

TIPS FOR STUDENTS – SUMMER WORKSHOP IN LISBON

- Check out the **US State Department**'s suggestions for U.S. students abroad at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/students.html> and their checklist at: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-checklist.html>
- **Power of Attorney:** You should consider granting Power of Attorney to someone you trust to take care of official or legal business in your absence. A Power of Attorney form is a legal document that gives the person of your choice the legal power to act on your behalf. This will be useful to you while you are abroad and are not able to personally deal with your bank, your home university, or other government or private offices. You can find a Power of Attorney form at office supply stores or online. It must be completed and notarized to be legally binding.
- **Passport:** You must have a passport in order to travel internationally. Getting a passport is one of the first steps you should take once you have decided to study abroad. If you do not have a valid one or if it is about to expire, consult the US State Department site and get a passport as soon as possible at a local post office; you may want to pay extra to expedite it. You do not need a Visa for most European countries, such as England and those part of the EU. Make a copy of your passport and keep it in a safe place in your local address.
- **Health:** You should make sure to take all the medications you need, and a copy of your prescription. Have sufficient quantities of prescription medication (and contacts, if needed) to last through your time abroad. Get the generic name of your prescription medication(s) in case you need to buy local. It might be a good idea to visit your doctor, dentist, and optometrist, etc., for a check-up.
- **Insurance:** Contact your insurance company to know their international coverage; some allow you to buy extra coverage for your travel. You should consider buying specific travel insurance through a trusted international company (see several on-line cheap options such as USA Assist and Allianz), as well as additional personal property and personal liability coverage.
- **Safety Abroad:** Maintaining safety abroad is much like at home: Use common sense, travel in groups, be aware of your surroundings, and be alert to your environment. You must take responsibility for your own safety. Be informed and make smart choices. Familiarize yourself with local conditions and laws in the areas to which you plan to travel. Research how people from your country, race, ethnic group, religion, gender, and sexual orientation are viewed or treated. Always be aware of your surroundings, and do not behave in a way that detracts from that awareness (alcohol consumption, extensive attention to your cell phone or other electronic devices, wearing headphones, etc.).
- **General Safety Tips:** You are expected to adhere to the legal system of the country you will be visiting, as well as abide by the local university's code of conduct.
 - Carry contact information for on-site staff and local emergency services at all times.
 - Keep the group well-informed of your whereabouts and activities, and provide the faculty and your colleagues with your contact information.
 - Keep copies of your important travel documents (passport, visa, plane tickets, and prescriptions).
 - Keep an eye at your personal belongings at all times, particularly in airports, stations, and crowded situations. Watchout for pickpockets and never carry a backpack without being fully aware of your surroundings at all times.
 - Always walk with someone you know whenever possible, especially at night.
 - Stay in well-lit areas. If you feel uncomfortable in a situation, walk away.
 - If you experience a troubling situation, report the incident to faculty as soon as possible.

- **Substance Abuse:** The use and abuse of alcohol and drugs abroad increases the risk of accident, injury, and victimization. In many countries, being found guilty of violating alcohol or drug laws can result in serious consequences, including jail. Portugal has a different attitude about drinking and the legal drinking age than the US. But you must remember you are not in your normal environment. While it may be common abroad to find alcohol served with meals and when socializing, being drunk is never socially acceptable. Drunk driving, in addition to the obvious dangers, carries heavy penalties abroad. Alcohol is involved in the vast majority of student incidents and is therefore discouraged.
- **Illegal Drugs:** The use or possession of illegal drugs or paraphernalia is not tolerated by the host university and can result in fines, imprisonment, expulsion, deportation, exile from that country, and/or other serious consequences. In addition, it can put you in potentially dangerous situations. Visit the US Department of State's website for more information.
- **Nightlife:** Going out and experiencing nightlife is part of the living abroad experience. However, the same rules for behavior in your home country should govern your activities abroad. Behave in a mature and responsible manner; never do anything that puts you or others at risk, or makes you uncomfortable; research which types of transportation will be running late at night, always make a plan for getting home safely, and travel in pairs whenever possible.
- **Cash:** It is helpful to have approximately \$200 (in small bills) in local currency upon arrival, especially if you arrive on a holiday, outside of normal working hours, or the ATM is broken. This can be obtained before departure in most international airports or major banks. It is not recommended to carry large amounts of cash. Many restaurants and local establishments may only take cash, and may not separate checks for large parties.

- **Debit Cards:** ATMs and debit cards often have the best exchange rate for withdrawing money from your home bank account in the local currency. They also offer 24-hour accessibility. Check with your bank at home to make sure your card is approved for use abroad and to determine any charges related to using it internationally, as there are usually currency conversion fees for each withdrawal. Be aware of the daily withdrawal limit for your debit card. In some countries, ATMs will not accept a PIN longer than four digits or that starts with zero. This can be an issue with older ATMs, so contact your bank beforehand to resolve any possible conflicts and to possibly change your PIN number.

Let your credit card and bank know the dates and locations of your travels abroad - they may cancel your card if they see unexpected charges in foreign countries! Because transaction fees can add up, we recommend minimizing the number of transactions - a suggestion that requires a little bit of planning.

- **Credit Cards:** Visa and MasterCard are the most widely accepted abroad. You should let your credit card company know when and where you will be traveling, and confirm that your card can be used abroad. Consider requesting a 4-digit PIN to use (like you would with a debit card), verify your daily limit, and check if there are any service fees/restrictions. Many credit cards do not charge a fee or percentage for the currency exchange rate. Just in case, be prepared to have another form of payment in the event you cannot use your credit card.

- **Electricity and Compatibility:** Outlets and sockets are different around the world, and electrical voltage varies from country to country. Laptops, phones, and appliances brought from home will have a different plug shape or will end up shorting out. The plug shape adopted in Portugal and in the EU are different and in the US, as is the voltage (230V). You will need a plug adapter as in the photo (available in most electronic stores). Most laptops and smart phones are dual voltage (110/240V) and do not need a converter, but you should check yours. Be careful, if you use an US electronic that does not have its own voltage converter, you will fry it and risk starting a fire!



- **Cell Phones:** You may decide to purchase and use a local pay-as-you-go cell phone while abroad, although such phones are not the best way to remain in contact with friends and family at home. The cost will vary depending on your plan, phone usage, and location. You can use your current phone but you need to ask your cellular provider at home to determine if your phone will work in the country where you will be studying and if upgrading to an international plan would save you Money (probably not). If so, you may be able to unlock the international roaming service to allow calls while abroad. Consider having your phone unlocked so you can replace your current SIM card with a local SIM

card (each SIM card has its own number). This will allow you to make and receive local calls, in addition to calling home (roaming charges may apply). **Share your phone numbers with your colleagues and faculty.**

- **Keeping a sketch book / journal:** During this trip you will be asked to keep a sketch book / journal where you will be asked to sketch places and document your experience. Not only does it provide a valuable record of memories, but it may also help to clarify your attitudes and values. You may be surprised by your own insights. Include thoughts about your initial reaction to the culture, the people, the food, and anything else that leaves an immediate impression.
- **Blogging:** A great way to publish your feelings, experiences, and adventures and to keep in touch with your friends and family. There are many free, easy-to-use blogging sites available. This is great for students who want to keep their friends and family updated as the travel unfolds. Blogs also enable you to post pictures along with your writing and are highly customizable, allowing you to express your creativity and personality in more than just words.
- **Avoid airport frustration:**
 - Make sure you buy your ticket under the exact name that appears on your ID.
 - Check the most recent airport security procedures and luggage restrictions, including weight limitations.
 - Know TSA and the airline's carry-on baggage restrictions.
 - Confirm your flight reservation 72 hours in advance for international travel.
 - Check in at the airport three hours prior to departure for international flights.
 - Research security measures at: www.tsa.gov
- **Luggage and packing:** Research the climate before you begin packing to make sure you are prepared for the weather in Lisbon. It will be summer time and it could get pretty warm. Be sensitive to the local culture and pack according to the local customs. Europeans are more on the formal side, so wearing shorts and flip-flops all the time will not be appropriate. Pack a swim suite (beach!) but also a sweater for chilly nights. Pack light! Students often find they have taken too much luggage and regret it.

Airlines have strict guidelines on the amount of luggage you can take without additional charges. Research luggage allowances with your airline. Make sure you know the weight and size restrictions, how many bags you can check, and the fees for oversize/overweight bags.

- **Laptop computers:** You will need to take your laptop with the software needed for the class/studio: Adobe Suite, Word, Google SketchUp and, if possible, AutoCad. The host university will have computer labs, but access is not always guaranteed. Do not pack it in your checked luggage! Computers (and any valuables) are much more secure in your carry-on luggage. Consider purchasing personal property insurance for laptops and other valuables.

Travel Safety Tips



Keep luggage close to you at the airport or train station. The more bags you carry, the easier it is to lose your stuff.



Sleep with valuables under your pillow on trains, long bus rides, or hostels.



Use safety pins to attach the pull tabs of your zipper to your bag. That way, no one can sneakily open it when you are in a crowded place.



Wear a backpack under your arm rather than on your back. Choose a purse with a zipper, worn across the chest.



Keep your wallet, camera, or other valuables at the bottom of your backpack.



Place the strap of your purse or backpack under the leg of your chair, still in sight. Never leave a bag hanging on the back of your chair!



Keep valuables on your person and close to you at all times, preferably on the front of your body.



If you keep valuables in your pocket, make sure it is a tight-fitting pocket that buttons or zips.



Don't carry large sums of cash!



! Beware !



Crowded Areas Pose a Higher Risk of Pickpocketing

Like train stations, restaurants, tourist attractions, metros, and at the beach.



Practice Good Habits

Keep items like your cell phone, purse, wallet, and camera in a safe and secure place at all times.