Gina Reis, Asst. Director for Study Abroad
- What can this experience mean for you?
- Advising from abroad – via Skype
  - umdipo

Your name? your major? your program? Your goal?
- Consider exchanging contact info
AGENDA

- A Cultural Experience
- Expectations, Yours & Ours
- Your Rights & Responsibilities as a Participant
- Getting Prepared
- Taking Good Care of Yourself
- Making the Most of the Experience
- Health & Safety
- When You Return
- Still A Part of UMassD
- Sign-out w/Staff
A CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

- One of the primary reasons to spend time abroad is to experience new cultures and perspectives, and gain an awareness that there are many ways to approach the opportunities and challenges all of us face in life.
- Cultural difference will underlie everything you experience abroad: how classes are taught & assessed, shopping, banking, socializing, etc.
- This link is to a self-guided and self-paced tool for students preparing to study abroad http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/pub/CULTURE_ISSUES_2.htm
One becomes much more aware of their own identity as a member of their home culture and society.

- Recognize that other cultures can differ from the US in views of gender roles, races, religions, other differences.
- They also differ in perception of time and punctuality, in prioritizing individual vs. group choice, work vs. leisure, material possessions vs. simplicity, etc.

“Cross-cultural competence” is the ability to see other’s points of view and to collaborate more easily with others.

As one gets to know others whose language, culture and society have been shaped by a different history other than one’s own, one becomes more aware of one’s own culture and develops greater cross-cultural competence.
CULTURE SHOCK

- Reality differs from assumptions = Culture Shock
  - Culture shock topic centers around assumptions being tied to culture
    - Stress is felt because of dealing with different assumptions all day
    - Definition of stress is ..... [mind and emotions working harder at all times]
    - Tremendous leaps in adaptability and self-confidence result from these daily stresses
  - REQUIRES MORE SLEEP THAN NORMAL AND A HEALTHY DIET

Graph from Ithaca College website, Nov. 25 2011
CULTURE SHOCK cont.

- Nearly everyone who goes to live in a different environment will experience “culture shock” at some point – a period of adjustment and adaptation essential to a person’s growth in cultural awareness and self-confidence.

- Being able to recognize culture shock when it occurs and having strategies to counter it, is the best defense.
  - Focus on your goals for being abroad.
  - Keep a journal or blog to record your experiences.
  - Go out and see new things; meet new friends through clubs and activities.
  - If you feel really down or it lasts for more than a few weeks, let someone know – program coordinator, the host university counseling service or the IPO office.

- The Peace Corps has developed guides for cultural adjustment. Read this mental and emotional health:
  - [http://www.globaled.us/peacecorps/maintaining.html](http://www.globaled.us/peacecorps/maintaining.html)
Dr. Chris Frizzell, Director – Counseling Services
Take care of yourself; unfamiliar environments can place more stress on your body and mind

Shelly Metivier Scott, Assoc. Dean of Students
While registered as a UMassDartmouth Study Abroad participant, you continue in active student status
Student Affairs, Health Services, Counseling, Housing other offices available to you as needed
If you are registered with Center for Access & Success, talk with them about arrangements while on study abroad
Student Conduct Code applies
WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT OF YOUR PROGRAM

Some form of orientation information will take place very shortly after arrival. You should expect to receive basic information such as this; if you feel you need more, ASK THE LEADER (he/she is your ally!):

- How to reach the director and/or other emergency contact 24/7
- Telephone services and how to dial locally & to US
- Be able to recognize police, police stations, hospitals/clinics and how to contact them if needed
- How to recognize bank notes and coins and the approximate conversion rate from USD
- Know the recommended means of changing money
- Hours, services, street address of the student accommodation
- Basic phrases in the local language
- Meeting place for the group and instructions in case of emergency
- Academic and behavior expectations
YOUR EXPERIENCE, YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

- The program is organized to teach you, provide opportunities for interaction with the host culture, and guide your overall experience—however, YOU ARE ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING THE DAILY CHOICES AND DECISIONS THAT WILL AFFECT YOUR SAFETY AND YOUR DEPTH AND BREADTH OF LEARNING.
- Attend all pre-program sessions and read materials.
- Research the country/city (including visa/immigration info).
- Non-US citizens check with ISSC re: re-entry to US.
- Know where to find emergency assistance.
- Respect host country norms and obey all laws; avoid illegal drugs and abuse of alcohol.
- Keep your parents & program informed.
- Get to know the Program Leader—your best advocate!
WHAT UMassD EXPECTS OF YOU

- Behave responsibly at all times; when abroad you represent UMass and the people of Massachusetts

- Academic Guidelines
  - Semester students must carry a full course load (equivalent to 12 US credits)
  - actively engage in and complete all classes
  - the department of your major will certify completion of your graduation requirements; it is up to you to communicate with your department regarding choice of study abroad courses and to obtain approval for transfer credit

- Be familiar with UMassD catalog degree requirements/policies
  - [http://www.umassd.edu/academics/catalogs/](http://www.umassd.edu/academics/catalogs/)

- Read, Sign & Return IPO membership/academic agreements
  - maintain “good standing” as a UMass Dartmouth student academically, financially, judicially

- Upon return, complete an evaluation form for IPO so we can learn what you think of the program and your experience

- Participate in events/share your experience w/other students
WHAT THE UNITED STATES EXPECTS OF YOU

- Consider that you will be one of the few Americans that most people know; you will be an ambassador of this country
- Many people will want to practice their English with you
- You may also be viewed by unscrupulous people as an unsuspecting target to get something they want
- Upon re-entry to the US, you will need to account for your actions abroad and for all items you bring into the country
- An increasing number of study abroad students have been approached by foreign governments. Read:
  - Please report to IPO if you encounter this so we can advise you
CONSULT US GOVERNMENT ADVICE

- US State Department offers extensive information for students and others travelling abroad; USE IT

- IF YOU READ NOTHING ELSE: US State Department section providing support for students preparing to study abroad
  http://studentsabroad.state.gov/

  - CRITICAL: Register with the local US Embassy
    - https://step.state.gov/step/
  - A Safe Trip Abroad
  - Worldwide Caution
  - Travel Warnings and General Briefings by country
  - Vaccination and Health Advice by country
  - US Customs Regulations
    - http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go/customs.html
HEALTH & SAFETY – PREPARATION

- Review “Medical Facilities and Health Information”, “Safety” sections of the US State Department Country Info
    - Levels and types of violence vary
    - Prevalence and kinds of illnesses vary
    - Resources for guidance and assistance vary
- Check the Centers for Disease control website to see what recommendations they have for your destination
- Advise your doctor you will be out of the country and ask for recommendations specific to your history
- Prescription medicine: *Bring enough* to last your entire stay and a letter from your doctor stating what condition it is for
  - carry it in the original labeled containers
  - carry a copy of the prescription/s
  - check the travel.state.gov listing for your country, under “Health” for any special advice – such as restrictions in some countries on common medicines
INSURANCE MATTERS

- MAKE SURE YOU HAVE YOUR PROOF OF PERSONAL HEALTH INSURANCE WITH YOU, POLICY AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- IMPORTANT: You will need to pay out-of-pocket for any doctor or hospital charges, then keep receipts and submit them to your health insurance company for reimbursement later

- UMass recommends purchase of the International Student Identity Card (ISIC). ~$25 for travel insurance and discounts

- IF YOU HAVE UMASS STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE: You must contact the Bursar’s Office to register for coverage while you are away on EXH/study abroad status

- UMass students on approved programs are covered by travel accident & sickness insurance which supplements your personal medical & travel insurance and provides coordination assistance in case of emergency
  - IMPORTANT: BRING THE UMASS POLICY NUMBER AND TELEPHONE NUMBER
COLLECT AND CARRY THROUGHOUT

- Passport & visa (if required)
- Roundtrip air ticket and itinerary
- Health insurance & UMass travel insurance
- Letter of Admission/Program Confirmation
- Credit card and small amount of local currency
- Phrasebook and basic maps
- Emergency contact numbers (direct-dial)
  - family
  - local program coordinator
  - US Embassy
  - local police
LEAVE WITH FAMILY

- photocopy of your passport & visa
- copy of your flight itinerary
- copy of your insurance policies and id numbers
- emergency contact numbers
  - local program coordinator at your destination
  - US number for the study abroad program
  - UMass Dartmouth number and IPO office
  - US Embassy closest to your location
- If you purchase a pay-as-you-go phone, ADVISE PARENTS OF MOBILE TELEPHONE NUMBER AS SOON AS AVAILABLE & SET-UP THE VOICEMAIL
TRAVEL & ARRIVAL

- Upload your flight itinerary to your IPO application
- Confirm your flights w/airline 24 hours in advance and pack light – 1 lg or 2 sm. bags
  - verify check-in time & place for int’l flight
  - number/size/weight of bags allowed
  - obtain list of restricted items and carry ziplock
- Electric current and outlets vary by country: bring or purchase enroute, an electrical converter designed for use in your destination
- Arrange transportation from the airport to the program check-in point or accommodation
- Attend your program’s entire arrival orientation
HOST UNIVERSITY ACADEMICS

- Maintain a full course load at all times; this is required by UMass Dartmouth and by the terms of your student visa.
- Professors/lectures more formal; reading lists long; students may not have the opportunity to speak in class.
- Likely fewer books to purchase; use the library & shared materials.
- Read syllabus; ask questions after class or the department office.
- Grades may be based primarily on the exams; don’t fall behind.
- Grades may be posted in public; exams can be oral.
- Grade scales vary widely; do not confuse any letter or numeric mark with what you know in the US; ASK what the grade scale is.

UMass Dartmouth GRADE POLICY: Per the UMassD catalogue – Study Abroad courses transfer in with letter grades but are not calculated in the gpa. Most credits count as in-residence.
Much of our daily existence is based on unconscious assumptions

- Issues like HIV, date-rape, theft are not unfamiliar – but may be more or less prevalent
- Health and safety precautionary steps may be the same, but the situations are often very different from those at home
  - no flashy jewelry or electronics in view
  - don’t walk alone late at night
  - check your route in advance and don’t look lost
  - always carry enough cash and the number for a taxi
- Being in a place that is physically unfamiliar and surrounded by a less familiar language means less access to information for making decisions
Note that cultural norms will vary regarding relationships and sexuality:
- Set Boundaries and use your instincts; if something does not feel right, always report it to program/authorities.

RIGHTS – Your human right to being treated with dignity and respect is absolute; always report any situation that makes you feel uncomfortable
- Women Travelers  www.journeywoman.com
- LGBT Resources  http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/lgbt/lgbt_5887.html

If you are attacked or arrested abroad, contact your program coordinator as soon as possible. They will help to get you whatever assistance is needed, and advise you about filing a police report.
- Rape: May also contact the UMassD Victim’s Advocate
LOCAL RULES AND LAWS APPLY

- Outside the US, you are subject first and foremost to the laws and regulations of the local area
  - Do not become involved in crowded events and protests
  - US citizenship does not exempt or protect you
  - If you do have a problem, contact your program leader as well as the US Embassy
- The program provider: has policies on behavior and responsibilities of participants
- National laws: "ignorance of the law is no excuse" – what may seem like a small infraction, may carry a severe penalty especially for things like drug use
- The host institution: their own rules and guidelines apply to academic work and appropriate behavior
DON’T LET THIS BE YOU
CHOICES YOU MAKE

- RESPONSIBLE USE OF ALCOHOL – you may be of legal drinking age in your country but nowhere is drunkenness considered acceptable, especially when it results in harm to others or oneself.

- ALCOHOL, UNFAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS, CASUAL ACQUAINTANCES = HIGHER VULNERABILITY.

The study abroad staff at University of Texas Austin have put together a video that illustrates the importance of students taking responsibility and making good choices when abroad.

The “Culture of Safety”:  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_jVVX7bOZQ&feature=youtu.be
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- Always carry emergency contact numbers with you.
- If hurt or injured, contact police/ambulance first, then the local program coordinator to advise, and your family AFTER when you can tell them help is already being arranged.
- If you are involved in a larger incident or weather emergency, follow the direction of local authorities:
  - university/program authorities
  - local police, public health, government officials
  - watch the local news or listen to a radio
  - use your mobile phone and email to contact the program coordinator to let them know you are OK
- If something major happens in your country and you are far away and not involved, call your family anyway as they will see it on the news and worry!
CULTURE SHOCK

- Reality differs from assumptions = Culture Shock
  - Culture shock topic centers around assumptions being tied to culture
    - Stress is felt because of dealing with different assumptions all day
    - Definition of stress is ..... [mind and emotions working harder at all times]
    - Tremendous leaps in adaptability and self-confidence result from these daily stresses

- REQUIRES MORE SLEEP THAN NORMAL AND A HEALTHY DIET

Graph from Ithaca College website, Nov. 25 2011
CULTURE SHOCK cont.

- Nearly everyone who goes to live in a different environment will experience “culture shock” at some point – a period of adjustment and adaptation essential to a person’s growth in cultural awareness and self-confidence.

- Being able to recognize culture shock when it occurs and having strategies to counter it, is the best defense:
  - Focus on your goals for being abroad
  - Keep a journal or blog to record your experiences
  - Go out and see new things; meet new friends through clubs and activities
  - If you feel really down or it lasts for more than a few weeks, let someone know – program coordinator, the host university counseling service or the IPO office

- The Peace Corps has developed guides for cultural adjustment. Read this mental and emotional health:
  - [http://www.globaled.us/peacecorps/maintaining.html](http://www.globaled.us/peacecorps/maintaining.html)
DEPARTURE & REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

- Prepare to experience reverse culture-shock when you get back to the US
  - Be aware that family and friends may have a difficult time relating to the exciting experiences you will have had; in fact they may tell you that you’ve changed – it will be true!
  - Blog and share photos about your experiences throughout to keep family & friends involved and to record for yourself!

- Expect reverse culture-shock to be more pronounced

- Networking with other returned study abroad students and learning how to describe the skills acquired abroad for prospective employers can help
  - Watch for IPO’s invitation to the annual student Re-entry Conference. Info on past conferences is available at
  - [http://nestudyabroadreentryconference.wordpress.com](http://nestudyabroadreentryconference.wordpress.com)
Consider getting involved with international activities on campus when you get back to UMass Dartmouth

- Join the Global Ambassadors program by volunteering with the IPO – be a buddy to exchange students, assist with prospective student information sessions, do peer advising
- Plan a presentation on a project or experience you had abroad for the annual US International Education Week in November. A variety of campus activities are sponsored by IPO and ISSC to familiarize the university community with international endeavors across the campus [http://iew.state.gov/](http://iew.state.gov/)

Apply for an internship or work study position in the International Programs Office
Email: Continue to check your UMass Dartmouth email at least daily. The university may have important general announcements and the Registrar or Student Affairs may need to contact you.

The International Programs office is here for advising – skype advising appts. upon request! Use this email protocol for fastest reply:

- “ABROAD: 1–3 word title” or as necessary
- “URGENT – ABROAD: 1–3 word title”

All of UMass Dartmouth is here to support you. Email/call your academic advisor, the Enrollment Center, Housing, Counseling Student Affairs anytime you have questions or concerns.
ACADEMIC PLANNING:

- UNIVERSITY STUDIES 5B ENGAGEMENT requirement can be completed through study abroad!
- Great opportunity to compare & contrast your study abroad experience with other UMass Dartmouth students abroad at the same time.
- Students must register for EXH 058 for the term they are abroad, and participate in online course taught by IPO.
  - Write a Pre-Departure Essay in response to 4 prompts prior to departure.
  - Journal and participate in an online discussion with other students abroad during the time abroad
  - Write a re-entry report upon return from study abroad.
- Previous participants have noted that this ongoing reflection made them more conscious of their learning and growth while abroad. Contact IPO for more info.
FINANCIAL PLANNING

- Arrange with your bank for a small amount of cash in the local currency to take with you ($50–100)
- Bring a credit card for unforeseen emergencies; make sure your bank sets it up for international use and ask what the fees are for ATM withdrawal when out of the US
- ATM withdrawals have lower exchange rates than airport kiosks
- Pay ALL study abroad fees prior to departure
  - For due dates, cancellation policies see the IPO website: http://www.umassd.edu/ipo/studyabroad/financial/
  - Note: UMassDartmouth fees are non-refundable if you withdraw early from a program; 3rd party program provider policies vary
- IMPORTANT IF ON FINANCIAL AID: Unless you leave your form with IPO in pre-departure orientation, It is your responsibility to arrange with the Bursar’s office for disbursement of funds and to notify your provider of that date
FINANCIAL AID

- If you are a financial aid recipient, prior to your departure you must submit a completed Prior Approval form and completed Consortium Agreement to the Enrollment Center. If you are on a campus sponsored program, a completed Study Abroad expense form.

- Most providers require the student to submit a Financial Aid Verification Form. It is your responsibility to submit this form to the University Enrollment Center (UEC) to be completed by your financial aid administrator. Please allow our office ample time to complete this process.

- Courses must be approved by your college and be applicable to your UMassD degree.
FINANCIAL AID

- Some institutions/programs may require payment prior to the receipt of financial aid. You are responsible for ensuring the host institution/provider is paid according to their policy.

- Financial aid will be credited to the UMassD account. Funds will not be disbursed until after the UMassD add/drop period. Prior to departure, students must confirm how they would like these funds to be managed.

- We strongly encourage you to authorize UMassD to allow your financial aid award to pay the provider directly. Any excess funds will be made available to you in a refund.

- If you have not already done so please sign up for direct deposit. Information may be found at http://www.umassd.edu/bursar/refunds/studentrefunds/
FINANCIAL AID

- Private education loans must be credit approved and certified by the campus before verification will be issued to the provider. This process may take up to 30 days.

- You must notify Financial Aid Office if you withdraw or drop a class at the host institution. Withdrawn or dropped coursework may impact your financial aid status and/or award. Please refer to the withdrawal policy at http://www.umassd.edu/financialaid/policies/

- Upon completion of the program, you must submit an official transcript from the host institution to the UMassD International Programs Office.
UNIVERSITY CONTACTS WHILE ABROAD

EMERGENCY: contact Public Safety anytime and they will locate the appropriate person for you to talk with:
UMassD Public Safety (24/7): +1.508.999.9191

- International Programs Office: +1.508.910.6506 or intl_programs@umassd.edu or Gina Reis greis@umassd.edu
- Student Affairs: +1. 508.999.8640 or Shelly Metivier Scott sscott1@umassd.edu
- Counseling Center: +1. 508.999.8648 or Chris Frizzell cfızzell@umassd.edu
- Victim’s Advocate: +1.508.910.4584 or Kendra Pereira kpereira@umassd.edu
- Health Center: +1. 508.999.8984 or Sheila Dorgan sdorgan@umassd.edu
- University Enrollment Center: +1.508.999.8857 or Mary Cabral mcabral@umassd.edu
ADVANCE READING

- Guide for US study abroad students with further information on all
  http://www.studentsabroad.com/contents.asp

- Register with US consulate
  https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/index.aspx

- Services for US Citizens Abroad
  http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html

- US State Department Emergency Contacts
  http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1212.html

- US State Department Travel Warnings

- Travelers Health – US Centers for Disease Control

- Maintaining Mental & Emotional Health
  http://www.globaled.us/peacecorps/maintaining.html

- GlobalScholar online course series: Intro to Study Abroad
  http://globalscholar.us/course_description.asp
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Sexual Harassment & Prevention

- Diversity Resources
  - [http://www.diversityabroad.com/minority-study-abroad](http://www.diversityabroad.com/minority-study-abroad)
  - [http://www.diversityabroad.com/disable-students-abroad](http://www.diversityabroad.com/disable-students-abroad)

- Women Travelling Alone
  - [www.journeywoman.com](http://www.journeywoman.com)

- Disability Resources
  - [http://www.miusa.org/plan/americans-abroad](http://www.miusa.org/plan/americans-abroad)
  - [http://www.miusa.org/resource/booksjournals/awaynonapparentdisability](http://www.miusa.org/resource/booksjournals/awaynonapparentdisability)

- Scholarships, grant listings, and international student loan programs
  - [International Education Financial Aid (IEFA)](http://www.xe.com/ucc/full/)

- GLIMPSE: photos and journals of study abroad students
  - [http://glimpse.org/](http://glimpse.org/)