Safety Tips

General

- **Travel light.** You can move more quickly and will be more likely to have a free hand.
- **Use the same common sense traveling overseas that you would use at home.** Be especially cautious in areas where you may be more easily victimized. These include crowded subways, train stations, elevators, tourist sites, market places, festivals, and neighborhoods.
- **Check the weather** at your destination and note when the sun rises and sets.
- **Consider your attire.** It’s usually best to wear clothing considered appropriate to the host culture and not items that make you look like the stereotypical “American tourist.” This can result in unwanted attention and potential targeting by thieves.
- Make two **photocopies** of the first page of your **passport** (in color if possible), country-specific entry **visas** (if applicable), **airline tickets, travel itinerary, contact information, driver’s license**, and **credit card/ATM card**. Leave one copy of this information with family and/or friends at home and then pack the other copy separate from the originals.
- **Avoid public demonstrations** and other civil disturbances.
- **Keep a low profile** and avoid loud conversations and arguments.
- Be cautious of what you discuss with strangers or what others may overhear. Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers.
- **Avoid scam artists by being wary of strangers** who approach you and offer to be your guide or sell you something at bargain prices or for “free.”
- **If your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the local police.** Keep a copy of the **police report** for insurance claims. After reporting missing items to local police, **report the loss or theft of:**
  - Credit cards/ATM cards to the issuing credit card company or bank
  - Passport to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate
- **You can be detained for photographing security-related institutions** such as police and military installations and government buildings. If you are in doubt, ask permission first.

Transit

- **Travel in a group or in pairs** and **don’t travel alone at night.** If you are out late at night, let someone you trust in the host country know when you will return.
- **Be aware of your surroundings** and keep track of your belongings at all times. Act purposeful when you move about.
- **Avoid handbags, fanny packs, and outside pockets** that are easy targets for thieves. One of the safest places to carry valuables is in a pouch or **money belt** under your clothes.
- **Put your name, address, and telephone numbers** inside and outside all baggage. Use covered luggage tags to avoid casual observation of your identity or nationality.
- **Beware of pickpockets.** They often have an accomplice who will:
  - Jostle you
  - Ask you for directions or the time
  - Point to something you spilled on your clothing
  - Distract you by creating a disturbance (this can even be children trying to play with you)
- **Only take public transportation clearly identified with official markings.**
- If on a faculty-led program, **give a copy of your itinerary** (including where you plan to stay and how to contact you) **to the Faculty Leader** each time you travel independently.
Contact Information

- If you’re on a faculty-led program, **keep the leader’s and group’s contact information**
- **Keep host university International Office** contact information with you at all times.
- **Keep the address and phone number of any accommodations** (hotel/residence hall/home stay/hostel, etc.) Also keep a map with directions to that location with you.
- **Find the phone number of the country’s “911” equivalent.** For more information, visit: http://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en/emergencies.html
- **See the “Emergency Contact Information” document** for details and more contacts

Especially for Women

- **Ask the hotel’s concierge and/or local women** if there are any areas they consider unsafe and ask what they do to protect themselves.
- **Observe locals** and dress/act in congruence with them as is appropriate.
- **Avoid wearing clothing considered inappropriate** to the host culture.
- **Try to travel in groups** or with people who you know.
- **Consider sitting next to other women or families** while traveling on public transportation.
- **Stay alert** when on the phone, searching through your personal items, and any other activities to avoid being caught off guard.
- **Wear the strap of your bags across your body** and walk with the bag away from the curb.

Alcohol and Drugs

- **As a K-State student, you are responsible for abiding the Kansas State University Code of Conduct** (www.k-state.edu/osas/code.html) and Conditions of Participation. Violation of these policies may result in your expulsion from your program and K-State.
- **If you decide to consume alcohol, you must do so responsibly and follow all host country laws** and customs related to alcohol consumption.
- **The legal drinking age may be lower or higher** in your host country.
- **Always remember that you are a representative** of K-State and your country.
- **Students are prohibited from using, carrying, and trafficking illegal drugs abroad.** If the host country takes legal action for illegal drug use or alcohol related criminal activity against a student, the US Embassy can do little to intervene.
- **You will not be protected by American laws while abroad.** You are expected to uphold the laws of the country you are visiting.
- **If in doubt about foreign drug laws, ask local authorities** or the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. A number of Americans have been arrested for possessing prescription drugs abroad even when purchased legally elsewhere.

Research the Host Country

- **Topics to Research Include:**
  - Interpersonal Communication (including body language)
  - Gender Roles and Relationships
  - Cultural and Geographical Information
  - View of the United States and American Citizens
  - Safety and Health Information
- **U.S. Department of State:** http://www.travel.state.gov
- **U.S. Center for Disease Control:** http://www.cdc.gov/travel
- **U.S. Embassies & Consulates:** http://www.usembassy.state.gov
- **World Health Organization:** http://www.who.int