Sending Students Abroad

Malgorzata Hedderick, Associate Dean
Josh Nupp, Assistant Dean
Global Education and Career Development
1. Approach student support as a three-part process.

- Planning and preparation
  - Health and safety
  - Cultural preparation
  - Logistical preparation
- In-country experience
  - Awareness and using the information gained during preparation
- Re-entry
  - Reflection, articulating gains (in discipline, cultural, career-related)
2. Plan ahead and set expectations.

- **Trip leader**
  - Who will be in charge of the group and what will be his/her responsibilities?
  - What training will they need to be well prepared for the role?
  - Travel approval (possibly seeking waiver)/Possible trip cancellation

- **In-country contact(s): English-speaking contact person/host**
  - Ask for information about nearby hospitals and English-speaking doctors
  - Confirm the best way for the group to reach the contact(s) in case of emergency

- **Clear communication protocol**
  - Agree upon and communicate to the group the emergency protocol: card w/ this information; confirm the protocol for communication between the trip leader and MIT faculty and administrators
3. Help students take ownership.

- Passports / Visas / Immigration
  - Confirm passport validity (90 days after return)
  - Research and apply for visa if needed
  - International students must meet with ISO

- Finances
  - Inform bank / credit card of travel plans
  - Set and stick to a budget
  - Have multiple ways to access money

- Communication
  - Share trip details and preparation with parents
  - Set communication plan and frequency
3. Help students take ownership.

- **Health and Safety**
  - Make appointment at Travel Clinic (if needed)
  - Obtain / confirm adequate health insurance coverage
  - Research local health / safety issues
  - Familiarize yourself with local laws and cultural norms
  - Fill out Risk Acknowledgement Form

- **Travel Registration**
  - Enter emergency info in MIT-Horizons
  - Register with ISOS and US Department of State (STEP)

- Awareness of the host culture: reading news, participating in programming before leaving

- Awareness of local customs, cultural norms and religion

- Awareness of student’s own culture: discussion of possible questions or discussion topics that can come up abroad

- Intercultural awareness: IDI as a useful tool for preparation
5. Revisit local risks and resources upon arrival.

- Remind the group about local safety issues and resources (U.S. Embassy, local emergency numbers, hospitals) upon arrival
- Discuss common health and safety issues
  - Alcohol and drugs
  - Automobiles and transportation
  - Petty theft and pick-pocketing
- Test emergency response protocol on-site
- Behavior / common sense are biggest determining factors of safety overseas
6. Reflect, evaluate and improve.

- Engage students in self-reflection upon return
  - Written or in-person (group or individual) reflection
  - Select peer mentors for marketing and advising purposes
- Seek feedback from students on all program aspects (preparation, logistics, health/safety, etc.)
- Redesign or tweak future programs as needed