abroad Office to prepare for a summer abroad program, make sure you complete the Request for Transfer Credit Form accessed in your program application in the VolsAbroad Portal.

Note: Students participating in UTK Faculty-Directed programs or UT Academic Internships do not need to complete a Request for Transfer Credit Form. Please contact your coordinator if you are unsure.

Other tips

1. Winter mini-term hours are counted toward total enrollment and financial aid eligibility for the spring semester
2. There are not separate financial aid disbursements for Winter mini-term & May mini-session.

Program Abroad Term	Term for Aid Disbursement
Fall, Academic Year	Fall
Spring, Winter mini-term, Academic Year	Spring
Full Summer, Summer 1, Summer 2, May mini-session	Summer

DATES & DEADLINES

<https://calendar.utk.edu/deadlines>

- Program fees post to student accounts according to UTK general term deadlines for billing and payment.
- Financial aid will be disbursed automatically according to OneStop's dates (link above)
- Excess financial aid refunds are generally available within the first 2-3 weeks after start of the UT term

Dates to identify based on UTK calendar (if applicable):

- When billing begins on MyUTK
- When payment deadlines & financial aid/scholarships disbursement occurs
- When excess financial aid refunds are generally available

For Programs Abroad Office internal scholarship disbursement dates, to include the CGE Undergraduate Study Abroad Scholarship and the UT in Florence Scholarship, please contact the Programs Abroad Office at volsabroad@utk.edu or 865-974-3177.

MONEY MANAGEMENT ABROAD

- Use online currency converters to understand your host country's exchange rate

Resource:

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=google+currency+converter&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

- Make well-informed decisions about how you will access money while abroad.
 - Are there ATM withdrawal fees?
 - Are there international charge fees for using your bank/credit card abroad?
 - Is your bank aware you will be traveling abroad?
 - How much money do you want to carry around at one time/risk losing?
 - What will you do if your wallet is stolen?

Resource: <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/money-transfer/money-transfer-where-to-exchange-currency/>

- Research cost of living in your host country/city & establish a spending budget.

Resource: <https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/>

Resource: <https://www.economist.com/big-mac-index>

HEALTH ABROAD



As you are preparing for your study abroad experience, there are important health considerations to keep in mind. Maintaining your health and wellness, both physically and mentally, should be considered a top priority for you throughout your time abroad. Here are some tips to stay healthy in a new country and cultural environment.

Preparedness is about planning.

Ask yourself: What's the plan if

1. I feel homesick
2. I lose my medication
3. I test positive for Covid
4. I get injured

For situations you don't have an answer to yet, that's okay! In this section, we will share resources so you can be proactive, formulate a plan and feel better prepared for your experience abroad.

CULTURE SHOCK

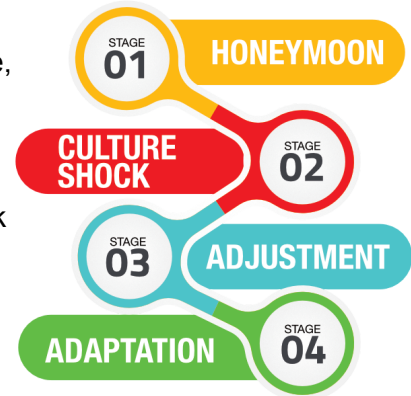
<https://www.participatelearning.com/blog/the-4-stages-of-culture-shock/>

Overview: Though it can be one of the hardest parts of traveling, culture shock is just as integral to the experience as food, people, and scenery. By recognizing it for what it is and finding ways to cope, you can prevent culture shock from ruining an otherwise enriching experience abroad.

Definition: the feeling of disorientation experienced by someone who is suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture, way of life, or set of attitudes.

Stages of Culture Shock:

- 1. Honeymoon:** The first stage of culture shock is often overwhelmingly positive. Travelers may become infatuated with the language, people, and food in their new surroundings. At this stage, the trip or move seems like the greatest decision ever made and an exciting adventure. ***On short trips, the honeymoon phase may take over the entire experience as the later effects of culture shock don't have time to set in. On longer trips, the honeymoon stage will usually phase out eventually.
- 2. Culture Shock:** Frustration may be the most difficult stage of culture shock and is probably familiar to anyone who has lived abroad or travels frequently. At this stage, the fatigue of not understanding gestures, signs, and the language sets in and miscommunications may be happening. Small things – losing keys, missing the bus, or not being able to easily order food in a restaurant – may trigger frustration. And while frustration comes and goes, it's a natural reaction for people spending extended time in new countries. Bouts of depression or homesickness are common during the frustration stage.
- 3. Adjustment:** Frustrations are often subdued as travelers begin to feel more familiar and comfortable with the cultures, people, food, and languages of new environments. Navigation becomes easier, and friends and communities of support are established. Details of local languages may become more recognizable during the adjustment stage.
- 4. Adaptation:** The final stage of culture shock is acceptance. Acceptance doesn't mean that new cultures or environments are completely understood. Rather, it signifies that complete understanding isn't necessary to function and thrive in the new surroundings. During the acceptance stage, travelers are able to draw together the resources they need to feel at ease.



MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH

You can be prepared by being proactive.

Mental Preparation:

1. Ask yourself “What **coping strategies** do I use in the US that I can use in situations of stress, isolation or when I’m feeling overwhelmed or anxious while abroad?”

Resource: IES, 12 Mindful Ways to Manage Your Stress

<https://www.iesabroad.org/news/12-mindful-ways-manage-your-stress#sthash.E0qvTMXu.xj5Fnp3n.dpbs>

2. Research the host-country to see what customs, attitudes or **cultural differences** to expect.

Resources: CIEE, City-specific Resources for Study Abroad

<https://www.ciee.org/about/what-we-stand-for/diversity-inclusion/city-resources>

Diversity Abroad, Guide to Preparing to Go Abroad

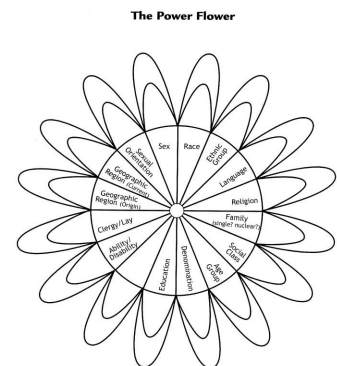
<https://www.diversityabroad.com/articles/category/prepare-to-go-abroad>

3. Consider the intersections of your **identity, privilege, and power** and their potential impact on your experience abroad.

Complete an identity assessment such as the Power Flower, to reflect on how your personal identities compare with societal power structures and identities in both the US and in your location abroad.

Link to Power Flower activity:

<http://lgbtq2stoolkit.learningcommunity.ca/training/power-flower/>



Resources:

- UT Student Counseling Center (<https://counselingcenter.utk.edu/scc-overview/>)
- Healthy Happy Vols Abroad: Anxiety Support Wherever You Are (https://youtube.com/watch?v=GIWJPZ_LQnw&feature=share)

Travel tip: Community, Coping Strategies and Communication

Engage in and Build Community: It’s normal to feel overwhelmed or isolated in a new environment. It is important to build and be involved in a supportive community by taking part in organized excursions, finding a language learning/interest club, or setting up regular community dinners with housemates. With an open mind, proper support and time, you will adjust and allow yourself to lean into discomfort and experience and engage in a new and vibrant culture.

Seek Support and Implement Coping Strategies: Sometimes, you need to reflect on your experience and implement a coping strategy. Once you’ve done so and found the necessary support, don’t be afraid to keep trying new things that will help shape your

experience abroad and allow you to reflect on and continue to learn about your global citizenry.

Stay in Communication: Reach out to your program leader/ in-country program leaders if you are experiencing issues or need assistance or support, but also remember that the Programs Abroad Office remains a resource to you leading up to, during and after your abroad program.

Physical Preparation:

1. Check with your host country, affiliate provider/host institution, International SOS, and all other parties like airlines to determine specific requirements/rules that may be applicable to you while you're abroad, regarding things like:
 - current medications you're taking
 - immunizations you need
 - proof of health records/vaccines
 - quarantine and testing requirements for Covid-19

For medications you are currently prescribed:

- Keep the medication in its original labeled medication bottle
 - Consider asking your doctor for a written prescription to include in your travel documents
 - Pack extra, in case of travel delays
 - Include in your carry-on bag, not checked luggage, to minimize the risk of it being lost in transport
2. Maintain records that are both accurate and up-to-date; Keep them in 2 or more secure but accessible locations (*Example: VolsAbroad portal, Google Drive, physical copies, trusted family member, etc.*)

Resources:

- *Your primary care physician*
- *CDC (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>)*

Covid-19 Reminder

- Some program destinations may require Covid-19 boosters in addition to vaccination. Vaccines and boosters for Covid-19 are currently available at the UTK Student Health Center (<https://studenthealth.utk.edu/>)
- Timing is extremely important. Some countries require “full” vaccination (i.e. two weeks after second dose or booster). Please make sure the timing of your vaccinations complies with all local requirements.
- List your vaccination history in your study abroad application (VolsAbroad portal)

- Consult your doctor with any questions

The best defense remains getting vaccinated and/or boosted before your travel. Getting vaccinated/boosted not only helps protect your health, but also your investment in this study abroad opportunity.

With changing regulations, we strongly encourage you to check with your selected program provider, host country, and airline to determine whether this opportunity is right for you. Talk to your doctor if you have specific concerns related to your health and Covid-19 or any other health issues.

You are required to comply with all entry and exit requirements – including full vaccination/booster status, if applicable – and any restrictions that may be in place at the time of travel. If eligibility requirements are not met, you are held financially responsible for associated costs, as outlined in the withdrawal policy found in your Vols Abroad application.

Please note: If you test positive for Covid-19 while abroad, you will be held to testing, isolation, and treatment procedures set by your host country and/or program provider. If you feel unwell or suspect you might have Covid while abroad, contact your program leader/in-country program contact, who can help you receive access to the medical care you need.

Resources: US Department of State

(<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/COVID-19-Country-Specific-Information.html>)

World Health Organization (WHO)

(<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice>)

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE

<https://cge.utk.edu/intlsos/>

UT faculty, staff, and students traveling abroad on university-sponsored trips are covered by an international travel insurance policy underwritten by Chubb Insurance.

	<p>UT Academic Internship or Faculty-directed</p>	<p>UT Direct, Exchange or Affiliate</p>
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Chubb Insurance (charged & enrolled by UT)		
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Why it's important:

Having an international medical insurance policy is important because most US policies have limited coverage outside of the US. Not only does international health insurance cover your medical expenses while you are abroad, it also covers expenses such as repatriation and medical evacuation to use in case of emergencies. However, it is important to note that this insurance does not cover expenses related to travel such as lost or delayed baggage, travel delays, or cancellations. You may want to consider an additional policy to cover these situations.

Highlights:

- \$500,000 Total Maximum per Covered Accident or Sickness
- \$0 Deductible per Covered Accident or Sickness
- Emergency medical and security evacuation benefits
- \$2,000 benefit to help cover COVID-19 quarantine-related expenses abroad

For information or to submit a claim post-incident, please visit

<https://cge.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/84/2022/09/2022-2023-University-of-Tennessee-International-Travel-Insurance-Brochure.pdf>

SAFETY **ABROAD**



(Repeating because it's true): **Preparedness is about planning!**

Ask yourself: What's the plan if:

1. A natural disaster occurs?
2. I am the victim of a crime?
3. I break an international law?
4. My passport/wallet are stolen?

COMMON INCIDENTS & GLOBAL SAFETY CONCERNS

Common Incidents Abroad

- Lost or Stolen items (*passport, wallet, luggage, etc.*)
- Alcohol-related incidents (*physical injuries, breaking the law, etc.*)
- Interpersonal Conflicts (*roommates, classmates, etc.*)

Global Safety Concerns

- Terrorism
- Political/Civil unrest
- Natural disasters
- Street crime

GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

It is very important that you know the potential risks in your program location in order to be able to minimize those risks. It is your responsibility to take an active role in your safety.

To learn more about the specific risks for your location(s), be sure to review all information provided to you by your program provider/organization and/or host university and follow their safety protocol. Do independent research on your abroad location(s)/host country using International SOS and other credible resources.

Resource: International SOS (<https://www.internationalsos.com/MasterPortal/default.aspx?membnum=11BCAS080063>)

General Safety Guidelines

In the majority of locations, these general safety guidelines provide a foundation you can use to inform your decisions and develop your personal risk mitigation plan:

Communication

- Have a charged and accessible cell phone in case of emergencies.
- Report any issues or concerns to program leaders/in-country program contacts.

Common Sense

- Use the buddy system whenever possible, and never leave a buddy behind.
- Avoid potentially dangerous situations, “high risk” locations, and “no go” zones - especially after dark or when alone.
- Pay attention to your intuition. If something feels “off”, don’t ignore it.

Country-specific Information

- Be conscious of culturally appropriate and inappropriate behavior.
- Know the address of the nearest hospital and US Embassy.

EMERGENCIES **ABROAD**



To make informed decisions, it is helpful to know what constitutes an emergency or non-emergency, what protocols are in place and what your resources are. In this section, we will highlight various scenarios you may encounter and relevant resources to help you prepare for and act during emergency situations abroad.

EMERGENCY VS. NON-EMERGENCY

Emergency

- Accident that threatens your life or the life of another
- Life-threatening illness that presents extreme or concerning symptoms
- Attack or assault to your person
- Local or world events deemed by your program to threaten your health or safety in your location

Action to take: Use the Emergency Abroad Protocol and Contacts below.

PROGRAMS ABROAD EMERGENCY RESPONSE
Use this to guide your decision-making until the situation has been resolved

EMERGENCYABROAD
Situations where health and/or safety are an imminent concern

Call the local 911-equivalent for immediate assistance

Communicate with the program leader/in-country program contact

Call International S.O.S.
+001-215-942-8478
Membership Number: 11BCAS080063

Call the Programs Abroad 24/7 Emergency Hotline
+001-865-789-2982

In **NON-EMERGENCY** Cases
Situations of missed flights, mild illness or lost/stolen possessions

Notify the program leader/in-country program contact and then our office of the situation and action taken

Non-Emergency

- Lost or stolen items (*credit card/wallet, luggage, technology, etc*)
- Rescheduled, delayed or missed flights
- Mild illnesses with which you are familiar (*common cold, seasonal allergies, stomach aches, etc.*)

Action to take: Notify the program leader/in-country program contact of the issue/situation and any action taken so they can assist as needed. Then, inform the Programs Abroad Office by email at voisabroad@utk.edu or phone at 865-974-3177.

EMERGENCY ABROAD PROTOCOL & CONTACTS

Contact through the following chain-of-command:

1. **The local 911-equivalent** for immediate emergency assistance.

This process is similar to how you'd reach out to emergency services in the US in case of fire, need for police, etc.

Resource: https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf

2. **Program leader/in-country program contact** to inform and for on-the-ground support.

This should be covered in your in-country orientation session. If you're not sure who this is, ask the Programs Abroad Office.

3. **International SOS** for professional guidance, resources, and in-the-moment support

+001-215-942-8478

Membership Number: 11BCAS080063

4. **UTK Programs Abroad 24/7 Emergency Hotline** for guidance and in-the-moment support

+001-865-789-2982

PREPARE, ACT, RESPOND

Prepare:

1. Understand the emergency protocol shared in the following section and familiarize yourself with the linked resources
2. Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (S.T.E.P.) at step.state.gov
 - Free service for U.S. nationals traveling and living abroad through the US Department of State
 - Sends important country-specific safety updates from the local embassy
 - Helps the embassy contact you in case of an emergency
3. Save emergency contact information for US and international-based contacts:
 - Local 911-equivalent: https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf
 - Local program leader/in-country program contact(s)
 - ISOS Emergency Hotline
 - Programs Abroad Emergency Hotline
4. Make hard and/or digital copies of:
 - Passport and visa, if applicable
 - Vaccine card/proof of up-to-date immunizations
 - international insurance coverage information
5. Share copies with your support systems back home (family/guardian, emergency contacts, etc.)

Act:

International SOS - Travel support IN THE MOMENT

- *Examples: Lost medication, need to get to a doctor, lost passport*
- *Resource: <https://www.internationalsos.com/MasterPortal/default.aspx?membnum=11BCAS080063>*

Chubb Insurance - Health insurance provider POST-INCIDENT

- *Example: You need to file a claim to be reimbursed for medical expenses*
- *Resource: <https://cge.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/84/2022/09/2022-2023-University-of-Tennessee-International-Travel-Insurance-Brochure.pdf>*

CDC - Government resource for health-related travel information

- *Example: "What vaccinations are required in my host country?"*
- *Resource: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>*

US Dept of State - Government resource for health/safety travel information

- *Example: "How safe is my host country?"*

- Resource: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html>

WHO - United Nations resource for health, safety and vulnerable populations

- Example: Covid-19 Travel Advice
- Resource: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice>

Respond:

- Monitor your UT and program organization/host university email accounts and portals regularly
- In the event of an emergency, your program contacts will check in with you about your safety and provide guidance
- It is very important that you respond to any emails, calls, or texts from UT and/or local program staff

REMINDERS & SUMMARY OF RESOURCES



REMINDERS

Packing Considerations:

1. **Weather and Climate:** Does your destination have a rainy/cold season? Summer in Tennessee does not mean it will be hot and humid in your host country.
2. **Culturally Appropriate:** For most destinations, it is a good idea to avoid tank tops and short skirts/shorts in public.
3. **Program Activities:** Are you going hiking/walking a lot? You'll need comfortable, closed-toed shoes. Water activities? Pack the SPF! (Check TSA's guidelines)
4. **Personal Medications:** Do you have enough for your entire program or know what to do if you run out? Is it in its original bottle with your name on it?
5. **Luggage and Belongings:** Is your luggage lightweight, easy to manage, waterproof? How will you store/safeguard your passport, money, electronics? Is bringing that drone really necessary?

Resources: CDC (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>)

TSA Guidelines (<https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring/all>)

Behavioral Expectations:

As a UT student, you are held to the UT Student Code of Conduct and any Behavioral Agreements outlined in your program application in the VolsAbroad portal.

For more information, please review the [UT Student Code of Conduct](#) and Behavioral Agreement in your program application in the [VolsAbroad](#) portal.

You are an ambassador of the University of Tennessee and the USA! The consequences of violating these policies can be costly and compromise your safety.

Consequences of violating behavioral expectations may include:

- Endangering personal safety
- Undergoing conduct sanctions at UT
- Being sent home from your program
- Suffering legal consequences

Vols Help Vols:

You uphold the Vols Help Vols ideology when you act in a respectful and responsible manner towards your host country, instructors/program leaders, classmates, room/housemates or host families and yourself.

To your host country/culture:

- Inquire about history, social norms and other aspects of your host country's culture before making an assumption or judgment that might harm others
- Be respectful of others' intercultural learning experiences and your responsibility as an ambassador of UT and the USA

To Academic Instructors/Program Leaders:

- Show an interest in the material, be attentive in class and be aware of the academic expectations

To Classmates:

- If you see that another program participant is struggling, assist as you are able or encourage them to seek support.
- Do not invite *non*-program guests to participate in program activities or visit student housing. This is not permitted and disrupts the learning environment and/or safety of others.

To Room/Housemates or Host families:

- Communicate any plans that may impact those you are co-inhabiting with, especially if it involves a break from your normal routine.

Example: If you're taking a weekend trip out-of-town, let them know not to expect you home and/or your intended destination.

To Yourself:

- Identify personal boundaries/limitations. Even outside of your comfort zone, you can respect yourself and your needs.
- Communicate with your program leader or in-country contact when you have questions or concerns

SUMMARY OF RESOURCES

Listed as they appear in “Know Before You Go: A Student’s Guide to Going Abroad”

**Please note: Suggested external resources are meant to assist the student but are not monitored or maintained for accuracy or quality control.*

Category	Resource	Link	Used for
Academics	International Grade Equivalencies IFMA Foundation	https://foundation.ifma.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/International-Grade-Equivalencies.pdf	Suggested external source for checking the host country’s grading scale and how it may compare to the USA*
Academics	Request for Transfer Credit Form Dynamic Forms	tiny.utk.edu/df	Office resource for checking the status of previously submitted forms
Academics	Transfer Credit Process Programs Abroad	https://programsabroad.utk.edu/returnees-alumni/transfer-credit-process/	Office resource for understanding the Transfer Credit process
Academics	Vol Success Tips Student Success	https://studentsuccess.utk.edu/vol-success-tips/	UT resource for adhering to UT academic expectations
Finances	Study Abroad Resources OneStop	https://onestop.utk.edu/study-abroad-aid/	UT resource for understanding the conditions under which financial aid may apply to a program abroad
Finances	UT Academic and Financial Dates and Deadlines Calendar	https://calendar.utk.edu/deadlines	UT resource for understanding the UTK deadlines under which our office operates and the student is expected to adhere to
Finances	Online Currency Converter Google	https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=google+currency+converter&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8	Suggested external source for currency conversion*

Finances	“Where to Exchange Currency Without Paying Huge Fees” Forbes Magazine	https://www.forbes.com/advisor/money-transfer/money-transfer-where-to-exchange-currency/	Suggested external source for tips on exchanging currency*
Finances	Cost of Living Numbeo	https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/	Suggested external source to research cost of living in host country*
Finances	“Our Big Mac index shows how burger prices are changing The Economist”	https://www.economist.com/big-mac-index	Suggested external source to understand exchange rate/cost of living in host country*
Health	“The Four Stages of Culture Shock” Participate Learning	https://www.participatelearning.com/blog/the-4-stages-of-culture-shock/	Suggested external source to understand what culture shock is and how it affects an international experience*
Health	“12 Mindful Ways to Manage Your Stress” IES Abroad	https://www.iesabroad.org/news/12-mindful-ways-manage-your-stress#sthash.E0qvTMXu.xj5Fnp3n.dpbs	Suggested external source for tips on how to manage stress*
Health	“City-Specific Resources for Study Abroad” CIEE	https://www.ciee.org/about/what-we-stand-for/diversity-inclusion/city-resources	Suggested external source for researching customs and cultural differences in host country*
Health	“Guide to Preparing to Go Abroad” Diversity Abroad	https://www.diversityabroad.com/articles/category/prepare-to-go-abroad	Suggested external source for researching cultural differences and diverse identities abroad*
Health	“Power Flower” LGBTQ2s Toolkit	http://lgbtq2stoolkit.learningcommunity.ca/training/power-flower/	Suggested external source for understanding how your own identities and perception of identity impacts your experience abroad*

Health	UT Student Counseling Center	https://counselingcenter.utk.edu/scc-overview/	UT resource for mental health services
Health/Safety	Emergencies 911 Abroad US Department of State	https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf	Government resource for researching 911-equivalent contact numbers in host country
Health/Safety	Centers for Disease Control (CDC)	https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/	Government resource for immunization requirements; Legality and accessibility of current medications
Health/Safety	Emergency Assistance (International SOS) Center for Global Engagement	https://cge.utk.edu/intlsos/ https://cge.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/84/2022/09/2022-2023-University-of-Tennessee-International-Travel-Insurance-Brochure.pdf	UT-partnered resource for understanding the emergency protocol and contact numbers
Health	International Health Insurance (Chubb Insurance) Center for Global Engagement	https://cge.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/84/2022/09/2022-2023-University-of-Tennessee-International-Travel-Insurance-Brochure.pdf	Departmental resource for understanding the UTK-provided international health insurance coverage and reimbursement claims process <u>post</u> -incident
Safety	International SOS	https://www.internationalsos.com/MasterPortal/default.aspx?membnum=11BCAS080063	UT-partnered resource for researching country-specific information; downloading your membership card
Health/Safety	Covid-19 Country Specific Information US Department of State	https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/COVID-19-Country-Specific-Information.html	Government resource for researching travel advisories and country-specific information; Covid-19 Information
Health/Safety	Covid-19 Travel Advice	https://www.who.int/emergenci	United Nations resource

	WHO	es/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice	for understanding the requirements, resources and mandates in place in the host country
Safety	Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (S.T.E.P.)	step.state.gov	Government resource for maintaining awareness of safety updates and contact information
Health/Safety	Emergencies 911 Abroad US Department of State	https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf	Government resource for researching 911-equivalent contact numbers in host country
Health/Safety	US Department of State	https://travel.state.gov/content/travel.html	Government resource for understanding the health and safety information of host country
Reminders	Transportation Security Administration (TSA)	https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring/all	Government resource for understanding airline rules and restrictions
Reminders	UT Student Code of Conduct	https://studentconduct.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/53/2021/08/2m3k1ac-Fall-StudentCodeOfConduct WEB.pdf	UT resource to understand the student's behavioral requirement

KEEP WITH YOUR IMPORTANT TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

International SOS
Medical and Security Services

Membership I.D.
11BCAS080063

Organization
The University of Tennessee

Call our medical and security experts 24/7.
Call for preventative or emergency enquiries.
Call before, during and after travel or assignment.



Bali +62 21 766 4633	Jakarta + 62 21 750 6001	Paris +33 (0) 155 633 155
Bangkok +66 2 205 7777	Johannesburg +27 (0) 11 541 1300	Philadelphia +1 215 942 8226
Beijing +86 (0) 10 6462 9100	Kuala Lumpur +603 2787 3126	Seoul +82 (2) 3140 1700
Dubai +971 4 601 8777	London +44 (0) 20 8762 8008	Singapore +65 6338 7800
Frankfurt +49 6102 3588 100	Madrid +34 91 572 4363	Sydney +61 2 9372 2468
Geneva +41 22 785 6464	Manila +63 (2) 8687 0909	Taipei +886 2 2523 2220
Ho Chi Minh City +84 28 3829 8520	Moscow +7495 937 64 77	Tokyo +81 3 3560 7183
Hong Kong +852 2528 9900	Mumbai +91 22 42838383	

WHEN DO I USE INTERNATIONAL SOS?

PREPARE before you leave home:

- Keep your membership card safe and with you at all times
- Call an Assistance Centre for free pretravel information (i.e. vaccination, required medication and travel security concerns)
- Download the Assistance App, log in using your membership number to help you make more informed travel decisions based on our online medical and security reports and country travel risk guides
- Sign up for health and security email alerts
- Inform friends and family that you are with International SOS, so they can get in touch with us should they have any concerns for your welfare while you are away

WHILE ABROAD all medical and security enquiries, be they of a routine or medical nature:

- Free and unlimited health, safety, and security advice
- Find a local nurse, internationally trained doctor or security specialist near you
- Find medication or medical equipment
- Travel advice on loss of travel documents or legal assistance
- Assistance paying your medical fees

IN AN EMERGENCY we provide all necessary emergency services, including:

- Arranging medical transportation and care
- Monitoring your condition and provide advice along the way
- Evacuating you when necessary
- Contacting your family, so they know you are in good hands.

WHERE DO I ACCESS MORE INFORMATION? DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE ASSISTANCE APP

1 Login to internationalsos.com/members to sign up for health and security email alerts using your membership number or:

2 Download the free Assistance App from app.internationalsos.com to contact us and help you make more informed travel decisions based on our online medical and security reports and country travel risk guides.



Or scan this code to download from your device's App Store

Access Your Member Portal at internationalsos.com/members

20 QUESTIONS WORKSHEET: #VolsAbroad Edition

Fill in the blanks and answer "Yes" to the following statements to set yourself up for success as you prepare for your experience abroad! Please use "Know Before You Go: A Student's Guide for Going Abroad", resources shared by our office/affiliate partners and independent reflection to complete.

Academics

1. I understand how the course(s) I am taking abroad will count towards my degree and if applicable, transfer back to UT. I am aware that this is something that should be done before I go abroad, or in some cases, before I even apply to my program.

For Direct, Exchange, and Affiliates: I have completed the Request for Transfer Credit Form inside my VolsAbroad application and am regularly monitoring its progress at tiny.utk.edu/df and checking in when delayed. If anything changes, I will submit a new form with accurate and complete information.

For Faculty-Directed and Internships: I have enrolled in the appropriate courses on MyUTK, as instructed by my faculty leader/academic advisor.

Initial here to agree: _____

Resource: <https://programsabroad.utk.edu/returnees-alumni/transfer-credit-process/>

2. I understand that my abroad program is NOT pass/fail, and it is my responsibility to understand the grading scale and adhere to the academic standards in place at my host institution as well as UT.

Initial here to agree: _____

(If applicable) The grading scale in my host country is _____
with a passing grade as _____.

Resource: *International Grade Equivalency*
<https://foundation.ifma.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/International-Grade-Equivalencies.pdf>

Finances

3. Billing on MyUTK begins: _____

Resource: UTK Registrar Calendar (<https://registrar.utk.edu/calendar/>)

4. Payment deadlines & financial aid/scholarships disbursement date:

Resource: UTK Registrar Calendar (<https://registrar.utk.edu/calendar/>)

5. Financial aid refunds processing begins: _____

Resource: UTK Registrar Calendar (<https://registrar.utk.edu/calendar/>)

6. Primary* currency of my abroad country: _____
**In highly traveled areas, sometimes there are numerous forms of currency exchanged.*

Resource: Currency Converter Tool (<https://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/>)

7. Exchange rate**:
\$1.00 in the US is equal to _____ in my abroad location.
(amount) (type of currency)

***Based on the market at the time of inquiry. Fluctuations are normal.*

Resource: Forbes Magazine Article (<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/money-transfer/money-transfer-where-to-exchange-currency/>)

8. The cost of living in _____ is _____ than the cost of living in the
US/Tennessee. (country) (higher/lower)

To prepare for this difference, I can: _____

Resource: Cost of Living Tool (<https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/>)

Bonus: A historical summary of the currency in my host country is: _____

It is sometimes helpful to be aware and familiar with historical accounts of the currency in your host country. Oftentimes, political influence is a large component and allows you to be more aware as you engage in the culture abroad.

Health

9. What **coping strategies** do I use now that I can use in situations of anxiety, stress, isolation or when I'm feeling overwhelmed while abroad?

- _____

- _____

- _____

10. Based on my above answer, I need to ensure I pack or prepare the following resources:

- _____
- _____
- _____

11. What customs, attitudes or **cultural differences** can I expect in my abroad location(s)?

Resource: CIEE, City-specific Resources for Study Abroad
(<https://www.ciee.org/about/what-we-stand-for/diversity-inclusion/city-resources>)

12. I have a plan for how I will manage my medication abroad. I have checked to ensure I am bringing enough of my medication for the duration of my program and that I am complying with all local laws and regulations of my host country.

Initial here to agree: _____

13. The address and contact information of the nearest hospital or US Embassy to my abroad location is:

Resources: Your host country's foreign embassy (<https://www.usembassy.gov/>),
International SOS
(<https://www.internationalsos.com/MasterPortal/default.aspx?membnum=11BCAS080063>)

14. I am **aware of and up-to-date** on all immunizations required by the various parties involved, including but not limited to:

- Host country requirements/rules
- Affiliate provider/host institution requirements/rules
- Airlines and other transportation services requirements/rules
- Other involved parties (*other countries/travel destinations, hostels, etc.*)

Initial here to agree: _____

Resources: Your host country's foreign embassy (<https://www.usembassy.gov/>), Department of State Country-Specific Covid-19 information (<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/COVID-19-Country-Specific-Information.html>), WHO (<https://www.who.int/>), and the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/>)

15. I have health records/proof of vaccines that are both **accurate and up-to-date**. They are in **2 or more** secure but accessible locations, including a physical copy that I am keeping in a secure location.

Initial here to agree: _____

Resource: Your primary care physician

Safety:

16. Before my flight is scheduled to depart I have or will obtain a passport that is valid for at least 6 months beyond my return date. I will include copies of my passport that are signed, in-color and legible in **2 or more** secure but accessible locations, including my program application in the VolsAbroad portal and a physical copy that I am keeping in a secure location.

Initial here to agree: _____

17. The in-country 911-equivalent number is: _____

Resource: Emergency Equivalent Numbers Abroad (https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf)

18. The in-country calling code is: _____

Resource: List of Country Codes (<https://www.howtocallabroad.com/codes.html>)

19. ***For Direct, Exchange, Affiliates and Internships:***

My program provider/host institution's 24/7 emergency contact is:

For Faculty-directed programs:

My faculty leader's emergency contact is: _____

Bonus: (If applicable) Common phrases or ways to ask for help if traveling in a destination where English is not the primary language:

Resource: [Google Translate](#)

English: "Can you help me?"

English: "It's an emergency!"

English: "Police" _____

English: "Ambulance" _____

English: "Hospital" _____

English: "Fire" / "Fire Department" _____

20. I have saved the following emergency hotline numbers (below) in my phone and downloaded the free Assistance App from **International SOS**. I understand that this resource can help me find local healthcare or medication, arrange medical transportation and care, monitor medical conditions, provide safety/security advice, and assist in evacuations.

International SOS 24/7 Assistance:

+001-215-942-8478

Membership Number: 11BCAS080063

Programs Abroad 24/7 Emergency Hotline:

+001-865-789-2982

Initial here to agree: _____



*Resource: International SOS app (app.internationalsos.com)
UTK's membership number is 11BCAS080063)*

Or scan this code to
download from your
device's App Store