Global Risks: Graduate Student Resources for Responsible Travel Preparation

Academic Year 2015-2016

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Overview

International risk management is managed by The Office Global Safety and Security

Mission

– Provide an comprehensive approach to international risk management for students, faculty and staff
– Reports to the Provost’s Office

Staff

– Director, Administrative Assistant, and Coordinator of Security Information and Analysis (to be posted in 2016)

Daily operations/regular activities

– Monitor world events/assess & mitigate security risks
– Respond to student incidents/needs here and abroad
– Increase quality of (and access to) pre-departure training/preparation
Agenda & Goals

Health and Wellness
  • Pre-departure medical needs (immunizations, medications, etc.)
  • On-site medical needs
  • Sexual harassment/assault

Risk Management
  • Identifying/understanding risk
  • Preparing for emergencies
If you are going to have a problem, it’s likely going to be a medical problem
Most Likely Medical Problems

• Management of a pre-existing condition
• Negative prescription drug interactions
• Alcohol or other drugs (prescribed & illegal)
• Vehicle or sports injury
• And in developing countries, we mostly see:
  – Gastrointestinal illness
  – Insect-borne illness
  – Eye infections
A HTH Worldwide international medical insurance plan is required of all Northwestern students going overseas on university-sponsored travel (unless you are a citizen of the destination). The cost is $9.80/wk.

- Pre-departure consults
- Routine, non-emergency care (appointment assistance)
- Continuing services needed for pre-ex condition
- Emergency treatment for accidents, injuries, illness, etc.
- Evacuation (medical AND security/natural disaster)
- Mental health services (counseling/therapy)
- Care coordination/quality assurance
- Prescription medication
- Repatriation of remains
- Death benefit

Exclusions: skin/scuba diving, sky diving, hang gliding, bungee jumping
On-Call Coverage Insufficient

- AETNA does not offer pre-departure consults for the management of pre-existing conditions while abroad (or the arrangement for prescription refills)
- AETNA requires pre-authorization for treatment abroad
- AETNA typically requires the patient to pay upfront for care and seek reimbursement upon return to the States
- AETNA does not cover re-booking fees if a serious medical problem prevents returning to the U.S. as scheduled

- Both plans cover medical, political or security natural disaster, but only HTH has experience working with NU on such returns
Pre-existing Conditions

• Discuss your travel plans with your current health care provider

• Disclose *chronic conditions* a member of HTH’s Global Health Team to determine availability of medications and plan for contingencies:
  – 610-254-8771
  – globalhealth@hthworldwide.com
  – julie.friend@northwestern.edu

• Travelers with disabilities and/or chronic conditions can have successful experiences with appropriate pre-departure planning
Mental Health

It is not uncommon for travelers to experience the following while abroad:

- General anxiety
- Academic concern
- Depression
- Eating concerns
- Hostility
- Substance use or abuse

If your symptoms prevent you from functioning, please ask for help!
Gastro-Intestinal

- Cramping
- Bloating
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Other causes (less likely):
  - Appendicitis
  - Urinary tract infection
- Try not to panic
- Drink lots of fluids
- Rest/Relax
- Report symptoms if severe or unchanged in 24 hours
Insect-borne illness

- Malaria, Dengue Fever, Chickungunya and Zika are serious, sometimes fatal illnesses.
- Transmission often results in flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, muscle or bone aches, fatigue, etc.).
- Exposure can be significantly reduced by:
  - Sleeping under insecticide-treated bed nets, using insect repellent with 20% DEET, and wearing long-sleeved clothing at dawn/dusk.
  - If appropriate, taking prophylactic medications as prescribed.
Eye Infections

- Common for contact lens wearers in developing countries and residing in rural areas with limited access to clean water
- Be mindful of handling your lenses – make sure that your hands and any storage devices are kept clean
- If you experience any eye discomfort, stop wearing lenses immediately
  - Serious complications, gone untreated, can permanently impact sight
Ebola in West Africa
Warning: Avoid Nonessential Travel to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone

VACCINES. MEDICINES. ADVICE.
Immunizations

• Check the CDC’s Travelers’ Health site for information about required and recommended vaccines
  – Visit a medical professional trained in Travel Medicine
  – Take the CDC guidelines and be prepared to talk about your destination and activities

• Only YOU can decide what is best for you based on your proposed activities and health history

Use this chance to get up-to-date on your routine immunizations!
Immunizations, cont.

- Routine vaccinations include Chicken pox (Varicella); Hepatitis A; Hepatitis B; Influenza; Pneumococcal; Polio; Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR); Meningitis and Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (DTP); and now HPV
  - If you need adult boosters for any of the above, the cost should be covered by your health care plan

- If applicable, visit the Northwestern Medicine (NM) Travel Clinic in downtown Chicago or Glenbrook Hospital (Glenview)
AETNA Covers Travel Vaccines

• NU Aetna Student Health covers travel vaccines the same as other routine immunizations
• Referrals are not required, but you must use providers that are in Network
• For more information review the NU/Aetna Plan Homepage or call Aetna Student Health Customer Service at 877.626.2314 or email the NU Student Insurance Office at student.insurance@northwestern.edu
Non-emergency Needs Abroad

• Contact HTH for a physician's referral/appointment or work with local resource to an appointment
  – If you DO NOT make the appointment through HTH, you will usually pay out-of-pocket and seek reimbursement

• Do not put off your need for care – especially if you are feeling ill close to the weekend

• Do not spend all your local currency before going to the airport on your return – you may need it to cover emergency care
Medical Emergency

- Go to the nearest treating facility and call HTH at (610) 254-8771
- Provide your name, certificate number, hospital name, location and telephone number
- Direct billing is often available for hospital admits, but only at the intake stage

✓ Then contact NU by calling your program director, advisor or the NUPD at (847) 491-3456
Risk Management 101

- Risk management is the identification, assessment, and prioritization of risks followed by coordinated and economical application of resources to minimize, monitor, and control the probability and/or impact of unfortunate events.

From Wikipedia

Nicaragua
Possible Risks for Travelers

- Health problems
  - Pre-existing condition gone awry
  - Localized cause (food, water, insect, etc.)
  - Accident/Injury (activity-related)
- Harassment (gender, race, ethnicity, religion, etc.)
- Petty crime (pick-pocking, purse snatching)
- Violent crime (robbery, home invasion)
- Car-motorcycle-moped accidents
- Alcohol-related illness or injury

- Civil unrest/public protests
- Terrorism
- Sexual assault
- Drowning
- Animal bites
- Arrest
- Kidnapping
- Identity theft

Israel
UB student dies in New Zealand kayak accident

George Washington University student drowns off coast of South Africa

University student passes away in car crash while studying abroad

Duke TODAY

[Updated May 1] Authorities Locate Body Of Swarthmore Student In Duke Study Abroad Program

The student was pulled out to sea while swimming off the coast of Costa Rica.

Topics for this story: Campus News

Boston University mourns death of 3 students in New Zealand van crash

A University student died in a car accident Monday while studying abroad in South Africa.
How to Manage Risk

• Get Informed
  • Security: State Department Info
    • http://travel.state.gov
  • Health: HTH & the CDC
    • http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel
  • Culture: Travel Guides/Faculty

• Prepare for the unexpected/plan
  • Predictable Emergencies
    • Illness/Injury
    • Petty crime
    • Political protests
  • Communications

Morocco
Quick Facts

PASSPORT VALIDITY: 6 months

VACCINATIONS: Suggested

BLANK PASSPORT PAGES: 2 pages required for entry stamp

CURRENCY RESTRICTIONS FOR ENTRY: None

TOURIST VISA REQUIRED: Not required for stays under 90 days

CURRENCY RESTRICTIONS FOR EXIT: None

U.S. Consulate General
Johannesburg
1 Sandton Drive (opposite Sandton City Mall)
Johannesburg 2196
South Africa

Telephone
(27-11) 290-3000 (from South Africa 011-290-3000)

Emergency Telephone
(011) 290-3000 or 079-111-1684 (outside South Africa: 27 79-111-1684)

Fax
(27-11) 884-0396 (from South Africa (011-884-0396)

Email
consularjohannesburg@state.gov

U.S. Consulate General
Johannesburg
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PURPOSE: To notify U.S. citizens/nationals in the event of a disaster, emergency or other crisis, and for evacuation coordination, the information solicited on this form may be made available as a routine use to appropriate agencies whether federal, state, local, or foreign, to assist the Department in the evacuation or provision of emergency service to U.S. citizens, or for law enforcement purposes. The information is also made available to private U.S. citizens, known as wardens, designated by U.S. Embassies to assist in communicating with the U.S. Citizen community in an emergency.

I have read the terms of the Privacy Act Notice *
Entry/Exit

• **Confirm** compliance with any necessary visas to travel to, and remain in, your destination country legally by reviewing entry/exit requirements with the applicable [foreign embassy](#).

• **Ensure** that your passport is valid for at least six months beyond your planned return date to avoid any confrontation with customs or immigration officials during your time abroad.
Int’l Students and Scholars

• If you are an international student or scholar (F-1 or J-1 visa holder), you must **comply** with **all overseas travel requirements** outlined by the International Office, or risk facing detention by the Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officials upon return to the U.S. The OGSS has no authority with the CBP and cannot intervene on a traveler’s behalf.
Higher-Risk Locations

• **Sign and Submit** a Graduate Student Travel Warning waiver/release if your destination is on the [U.S. DOS Travel Warning](#) list

• OGSS can provide special assistance for travel to high risk areas (conflict zones, post-conflict zones, remote locations, etc.)
  
  – Specialized assessments by security assistance providers
  – Contact with U.S. Department of State security analysts
  – Referral to NGOs or corporate security specialists located in the same area
Situational Awareness

• Assess your transportation options
  – As local contacts about the safest routes, modes and times of travel - **always wear seat belts!!**
  – Consider driving yourself a last resort
• Learn about cultural customs that can enhance your safety
  – Alternatively, be mindful of customs or habits that may unintentionally offend, and jeopardize your safety
• Be mindful of your surrounds
  – Select your walking routes with care
  – Go where the people are
  – Avoid unlit paths and dark alleys
Theft Deterrence

• Clean out your wallet before travel and take only necessary items
• Make a color photocopy of your passport and carry this with you at all times while abroad
  – Keep your original passport in the hotel safe
• Keep close watch on your items – never leave them unattended
• Cross handbag strap over the neck and shoulder
• Men – keep wallet in front, not back, pocket
Sexual Misconduct Abroad

• Perpetrators are not generally strangers, but usually local acquaintances
  • Some of whom may be known to prey on travelers
• Contributing factors include cultural differences, weak social networks, differing laws or attitudes regarding sexual harassment assault
  • Predators often use alcohol or drugs to incapacitate their targets
• Overseas survivors are often reluctant to see support services due to these and other factors

See this brand new website:
Information and Options for Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Abroad
Special Risks: Female Researchers

What Happens in the Field

August 13, 2014
By Colleen Flaherty

A young female researcher is working at a field site in a foreign country. She and her supervising professor visit a local town and strike up a conversation with a woman in her native language. Midway through, the professor turns to the graduate student to compliment the local woman’s breasts in English. The comment nags at the student, but at the time she chalks it up to what she calls “hazing” at the work site; after all, her mostly male colleagues make lewd comments about her breasts as well, and sometimes leave pornographic photos on her desk. It’s all a joke.

Develop an EAP

• Consider potential real and perceived emergencies
  – Health problems
  – Criminal activity
  – Lost/stolen documents
  – **Road/water/fire safety**
  – Protests/strikes/poor weather and impact on travel

• Develop communication plans/contacts
• Designate primary and secondary safe place
• Report status to home campus/provider/supervisor/family or friends
Communication/Contacts

Know all relevant contact information:

• Local medical / emergency contacts
• NU emergency contacts
• Local law enforcement
• Host emergency contacts
• Other student(s) contact info
• Relevant NU contacts
• NUPD: 847-491-3456
• HTH Worldwide: 610-254-8771

Share this information with your family

England
Communication

- Agree on communication protocols with your sponsor AND your family (phone, text, email, Facebook...)
- Acknowledge the personalities of family members who may have a lower tolerance for risk or a higher level of overall anxiety

Gawker.com – March 2013

World's Most Embarrassing Mom Makes Peruvian Government Hunt Down Her Son When He Stops Posting on Facebook

Sometimes moms do cool things like drive you to the mall and let you borrow/keep forever $20. Mostly, though, they are embarrassing.

Take for instance, Garrett's mom.

In November, 25-year-old Garrett Hand and his 25-year-old girlfriend Jamie Neal flew from their California home to South America for a four-month bike trip. Before the couple left, they informed their friends and family that, for some of their trip (as they traveled through jungles and rainforests), they would be out of cellphone and Internet range.

In January, they passed out of cellphone range. In February, Garrett’s mom demanded the Peruvian government launch a full-scale search for the couple, whom she believed to be missing.
Channel Your Efforts

Think More About:

- Alcohol Use/Abuse
- General Health
- Vehicle/Pedestrian Safety
- Lost/Stolen Passports
- Petty Crime
- Harassment (all types)
- Water Safety
- Civil Unrest

Think Less About:

- Terrorism
- Natural Disasters
- Violent Crime
Your Takeaways

• Discuss pre-existing \textit{chronic} health conditions with your current provider to plan for overseas management
  – Enroll in HTH ($9.80/week) through the Office of Risk Management
• Comply with \textbf{all overseas travel requirements} outlined by the International Office (int’l students and scholars)
• Submit \textbf{special release} for travel in countries under U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings
• THINK about your risks and PLAN a response
• Register with the U.S. DOS’s \textbf{Smart Traveler Enrollment Program} (STEP)
Thank You!

Julie Friend, Director, Global Safety and Security

- julie.friend@northwestern.edu
- (847) 467-3175
- (847) 491-3456 (PD)
RESOURCES
Pre-departure Questions?

Contact A Travel Health Professional or Treating Physician
• Pre-departure Medical Needs (Immunizations/Medications)
• Managing a Pre-existing Conditions Abroad

Contact Julie Anne Friend
• HTH Worldwide
• Consideration for Managing a Pre-existing Condition Abroad
• Arranging On-site Medical Support

Contact CAPS
• Student Mental Health/Travel Stress

Contact CARE
• Sexual Health Abroad
• Survivor Support

Contact A Program Director, Faculty Leader or Trip Administrator
• Social, educational and work-based cultural adjustment tips
• Information about crime and safety, in-country travel
HTH Contact Info

Students with disabilities and/or chronic conditions can travel abroad successfully with appropriate pre-departure planning

• Contact HTH by phone or email:
  – Call the Global Health Team (GHT) at (610) 254-8771
  – Email the GHT at globalhealth@hthworldwide.com

• Or, touch base with NU’s Office of Global Safety and Security:
  – Beth Osterlund, Administrative Assistant
  – Julie Anne Friend, Director
Health-related Links

• HTH Worldwide (policy details + enrollment info)
  [http://www.northwestern.edu/risk/insurance/study-travel-abroad-health/index.html](http://www.northwestern.edu/risk/insurance/study-travel-abroad-health/index.html)

• CDC Travelers’ Health

• For Chicago-area country health facilities
  [http://www.idph.state.il.us/local/chicago.htm](http://www.idph.state.il.us/local/chicago.htm)

• For the rest of the country, see
Safety-related links

• U.S. Department of State (country-specific information)
  http://travel.state.gov/

• U.S. DOS site for Students Abroad
  http://studentsabroad.state.gov/

• Lonely Planet travel guides
  http://www.lonelyplanet.com/

• Fire, water and road safety
  http://www.firesafetyfoundation.org/worldwide-fire-safety.html
  http://www.asirt.org/