



New Zealand

New Zealand

<https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35852.htm>

Fact Sheet
April 6, 2022

U.S.-NEW ZEALAND RELATIONS

New Zealand is a strong, steadfast partner and friend of the United States.

The U.S. diplomatic presence in New Zealand dates back to the commissioning of the first U.S. Consul in 1838. Formal diplomatic relations were established in 1942, following the United Kingdom's recognition of New Zealand's domestic and external autonomy within the British Empire. During World War II, U.S. military

personnel were stationed in New Zealand to prepare for battles such as Guadalcanal and Tarawa. The United States and New Zealand share common elements of history and culture and a commitment to democratic principles and the international rules-based order.

Bilateral ties between the United States and New Zealand are broad and robust. In 2010, the United States and New Zealand signed the Wellington Declaration, reaffirming close ties between the two countries and outlining future practical cooperation. This was enhanced in 2012 by the signing of the Washington Declaration,



which strengthened the defense relationship by providing a framework and strategic guidance for security cooperation and defense dialogues. In November 2016, the destroyer USS Sampson visited New Zealand, the first bilateral ship visit in more than 30 years. The USS Sampson's visit took on additional significance in the aftermath of the 7.8-magnitude Kaikoura earthquake. At the request of the New Zealand Government, the USS Sampson diverted to the South Island and provided humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to affected communities. In July 2018, the U.S. Congress passed the Knowledgeable Innovators and Worthy Investors (or KIWI) Act, which granted New Zealanders access to E1 and E2 entrepreneurship and investor visas; in August 2018, the President signed the act into law. In May 2021, New Zealand signed the Artemis Accords, which establishes a practical set of principles to guide space exploration cooperation among nations participating in NASA's 21st century lunar exploration plans, including sending the first woman and person of color to the moon. Also in May 2021, the United States joined the "Christchurch Call to Action to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online," an initiative led by New Zealand and France.

The New Zealand Government attaches significant importance to continued close political, economic, and social ties with the United States. New Zealand actively engages in peacekeeping and international security efforts around the world. The United States and New Zealand work together on a range of scientific areas, especially research in Antarctica. Christchurch is the staging area for joint logistical support operations serving U.S. permanent stations at McMurdo and the South Pole, as well as New Zealand's Scott Base. The United States and New Zealand also share deep people-to-people ties, including research links, bilateral exchange programs like Fulbright, ties in sports, music, and art, and Pacific Island cultural connections.

U.S. Assistance to New Zealand

The United States provides no development assistance to New Zealand.

Bilateral Economic Relations

Commercial ties between the United States and New Zealand are robust and growing. Two-way goods trade between the United States and New Zealand totaled \$10.8 billion in 2020, with U.S. goods exports to New Zealand totaling \$5 billion and imports totaling \$5.7 billion. U.S. trade in services (exports and imports) with New Zealand totaled an estimated \$3.4 billion in 2020. Services exports were \$1.8 billion; services imports were \$1.5 billion. New Zealand was the United States' 47th largest goods export market in 2020. The U.S. goods trade deficit with New Zealand was \$1 billion in 2020. The U.S. services trade surplus with New Zealand was \$332 million in 2020.

Top U.S. goods exports to New Zealand include aircraft, machinery, vehicles, electric machinery, and optic and medical instruments. Top U.S. goods imports from New Zealand included meat (mostly frozen beef and lamb), beverages (mostly wine), dairy products, machinery, and albuminoidal substances (mostly casein). The United States and New Zealand have had a bilateral Trade and Investment Framework Agreement in place since 1992.

In 2020, New Zealand was the fastest growing source of FDI to the United States, according to the SelectUSA agency. New Zealand FDI in the United States (stock) totaled \$3.4 billion in 2020. New Zealand FDI is concentrated in software and IT services; plastics; communications; industrial equipment; transportation and business services. In 2020, U.S. direct investment in New Zealand (stock) totaled \$12.9 billion concentrated in the manufacturing, finance, and wholesale trade sectors. The space sector is an area of growth with joint investments in Rocket Lab and LeoLabs, and a partnership offering NASA scholarships to New Zealand. Over 300 U.S. companies have subsidiary branches in New Zealand. Many operate through local agents, and some are in association in joint ventures.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of U.S. travelers to New Zealand and New Zealand visitors to the United States increased annually. Approximately 300,000

New Zealand visitors traveled to the United States in 2019, and a similar number of U.S. travelers visited New Zealand. New Zealand's March 26, 2020, border closure to

non-citizens due to the COVID-19 pandemic created a significant drop in visitors and in air routes and airlines flying between both countries. New Zealand's announced it will reopen borders to vaccinated U.S. visitors effective May 2022.

New Zealand's Membership in International Organizations

New Zealand and the United States belong to a number of the same international organizations, including the United Nations, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, ASEAN Regional Forum, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization. New Zealand also belongs to the Pacific Islands Forum, of which the United States is a Dialogue Partner.

Bilateral Representation

Principal embassy officials are listed in the [Department's Key Officers List](#).

New Zealand maintains an **embassy** in the United States at 37 Observatory Circle NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel. 202-328-4800).

More information about New Zealand is available from the Department of State and other sources, some of which are listed here:

[CIA World Factbook New Zealand Page](#)

[U.S. Embassy](#)

[History of U.S. Relations With New Zealand](#)

[Office of the U.S. Trade Representative Countries Page](#)

[U.S. Census Bureau Foreign Trade Statistics](#)

[Export.gov International Offices Page](#)

[Travel Information](#)



The Overseas Security Advisory Council's Travel Safety Reference Guide

November 2011

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Introduction

Globalization has made overseas travel – be it for business, academia, charity, personal, or mission work – quite common. International travelers are exposed to many new experiences and phenomena and among these, certain risks. This guide offers international travelers information, tactics, techniques, and procedures to mitigate risks inherent to international travel.

OSAC acknowledges that every destination is unique and that no one resource can address all eventualities. Therefore, we have developed this reference in coordination with our constituents to inform the private sector of best practices for personnel safety abroad. The risks of international travel are no longer just tied to local or transnational crime. It is our hope that the enclosed recommendations will both encourage individuals to seek overseas opportunities and provide greater comfort and confidence for those traveling internationally.

Pre-Departure

Know Before You Go

- Register with the U.S. State Department's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#).
- Review the U.S. State Department's [country specific information](#) and OSAC's [country crime and safety reports](#).
- Do your homework. Visit country-specific websites for important information on your destination country.
- Understand the laws and currency exchange rates in your destination country.
- Be culturally aware; learn a few common phrases in the local language and the basics of the cultural values and norms.
- Get a map and study it. Identify potential hazards and safe havens; learn several routes to key places you will be staying/living/visiting.

Packing

- Pack your luggage wisely. Make sure to place any prohibited materials (scissors, files, other sharp objects) in your check-in luggage.
- Be sure to pack 2-3 day "survival items" in your carry-on bag. This includes: medicines and toiletries, an extra change of clothes (including undergarments), important documents, drinking water, snacks (e.g., Powerbars), and anything else you may want.
- Do not display company or other identifying logos on luggage. Place your pertinent contact information in a visible place inside each piece of luggage.
- Do not openly display your name tags on your luggage. Include only your name and contact number on your tags, and keep them covered or turn the paper over and write "see other side."
- Get a plain cover for your passport.

- Make out a will.
- Consider a privacy act waiver.
- Leave travel itinerary and contact information with family or friends; do not otherwise disclose.
- Consider getting a telephone calling card and a GSM (tri-band or “world”) cellular phone that allows access to most local cellular systems (and provides a single contact number). Depending on your situation, you may want to purchase a local phone or SIM card in country.
- Take out property insurance on necessary equipment (cameras, binoculars, laptops, etc.).
- Consider securing a new credit card with a low credit limit separate from existing credit cards; in the event of theft, your personal accounts will not be compromised.
- Notify your credit card company of your intent to travel; confirm credit limit and availability.

Health

- Make sure health insurance covers foreign medical providers and medical evacuation expenses.
- Take an extra pair of glasses; depending on the destination, contact lenses can be problematic.
- Visit a travel clinic, inform them of destination(s), and get any needed inoculations and medications.
- Get a dental cleaning and checkup if you had not recently had one.
- Prep and pack a travel med kit; some items you may want to include:
 - Anti-diarrheal medication
 - Antibiotics
 - Anti-malaria (if applicable)
 - Antihistamine and decongestant
 - Antacid and laxative
 - Anti-fungal/anti-bacterial and hydrocortisone cream
 - Anti-bacterial hand wipes/ hand sanitizer
 - Pain reliever/fever reducer, sleep aid
 - Gauze, bandages, and medical tape
 - Insect repellant with DEET 35%
 - Shaving razor, tweezers, manicure kits
 - Sunscreen and aloe
 - Thermometer

During Your Trip

Awareness

Situational Awareness is very important domestically but becomes critically important overseas in unfamiliar environments. Keep your head up, eyes and ears open, and listen to your intuition! Situational awareness can and should be practiced and will improve the more you do so. Focus on seeing and remembering everything around you. It will seem extremely arduous and time-consuming at first but will become increasingly easier as time passes and proficiency is gained. Your goal should be for these efforts to become habitual and completed sub-consciously. Some important practices are:

- Trust your instinct; if a place does not feel right, move to a safer location – immediately.
- Assess your emotional and physical strengths and limitations.
- Be attentive to how others perceive you; behave in an unprovocative manner that discourages unwanted attention.
- Familiarize yourself with your neighborhood and work environment.
- Use common sense. Beware of EVERYONE, including pickpockets, scam artists, etc.
- Remove name tags or convention badges when outside the venue.
- Pay attention to local media for any activities or events that might affect you.
- Be aware of surroundings, including the people, cars, and alleys nearby.

- Keep alert to potential trouble, and choose to avoid when possible. Trust your instincts.
- Educate yourself of any pending events (elections, demonstrations, anniversaries) that may cause civil disturbance, and avoid unnecessary risks.
- Establish a support network among your colleagues and when possible, embassy personnel.
- Inform yourself of the availability and reliability of local support services (police, security, medical, emergency, fire).
- Confirm (with your embassy) the procedures for you and your family in the event of a crisis or evacuation.
- Politely decline offers of food or drink from strangers.
- Accept beverages only in sealed containers; make sure there has been no tampering.

Personal Conduct

You can dress, behave, and move about in a manner that is respectful of local custom, but rest assured, **YOU WILL NOT BLEND IN**. Remember that whenever you travel anywhere, whether you realize it or not, you are representing yourself, your family, your organization, and your country. Your behavior and actions will be applied as a positive or negative impression of all that you represent. In many cultures, this will essentially make or break your ability to successfully function and interact in another culture. Always keep in mind the following:

- Behave maturely and in a manner befitting your status in the local society; insist on being treated with respect.
- Dress in a manner that is inoffensive to local cultural norms.
- Avoid clothing that shows your nationality or political views.
- Establish personal boundaries and act to protect them.
- Exercise additional caution when carrying and displaying valuable possessions (jewelry, phone, sunglasses, camera, etc.); what may be a simple, even disposable item to you, may be a sign of extreme affluence to another.
- Vary your patterns of life/behavior to be less predictable.
- Divide money among several pockets; if you carry a wallet, carry it in a front pocket.
- If you carry a purse, carry it close to your body. Do not set it down or leave it unattended.
- Take a patient and calm approach to ambiguity and conflict.
- Radiate confidence while walking in public places.
- Do not expect privacy, anywhere.
- Do not discuss personal, professional, or financial issues of your group or yourself; these can be used to exploit you and your group.
- Be cool when facing confrontation; focus on de-escalation and escape.
- Respect local sensitivities to photographing/videotaping, especially at airports, police, and government facilities.
- Carry required official identification with you at all times.
- Report any security incidents to your embassy or consulate (who will advise you of options including reporting to local authorities, prosecution, corrective measures, etc.).
- Maintain a low profile, especially in places where there may be hostility toward foreigners and/or citizens of your country; do not seek publicity.
- Avoid public expressions about local politics, religion, and other sensitive topics.
- Avoid being out alone late at night or after curfew.
- Stay alert.
- Be unpredictable.
- Carry yourself with confidence.
- Be aware of distractions.
- Watch for surveillance. If you see the same person/vehicle twice, it could be surveillance; if you see it three times, it probably is surveillance.

Electronics Security

- First and foremost: if you don't NEED it, don't bring it!
- If you need to bring a laptop and/or phone and have "clean" ones available, use them.
- Back up and then wipe (sanitize) your laptop, phone, and any other electronics to ensure that no sensitive or personal data is on them while [traveling](#).
- Carry laptop in a protective sleeve in a backpack/purse/bag that does not shout "there's a computer in here."
- DO NOT EXPECT PRIVACY, ANYWHERE.
- Do not leave your electronic devices unattended.
- Do not use local computers to connect to your organization's secure network.
- Clear your temporary files, to include your temporary internet files, browser history, caches, and cookies after each use.
- Consider opening a new e-mail account (Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, AOL, etc.) for use during your trip.
- Ensure you update your computer's security software (antivirus, firewall, etc.) and download any outstanding security patches for your operating system and key programs.
- Upon return, change all of your passwords for devices and accounts (including voicemail) used while traveling.

Logistics

Air Travel

Air travel can be incredibly convenient and frustrating at the same time. While traveling you are extremely vulnerable and must bear this in mind that a distracted individual is a prime target for all kinds of nefarious actions. You must control what you can and readily adapt to, as well as what you cannot (i.e., flight schedules/delays and time to clear security). Here are some key considerations:

- Wear comfortable, loose fitting clothing.
- Arrive at the airport in plenty of time (1.5 – 2 hours before departure).
- Move through passenger security immediately after ticketing and locate your departure gate.
- Stay with your bags at all times.
- Set your watch to local time at destination upon take off.
- Be careful about how much of your personal/business information you share with fellow passengers; they are still strangers.
- Limit intake of alcohol in flight, and drink plenty of water to counteract "jet lag". This will help limit stress and increase alertness.
- If possible, pre-arrange transport from the airport to your hotel. Consider paying the additional room rate for a hotel that provides shuttle service to and from the airport.
- Have your immigration and customs documents in order and available. A durable folder secured by a buckle or elastic band may be useful.

Ground Travel

Ground travel poses several risks to the traveler. Not only are you more vulnerable, but many places do not have the traffic laws, enforcement, infrastructure, or assistance that you are accustomed to. Be prepared. You will be in an unfamiliar environment and may have to contend with, among other things, dangerous road conditions; untrained or unlicensed drivers; drivers operating under the influence of alcohol and/or narcotics; vehicles that are poorly maintained and therefore hazardous, police and/or criminal checkpoints or roadblocks, and others with malicious intentions. Some recommendations for ground travel are:

- Use a common vehicle model (local taxis may be a good indicator). If you rent, remove any markings that identify vehicle as a rental.
- If you have to drive, always leave a path for escape when you stop (at a light, stop sign, cross-walk, etc.).
- Park in a manner that expedites your departure.
- Carry a cell phone, first aid kit, maps, flashlight, and official documents in your vehicle.
- Keep the vehicle windows rolled up and the doors locked.
- Use the seat belts.
- Be alert to scam artists and carjackers while stopped in traffic.
- Understand the proper local procedures should you be involved in or witness a traffic accident. In some locales, stopping for an accident can put your life at risk.
- Only take official, licensed taxis; note the license plate number of taxi and write it down.
- Avoid getting into a taxi already occupied by others. If necessary, pay extra for a single fare. Negotiate a price before getting in taxi. Have money ready to pay in appropriate denominations.
- Take a seat on a bus or train that allows you to observe fellow passengers but does not preclude options to change seats if necessary.

Lodging

At the Hotel

For most destinations you travel to (in addition to being an obvious foreigner), you will be considered wealthy and a prime target. You should not consider a hotel a complete safe haven, there are still many threats and you are potentially very vulnerable at them. Some important considerations:

- Use reputable hotels, hostels, or boarding houses; your safety is worth any added cost.
- Remind hotel staff to not give out your room number.
- Meet visitors in the lobby; avoid entertaining strangers in your room.
- Take a walk around the hotel facilities to familiarize yourself with your environment. Are hotel personnel located on each floor? Are they in uniform? Do they display any identification? Who else has access to your floor?
- Ensure the phone in your room works. Call the front desk.
- Inspect the room carefully; look under the bed, in the showers and closets.
- Ensure door and window locks are working. Do not forget the sliding glass door, if the room has one.
- Ensure the door has a peephole and chain lock.
- Avoid ground floor rooms at the hotel. Third through fifth floors are normally desirable (harder to break into, but still accessible to firefighting equipment – where available).
- Read the safety instructions in your hotel room. Familiarize yourself with hotel emergency exits and fire extinguishers.
- Count the doors between your room and nearest emergency exit (in case of fire or blackout). Rehearse your escape plan.
- Keep all hotel doors locked with a dead bolt or chain at all times (do not forget the sliding glass door and windows).
- Consider traveling with a rubber door stop, smoke detector, and motion detector.
- Identify your visitor before you open the door.
- If you doubt room delivery, check with the front desk before opening the door.
- If you are out of your room, leave television/radio on at high volume. Place a “do not disturb” sign outside door.
- Do not leave sensitive documents or valuables visible and unattended in the room.
- Keep your laptop out of sight, in a safe, or in a locked suitcase. You may wish to use a laptop cable lock to secure your laptop to a window frame or bathroom plumbing.

- Keep your room number to yourself. If your room key is numbered or has your room number on a key holder, keep it out of sight. If a hotel clerk announces your room number loud enough for others to hear, ask for a new room.
- If you leave the hotel, carry the hotel business card with you; it may come in handy with a taxi driver who does not speak your language.

Residential

When residing overseas, it is critically important to understand the threat environment in which you will be living. Take the time to reach out to the resources available, including security professionals in your organization, the local embassy or consulate, and the appropriate crime and safety reports. Here are some security measures you might want to consider:

- Avoid housing on single-entry streets with a dead end or cul-de-sac.
- Housing near multiple intersections can be beneficial.
- Ensure the sound, secure structure of your residence.
- Strictly control access to and distribution of keys.
- Install adequate lighting, window grilles, alarm systems, and perimeter walls as necessary.
- Establish access procedures for strangers and visitors.
- Hire trained guards and night patrols; periodically check-up on guards.
- Set-up a safe room in your house; consider adding additional locks
- Establish rapport with neighbors. Is there a “neighborhood watch” program?
- Seek guidance from local colleagues or expatriates who have insight into local housing arrangements.
- Ensure adequate communications (telephone, radio, cell phone) with local colleagues, authorities, and your Embassy.
- Install a back-up generator and/or solar panels.
- Set aside emergency supplies (food, water, medicine, fuel, etc.).
- Install smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and carbon monoxide monitors, as appropriate.
- Avoid sleeping with the windows open or unlocked.
- Speak on the phone inside, somewhere that is and away from windows (through which you can be seen and heard).
- Ensure all windows have treatments that can prevent external observation.
- Lock up items, such as ladders and hand-tools, which could be used to facilitate forced entry.
- Store emergency funds in multiple places around the house.
- Keep a “go-bag” with clothes, water, and food (Powerbars, etc.) for three days packed and ready at all times. Keep copies of important documents and some emergency funds with the bag. Keep other necessary items (medications, etc.) in a centralized place for easy placement into bag. Key items include:
 - Documentation
 - Copies of all key documentation
 - Passport and/or national ID
 - Driver’s License
 - Health Insurance Card
 - Communication
 - Mobile phone – including a charger and extra battery
 - Work and emergency contact lists
 - Satellite Phone (if available)
 - GPS device (if available)
 - Food and water
 - Water bottle
 - Purification tablets
 - Energy bars / dried fruit / nuts

- Other essentials
 - Cash (USD and local currency)
 - Full change of clothing
 - Rain jacket
 - Sweater
 - Walking shoes or boots (with heel and closed toe)
 - Insect repellent
 - Matches (ideally windproof and waterproof)
 - Flashlight (with extra batteries)
 - Medical/first aid kit
 - Sun screen
 - Sunglasses
 - Toiletries
 - Toilet paper
- Extended items
 - Sleeping bag or blanket
 - Mosquito net

Preparation for the “what if” scenarios

If You Become a Victim

Despite all of your efforts to reduce exposure to risks and to avoid threats, you may still become the victim of a crime or critical event. Following are some general response strategies:

- Remain calm and alert.
- Carefully note details of the environment around you (license plate number, distinguishing features, accents, clothing, etc.).
- First, try to defuse the situation. Culturally appropriate greetings or humor may reduce tensions.
- If an assailant demands property, give it up.
- You can create a timely diversion by tossing your wallet, watch, etc. to the ground in the opposite direction you choose to flee.
- Against overwhelming odds (weapons, multiple assailants) try reasoning, cajoling, begging, or any psychological ploy.
- If someone tries to grab you, make a scene and fight; kick, punch, claw, scratch, and grab as if your life depends on it, it very well could.
- If you feel your life is endangered and you decide to physically resist, commit to the decision with every fiber of your being; turn fear into fury.
- Report any incident your embassy.
- Seek support for post-traumatic stress (even if you exhibit no symptoms).

Hijacking/Kidnapping

- You may be targeted for kidnapping. As discussed previously, when traveling, you represent yourself, your family, your organization, and your homeland (or perceived homeland). You may be targeted due to any of these affiliations, or you may simply just end up in the wrong place at the wrong time. Because abduction situations vary greatly, the following considerations should be applied based on one’s best judgment at the time:
 - Know the “ransom” policy of your government. The United States of America will not pay a ransom.
 - The greatest risk of physical harm exists at the point of capture and during a rescue attempt or upon release.

- If you are going to resist at the point of capture, do so as if your life depends on it; it most probably does.
- Remain calm and alert; exert control on your emotions and behavior.
- Humanize yourself, quickly and continually.
- Be passively cooperative, but maintain your dignity.
- Assume an inconspicuous posture and avoid direct eye contact with captors.
- Avoid resistance, belligerence, or threatening movements.
- Make reasonable, low-key requests for personal comforts (bathroom breaks, a blanket, exercise, books to read, etc.)
- If questioned, keep answers short; volunteer nothing.
- As a captive situation draws out, try to establish some rapport with your captors.
- Avoid discussing contentious issues (politics, religion, ethnicity, etc.)
- Establish a daily regimen to maintain your body physically and mentally.
- Eat what your captors provide. Avoid alcohol.
- Keep a positive, hopeful attitude.
- Attempt to escape only after weighing the risks and when you are certain to succeed.

Resources

U.S. Department of State and OSAC

- Overseas Security Advisory Council: www.osac.gov
 - Country Crime and Safety Reports: www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReports.aspx?cid=2
- Visit www.travel.state.gov for security advisories and other travel guidance
 - Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP): www.travel.state.gov/step
 - Country Specific Information: www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html
 - U.S. State Department's role in a crisis: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1212.html

World Factbook

- CIA World Factbook: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html

Study Abroad

- To get the latest in education abroad security information and training, go to www.globalscholar.us
- U.S. State Department Students Abroad website: www.studentsabroad.state.gov
- NAFSA (Association of International Educators) and The Forum on Education Abroad: <http://nafsa.org/> <http://www.forumea.org/>

Weather

- Review the climate and weather at your point of destination and/or any layover cities: www.weather.com

Travel Medicine/Health

- Centers for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/travel
- World Health Organization: www.who.int/ith

About OSAC

OSAC's Commitment

The Overseas Security Advisory Council is committed to providing the American private sector with customer service of the highest standard. As OSAC is a joint venture with the private sector, we strive to maintain standards equal to or surpassing those provided by private industry. OSAC activities directly correspond to requests from the private sector.

OSAC has received exceptional support for its initiatives from the chief executive officers and corporate security directors of many of the largest international corporations in the United States. The U.S. State Department and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security recognize the need in OSAC's goal to support the U.S. private sector by continuing to develop an effective and cost-efficient security information and communication network that will provide the private sector with the tools needed to cope with security-related issues in the foreign environment. OSAC's unique charter and continued success serve as an example of the benefits of mutual cooperation.

Mission

The U.S. State Department's Overseas Security Advisory Council (Council) is established to promote security cooperation between American private sector interests worldwide (Private Sector) and the U.S. Department of State.

The objectives of the Council, as outlined in its Charter, are:

- To establish continuing liaison and to provide for operational security cooperation between State Department security functions and the Private Sector.
- To provide for regular and timely interchange of information between the Private Sector and the State Department concerning developments in the overseas security environment.
- To recommend methods and provide material for coordinating security planning and implementation of security programs.
- To recommend methods to protect the competitiveness of American businesses operating worldwide.

For more information and to join the Overseas Security Advisory Council, please visit www.osac.gov.

This document is a compilation of constituent and OSAC efforts and is meant to serve as a reference guide for private sector best practices. OSAC wishes to thank all of our constituents who generously provided their input and assistance. A special thank you to Michael O'Neil, Director of Global Safety and Security, Save the Children International, whose contributions were vital and provided the foundation for this reference guide.



www.osac.gov

TRAVEL SAFETY GUIDE FOR STUDY ABROAD

If you become the victim of a crime, seek medical help if necessary, then immediately contact:

- the local police,
- your home nation's diplomacy or consular office
- your International Programs Office Director

If you have a medical emergency, seek immediate care, then contact:

- your host family/program director/international office at host institution
- IPO
- your family

PERSONAL SAFETY

- 🌐 Do - A thorough medical and dental check-up before departure.
- 🌐 Do - Travel with limited cash and one credit card keeping cash in more than one place.
- 🌐 Do - Use official currency outlets and use caution at ATM machines so as not to be a target for thieves. Make sure your card works abroad and notify your bank and credit card companies that you will be out of the country.
- 🌐 Do - Lock personal possessions and valuables in the hotel or room safe or use hotel security.
- 🌐 Do- Use a money belt rather than a purse. If you use a handbag, keep it close to the body. Wear backpacks in front.
- 🌐 Do - Maintain a security awareness of items on your person - i.e.: purse, wallet, keys, money and cell phones
- 🌐 Do - If you are sexually harassed, ignore the proposition and continue on your way.
- 🌐 Do not - Open your hotel room door for anyone not expected or known or does not have an official identification.
- 🌐 Do not - Wear expensive looking jewelry. Remember that thieves may not know the difference between pieces of real and costume jewelry.
- 🌐 Do not - Use ATM machines at night unless the area is open and well lit.
- 🌐 Do not - Walk in low-lighted areas without being surrounded by people and trust your instincts if something seems amiss, return to a safer surrounding, such as a hotel.
- 🌐 Do not - Walk, drive or travel alone and be aware of your surroundings when using public transportation, elevators or restrooms.

Travel Safety Pocket Guide

“Remember that no list can contemplate every possible “do” and “don’t” on safety issues. Every situation is unique. Be careful, don’t rush, think before you act, stay in a group whenever possible, and always use your own best judgment in any given circumstance.”

TRAVEL SAFETY

- 🌐 Do – Leave copy of travel itinerary with two or more known trusted people.
- 🌐 Do – Promise to call or email relatives or friends periodically.
- 🌐 Do – Dress according to the social and cultural norms in each country.
- 🌐 Do – Exclude titles, organization names or unnecessary data on luggage tags.
- 🌐 Do – Keep luggage near by and in view at all times and pack a small flashlight.
- 🌐 Do – Have alternative plans for unexpected events during traveling, keeping necessary items in your carry-on.
- 🌐 Do – Create and have handy detailed maps.
- 🌐 Do – Ask about surrounding and problem areas you may have to travel through. Check these sites:
 - **U.S. State Department:** <http://www.state.gov/travel/>
 - <https://step.state.gov/>
 - <http://www.traveldocs.com/>
- 🌐 Do – Be aware of your surroundings – not to be lulled with a false sense of security.
- 🌐 Do – Keep advised, via local media, of the current security situations in the area.
- 🌐 Do – Use main entrance of hotels and other buildings.
- 🌐 Do – Use all security locking devices when in your room and keep your room key in your pocket.
- 🌐 Do – Know the emergency number to call where you will be.
- 🌐 Do – Figure out how you will communicate: SIM card? App? Current phone number? What will work in an emergency?
- 🌐 Do – Have a backup plan if relying on your phone for directions or information. Be prepared in case you lose it.
- 🌐 Do – Research and know the laws of your host country. Ignorance is not an excuse.
Be aware of what transportation is official and if using ride shares (Uber/Lyft), verify your ride and driver before entering car.
- 🌐 Do – Consider buying RFID blockers to protect cards from identity theft.

FIRE SAFETY

- **www.firesafetyfoundation.org**
- 🌐 Do – Acquaint yourself with all hotel/residence hall/ etc. emergency procedures and locate all emergency exits nearest you.
- 🌐 Do – Ask about safety measures such as, fire alarms, evacuation procedures and if windows will open.
- 🌐 Do – Call fire department direct if fire occurs then call hotel/residence hall management.
- 🌐 Do – Feel door with palm of hand, if hot don’t open if not try to escape to nearest stairway exit-not elevator.
- 🌐 Do – Stay in room and wait for help when in doubt on what to do and DO NOT PANIC or DO NOT JUMP.
- 🌐 Do – Keep everything wet if you stay in room stuffing door cracks with wet sheets and towels.
- 🌐 Do – Fill the tub with water and douse the door and walls if you stay in room.

LINFIELD UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

IDST 031 SYLLABUS; 2023-24 Academic Year

IDST 031: Intercultural Communication: Pre-Departure, Experiences Abroad, and Re-entry (S/U; 1 credit)

Note: *Students do not register for this course. It will appear on your transcript after you return from your program and attend the re-entry session. IPO then submits the grades to the Registrar to post. Please read the information below which explains the details.*

Course Objective:

This three-part course, required of all semester abroad participants, is designed to prepare you for your semester abroad program, reflect on your experiences while you are abroad and challenge you to think about your encounter with your own culture/country upon returning home. Studies have shown that students who undergo a well-designed orientation program tend to have a higher probability of success when they encounter a cross-cultural conflict or difficulty or experience culture shock. This applies both to international students who study in the United States and American students preparing to study abroad. Some may think that the term “culture shock” is overplayed in some circles, but rest assured that just about everyone will face some level of stress and anxiety when placed in a cultural environment different than their own. The objective is to be able to identify and recognize the symptoms and be ready to cope with the stress so that the experience abroad will turn out to be a rewarding one.

The International Programs Office (IPO) will provide you with cross-cultural material, specific assignments and readings in order to satisfactorily fulfill this one-credit course.

This companion course to the actual on-site study will allow you to identify, examine and explore your personal objectives for undertaking the study. Linfield College has also identified some of the objectives and learning outcomes expected of all students who study abroad.

LEARNING OUTCOMES EXPECTED OF SEMESTER/YEAR ABROAD PARTICIPANTS:

At the end of the semester or year of participation in a Linfield-administered program, participants must be able to demonstrate the following:

- Language acquisition: participants must meet a desired level of proficiency in their language of study. This will be determined through a pre and post test instrument specifically designed and administered by the Global Languages & Cultural Studies. In some cases, the GLCS faculty will also conduct mid-year evaluations of language proficiency for their majors.
- Ability to adapt and be successful in a culturally (and systemically) different educational environment.
- Ability to see and articulate similarities and differences between your own country/culture and the culture of your host country
- Ability to recognize, synthesize and articulate the cultural differences, norms, mores, habits and lifestyles of families in your host country compared with your own.

- Ability to utilize experiences abroad for (international) career building: participants should be able to write a succinct paragraph to this effect to be included in their revised resume.
- Have the skills to be more self-confident, more tolerant and flexible and less reliant on others.

Assessment tools:

- Pre and post language tests, as well as mid-year evaluations **for year-long language majors.**
- Coursework and final grades
- Mid-Semester assignment
- Returnee questionnaire and evaluation
- Re-entry discussion and assignment

1. Pre-Departure Preparation:

A pre and a post orientation assignment will accompany a day and a half of cross-cultural orientation session (normally held in mid-March of each year), required of all participants. The pre-orientation assignment will be emailed to you after you have been accepted into the program and 1-2 weeks before orientation. It will be due the first day of orientation. The mandatory day and a half orientation session will include general discussion and presentation of various cross-cultural topics as well as information about the specific country of your destination. A post orientation assignment will allow you to summarize your thoughts about what you have gained from the sessions.

2. Your Experiences Abroad:

While you are abroad, we will send you a mid-semester assignment that is designed to reflect on your experience and to make comparisons across cultures, your own as well as the one you are experiencing in the host country. You are required to submit your reactions via *Blackboard* or email to ipo@linfield.edu. In completing this on-site mid-semester assessment, you should be aware that IPO will post select entries on the Linfield website so that others in the community would also benefit from your experience abroad.

Mid-Semester Assessment

Please respond to the question/assignment below, with 2-3 thoughtful paragraphs.

- Identify someone from your host country (such as a roommate, a classmate, a member of your host family, a clerk at a local store, a program assistant at the study center, someone you met at the study center) and conduct an interview. Write 2-3 paragraphs to report your findings on these salient points (*make up your own questions to address these points*):
 - What surprised you the most about the lifestyles, mores, norms and habits of the person you interviewed compared to yours or people you encounter with back home?
 - What are (cultural) similarities and differences you observed or learned (their preferences, tastes, outlook, values) between the person you interviewed and you?
 - How did the interview experience and what you learned changed your initial perceptions of the host country?

- At the end of your report, include the name(first name only) of the person you interviewed, who they are and the date of the interview.

At the conclusion of your study abroad program, you will be asked to complete a “study abroad returnee” assessment of your learning experiences.

3. *Returning home:*

Studies have shown (and the Linfield experience has confirmed) that study abroad returnees often experience some level of anxiety about returning home and getting back to their normal routine after spending some time (semester or year) living in another culture. Most feel the value of sharing these feelings with fellow students who have had similar experiences. Hence, we have developed a re-entry workshop to provide for this discussion. For the final part of this course, you will be required to attend one re-entry session held each term. The estimated dates for this session are provided below, along with information about the class meeting.

Grading:

You will receive a passing grade for this course once you have satisfactorily completed all assignments associated with the three segments to this course: pre-departure, experience abroad, returning home.

Mandatory Semester Abroad Orientation

- Attend the **mandatory** study abroad orientation sessions listed below. **Absences for any reason are not allowed. For all students:**
 - Friday, March 17, 2023 (from 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm); Jonasson Hall
 - Saturday, March 18, 2023 (from 8:30 am – 12:00 pm); Jonasson Hall
 - Saturday, March 18, 2023 (1-5pm) Country-specific sessions; various locations

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Due Dates</u> <u>Fall 2023 Programs</u>	<u>Due Dates</u> <u>Spring 2024 Programs</u>
Pre-orientation Assignments	March 17, 2023	March 17, 2023
Post-orientation Review	March 24, 2023	March 24, 2023
Mid-semester assignment: Experiences Abroad	Questions sent by our office for responses. Select entries will be posted on the IPO website and Linfield’s Digital Commons website.	
Returnee Assessment/Questionnaire	Within 2 weeks of the end of your program.	
Reentry Class	Feb./March, 2024	Sept./Oct, 2024

Relevant texts:

These reference materials are available in Nicholson Library. Use these materials as a background to complete your assignments for this course.

Culture Shock publication for all destinations, published by Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland Oregon. Similar publications are also available through Lonely Planet Publications.

Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodation, who have any emergency medical information of which IPO should be informed, or require special arrangements in order to **fully** participate in the abroad program or in the event of a necessary evacuation from the study abroad site, should meet with a staff member in IPO as early in the process as possible, no later than a week after receiving the acceptance letter.

Students who have been accepted to participate in a semester/year study abroad program are expected to adhere to the college policy on academic honesty, as published in the Linfield College catalogue, in fulfilling the requirements of this course and in all the courses they would be taking while abroad.

10/22

The University of Canterbury Academic Calendar 2024

DATE	EVENT	ADD TO
03 January	UC reopens for 2024	Add to calendar
08 January	2024 Summer School lectures start	Add to calendar
19 January	Summer School results released (for courses with an end date in December)	Add to calendar
06 February	Waitangi Day (University closed)	Add to calendar
09 February	Summer School lectures end	Add to calendar
11 February	Lunar New Year (not a University Holiday)	Add to calendar
16 February	Summer School results released (for courses with an end date in January or February)	Add to calendar
19 February	Semester One lectures start	Add to calendar
22 March	Lectures end for mid-semester break	Add to calendar
25 March - 12 April	Mid-semester lecture break	Add to calendar
29 March	Good Friday (University closed)	Add to calendar
01 April	Easter Monday (University closed)	Add to calendar
02 April	University Holiday (University closed)	Add to calendar

DATE	EVENT	ADD TO
22 April	Lectures resume	Add to calendar
25 April	ANZAC Day observed (University closed)	Add to calendar
02 June	Semester One lectures end	Add to calendar
03 June	King's Birthday (University closed)	Add to calendar
03 June - 09 June	Study break	Add to calendar
10 June - 22 June	Semester One examination period	Add to calendar
28 June - 28 June	Matariki public holiday (University closed)	Add to calendar
05 July	Semester One results released	Add to calendar
08 July - 12 July	Academic Progress	Add to calendar
15 July	Semester Two lectures start	Add to calendar
23 August	Lectures end for mid-semester break	Add to calendar
26 August - 08 September	Mid-semester lecture break	Add to calendar
09 September	Lectures resume	Add to calendar
19 October	Semester Two lectures end	Add to calendar
21 October - 27 October	Study break	Add to calendar

DATE	EVENT	ADD TO
28 October	Labour Day (University closed)	Add to calendar
29 October - 09 November	Semester Two and Whole Year courses examination period	Add to calendar
11 November	Summer School starts	Add to calendar
15 November	Show Day (University closed)	Add to calendar
29 November	Semester Two and Whole Year courses results released	Add to calendar
13 December	Lectures end – summer break	Add to calendar
23 December	Summer break (University closed)	



Dates for the Academic Year 2024

Monday 8 January	Summer School commences
Tuesday 6 February	Waitangi Day
Friday 16 February	Summer School classes end
Saturday 17 February	Summer School examinations begin
Monday 19 February	Convocation Ceremony
Thursday 22 February	Summer School examinations end
Friday 23 February	Preliminary classes held
Monday 26 February	Formal lectures begin
Friday 29 March	Good Friday Mid-semester break begins
Monday 1 April	Easter Monday
Tuesday 2 April	Otago Anniversary Day observance (Dunedin)
Monday 8 April	First Semester resumes
Thursday 25 April	ANZAC Day
Saturday 11 May	Graduation Ceremonies – Disciplines in each ceremony to be confirmed
Saturday 18 May	Graduation Ceremonies – Disciplines in each ceremony to be confirmed
Friday 31 May	Lectures end
Monday 3 June	King's Birthday
Wednesday 5 June	First Semester examinations begin
Wednesday 19 June	First Semester examinations end – Maximum length of the formal examination period [although there may be some examinations held after this date]
Friday 28 June	Matariki
Monday 15 July	Second Semester begins
Saturday 17 August	Graduation Ceremony – Degrees and diplomas in all disciplines
Saturday 31 August	Mid-Semester Break begins
Monday 9 September	Second Semester resumes
Friday 18 October	Lectures end
Monday 21 October	End of year examinations begin
Monday 28 October	Labour Day
Saturday 9 November	End of year examinations end – Maximum length of the formal examination period [although there may be some examinations held after this date]
Monday 11 November	Pre-Christmas Summer School begins
Saturday 7 December	Graduation Ceremonies – Disciplines in each ceremony to be confirmed
Wednesday 11 December	Graduation Ceremonies – Disciplines in each ceremony to be confirmed
Friday 13 December	Pre-Christmas Summer School classes end
Saturday 14 December	Pre-Christmas Summer School examination day – The formal examination day [although there may be some examinations held after this date] Graduation Ceremonies – Disciplines in each ceremony to be confirmed

NEW ZEALAND, UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO (Tentative)

No definite calendar as yet, but orientation usually begins late February with final exams finishing in late June/early July.

STUDENT BUDGET – NEW ZEALAND 23-24

The following figures are estimates based on students' budgets from last year. They are only estimates and vary widely according to the individual. It is important to remember that not all expenses are included! Be prepared for some additional small expenses (i.e. photographs, photocopies) that will be necessary for various reasons.

Be aware of the exchange rate while you are there. Currently, 1 US Dollar = 1.63 New Zealand Dollar (as of June 2023).

Rent	\$2,000-4,000
Food	\$500-1,000
Books	\$50-100
Postage	\$20
Phone	\$100
Gifts	\$200
Local Transportation	\$50-250
Individual Travel	\$1,000-2,500
Entertainment	\$250
Other	\$50

Total *Estimated* Cost: **\$5,170-8,420**

Students sign up for and pay housing directly to the New Zealand university. Some arrangements include meal plans, it is up to the student. Housing can sometimes be paid monthly or by installment, depending on the University and type of housing selected.

*If you are on a tight budget, these items can be reduced considerably by concentrating on local travel and taking care with discretionary expenditures.

BANKING:

Plan to exchange \$100 USD into your country's currency, preferably at the airport of departure or you can exchange currency at most airports of arrival, but often arrival is a hectic time plus you might be experiencing jet-lag.

The easiest method for obtaining funds is to use an internationally recognized ATM (Automatic Teller Machine) card – such as PLUS or CIRRUS –for cash withdrawals. You will need to get a pin number from your bank, and you will probably be able to withdraw money only from checking accounts, not

savings accounts. **Be sure to check with your bank here at home. Have a back-up plan in case your card does not work. ATM's are not always available outside of cities.**

Another practical solution to international banking is a VISA credit card. You can use the card to charge expenses in most stores, restaurants, and hotels throughout Western Europe. You can also get cash advances at exchange windows of many banks. Be aware, however, that there is often a fee for the advance plus interest charges that begin immediately after withdrawal.

It is also advisable to photocopy the backs of all your ATM/credit cards and keep that with a photocopy of your passport. If you lose any of your cards, you will have the phone numbers to call the companies.

University of Canterbury
Christchurch, New Zealand
Peggy Barrett, Megan Lee, Sarah Sharman

Christchurch and Canterbury

Christchurch is located in the Canterbury plains which is the driest and flattest part of the whole of New Zealand. The majority of Christchurch is now residential since the earthquake took out most of the downtown and business districts, which is gradually being rebuilt. A large portion of the city area is covered in cranes, due to the construction process after the earthquakes. The University is located on the West side of town and the main roads near it are Riccarton, Ilam, and Waimairi. Riccarton Rd has a lot of shops and food, and is the main road used to get to the East side of Christchurch. The center of town is located around Hagley park, the botanical gardens, the Re:Start mall, and the central bus station. The Re:Start mall is an innovative mall built out of shipping containers, created after the 2011 earthquake damage. It provides a fun city environment for shoppers, and is one of many examples of how the Christchurch community has worked to rebuild itself after the devastating earthquakes. There are two popular beaches in Christchurch, New Brighton and Sumner. New Brighton beach is to the north and is less popular among university students (due to its bordering of a more sketchy area of town), whereas Sumner beach is to the south and is frequently covered in surfers and picnickers. Another popular beach to visit is Taylor's Mistake, the cove right next to Sumner beach. This beach can be accessed by car, or by hiking over the bluff from Sumner Beach. If you are looking to continue the hike from Taylor's Mistake, you can continue hiking around the beautiful bluff up to Godley Head. This makes a great day trip from the university. Akaroa, a French settlement, is about an hour away by car and features tourist activities such as swimming with dolphins, kayaking, and quiet beaches.

The bus system in Christchurch is very easy to use, and can be very helpful for transportation around the Riccarton area. To get across town is a bit more challenging, as it usually requires some walking and transfers, but is manageable. All bus stops and routes can be looked up on the website provided below, and all of the bus drivers are personable and helpful! If you plan on using the bus, I highly recommend that you get a Metro card as soon as possible. It costs \$10 but it gives a pretty good discount, so instead of paying \$3.50 for a two hour bus pass, you pay \$2.50. You can also add more money to your card (called topping up) online or when you get on the bus. To look up buses the website is metroinfo.co.nz.

At the beginning of every semester, the university holds a week of events called Orientation (or Reorientation, or ReO, in the spring). The events require tickets, which you purchase online and print off! Go onto the UCSA website (the University of Canterbury Student Association website: <http://www.ucs.org.nz/>) to find links for the tickets which can be purchased from the Dash Tickets company. Don't worry about not having anyone to go with because you'll meet heaps of people during your first week! I really recommend the events though, because they are a great way to meet people, and get immersed in the Kiwi culture. On that same note—a lot of events put on by the school and clubs require tickets, and also you have to pay to join clubs and go on trips. The university has a ton a clubs, ranging from music, arts, sports, outdoors, and much more. If you plan on camping/hiking/backpacking during your stay, I encourage you to join the Tramping Club (tramping=hiking). This club leads group trips where you can meet a bunch of people, and it also allows you to rent out gear such as tents, backpacking packs, stoves, sleeping bags, and much more. There will be a few club days where all of the on campus clubs will set up tables where you can go to learn about what they do—I strongly encourage going to this as well! Though the cost to join clubs is minimal (maybe \$20-30 NZD) that is a night in a

hostel or a bus ride so you just have to pick. Speaking of money, if you're looking for cheap food Captain Ben's on Ilam has super cheap fish and chips (and Chinese food) and is delicious.

Day Trips from University of Canterbury

- Riccarton Bush
 - Short walk from campus
 - Farmers market every Saturday morning
- Akaroa
 - Kayaking
 - Enjoy the French settlement and cute little town
 - Hikes:
 - Lots of cliff hikes to do over looking the beautiful blue waters
- Sumner
 - Hike:
 - Take bus from the university to Sumner. Hike up the cliff and over the side to Taylor's Mistake Beach, and if you want to continue, hike along the bluffs on the other side to Godley Head Park.
- New Brighton
 - Great farmers market every Saturday
 - Walk on the beach and pier
 - Beach side library
- Port Hills
 - The Port Hills are about 30 minutes by car/45 minutes by bus away from the university. There are plenty of hikes to do in the Port Hills and the views are amazing.
 - Hikes:
 - Bridle Path Walk—this hike takes you up to the Port Hills with beautiful views of the Lyttelton below. You can either hike back down the way you came, or hike down to Lyttelton and walk around the little town and take the bus back from there.
 - Crater Rim Walkway—takes you along the rim of the Port Hills.
 - Rapaki Track Walk
- Lyttelton
 - Take a quick bus here from the university.
 - Fun little port town to walk around
 - Take the ferry from Lyttelton to Diamond Harbour
 - Hike: From Diamond Harbour hike up Mount Herbert for beautiful views (and lots of sheep!). Get an early start because it is a long hike!
- Kaikoura
 - Can be a day trip, but also a fun camping trip for a weekend.
 - Seals everywhere!
 - Whale watching
 - Coastal hikes
 - Backpacking trip:

- Mount Fyffe—there is a hut half way up the mountain that you can stay in (with a hut pass from the DOC office for \$5 NZD) or camp outside of it for free. Hike up to the summit for beautiful views of mountains on one side and the Kaikoura peninsula coastline on the other side.
- Arthur's Pass/ Craigieburn Wilderness area
 - Castle Hill
 - Bouldering and hiking
- Hanmer Springs
 - Hiking
 - Thermal hot pools
 - Mountain biking

What to pack

What you need to pack greatly depends on the semester you're going. Since their seasons are opposite if you go during our Spring semester you will arrive at the end of their summer going into fall and winter. Luckily, Christchurch is located in a fairly warm area (at least compared to Dunedin) so the weather stays pretty similar to Oregon. People also dress nicer (even when going to class) so bring some nice clothes (girls and boys!) Camping and outdoor gear is very expensive there (go to the Kathmandu outlet on Riccarton!) so if you plan on doing a lot of tramping (hiking) I would suggest bringing a sleeping bag, a backpack, and possibly a tent. If you do buy stuff there you can sell it back to the tramping club at the end of the semester. If you do not want to buy this gear, you can also rent it from the tramping club. Other essentials such as toiletries can easily be bought there.

Clothes:

- Rain coat/warm coat
- Nice coat (I brought my peacoat)
- Summer clothes such as shorts, tank tops, skirts, t-shirts
- Dressy clothes for going out (I brought a couple dresses and nice shoes. Boys should bring a nice button down and nice shoes.)
- Jeans/pants
- Outdoor clothes (underarmor, fleeces, synthetic materials)
- Hiking shoes

Toiletries and household stuff:

- I bought many things there such as shampoo/conditioner, soap, hangers, laundry detergent, and such
- Girls, bring your 'feminine' products with you since they are expensive and different ie makeup
- Contact solution if needed (again, expensive)
- Any medications or aspirins
- I brought a towel and hand towel but you can easily buy those there

- I also brought shampoo/conditioner and body soap in 3 oz containers which was nice because I could shower right away. The 3 oz containers were also super nice while traveling so you didn't have to lug all your bulky stuff around!

Other:

- Converter/adaptor (I bought mine at Target and it worked great)
- Camera and laptop
- You can buy a pre-paid phone in NZ but I bought mine from a Linfield student who had studied there previously which was nice because I could activate it right away (phone companies are 2degrees, Vodaphone, and Telecom. I would suggest 2degrees.) You can also buy a new sim card when you get to NZ to get a NZ phone number. Depending on what phone plan you currently have, you may be fine without a new phone.
- Gifts for flat mates
- Some New Zealand cash just in case

Housing

Canterbury does not give you much information about housing which I found annoying. Most international students lived in the Ilam apartments, which are across the road from the main university. Make sure to send in your housing form early!! Unlike Linfield housing, Canterbury's can fill up and there is a housing shortage in Christchurch that makes finding an off campus flat difficult! You will not be told which apartment you are in until you arrive and you won't be told who your flatmates are until you meet them, unless you email Ilam Apartments before you arrive! Additionally, unlike Linfield, the flats can be co-ed. If you don't want to live in a co-ed apartment, then tell them on your housing form! Kiwis do live in Ilam but it's rare, you'll likely be living with other international students. The flat floor plan is similar to an HP. They're fully furnished with bedrooms (everyone has their own room), a kitchen, living room with a tv, balcony, and two bathrooms. There is no oven in the Hinau apartments. The kitchens come "fully stocked" with a few pots/pans, bowls/plates, cups/mugs, and some utensils. I would suggest talking to your flatmates about buying some community items such as measuring cups, more silverware, and perhaps another pot. Unfortunately, the kitchen doesn't have an oven, though it does have a convection oven (it takes forever to cook anything in it though). My flatmates and I worked out that we'd alternate buying dish soap, paper towels, and toilet paper. The bathrooms are fine with a small amount of counter space. The Uni provides all your bedding materials and a pillow. They recently switched the Internet plan, so you should have a certain amount free wifi in your apartments (I never ran out) as well as everywhere on campus. There is community laundry and it's \$2 for wash and \$2 for dry (but I just used the provided drying rack). Also, there is a difference between top and front loading laundry soap! The Uni uses front loaders. The TV only gets about 4 channels but you'll be too busy to worry about that anyway!

Campus

The campus is nice and definitely bigger than Linfield's! It took me at least 15-20 minutes to get to my classes walking at a decent pace. It also took a while to orientate myself but it's easy once you remember that the library is the middle of everything. Speaking of library there are some food shops and café's in an area below the library called the Undercroft, which is nice for a quick snack. There are also heaps of other food places on campus if you don't feel like walking back to make food (which is understandable). There are some buildings that are still closed from the earthquakes but overall nothing is damaged too badly, though there is a lot of construction on a daily basis. The main place to study is the library (there's 11 floors so there's room) or the Ilam common room. I didn't find that students studied in classrooms like they do at Linfield.

Grocery Stores

All the grocery stores are easily accessible. Pak n Sav is on Riccarton Rd at the Westfield Mall and is the cheapest, kind of like a WinCo. Be aware that they charge about 10 cents for bags so if you want to save a bit just bring your backpack. Pak n Sav is a longer walk, so sometimes I would walk there then take the bus back with all of my groceries. Slightly more expensive is Countdown, down Waimairi Rd at the Bush Inn. This store is literally right down the street so sometimes the convenience was worth the extra 20 cents. The "nice" store was New World, also within walking distance from the apartments. Sometimes you can only find certain things at either Countdown or New World. Pak n Sav and New World have bulk food sections. The most expensive store (which is usually found in small towns) is 4 square. The selection is poor and its way over priced but sometimes that's all there is (as in Queenstown for example). For liquor I found the best deals (yet still very expensive) at Liquor King, which is right near Bush Inn (about a 5-7 minute walk). All other alcohol can be purchased at both New World and Countdown. Both Bush Inn and Westfield have a bunch of other eating places too.

Banking

I got a New Zealand bank account with BNZ. I chose them mainly because they were close to campus (at Bush Inn by Countdown) and they didn't charge any fees for creating an account, closing it, or getting a debit card. I would suggest transferring enough money for a couple days then writing yourself a check for the rest of your funds to avoid the service charge. The checks will take about 3 days to a week to clear but make sure to have funds till then. I would also suggest getting a card that allows you to make online purchases. I booked a lot of transport, hostels, and activities online. Keep your home debit card with you just in case but it's definitely cheaper to use a New Zealand card.

I brought a few hundred NZDs with me in cash, then opened my BNZ account with that cash. Again it depends on which bank you have at home, but I found that some people were okay using their home banks.

Registration

Registration was a lot different than at Linfield. For one, you can sign up for classes that have conflicting time slots and just choose not to go to a lecture on a certain day. Most all lecture classes put the recorded lectures online, so if you have to miss a day, you can watch it on Learn (the university's website, similar to Blackboard). The actual process of registration happens a few days before classes start after orientation. If a class has pre-requests you might have to do some running around getting signatures from department heads so leave some extra time. Other than that, the process is pretty smooth and only took about 20 minutes after I got all my signatures.

Classes and Work Load

Once you're registered you can look at your schedule on Learn to determine where your classes are and I would suggest walking through the campus prior to the first day. The classes themselves are divided into a lecture and tutorial. In the lecture there's not much teacher-student interaction (though that depends on the class) and the tutorial is where you discuss your weekly readings and can ask questions. A lot of the lectures will put up their Powerpoints and lecture notes on Learn, and some even have the lectures recorded! For all my classes all our reading was online (found on Learn) so I didn't have to buy a textbook which was nice. I didn't take a class with a lab but my friends said that they only ran through the first term which was nice. Not that I'm encouraging slacking off but the class work is easier than Linfield's and you'll find yourself with a lot of free time—which can be good and bad. On one hand you're free to travel but it's also harder to motivate yourself when you have serious work to do. Your grade will usually only be divided up between a few papers which was different for me but manageable. Just remember, you are there to study too!

If you are unsure what classes to take, I suggest looking into:

- TEPE112: Land Journeys and Ethics—learning about New Zealand's land, as well as the Leave No Trace ethics. This class also has two awesome backpacking trips for field trips led by the professor.
- CHCH101: Strengthening Communities through Social Innovation—this class allows you to go out and see the city and help out with community service projects. Awesome way to get involved and immerse yourself into the community.
- Check out some of the MAORI classes—there are tons of different options from learning the Haka, learning the language, or learning about the history.

Getting around New Zealand

Transport in NZ is pretty accessible. For buses there's Nakedbus, Intercity, and Atomic Shuttles. My favorite was Nakedbus but Atomic is usually the cheapest. However, if you plan far enough ahead Naked and Intercity offer \$1 fares which is awesome! The bus lines go to pretty much every major town in NZ and you can get to most other places with local bus lines. If you want to rent a car or campervan check out Juicy. They usually have "relocation" specials where you drive from one city to another for \$1

(excluding gas and insurance) and relocate the car for the company. These deals are only during certain time periods and only for a maximum of 3 days but we got a couple and it worked out great. There is also Mighty, Wicked, Adventure, and heaps more rental companies. I was told that while Rent-A-Dent is cheap there's a kilometer limit and the cars aren't very nice so it's probably best to avoid that one. Camper vans are a super fun way to travel around the island. If you are planning on staying in hostels or camping in tents, there is a regular car rental place right across the street from Ilam Apartments called "Affordable Car Rentals" which is a great option if you are splitting the price with a few friends. For tent camping, I suggest looking for DOC (Department of Conservation) campsites, usually nice and pretty cheap. *****ALSO:** download the app "Campermate" on your phone, it has tons of free campsites and DOC campsites, and shows you where they are on the map and is super helpful for road trips! As for places to sleep hostels will become your best friend! I got a YHA membership (which paid for itself pretty quick) which was nice because there's usually a YHA in every city and the membership usually made it the cheapest option. Usually YHA's are a little out of the town though which can be annoying. Other major hostel chains are Base Backpackers, BBH's, Nomad. Don't be afraid to stay at a "mom and pop" hostel either! The owners are usually really friendly and the rooms are sometimes cheaper than a big chain. Also, there's a tour company called Hello New Zealand! that is run by a retired teacher and he caters to students studying abroad. He gives really fun and informative tours and I would definitely suggest going on at least one!

Things to do on the South Island

Everything! Joking... kind of.

In and around Christchurch

- New Brighton and Sumner (beaches on the coast by Christchurch)
- Port Hills day hikes
- Lyttelton
- Diamond Harbour/Mt Herbert
- Taylors Mistake (a beach you can walk to from Sumner, fun and easy walk)
- Shipping container mall by the Red Zone in Christchurch (get the fresh fruit ice cream!)
- Riccarton Bush and Riccarton Market (both big farmer's markets)
- Botanical gardens/Hagley park
- Victoria Park
- Akaroa (heaps of hillside walks and a cute French downtown)
- Quail Island Kayaking

North-East and North

- Kiakoura and the fur seals
- Marlborough and wine country
- Abel Tasman (rent a kayak for the day or do part of the Great Walk)

- Nelson
- Picton to Wellington inter-islander ferry (pricy, but a fun way to travel!)

North-of-Fiordland West Coast

- Pancake rocks
- Hokitika (Wild Foods Festival and jade)
 - Hokitika Gorge walk
- Okarito (apparently you can see kiwis here!)
- Glaciers (I would suggest the full day hike on Fox glacier. It's cheaper than Franz Josef, you wouldn't see much cool stuff in the half day, and apparently the heli hike wasn't as impressive as the cost.)
- Wanaka
 - Roys Peak Hike
- Rob Roy Glacier Valley (One of my favorite spots in NZ)
- Lake Matheson (beautiful reflective lake with mountains in the background)
 - If you need a free campsite, check out Gillespies Beach, down the gravel road right near Lake Matheson. Gorgeous beach that you can watch the sunset on. Also, if you are here on a clear night it was the best star gazing spot (Milky Way was amazing!!!)

Fiordland Area

- Queenstown! So many cool things including: eating at Fergburger, gondola and walking up to the paragliders, night life, shopping, overall amazingness. Plan to spend at least three days here.
- Jucy tour bus that goes from either Queenstown or Te Anu to Milford Sound (the best way to get to Milford without renting a car)
- Milford Sound
 - Boat tour or guided kayaking trip
- Routeburn Track Great Walk (Falls hut and Key Summit)
- Marian lake
 - Beautiful glacial lake
- Doubtful Sound overnight cruise (Worth the money!!! One of my favorite experiences.)
- Glow worms in Te Anu were ok but I'd save the experience for Wiatomo if possible
- Kepler Track (right outside of Te Anau)

Dunedin

- Cadbury and Speights factory tours
- Elm Wildlife tour (see sea lions, fur seals, yellow eyed penguins, albatross, and blue penguins up close! It also gets you on the peninsula which is hard to do without a car)
- Baldwin Street

- Octagon and train station
- Tunnel beach
- Moeraki Boulders

Interior

- Arthur's Pass and Avalanche Peak (do in the summer and be prepared for challenging day!)
- Maruia Hot Springs
- Castle Hill
- Cave Stream
- Lake Tekapo (Mt. John overlook, hot pools, and the Church of the Good Shepherd. Stay at the Scenic Resort backpacker accommodation)
 - Campsites at Lake McGregor or Lake Alexandrina
 - Backcountry hut
- Lake Pukaki
- Mt. Cook and the Hooker Valley track (probably my favorite place in NZ)

Things to do on the North Island

The North Island is much more geared towards tourists and a lot is packed in to a much smaller space. I also didn't get to see as much of the North Island so this list is a bit shorter.

Wellington

- Mt. Victoria lookout
- Walk along the water
- Night life
- Te Papa museum
- Cuba Street
- Botanical gardens
- Zealandia wildlife reserve

Tongariro Alpine Crossing (not as daunting as all the propaganda says!)

Taupo

- Huka Falls Walkway (including FREE thermal spring)
- Craters of the Moon
- *Fearless* cruise out to the Maori carvings
- Kayak on lake

Coromandel Peninsula

- Hot Water Beach (dig your own hot springs)
- Cathedral Cove
- Kayaking

Rotorua

- Tamaki Maori village (great student discount)
- Thermal pools (there's a free one in town but there's others that I also heard were good)
- Redwoods (nice walking trails and one has a good lookout of the city)

Auckland

- Coast to Coast Walkway (includes Mt. Eden and One Tree Hill)
- Skytower
- Queen Street
- Aquarium
- A few hours north of Auckland are some free and non touristy glowworm caves called Abbey Caves that you can hike through
- Northern tip of NZ – Cape Reinga

No matter what you do, you're going to have so much fun! Enjoy the adventure of a life time!

Student Guide of Otago University– New Zealand

By: Claire Velaski, Caitlyn Blumenshein, Connor Ashmun



What should I pack?

I had heard the weather was similar to Oregon, so I packed what I would wear during the winter months here. In Dunedin it gets bone chilling cold and to get around, you spend a lot of time outside walking. Many days during the winter, you will look outside your

window and see a beautiful blue sky. Do not be deceived by this, it will be cold outside. Do not be deceived by the fact that New Zealand is relatively close to Australia... Dunedin is also very close to the South Pole. Also, the weather during the winter months is drastically different between the north and south islands of the country. Dunedin is the furthest south University in New Zealand. It also rains a lot. In one day you may see the most horrible gray clouds and be drenched in rain. But often earlier in the semester the weather is rather warm because it's coming to the end of summer for New Zealand so also make sure to pack accordingly for such instances. Keep in the mind due to NZ being in the southern hemisphere the seasons are switched. This means our summer is their winter and vice versa.

Clothes:

- Winter coat/snow coat... these can be a pain to pack, but a lot of students wore theirs on the plane ride which saved them a ton of room in their luggage. Or, once in Dunedin you can check out coats at Kathmandu if you are willing to spend a good chunk of money
- Tennis shoes/hiking shoes (another good thing to wear on the plane)
- Sandals (it will be spring/summer by the time you leave or when you arrive depending on which semester)
- A nice pair of shoes to wear when you go out
- Rain boots (campus and the city floods like Linfield!)
- Winter clothes... long sleeve shirts, jeans, sweaters, sweatshirts, etc.
- Spring clothes... shorts, etc
- Clothes to wear for nicer occasions, Kiwis love to dress up. They also love costume parties so if you have any random costumes laying around bring them!
- Bathing suit (the Pacific Ocean is really close and there are hot springs)
- Rain jacket (I found this my most useful piece of clothing with the constantly changing weather)
- Wool socks- these are the best socks to use during camping and tramping trips
- Hat (a lot of people wore beanies)
- Gloves – nice to have when hiking in snow
- Scarf

When I packed, I put a lot of things in ziploc bags and then sucked the air out of them to make them airtight. With this method, I was able to get quite a bit more over than some of my friends were. Another option is packing cubes from Amazon which are relatively inexpensive and will last a lifetime. I brought one large rolling suitcase, a large rolling duffel bag, a backpack, and a smaller rolling duffel for a carry on. Having a suitcase that is smaller was nice for weekend trips that I went on. Some of my friends had to lug around their large pieces of luggage and were envious of my smaller bag.

Toiletries:

Unless you have special shampoo that you use, I would suggest buying toiletries there, a lot of the products are the same. However, products are much more expensive! This will save room in your luggage.. Some basics I brought were:

- Toothpaste/toothbrush
- Contact solution (if necessary... it was very expensive there)
- Deodorant, perfume, makeup if you wear it (very expensive in Dunedin), special lotions or other skin products

Other:

- (2) Outlet plug converters, you can get them for a reasonable price at luggage stores. One outlet plug converter is fine, but I found it useful to have two so that I could charge both my laptop and phone.
- I bought one converter on Amazon that had multiple plugs and USB outlets. This worked perfect for me so I could charge multiple things at once.
- Portable charger (especially nice when on trips and tramping)
- Copies of your passport
- Copies of your birth certificate
- Copies of Visa
- A daypack for hiking or walking around town or to the beach. Something small useful and comfortable. You will be doing a lot of waling and hiking so a small pack is very useful.
- Some Linfield gear. A lot of international students wear attire from their home university and it's a good way to make friends by asking about their place of study.
- Gifts. I gave bumper stickers that said "Orygun" to my flatmates and some of my friends. I also brought chocolates from Made in Oregon that has Oregon scenery on it to give out if needed. The best thing I brought was calendars. When I went to Australia, we stayed with a family and I gave one to them. I also gave calendars to people who helped me get involved with the softball scene. Having simple gifts like these were easy to pack and greatly appreciated by the recipients.
- Girls: If you plan on bringing a hair dryer, straightener, etc. you will need a power converter. Otherwise you WILL blow the fuse. A lot of people bought these things over there. Power converters are different from outlet plug converters. You can get them at a luggage store.
- Camera/GoPro, camera charger and camera USB
- Memory stick. This was very useful when I wanted pictures from my friends camera. It was also useful when exchanging music which I found I did a lot of since a lot of my friends were from other countries and had cool stuff I had never heard of.
- Be ready to buy costumes. If you have anything that you think would be fun to dress up in, bring it. There is always something the Kiwis are dressing up for. eg. I went to a 70s/80s Ice Skating event, the tie dye shirt I brought with me came into perfect use!

- Stuff to put on your walls. I found it helpful to put pictures of my friends and family up on my walls and a tapestry. It made me feel better when I was feeling homesick and my friends loved to look at them and ask questions. Some people's rooms were not very homey and they were always looking for random things to put on their walls.
- Travel journal. I was never one to write in journals but I used one in NZ and am so glad. I got a little behind and I am constantly trying to remember things so I can update it. It is amazing how many little things you think you will remember but you forget.
- Addresses

What not to bring:

- Housing provides you with sheets, pillows, one body towel, etc. Not worth it to pack your own. I bought a small throw blanket when I arrived and one more pillow only because I love having lots of pillows. I also bought another towel when I got there as 1 is not enough in my opinion

What to buy when you get there:

- Prepaid cell phone. The way that all people in New Zealand communicate is by cell phone. And everyone texts. Phone calls cost \$0.89 a minute whereas you can buy monthly texting plans with whichever phone plan you buy. Before I went to NZ I unlocked my US phone so when I got there, I just popped in a NZ SIM card and purchased credit to put on it. A lot of people bought phones there, whichever you prefer. I believe that most phones were \$99 NZ and the SIM card was \$30 NZ. There are two main pay-as-you-go cell phone companies. Vodafone and Spark.
- I purchased a Spark pre-paid travel SIM card for \$60 NZD for two months that had unlimited NZ calls and texts, 10 GB of data, and 1 GB of social media data. Vodafone had similar deals. The only downside of this was changing my NZ number halfway through the semester since I had to purchase another travel SIM after the 2 months. I'm happy I went this route though because my friends with a monthly plan racked up their bills with their monthly data usage. I would recommend the travel SIM because 10 GB lasts longer than I was expecting especially since you have WIFI in your flat, on campus, and other places like hostels, cafes, and airports. You can also purchase add-ons, like more data, in the Spark app if you run out. If you go this route however make sure you unlock or pay off your US phone before leaving the country.
- Another company that is very good is 2Degrees. They are what I (Connor) used. I cannot stress enough how helpful it is to make sure your phone is unlocked by your US carrier before you arrive to NZ. If it isn't then you have to purchase a prepaid phone and you can't just use your regular phone. If your phone is unlocked it's as simple as switching sim cards. Keep your US sim card as it will be very helpful to just pop it back in when you return from the states instead of having to go to your carrier store and get a new one.

- I also purchased an incense candle from Kmart when I first arrived to help with the smell of my room. You're not supposed to burn candles in your Uniflats room, so I purchased an incense to help keep my room smelling fresh and not of mold. Many Uniflats rooms struggle with mold, and while my room did not have mold, it could smell damp sometimes, so I preferred to get a candle that only cost a couple dollars.
- Upon arrival I also purchased a laundry basket from Kmart for only a few dollars. It's very nice to not just let your clothes pile up on the floor since your room doesn't come with a laundry basket

Flights of the Conchords

Familiarize yourself with this band. They are a NZ band and had a hit show on HBO (unfortunately they are not doing a third season). The show was based on them coming to the States from NZ to get famous as a band. The show is absolutely hilarious and you get a glimpse into NZ humor, jokes and slang. If you can't access the show, look up some of their songs on Youtube. I promise you, you will laugh. Kiwis love Flight of the Conchords and International Students can quote entire episodes. If you come to love them as much as I do, you might be interested in catching Rhys Darby perform a comedy gig while in New Zealand.

<http://www.hbo.com/flight-of-the-conchords/index.html>

International Mentor Programme

The IMP is a great way to get to know someone who knows the ropes about Otago before you get there or in your first few weeks abroad. You have to apply for a mentor by filling out a form to be paired with a mentor based on the information you provide. IMP holds different events for mentors and mentees throughout the semester which makes it easier to meet other International Students as well.

I had friends that got mentors during the summer and they were able to get a lot of their questions answered before they got to NZ. This helps with pre-departure jitters!

Registration

Otago will send you information about registration by e-mail. When I got this, I was overwhelmed. The number of classes they offered was insane and I had no idea what I wanted to take. You are asked to select classes but this form is not binding in any way. During orientation there will be a time for International Students to register. To register, we all stood in a line and went over our pre-approval sheets with someone from the University. We were then directed to rooms where tables were set up and faculty was signing students into classes. The process was very long and kind of boring, but it was nice because it was pretty easy to get into the classes that I wanted.

I took three classes. International Students are required to take 3-4 classes and I felt that taking less was better because it allowed me to travel more. This was one of the best decisions I made. It opened up my schedule a lot. I didn't have lectures on Monday or Friday which made it easier for me to travel.

Class terminology is different. Classes are called papers and credits are called points. So when I said I took three classes, I actually was enrolled in three papers. Each of my papers was worth 18 points. This ended up equating to 4 credits for each class.

Another note is don't be surprised if your schedule starts later in the day. Unlike Linfield where classes generally begin at 8 or 9am its common to see your class day begin at 10 or 11am.

Papers

I was really worried that the work load would be a lot more difficult at Otago than at Linfield. I was wrong. I took classes that fulfilled LC's and a class on Maori culture. I highly suggest doing this if it fits into your schedule. This made the work load a lot less strenuous (I am not trying to encourage slacking off) which allowed me to do a lot more traveling than other students could do. Some students were required by their home schools to take certain classes and they found that they were spending more time studying than they would have liked.

My papers were 50 minutes or 1 hour and 50 minutes. All of the slides that were covered in my classes were posted online. In some cases, these slides were exactly what we went over during the session while in other papers the slides were notes. I learned that in some classes, you didn't need to be there to get the whole lesson. Two of my three classes were also recorded and posted online. This meant many students did not attend class and only watched the online videos. I found I learned better if I went to class since I did not actually watch the recorded lectures if I missed class.

Tutorials were held once a week, these sessions are used for tutors to go over the week's material with smaller groups. One of my papers had about 300 students and our tutorial only had about 30 students. Another one of my classes had about 30 students and our tutorial had 15 students. This was a great time to get clarification on the material covered and to ask questions about exams and assignments. One of the tutors reviewed my first paper and gave me feedback on the norms of papers at Otago.

The actual work for the papers was different as well. At Linfield there is lots of assignments and quizzes through the semester to help your grade and to help learn the information. **At Otago there were few assignments.** One of my papers had a couple small assignments through the tutorials and only equaled 5% of my total grade. My other two classes only had a mid-term paper grade, a tutorial attendance grade, and the final exam grade. **This puts lots of pressure on doing well on those two things.**

Textbooks

I didn't have to buy textbooks for any of my papers. Two of my papers had course readers which were filled with articles that we read throughout the semester. For my other paper we had a course workbook with problems and answers and lecture notes. All of my papers were online with archived readings provided. I did, however, purchase the Maori book with my flatmate because the readings were more helpful than the lectures. The textbook was only 30 NZD per person, so was much cheaper than American prices for textbooks.

Finals

When I got the academic calendar in the mail, I was really confused. The calendar showed that finals last from October 19th until November 16th. I was sure this must be a typo. But finals really did last that long! I had finals on October 22nd and 27th and November 7th. This gave me the opportunity to travel if I wanted (a lot of people took advantage of this) but I stayed in Dunedin to get a few extra days with my friends before we all began to travel independently.

Finals are different in that they were a lot more formal. You had to bring your student ID to the test where it was checked off by proctors and the time limit was very strict. You were required to stay for the first hour and then if you finished after that you could leave but you couldn't leave within the final 15 minutes of the examination period. Once the time was up, the proctors were very strict about enforcing that students put their pencil down.

Two of my exams (and most of my friends' exams... including those in science papers) were strictly essay writing exams. This is a very different style than the classes I have taken at Linfield. It was a little intimidating at first, but the professors outline almost exactly what the questions will be prior to the exam. This gives you a chance to write essay plans. Also, all previous exams for the paper are posted on the library homepage. Two of my exams were almost exactly like the previous finals.

Final exams are also worth a lot of your overall grade. **All of mine were worth over 50% of my final grade.** This was very stressful for someone who doesn't always test well. A lot of international students only needed to pass their courses while abroad but as a Linfield student your grade you receive abroad will affect your GPA when you return. This made me study harder than some international students.

Toroa International House

I flatted at Toroa International House which is about two blocks from campus. There were about 120 students from all over the world, including New Zealand. Toroa organized a lot of different events for its residents which really helped with homesickness at the beginning. Some Toroa events I participated in were movie nights, a lunch of Soup and Rolls, a Carnival, countless potlucks, and Karaoke Night. Through these events I met a lot of other people who lived in the same area I did and made some really great friends. Other events that Toroa hosted included: penguin visits, a foosball competition, 80s Disco night at the roller rink, the Toroa Ball, a farewell dinner, and much more.

Toroa offered some really great things that the Uni Flats didn't provide. There were about 10 bikes that Toroa owned that you could use whenever you wished. They had a great collection of movies that you could check out for free and they had a huge screen that you could watch them on along with a Wii that anyone could use. They also had a computer lab that allowed you to do printing from there instead of having to walk to Uni like the students in Uni Flats had to do. Toroa also provided each room with a laundry basket, bath towel, hangers, and bedding. It was great to not have to worry about these small things. There is a laundry room that we could use for free.

<http://www.toroa.ac.nz/>

Uni Flats

Uni Flats are flats that are owned by Otago. For International Students, they are paired up with a Kiwi Host and a few other International Students. The Kiwi Host is very helpful when you get there, showing you around town and giving important information to the International Students (i.e. it is a better deal to buy Spark Vodafone or 2Degrees). Uni Flats for International Students were generally clumped together which made it easy for International Students to get to know each other.

For my flat I had an overall fee that included rent, internet, bedding, electricity, and all other flat necessities. These were expected to be paid throughout the semester or in one big payment. Since Uni Flats organizes everything needed for the flat you don't have to worry about things like internet and electricity, only paying your housing bill to Uni Flats on time. However, our flat did have many appliance issues and all you needed to do was contact Uni Flats and they would come fix it. For example, our stove only had one working burner and when we reported it, Uni Flats came within the next week and fixed the others.

The great thing about Uni Flats is they offer great traveling deals around the South Island. I was able to go on a great trip to Queenstown even though I didn't live in a Uni Flat. Included in the price for the trip was: transportation, food, accommodation, bungee jumping, jet boating, a gondola and luge ride, and chair lift passes for a day of skiing/snowboarding. They also did a trip to a Marae and provided everything needed. Sadly I did not get to go since I signed up too late and all the seats were already filled. They hosted several other fun events such as touch rugby for beginners, volunteer trips, and cooking classes.

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/uniflats/>

Unipol

Get to know Unipol. This is the school gym and they offer a variety of different things. There are the usual machines to workout on (treadmill, bicycle, etc) and there is also a weight room (highly populated by men). Unipol also has a basketball court and a smaller weightlifting area with free weights and medicine balls. Unipol offers a Fitness for Fun course which costs \$50 for the semester. This allows you to go to any of the Fitness for Fun classes and there are tons throughout the week. Some of the classes they offer are: Step, Abs, Pump, and others.

Unipol also hosts some really cool trips around Dunedin and the surrounding areas. Through Unipol I went on a weekend snowboarding trip, staying at Lake Wanaka and snowboarding at Cardrona. I went on a weekend kayaking trip to Lake Manapouri. Everything was included in the price of the trips. They offered a variety of other things such as windsurfing, surfing, deep sea fishing, etc. Check out the website to look at other options. Unipol also hires (rents) out gear to students who want to go on a snowboarding, surfing, etc. trip on their own. You can rent sleeping bags for \$10 NZD a night, sleeping mats, tramping backpacks, cooker stoves, and many other essentials needed for outdoor events. This is extremely helpful for international students who for obvious reasons couldn't pack all their adventure gear with them.

Tip: After the first week you need your student ID to get access to Unipol so make sure you get one as soon as possible.

<http://www.unipol.co.nz/>

OUSA – Otago University Students' Association

OUSA puts on a bunch of activities throughout campus and are the coordinators of Orientation at the beginning of each semester. Every day throughout Orientation week, a different OUSA club hosts lunch at the OUSA building where students can get a great lunch with lots of food for only 3 dollars.

OUSA also organizes some really great classes available to all students. I took a 5 week massage class and a 5 week "Salsa for Dummies" class. I had a great time in both of these courses and met some new people. These classes sold out quickly though so I would recommend going to OUSA (and Unipol as well) and signing up for what you want to do in the early weeks to ensure that you get a spot. I did this and was still unable to get into the Thai Cooking course I wanted in. OUSA offers a variety of other options

<http://www.ousa.org.nz/>

Clubs

The first week of papers there is an event fair similar to Linfield's (but way better) where you can sign up for clubs. Otago offers so many clubs and I recommend at least joining one! You can meet lots of new people and try new things while abroad. I joined the tramping (hiking) club, the winter sports club (OUSSC), and an animal shelter volunteering club. To join the tramping and OUSSC clubs you had to pay a fee of NZ20 and is well worth it! These clubs put on trips that everyone talks about and most of the students including the locals are involved in. Both clubs host trips throughout the semester and all you have to do is pay a fee and transportation, food, and accommodation are provided. However, spots fill up VERY fast for these trips and you have to be ready! I went on the first tramping trip, Bushball, paid a fee of \$90 NZD, and the only thing I had to purchase was extra beverages. We left the Uni Saturday morning, and all climbed onto a big bus and left for Wanaka. It was about a 4-hour bus ride filled with getting to know the other students by playing a version of speed dating. We stopped for lunch and when we got to the track, we all put on our packs and left with our group leaders to tramp to the hut. Along the way we played games and got to know the other students. When we got to the hut, the club organizers made everyone dinner, and then we had a dance party until 1 am. There was also a Lord of The Rings theme and the next morning the person with the best costume won a prize. The club held a couple other trips during the semester, but I didn't attend any others.

While a key perk of these clubs is the trips, they also offer many unseen benefits. I was a member of the OUSSC club and by doing that it got me discounts around town at various restaurants and stores. When they are not hosting trips, they are planning amazing theme parties that on average result in the attendance of several hundred people and amazing memories!! The OUSSC club trips are similar and you sign up online and the spots fill super quick! You have to pay a fee around NZ100 (worth it) and still had to rent your own gear (cheaper to rent at Unipol versus on the mountain) and buy a day pass. No skill is needed to attend! If you've never skied or snowboarded before you can take lessons while you're there. I didn't get to attend any of the trips, but I did attend other events they held on campus.

What about money?

I highly suggest that you be willing to spend money on great experiences. I would suggest coming to New Zealand with anywhere between \$3,500- \$4,500 US. You won't regret the money you spent on making amazing memories. I'm not going to lie travel can be expensive but can be cheaper if travelling with 2 or 3 mates.

When I got to Dunedin, I was able to use my American debit card to withdraw money from the local ATMs, there were large charges but I found it nice to have my debit card with me because I could use it whenever I was in a bind.

Also note that the conversion rate changes often and to take a look at it every so often. Everything will look very expensive when in NZ dollars but after converting it you will find that prices are comparable to the states. Don't let it scare you.

I set up a bank account at the National Bank. I really liked banking here because there were no charges to set up the account and closing it down was a very quick and easy process. Once the account was set up, I deposited all my traveler's checks and then had my parents wire money into the account from my American account. I found this method to be good for me, others preferred to use their credit cards.

If you are looking to use a credit card while abroad but don't have one I highly recommend getting one before you go because many cards offer a bonus if you spend x amount in the first 3 months. You will easily hit that number with your expenses and travel. You're going to spend the money anyway might as well reap some reward from it. I used my credit card the entire time abroad because there is no foreign transaction fee. Rarely did I find myself needing cash, so I only carried about 50-100 NZD with me that I withdrew using my debit card. The buses only take cash (or you can load money onto a bus card) and some restaurants in Dunedin only take cash like Beam me up Bagels and Rob Roy's Dairy.

Another thing to keep in mind is that if you end up travelling with locals and looking to split cost, they don't have Venmo so you will either need to do cash or bank transfer.

Other Tips and Tricks

- **Arriving in Auckland:** In order to get to Dunedin, you must transfer from your international flight in Auckland on the north island to a regional jet that will then travel to Dunedin. **The most important thing to remember when you deplane in Auckland and head for your connection is to go pick up your checked bags and take them to the domestic terminal to get them cleared through customs.** Your bags are not automatically be checked through to Dunedin. If you forget to do this step you risk losing your bag and having a really stressful first couple weeks either having them find it and send it to Dunedin or you having to replace all that stuff in its entirety.
- **Travel:** This is the reason you study abroad! Traveling is the best part of the experience and will allow you an entirely new world view. Traveling around the South Island is amazing and makes for the best road trips.
 - **Transportation:** Unless you're going to the north island you'll want to drive. Either take a bus, find a friend with a car or get some mates and rent one. If you decide to rent a car, I recommend RAD Car Hire. They are super cheap and practical cars that will get you there. They offer a wide range of vehicle types to choose from depending on group size and intended terrain. Their pickup location is also only a five-minute walk from campus.
 - **Accommodation:** I highly recommend staying in hostels. I had never stayed in one until I went to NZ. This is a backpacker's country and thus there are hostels in every city offering varying levels of quality. The one I stayed at the most was YHAs. They offer a wide range of accommodations and provide most everything you need. If you travel with

a group, you can often book a 4-person room with a private bathroom making it totally private and it only costs about 20NZ per person. Another option to rent Air BNBs. This is very common and provides more comfort and privacy than hostels and hotels. The drawback is they can cost slightly more but if you split it with a group you can be very economical. The final option is to camp. This is a great option in the early part of the year and can be the most fun. But once winter comes it can be quite dreary.

- Booking activities or adventures: BOOK in ADVANCE! Spots fill up quickly and its best to plan a trip no later than a week in advance if you're looking to do activities that require bookings. A great website to find great deals and discounts on popular tourist attractions is through a website called Book Me. You can often find popular attractions for 20% off the list price and can save some money.
 - **HAVE FUN!!**
- **Buying a car:** It is extremely common for international students to purchase a car while they are in NZ. This may seem absurd at first, but you will find out that good used cars can generally be purchased for around \$1000. I purchased a 2008 VW Golf with my flatmate and we each payed half and split gas/insurance. When compared to the cost of constantly renting a car for roadtrips or quick daytrips the cost to buy became very reasonable especially since when we left, we sold it and recouped about 80% of our money. It also makes daily life easier. Quick trips to the beach take 10 mins instead of an hour waiting for public transport or a trip to the grocery store instead of a 30 min roundtrip walk. I am in no way saying a car is a requirement because it is not. Dunedin has an excellent and cheap public transport system and most of the town is walkable. It simply depends on your needs and financial situation.
 - **Preparing for classes:** While Linfield is a large campus it is very easy to find your classes. Finding your classes can be a real hard time at Otago. There are so many academic buildings with many floors. On top of that some classes are held in different locations depending on the day. My economics class was in a different building 3 times a week. My recommendation is finding your classrooms and lecture halls during orientation week before classes even start by walking to each one. That way you're less stressed on your first day and by doing this you also learn where a lot of other things on campus are located.
 - **"Ask Otago":** This is an organization on campus that has answers to pretty much any question you could ever have regarding life on campus and in Dunedin. Their main desk is located on the main floor of the library. They are one of your best resources your first couple weeks on campus. They assist with anything from visas to class schedules.
 - **Universal Healthcare:** Hopefully you will not need to utilize emergency medical services while you're abroad like I did. But, in the unlikely event that this does occur there are some things you should be aware of. The first being that NZ

operates under a universal healthcare system meaning that it is free. Even to tourists. I am informing you of this because here in the states an ambulance and trip to the ER will cost thousands of dollars but in NZ if you suffer an accident it won't cost you a dime. You are covered under ACC which is the country's national healthcare. On top of that, as students we are required to pay for travel insurance which will cover any other costs of your medical treatment such as if you require medications due to the incident or even physical therapy. Don't treat this as an invitation to be reckless and dangerous. A major injury, while monetary cost is limited it will cost you time and surely take away from your ability to enjoy NZ.

- **Contacting People Back Home:** While a NZ sim card will allow you to talk and text within NZ it doesn't allow calls or texts outside the country. Then why get a sim card? Because it gives you data which let's be honest is more useful nowadays than minutes or texts. The way I made calls home and to the IPO office was through both Facebook messenger calls/messages but more often I made calls to my family using Facetime Audio/iMessage. It works using data or WIFI and is as simple as a normal phone call. For those who don't use apple products I would recommend WhatsApp which is another data-based communication service.

Around Town

Groceries

I recommend bringing your backpack to load groceries into. Also, some stores charge you for bags so I suggest bringing some reusable bags with you (I somehow accumulated a ton of free ones). It is now illegal for stores in New Zealand to carry plastic bags. This means you should buy reusable bags as soon as you get to New Zealand. Generally they cost about 1NZ dollar. Unless you want to purchase paper bags every time you go to the store, reusable bags are a necessity!

- **Countdown:** Has best deals within walking distance but is the furthest within walking distance. Not always the most appealing decision when you have to carry your groceries back.
- **Pak'Nsave:** I heard that the prices were best here, but you needed a car to get there, so I never went.
- **New World:** This grocery store is closest to all the student flatting (at least that I knew of). It was said to be more expensive than Countdown, but that was a price I was sometime willing to pay when I had a lot of groceries and chilly weather made it hard for my hands to tolerate carrying heavy things a long distance. They have 2 location in town. The closest one to campus is smaller but to get there you just need to walk through the gorgeous botanic gardens.

- ***Veggie boys:*** is located down the street from the central library if you're looking for fruit and veggies. Has good prices compared to Countdown and closer than walking all the way to the store.
- There are also lots of ***Dairys*** (kind of like a gas station convenience store) located around campus and Uni Flats. These are super convenient for random cravings and when you only need something small like a liter of milk or a lunch snack.

Restaurants

- ***Mei Wah*** – A little fish and chip store that also served teriyaki. You could get a huge serving of fish and chips for \$3.70.
- ***Taste of Tandoor-*** best curry in town. You will find that Kiwis love to host large dinners at Indian restaurants throughout town.
- ***Esplanade-*** Located right in St Clair Beach and makes the best pizza I've had since my summer spent in Italy.
- ***Plant Burger-*** Excellent choice for vegans and vegetarians. Burgers but everything is made from plants. This is not your average veggie burger though
- ***Thai Over and Thai Land*** – Two different restaurants but owned by the same people with the same menu.
- ***Etrusco*** – Great Italian food but spendy. When I went it was for a birthday dinner and they brought out salads, pastas, pizzas, breads, and desserts without us ever ordering. I think this is how it works all the time but I am not entirely sure.
- ***Paasha Turkish Café***
- ***Governors Café*** – Heard it was good
- ***Velvet Burger*** – Huge burgers and tons of variety. Highly Recommend
- ***Rainforest Malaysian Restaurant***
- ***Alibi Restaurant and Bar*** – Expensive. I didn't go here until my parents got there and were paying for me!
- ***Savoury Japan*** – Can't beat 5 dollar sushi (George St)!
- ***Ra Bar and Restaurant*** – Good burgers (Octagon).
- ***Poppa's Pizza*** – Very close to the Central Library on Albany St. Most of the pizza has something other than marinara sauce as the base, it might throw you off at first. A lot of places use BBQ sauce. Also has good breakfast waffles.
- ***Eureka*** – On Albany. Has really good burgers and nachos!
- There is also another good fish and chip place on Albany.
- ReBurger- home to some of the most delicious burgers in Dunedin and even has a vegetarian option. On Mondays they double size it for free, just sayin..
- Rob Roy Dairy- the ice-cream in New Zealand far surpasses what we have in America. Rob Roy Dairy is the perfect place to go on a hot day and is just a short walk from campus
- Taj Mahal – many events at Taj Mahal since it's a BYO and also serves good Indian food
- The Vault – a nightclub in the octagon but during the day serves good food such as Korean fried chicken and salads. Is expensive though
- Hungry Hobos – good sandwich shop

- Carousel – expensive mixed drinks but a fun place to go at least once because their drinks are amazing!
- Alley Cantina – Mexican restaurant that is pretty expensive but has really good margaritas, nachos, and churros!
- Beam me up Bagels – has good bagels and coffee that you can enjoy in the botanical gardens. Best bagel sandwiches ive ever had.
- Stuart St Mac's Brew Bar – good chicken wings and fries, turns into a dance club at night in the octagon
- Mamas donuts – a pretty far walk, past the octagon, but on a pretty day worth it for some tasty donuts
- Hell's pizza – supposed to be best pizza in Dunedin on Great King street
- The Perc Café- located in the octagon but a good place to study and get coffee.
- Modaks Café- another café near the octagon but a good place to study.
- Patti's and Cream- an ice cream truck that is usually at St. Clair but travels around. Has super good homemade ice cream and more expensive than Rob Roy but well worth it!
- Jo's Garage – has good burgers and other food!
- Fllying Squid – one of the closest things to fast food, has really, really good fries and good fish. Right by other stores on Albany street.

Everything stores

- The Warehouse- this is basically Costco but instead of food products its daily use products. They basically have everything you could ever need.
- Kmart- I know what you're thinking when images of Kmart are conjured in your mind. But be prepared to have those blown away. If the store didn't have the name Kmart on the outside, I would assume I was walking through a Target. (on the 3rd floor of Meridian Mall on George St.)

Dance Clubs

- The Uni Bar- located under the library there is a student bar. A fun place to go and know you'll see other students. Every Wednesday they do \$5 pints and all the students go. It opens at 9 and be ready to wait in line!
- Starters Bar- super close to campus making it a great place to go, especially when they do Thursday throw- back nights!
- The Catacombs- personally my favorite nigh club. Its underground where the old city morgue used to be. Located in the Octagon
- Suburbia- octagon
- Vault 21- octagon
- Macs- octagon
- The Social Club- octagon

* The Octagon is at the end of George St and has a bunch of fancier restaurants, bars and clubs. The dress code is generally a bit nicer.

Speight's Ale House and Tour

Speight's is a Dunedin brewed beer and is known as "The Pride of the South". There are reasonably priced tours daily that take you through the beer brewing process with a **FREE** tasting period at the end. I recommend the tour, and the food at the Ale House is good.

Cadbury Chocolate Factory and Tour

I recommend this tour as well. It takes you through the factory and shows you how some of the different products are produced. You get a ton of free chocolate and the tour is priced well.

Baldwin Street

This is known as the World's Steepest Street. It is quite the hike up, but was a fun touristy thing to do and the view from the top was pretty. If you go to Otago during our fall semester, you will catch the Cadbury Chocolate Carnival and at the end of the week they race over 10,000 chocolates down Baldwin Street.

Independent Travel

You will have a lot of time to travel, so take advantage of it! In addition to traveling on the weekends, a lot of students take advantage of Mid-Semester break and go further. I was able to find a relatively cheap flight to Australia and I had friends go all over the Pacific including to Tonga and Fiji.

When it comes to travel you will feel you have to see everything but remember it's a big country that spans across 2 islands. This makes it difficult to see everything. Just make sure you make the most of the things you do see because I promise you your time there will go by in the blink of an eye.

I recommend that you work with IPO to get your plane ticket extended. I extended my time there by a month and was able to see a lot with my family. Many people stayed a month or two after finals ended and traveled with friends they made at Uni. Lots of students took advantage of being on this side of the world and travelled to other countries over here on their way home. Another suggestion I would make is speaking with the IPO office about getting to New Zealand sooner. I studied there in the spring semester and didn't take a Jan term. I arrived the second week of February the day before orientation week. Arriving the first week of February would have been very nice and allowed some more time to settle in.

Places/Beaches to Visit Around Dunedin

- Moeraki Boulders
- Long Beach
- St Clair and St Kilda Beach
- The Pineapple Track- simply hike with great views.
- Long Beach- this is where many students including myself camped in caves along the beach
- Sandfly Beach
- Second Beach
- Smails Beach
- Otago Peninsula
- Tunnel Beach – This is an absolutely must see, it is breathtaking. This was one of the highlights of the trip/scenery.
- Aramoana Beach
- Penguin Place- Conservation reserve
- The Botanical Gardens
- Otago Museum. Right across from campus and entry is free. Fantastic exhibits and they also offer morning yoga in their butterfly garden. Worth it.
- Signal Hill- absolutely best views of the city. Grab some mates and some burgers and go watch the sunset from here
- Mount Cargill – you can hike or drive to see great views of the peninsula and the city
- Doctor's Point
- Allen's Beach
- Nugget Point – in Catlins but only a two-hour drive. Recommend spending the night in Kaka Point and getting up early to see the sunrise over the ocean from the lighthouse.
- Saturday Market - every Saturday from 9 to 11 there's a farmers market with local vendors, music, and coffee, with reusable mugs, by the train station. My flat would go every week and do out produce shopping.
- Glow worms in Dunedin for FREE! Didn't have to pay for these glow worms and were just as good as some of the tours that require money.

South Island Highlights

- Queenstown
 - Ben Lommond Summit
 - Luge
 - Bars
 - Jet Boats
- Milford Sound
- Lake Tekapo
- Doubtful Sound

- Te Anau and the glow worm caves
- The Catlins
 - Cannibal Bay
 - Slope Point
 - Cathedral Cave
 - Nugget Point
- Christchurch
- Franz Joseph Glacier/Fox Glacier/Lake Matheson
- Abel Tasman
- Lake Manapouri/Te Anau Lake
- Cardrona (Ski/snowboard mountain)
- Cornonet Peak
- Kaikoura (Thermal Pools)
- Pancake Rocks
- The Copland Track
- The Kepler Track
- Wanaka
 - Roys Peak
- Haast Pass, blue pools, Brewster hut
- Mount Aspiring National Park
- Mount Cook National Park
 - Lake Pukaki
 - Sealy Tarns/Mueller Hut
 - Hooker Valley Track
 - Glaciers
- Lake Tekapo with lavender fields
- Routeburn Track
- Stewart Island
- Mt. Brown Hut

Popular kiwi words

- **Kiwi:** New Zealanders, also a native bird
- **Chilly bin:** Cooler/esky
- **Wop wop's:** The middle of nowhere/the sticks
- **Togs:** Swimsuit
- **Jandals:** Flip flops/thongs
- **Bugged/knackered:** Really tired
- **Jumper:** Sweater/pull over
- **Bach/crib:** Holiday home
- **Bro:** Brother, friend
- **Chur:** Thanks
- **Hokey-pokey:** Ice cream flavor (definitely try this while in New Zealand)
- **Stubbie:** Bottle of beer
- **Stubbies:** Shorts (short shorts)
- **Tramping:** Hiking
- **Mate:** Friend or enemy (depending on the speakers tone)

- **Snag:** Very popular food at student events. It is a sausage between folded white bread with ketchup.

The most important thing to remember is to have an absolute blast and cherish your experience because it will go by much faster than you can even imagine. You're going to love it!! Safe travels!

Linfield University Student Guide

University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand

Kia ora! The opportunity to study abroad for a semester has arrived! I hope you are excited for all of the opportunities that await you in New Zealand. Here are some things you should do in preparation of your travels, things you should keep in mind while abroad, and some inside info that'll keep you in the loop with the people you meet.

Prior To Departure:

Attend orientation. The information provided will be very helpful, especially if this is the first time that you will be going abroad. You will also meet others that have traveled or will travel to the same uni (university) as you. Orientation, although long, is a great place to gain knowledge and make new friends!

Apply to the University of Waikato. You will receive the application at orientation or by email. After filling this out and sending it to the University, you will receive your student information. It is important that you complete this as you cannot apply for housing until you are an official student. You also need this information in order to apply for your visa.

Make a list of classes you are interested in taking. There are a number of courses, known as papers, that you can take at Waikato. For a number of the papers, you can find old outlines (syllabi) online at waikato.ac.nz. When you're looking at the papers offered, make a decent sized list. You will not be able to directly apply for the papers that you choose—that is something you will be doing once you get to uni. Considering that you are studying abroad as a Linfield student, I suggest that you look into classes that will fulfill your major, minor and or LC requirements. A typical course load for an international student is 50-70 points, with classes being 15 to 20 points each; that means that, once you get your schedule finalized, you should be enrolled in three to four papers.

Get to know New Zealand. *Culture Shock: New Zealand* is a great start. This short book gives an encompassing view of many aspects of New Zealand, from stopping at dairies for a quick snack to the larger ethnic makeup of the country. If you can't find the book (for free or a relatively cheap price), ask others! I know that I personally love sharing my experience in New Zealand with others. Ask somebody out to coffee and learn about the New Zealand that they experienced. A simple internet search also wouldn't hurt.

Make sure you have the necessary shots. There shouldn't be any shots you have to have, but it's always safe to talk to a physician about traveling outside of the country in general. If there is any thing you need medically while in New Zealand, you should be able to get it without any problems. New Zealand has a very accessible healthcare system and you'll be

covered through StudentSafe, the insurance that the University of Waikato requires every international student to have.

Sort things out at your bank. Firstly, give your bank notice that you will be studying abroad for a semester so they don't block your credit card, thinking someone stole it. When it comes to how you plan to use money abroad, talk to your bank to find out the options that you have. One option is to convert U.S. Dollars to New Zealand Dollars here in the States, take that money abroad, and open a bank account at one of the branches on campus (either BNZ or ASB). I personally don't suggest this option because that means taking a large amount of money with you abroad as well as wiring money to yourself from the States if you needed more, and that usually includes a hefty processing fee. I talked with my bank about using my normal debit card in New Zealand. This worked as my card was a Visa card that was accepted most places and allowed me to withdraw money from ATMs. The only issue I had with my card was the fact that it was an international card, meaning that I couldn't use it at the local dairies and bakeries (which I frequented a lot). This meant that I did carry cash with me regularly. In all, talk with someone at your bank about what would financially be best for you while you are abroad.

Think about the tech you need. Purchase at least one voltage adapter and converter compatible with the voltage system used in New Zealand. You should be able to get them at a department store or online. All electronics you wish to take with you will need an adapter and some will need a converter. Make sure to use these devices with your electronics or you may fry them. I suggest taking a power strip that has a built-in surge protector for your room. This way you can maximize the few outlets that you have in your room and not have to buy an adapter for every single one of your electronic devices. If worse comes to worse, though, you can get any needed electronics at the Warehouse (it's kind of like a Walmart).

“Unlock your cell phone or purchase a cheap phone when you get to New Zealand. If you choose to take a phone with you from the States, make sure it is unlocked and that it will be able to function on any cell network. Once you are abroad you can purchase a sim card from a local phone company. If you choose to buy a phone when you get to New Zealand, know that electronics are more expensive and that a basic phone will cost at least \$30-\$100. By having your phone set up or buying a phone in New Zealand will allow you to contact your family.” This is the advice that the last person to edit this guide gave. Personally, I talked with my phone carrier about international plans because I knew that I was going to be calling and texting quite frequently to numbers in the States for work and such. Sadly, my phone died about a month into my trip, forcing me to buy a cheap phone so that I could still be in touch with others. I ended up getting a very cheap phone with a customizable phone plan from Vodafone. What you decide to do with your phone is dependent on how many calls or texts that you plan to make and send out. Maybe you won't have to buy a phone abroad as wifi is readily available on campus and there are many free wifi spots in populated areas that you can connect to.

Be active on social media or set up a blog. People will want to see what you are up to and it is the easiest way to communicate with a large amount of people without sending them individual messages to everyone. Writing down your experiences is also a great way for

you to remember what you did during your visit or help you to deal with homesickness. And don't forget to take pictures!

The day of your flight

Get to the airport early. You never know how busy the airport will be on the day of your flight, and you never know how long it'll take you to get through customs and TSA security. In the words of my mother: "you can never be too early."

Wear comfortable clothing. I don't know how long the flight from the West Coast to Auckland is, but it is nine hours from Hawaii, so be prepared for a long flight. I tend to wear sweatpants, a comfortable shirt, and a jacket. They also provide a blanket and pillow for the flight.

Bring snacks. Your flight will be long and, even though Air New Zealand provides at least two meals on their flights, you might get hungry. Pack food that is already processed (nothing fresh or raw) or buy something while you are at the airport. If you do take food with you onto the plane, you need to finish eating it before you land; you cannot bring food, fresh or not, into New Zealand.

Arriving at the University of Waikato:

The University of Waikato consists of approximately 15,000 students. It is a big difference from Linfield, but you'll be fine. The uni is located in Hamilton on the North Island of New Zealand. It is about an hour south of Auckland, and about an hour from the east and west coastlines. It is about 8-9 hours from the southern and northern tips of the island.

You will most likely be living on campus in either a fully-catered residence hall (dorm with meal plan) or a self-catered flat (apartment-like complex with no meal plan). You will get a swipe card for access into your building, a key to your room, and if you have a meal plan a swipe card for meals. I lived in Student Village, which has fully-catered and self-catered blocks, and I was self-catered and made my own food. I chose this option because I don't eat on a timed schedule, and because I enjoyed the freedom of making food that I knew I would eat instead of relying on a set system. I didn't hear much about the food, mostly because I didn't think to ask, but I know that the dining areas allowed for a lot of socializing that I definitely missed out on. Everyone in a hall eats meals, especially dinner, together so you get to know people fairly quickly. Keep in mind, though, that the catered meals are not all-you-can-eat like at Linfield, and only one option is served at each meal. Student Village (also known as StudVil) is the only living area on campus that has both fully- and self-catered students. The other fully-catered areas are College Hall and Bryant Hall with Bryant Hall being known for housing a number of the Pacific Islander students that attend Waikato. The other self-catered area is Orchard Park.

No matter where you end up living, the community that you encounter will become central to your life abroad. Whether you are living in a dorm situation or a flat situation, you'll make friends with the people in your vicinity as well as at block events put on by your RAs. These events include friendly sporting competitions, movie nights, and so forth. There are also various lounges (similar to rec rooms) located in your area where you can meet other students that happen to live nearby.

When you first arrive on campus, it will be Orientation Week. There won't be anyone in the halls except RAs and other international students. The International Programs Office will have an orientation for international students and I highly recommend attending. They will provide an introduction to the school and Hamilton, as well as information on how to finalize your timetable (class schedule). Here's a quick rundown of how finalizing your schedule is going to look like: based on the list of classes you made before getting to Hamilton, you are going to go to the "faculty" (department) that you have the most classes with. At their front desk, you'll be able to finalize your schedule. After that, you'll head to "Admissions" (Level 2 in Student Centre; very hard to miss) and they will make sure your dues are paid (which they should be) and you'll take your photo for your ID card. Know that the key card to your accommodation block and your student ID card are two separate things. The rest of O-Week is spent checking out various faculties and on-campus clubs and getting to know the campus before classes actually begin. O-Week and ReO-Week are also the times when the local clubs in Hamilton (The Hood, Bar 101 and The Outback) hold events for students. From personal experience, these events are super fun and because of the large number of uni students going, there is typically a bus service running specifically for students.

Papers (classes) will begin the following week during a time known as ReO-Week. This is the week in which a number of activities are happening on and off campus as students come back for either A or B Semester (A Semester is roughly late February through late June and B Semester is early July through late October). Essentially, ReO-Week is a revamp of O-Week. During both semesters, there is a one-week teaching recess that you can equate to Fall/Spring Break. This is a great time to travel with the new friends that you have made in the six or so weeks since you started at Waikato. There is also another week-long break right before finals (Dead Week). You can use this time to study, as some students do, but you could also use the time to explore more of the country before taking your finals; just be sure you know when your finals are so you don't accidentally skip one!

The rest of the program is pretty much what you make it. You will make friends if you put yourself out there and do things you might not normally do. Please note that it is reasonably easy to meet people even if you live in a flat; people will find out you're from the States and they'll have a lot of things that they want to ask you. I will say that you may need to be patient with some people because they may have preconceived notions about "Americans", but keep an open mind and calmly correct them in their thinking.

Suggestions for Packing:

If you are to attend Waikato in July, it will be winter when you get there and will be almost summer by the time you leave. If you are to attend in February, summer will be turning into fall and it will be wintery by the time you depart. Winter in Hamilton is very similar to winter in Oregon: it's rainy and chilly, but not cold enough to snow. No large winter jackets are needed unless you plan on skiing/snowboarding on the mountains.

As far as clothes go, I suggest packing normal 'go-to-class' clothes for school, dressier clothes for going out in town or any business-like opportunities that may arise, and clothes to workout or travel easily in. For some, school attire is much dressier than what is normally seen here at Linfield, but don't fret because others simply wear sweats. When it comes to class, wear what's comfortable for you. Club attire, on the other hand, is much dressier. I'll be honest and say that most times that I went out I was wearing a dress or patterned shorts with a dressy top, and I typically wear leggings and a hoodie 24/7. Another key thing for girls to remember is that you will not be let into a club or bar if your shoes don't have a back strap. Please keep that in mind! Guys, you can wear jeans out, but the norm is a collared shirt of some kind and nicer shoes. Kiwi friends can help you get dressed appropriately, but in the end dressier is better. It is also a good idea to have Kiwis accompany you to town the first few times to show you the ropes and steer you in the right direction.

Make sure to pack pictures and personal items that remind you of home. Shipping to New Zealand is very expensive, so anything that you think that you might want or need to help deal with homesickness should be brought with you.

When I went to New Zealand, I had one large checked bag, a duffle bag, and my backpack. This held everything that I needed. During my stay in New Zealand, though, I did buy and was gifted a number of things and I also brought home a number of my class materials because I knew it would be beneficial to me in the future. This led me to coming home with two checked bags and my backpack (the duffle was packed). Keep this in mind when you're packing because chances are you'll be bringing home more than you took with you.

What I suggest to pack:

- * A rain coat or an umbrella (Kiwi culture is not super big on rain coats; when it rains, you are more likely to see umbrellas than rain coats)
- * A fleece jacket... nothing super warm (unless you are planning on going skiing/boarding) but something to keep you warm none the less.
- * Shirts- from casual to workout to dress up; have a small assortment so that you can prepare for all possible occasions
- * Pants/shorts- jeans are perfectly acceptable for everyday life and you will want shorts for warmer weather
- * Jackets (jumpers) and sweatshirts- bring one or two jackets and a pullover sweatshirt; you can use them to keep warm (layering is something I did a lot of) and have them for those lazy days
- * Dresses- both casual day dresses and dressier night dresses
- * Leggings are super popular for girls

- * Footwear- Jandals (flip flops), tennis shoes, hiking boots if you plan on being outdoorsy, and fancier shoes for special events and going out (girls, remember that back strap)
- * A swimsuit just in case
- * Medicines you use daily as well as medicines that you would use if you got sick
 - § Ex. Benedryl, Tylenol or Advil, Dayquil or Nyquil, Pepto-Bismol etc.
- * Small purse with zipper
- * Backpack or other carry-on sized bag for weekend trips and trekking (hiking)
- * Computer (laptop)
- * Other electronic devices (cameras, tablets, etc.)
- * Chargers (for your computer, cell phone, etc.)
- * Small power strip (I took a power strip with an adapter so I could plug it into the wall and not have to use an adapter for each electronic device I needed to plug in)
- * Adapters (I took 3)
- * Surge Protector (most of your devices should be fine without one, but I definitely had a hair dryer short out on me)
- * Cell phone (for use in New Zealand)
- * Toiletries
 - § Pack most things in small bottles, you can buy shampoo, conditioners, soap, etc. all there; if you are adamant on having a particular brand, pack them into your checked bag in a plastic ziploc bag so that a mess is avoided should the liquids spill
- * Photos or the like to remind you of home (I suggest that you don't bring a lot because it will take up space in your bag)

Another thing to think about is that you will probably do some shopping in New Zealand, whether it is for souvenirs, things you forgot to pack or just to shop. Just down the road from campus is The Warehouse, and there are other stores like Kmart (nothing like the ones here in the States) and larger shopping centers within a 40-minute bus ride.

Other random notes

If you plan to go out to a club or any establishment that requires an ID, you need to have your passport on you. Your U.S. license or other ID will not work. You need your passport at all times as that is your main form of identification when abroad. My suggestion, especially if you are a girl with pants pockets that are not deep, is to find a passport holder that you can double as a wallet. This way you can keep your passport, money, and other important tidbits altogether.

The bus system in Hamilton as well as in New Zealand altogether, is great! The buses aren't sketchy or dirty or anything. They are a reliable form of transportation and one that I used constantly. During O-Week, they may give out BusIt cards and I suggest that you get one because not only will having a BusIt card lower how much you pay per trip, but I promise you that you will be using the local bus more than you think. Just be sure that, when

catching the bus, you get on the right one! There are two that you can catch from uni: one does a loop that essentially stays in the area around uni which includes the bus depot and “town” (the nearest area with shops, food, and entertainment) and the second bus (the Orbiter) does a larger route around all of Hamilton and makes stops at places like the Base (the better mall in the area). You can also look to take buses out to Ragland, Auckland, or Wellington. There are many options and, like I said, the buses are reliable.

If you get the chance, travel up North to the cape and down South to Queenstown. I will say that these two areas not only allowed me to take in the beauty of New Zealand, but I also had a ton of fun. You can do a lot in Hamilton and in the areas near Hamilton, but, if you can, explore! It’ll be worth it.

Well, that’s all the information that I have to share with you. I’m so excited that you are getting the opportunity to study abroad and that you chose New Zealand out of all places. In the short amount of time I was there I fell in love with the country and I can’t wait for you to experience it for yourself!

Have fun!

4 Ways People Steal Your Passport

by [Katherine LaGrave](#)

Beware of these four occurrences when traveling with a passport.

Sometimes, a bump, nudge, or distraction is all it takes.

The stolen passport market is huge: There are more than 40 million passports listed as missing on a database created by Interpol in 2002, and according to the U.S. Department of State, more than 300,000 American passports are lost or stolen in the U.S. each year. And given that these are the most common ways thieves have been known to pilfer a passport, it pays to be aware.

The set-down

It's easy enough to make a mistake with your documents when traveling—after all, how natural is it to put your passport on the table at a restaurant as you pull out a chair, or rest it on top of your suitcase as you check the departure board at an airport? I've done it, and I'm guessing you have, too. But take your eye off the document for a moment, and you open yourself up to the possibility of someone bumping your table (or bag) as a distraction—and walking away with your passport. Another one of the most common places for thieves to grab a passport is in a place where we actually need to produce it: checking in at a hotel overseas. Be wary of putting it to the left or right of you as you shuffle for your confirmation number or booking details, as someone could come along and create a distraction—think returning a key, or asking a question—and slip away with your document. Instead, place your passport on the counter in front of you, and immediately return it to its secure location after it is passed back to you.

The spill

It sounds slightly out of a Charlie Chaplin movie: seemingly innocent passers-by "spilling" anything from ice cream to juice on people they

pass. Yet there are worldwide reports of such instances, wherein a distraction is created, and in the process of aiding and cleaning the hapless victim, the "spillers"—or their associates—lift a passport. If you have the misfortune of being spilled on, refuse attendance and instead, avoid contact with the offender by quickly walking away.

[5 Ways to Keep Your Passport Safe When Traveling](#)

The pocket

It's obvious, sure, but one of the easiest ways for people to snatch your passport is if it's carried in your pockets: All it takes is a crowded train and a nudge—or a coat that's been draped over the back of a chair, and a sleight of hand. If you need to carry your passport with you, look for a flat money belt, which can be worn around your waist and neck and concealed under your clothing. If you're in the market for something a bit more comfortable, try a travel wallet or passport cover. Both conceal your passport (and nationality), and the travel wallet also has room for other valuables, including credit cards and emergency cash. Avoid carrying your passport and spending money together if you can, as taking out cash will alert potential thieves.

The authorities

In countries around the world, you'll most often be asked to produce your original passport at hotels and airports, or when crossing borders. Travelers have also reported instances in which policemen, plain-clothed or uniformed, approach them and ask to see their passports. Sometimes, the officials are actually as they say they are—numerous countries have plain-clothed officers asking for passports in order to catch illegal immigrants—but it's better to be safe than sorry. Signs that it probably isn't a scam: everyone else in your surrounding area is also being checked, security badges and patches are visible on the officer's uniform, and officials are not asking for anything but photo ID. If you feel you are being singled out and are still uncomfortable, agree to show your passport in the nearest police station or hotel lobby, where you can confirm with a clerk who speaks the native language.

Taking Prescription Medications Abroad:

While you're abroad is not the time to suddenly realize you ran out of your prescription!

If you have a condition that requires regular medication, bring an extra quantity with you and pack it in your carry-on, just in case your checked luggage gets lost. Just remember to keep it in its **original** container and **clearly** labeled — you don't want to create the impression you're carrying drugs which haven't been prescribed to you. In fact, you should [check with the local embassy](#) to make sure that your medication is acceptable to carry into the country. Some countries may consider your prescription medication to be **illegal**. Bring a letter from your doctor listing your medications and explaining why you need them. Doing your research and having a letter can help prevent any misunderstandings along the way.

Bring extras of any medical necessities you need, like contact lenses or glasses. You might want to pack a pair in both your carry-on bag and your checked luggage, just to be safe.

If you have allergies to certain medications, foods, insect bites, or other unique medical problems, consider wearing one of those "medical alert" bracelets and carry a letter from your doctor explaining required treatment if you become ill. It might not be the coolest piece of jewelry you wear, but it could save your life.

- Do you have prescription medications that will require you take a supply that will last for the duration of your program abroad?
- Will your insurance company allow for a prescription to be filled at one time to last for the duration of your program abroad?
- Is the prescription that you take classified as a narcotic and/or stimulant, and do you know if you will be allowed to enter your host country with the drug?

There is no one master list or web search that will give you a list of what medications are or are not allowed in every country you may visit while abroad, but it is important for you to do some research regarding studying abroad and your prescriptions.

- Have a conversation with your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your program abroad, to help you determine what, if any, medications you will need while you are abroad.
- Contact your insurance company at least 8 weeks before your program to discuss how best to fill a prescription that will need to last for the duration of your program abroad.
- Your insurance company may be able to advise you if your prescription is legal in the country in which your program will take place.
- Go to the host country's embassy website to see if drug rules and regulations are posted. For example:
- View the U.S. Department of State's Travel Information page:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html
[<http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html>](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html)
- View the U.S. Department of State's Custom and Import Restrictions page:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#customs
[<http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#customs>](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#customs)
- View the U.S. Department of State's Bringing Medications or Filling Prescriptions Abroad page: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#medications
[<http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#medications>](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#medications)
- View the U.S. Department of State's Country Specific Information; click on a country and then read Medical Facilities and Health Information:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html
[<http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html>](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html)
- Have a conversation with your local county health department.
- Contact Mobility International, located in Eugene, Oregon:



Surviving a Protest

Product of the Research & Information Support Center (RISC)

The following report is based on open source reporting.

August 7, 2014

Introduction

Travelers are regularly cautioned about protest activity when visiting a foreign country. The U.S. Department of State, for example, consistently encourages citizens to “avoid all demonstrations, since even peaceful gatherings can quickly turn violent” – a phrase common to many Consular messages. However, a deeper understanding of what motivates protest activity, and who or what the intended targets are, can be useful tools for educating travelers.

The Nature of a Protest

According to a 2013 [report](#) by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, a German non-profit organization that promotes democracy and political education, the global number of protests has increased every year from 2006 (59) through the first half of 2013 (112). [Note: these were protests covered in online news media. The countries analyzed represent 92 percent of the world’s population] While protests take place throughout the world, where they occur is not always a good indicator of how they will proceed. A country with a peaceful tradition of rallying can experience violence, while another with a more acrimonious style can experience no incidents at all. For example, in Cambodia, generally known for a peaceful tradition, demonstrators and police have recently come to blows over anti-government sentiment as well as a demand for a higher minimum wage among garment workers. In South Africa, known as the “[protest capital of the world](#)” and where violence is not a rarity, most demonstrations end peacefully and without incident. Demonstrations can also take place in countries not known for having any protest tradition at all, such as in Iran during the 2009 Green Movement, or in Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and Libya during the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings.

Protests by Region – 2006-2013

	Total	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013*
High-Income (Region)	304	17	25	25	35	44	57	60	41
Latin America/Caribbean	141	14	12	15	12	21	22	25	20
East Asia/ Pacific	83	3	9	10	9	12	20	11	9
Sub-Saharan Africa	78	7	6	8	8	5	18	15	11
Middle East/North Africa	77	3	11	6	7	11	18	15	6
Global	70	7	5	8	8	8	10	14	10
Europe/Central Asia	47	3	4	4	4	7	6	11	8
South Asia	43	5	5	4	4	8	2	9	6
World Total	843	59	77	80	87	116	153	160	111

Data provided by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

** As of July 2013*

By their nature, protests also attract attention. They can be exciting events, and for a foreigner, provide an up-close look at a country’s political landscape. But the advice to avoid them is not dispensed arbitrarily. An overzealous demonstrator can incite a crowd; individuals with ulterior motives can infiltrate an otherwise peaceful rally; a heavy-handed police response can provoke an aggressive reaction from gatherers. When this happens, onlookers can pay the price. This past May, a bystander was killed by a stray bullet during an anti-government protest in Istanbul, Turkey. Authorities in southern China acknowledged that police “may have accidentally injured...bystanders” during an April protest against a chemical plant in Guangdong province. During Egyptian riots in June 2013, an American college student was stabbed to death as he took photographs of the unfolding violence. What starts as simple curiosity can easily turn into a fight to stay out of harm’s way.

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.

Indicators Can Help

There are indicators, however, that can be helpful to any traveler when assessing the probability for protests, and how they will play out. Anti-government protests, for instance, may not be as likely to target foreigners as they would police officers or nearby property (although the death of the American student referenced above shows this is not always true). Destroying property can be a way of not only displaying intense dissatisfaction with conditions in the country, but also attempting to undermine the government. This was the case in Thailand in 2010, when anti-government protesters targeted not only government buildings, but also commercial facilities. The same was true for 2010 anti-government/-austerity protests in Greece. In both cases, foreigners were not directly targeted, and in Thailand, they were actually greeted warmly if they happened to pass by the event.

A protest against another country, on the other hand, might not result in widespread violence, but particular people and properties could be vulnerable. This past May, [anti-Chinese protests in Vietnam](#) targeted what were perceived to be Chinese-affiliated companies and factories following a maritime dispute between the two countries. In July, [anti-Israeli protests in Germany and France](#) led to the attack of synagogues and Jewish businesses in those countries.

There are also a number of issues that seem to bring protesters to the street regardless of location. For example, citizens accustomed to government subsidies (fuel, transportation, etc.) can quickly mobilize if their entitlements are threatened in any way; violent clashes in the streets of Jakarta in 2013 following a reduction of fuel subsidies are a prime example. The suspicion of electoral fraud is another key catalyst, as was evident during protests in Russia following disputed 2011 legislative elections. Another major indicator pertains to infringements-- real or perceived-- on basic democratic rights. Residents of Hong Kong, for example, regularly take to the streets to demand greater democratic freedom.

The Likeliest Scenario

More than likely, the biggest impact to travelers during a demonstration will be transportation difficulties, including blocked roads, crowded public transportation, and congested traffic. A lot of protests advertise in advance where and when they will take place, which makes a traveler's job of planning to get around them easier. Even for the ones that do not, it should become pretty clear what area(s) to avoid as numbers amass. Social media can be a great tool for collecting information; organizers and participants are likely to tweet about the event or post pictures to Facebook, Instagram, or a popular local social network (such as VKontakte in Russia). During past protests, OSAC constituents have allowed employees to work remotely or even take the day off when demonstration activity encroaches on work sites or precludes safe commuting. Over periods of sustained protest activity, employers have deferred travel, and in some cases, removed personnel from the city or country entirely. Each organization is responsible for its own plan, but understanding the fundamentals is a good start to making one.

Additional Information

For recent OSAC analysis on other regional protests, please see the below reports:

[Middle East Conflict Fuels Europe Protests](#)
[Haiti Opposition Protests](#)
[Northern Ireland Orangemen Parade Volatility](#)
[Royal Thai Army Invokes Martial Law](#)
[May Day](#)

For Further Information

Please direct any questions regarding this report to OSAC's [Cross Regional Analyst](#).

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Don't Go Soft on Study Abroad: a Call for Academic Rigor

*The following is a guest post by **William G. Moseley**, chair and professor of geography at Macalester College. He has worked and conducted research in Africa for 25 years.*

Study abroad can be a powerful experience for many students. A student's trip overseas can be one of those transformative educational periods after which a young person will never look at the world the same way again. Yet many students, faculty members, and college administrators don't take this education as seriously as they should.



Study-abroad students bird watching in Botswana's Okavango Delta.

Let's be frank, some students view study abroad as a vacation or at least a time when normal academic standards ought to be relaxed. But as an instructor and director on two different study-abroad programs for undergraduates in South Africa and Botswana, I have sought to expose participants to new cultures and provide academically rigorous courses.

Many students initially chafed at the large amount of reading and writing, in addition to original fieldwork, that I assigned during these programs. Not only did some start

the program with an educational holiday in mind, but they saw students in other study-abroad programs not working as hard. Knowing my interest in having them have cross-cultural experiences, my students would couch their concerns about the workload in terms of not having sufficient time to travel and interact with the local population. How could I deny them exploring southern Africa?, they asked.

Occasionally, a class of students confronts me directly about the workload. This happened a little over halfway through the term in my most recent study-abroad teaching experience in Botswana. Students asked me point-blank how my courses compared in difficulty to those I teach at my home institution. I indicated that the classes I offered in Africa were actually a little less challenging as I was trying to account for the added stress of unfamiliar surroundings and less reliable infrastructure. Their collective gasp was audible; they shook their heads in disbelief. However, in explaining why the academic requirements of the program could not be relaxed, we had one of the more interesting discussions of the term.

I shared my view that a successful study-abroad experience often means at least two things: 1) getting outside of your own cultural head space (that is, coming to understand that other cultures may have very different, yet equally valid, approaches to life); and 2) knowing enough background information about a place, its history, and connections to other parts of the world to really understand what you are seeing. Of course the two criteria are often linked; you can't set aside your own cultural prejudices until you understand why other people do things the way they do. Furthermore, learning enough to get a handle on what you are seeing requires hard work. That is, it means critically reading the academic publications about a place, discussing those insights with your peers, and synthesizing your understanding by writing.

Over time, my students began to value the rigor with which we explored this new area of the world, and the nuanced insights and deeper personal growth that it eventually yielded. For example, these students lived in a rural home for a time in the second half of the semester. This experience produced some beautiful reflections on what it meant to be with a local family. Gone were the shallow complaints about inefficient bureaucracy, the slow pace of life, or bad food from earlier in the term. Instead, the students showed a better ability to contextualize poverty, a greater appreciation for taking the time to get to know someone, or understanding Botswana on its own terms and in relation to the region, rather than just comparing it with American norms and practices.

Could we have done better? Yes, certainly. But I am also aware of the fact that we could have done a lot worse. It is expensive to have someone like me, a scholar of western and southern Africa, to relocate for a term (with his family no less) to teach a

course or two. It is far cheaper to subcontract study abroad to third-party providers. While many such organizations are excellent, some may be tempted to hire less-than-qualified teachers who were never (or are no longer) active scholars, and succumb to student pressure for less academic rigor because their business model demands it.

The reality is that the study-abroad experiences can be orchestrated quite poorly, potentially leaving students with a highly superficial, if not deeply flawed, understanding of another area of the world, not to mention a false sense of regional expertise.

So my hard advice is this: If you are a student looking for a study-abroad “vacation,” then either think about this opportunity anew and look for a rigorous program, or don’t go at all. If you are a faculty member looking to take a group of students overseas, get the necessary training and make sure you have the place-relevant research background to be a competent study-abroad instructor.

Finally, if you are an administrator that oversees study-abroad programs, then please treat this semester the same as you would the rest of an undergraduate’s career. If you are unwilling to compromise quality and provide education on the cheap at home, then a semester abroad should be no different.

[Photo courtesy of William G. Moseley]