

SPRING 2010

# STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR OFF-CAMPUS STUDY



International Programs and the EpiCenter

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# GREETINGS FROM THE EPICENTER

*This is an exciting time as you forward to and plan for your semester off campus! While you are dreaming of climbing the Acropolis, eating Central American cuisine, or visiting Lenin's tomb, you need to remember to take care of a few details here in Grantham. This Handbook is designed to help you do just that. Please take a time to carefully read this literature and make sure you do the following:*

**Complete an Off-Campus Study Course Approval Form**

*When you study off campus, you need to discuss possible course options with your academic advisor. List all courses you plan to take (plus a few additional options) on the Off-Campus Study Course Approval Form included with this packet and consult with your advisor. This will allow you to know in advance whether these courses will meet either general education or major requirements for your field of study. Completed forms should be submitted to the Registrar's Office.*

**Sign Your Study Abroad Contract Online**

*All students who earn credit in international settings must sign Study Abroad Contracts. A copy of the contract is included in this booklet. Please read this thoroughly. You will sign the document ONLINE before you register for classes.*

**Register at Messiah College**

*Even though you will be studying off campus, you still need to participate in Messiah class registration. **IF YOU ARE ACCEPTED INTO A PROGRAM, DO NOT REGISTER FOR GRANTHAM COURSES.** Register for your program on MCSquare after you electronically sign your study abroad contract.*

**Secure a Passport**

*If you are planning to study abroad, you should already have your passport. However, if not, you need to secure one immediately! Applications are available in the EpiCenter. Allow 10-12 weeks for your application to be processed.*

**Sign your Off Campus Study Financial Aid Package Understanding form**

*The form is included in this packet. This should be return to the Financial Aid Office at Box 3006.*

*Remember when you leave Grantham, you will still be in our thoughts and prayers. I will e-mail you weekly updates about campus activities, registration instructions, and other important information. If you have questions, feel free to contact me.*

**ENJOY YOUR SEMESTER ABROAD!**

*Wendy Lippert  
Faith Minnich*

*“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is not speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth and their words to the end of the world.” Psalms 19: 1-4*

**ENJOY DISCOVERING GOD'S WORLD!**

# REGISTRATION

## Students Should Complete an Off Campus Study Course Approval Form

To determine whether the courses you take will meet general education or major requirements, complete a **Off Campus Study Course Approval Form**. These forms are available in the EpiCenter. Remember that you must take at least 12 credits while studying off campus.

When completing your form:

- Review possible course offerings
- Check to see if they have already been evaluated to meet Messiah requirements by searching the Course Equivalency Database under the Registrar's Channel on the Academic tab on MCSquare
- Have your academic advisor evaluate major-related courses
- Have the Registrar evaluate general education-related courses and review your form once it is completed

## Students Should Sign a Study Abroad Contract ONLINE

All students who earn credits off-campus must complete a Study Abroad Contract (or Off-Campus Study Contract for domestic programs). A copy of this document located in this Handbook. You need to sign your contract online prior to registering for your program. You can find the online contract under the EpiCenter Channel on the Academic Life tab on MCSquare.

## Students Should Participate in Messiah College Registration

Even though you will be studying off-campus, you still need to participate in Messiah registration. Once you sign your online contract, you will be granted permission to register for your chosen program.

- Meet with your academic advisor, who will then release your advising hold.
- Log onto the Registrar's Channel under the Academic Life tab on MCSquare at your assigned time.
- Enter your Course Reference Number (CRN) (Please refer to the course registration packet for your CRN number.) for the program with which you will be participating. *Note: You will get an error message if you have NOT signed your study abroad contract online.*

**NOTE: YOU MUST BE REGISTERED BY NOVEMBER 20, 2009  
OR TWO WEEKS AFTER YOU HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED INTO YOUR PROGRAM  
IF YOUR ACCEPTANCE ARRIVES AFTER NOVEMBER 21  
OR YOU WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE PROGRAM.**

The general education requirement for **Ethics, Worldviews, Pluralism, and Science Tech and the World**, integrates a Christian perspective in the course content. As a result, these requirements are satisfied only when taken at Messiah College or a comparable Christian college or university. Similar courses taught at secular institutions, public and private, will not fulfill the general education requirement. (Office of the Registrar)

# HOUSING

The College will use the same housing registration system that was used for housing sign-ups during the last several years. Specific information about registering for housing for Fall 2010 will be e-mailed to you during the Spring Semester.

- The Housing Selection Process for residence halls will be online (on Housebook) and will resemble the process that took place last spring. The Housing Selection Process for apartments will be a manual process. If you wish to sign up for an apartment you will need to forward your housing contract confirmation email and PIN to your future roommates, or another student who is willing to serve as your proxy for apartment sign-ups. In the meantime...
- Diligently watch your e-mail **AND** the Residence Life/Housing Channel in MCSquare in late February/early March for announcements from the Housing Office about Fall 2010 housing selection. You will also receive a forwarded email from the External Programs Office that has the same information.
- The announcements will advise you to sign your housing contract on Housebook which is on MCSquare. Once you have signed your housing contract you will receive an e-mail giving you a time slot to sign up for housing and you will be given a PIN number. If you are signing up for a room you may sign up online for a room. To sign up with a roommate give your PIN number to your roommate and he/she can sign you both up for a room. If you want to sign up for an apartment you will need to forward the email with your timeslot and PIN number to the person who will serve as a proxy for you. Your proxy can be your future roommate or any student who is willing to go through the sign up process on your behalf.
- Sometimes MCSquare or other online processes are not accessible for those overseas. If you have trouble, please contact Rhonda Good, Director of Housing, at [rgood@messiah.edu](mailto:rgood@messiah.edu) or the Office of Residence Life and Housing at [housing@messiah.edu](mailto:housing@messiah.edu). You may also call 717.796.5239.
- Here is a brief (anticipated) timeline for housing sign-ups:
  - Monday, March 29 – 3 person apartment sign-ups
  - Wednesday, March 31 – 5 person apartment sign-ups
  - Monday, April 12 – residence hall room sign-ups begin

# MEAL PLANS

You will receive an e-mail from Dining Services this fall, requesting that you register for meals for Spring 2010. Students studying off campus should choose the "no plan" option. Choosing "no plan," does NOT mean that you will not have a meal plan while you are abroad (when applicable) or when you return in the Fall.

You will be receiving an e-mail in the spring, outlining how you can sign up for a meal plan for when you return. You can view Housebook instructions at: [http://www.messiah.edu/offices/dining/meal\\_plans/Directions.html](http://www.messiah.edu/offices/dining/meal_plans/Directions.html)

If you have a problem accessing MCSquare while you are studying off campus, please e-mail Dining Services at [dining@messiah.edu](mailto:dining@messiah.edu). They will be able to assist you with choosing your plan.

# PARKING

To obtain a parking spot for the 2010-2011 academic year:

- Parking Lottery is held in April. Because you will be away for the Spring Semester, you will need to inform Steve Smith of that **before you leave for Christmas Break** or send him the completed form to him by March 2, 2010 (before the parking lottery begins).
- You can obtain the Parking Permit Registration form at <http://www.messiah.edu/offices/safety/pdf/parking.pdf>.
- At the top of the form you must **indicate that you are a studying off campus for the Spring 2010. This is parking for the 2010-2011 academic year.** You will also need to indicate what dorm/apt you expect to be living at. If you do not know at the time you complete this form, please notify Steve Smith of your housing assignment as soon as that information is available.
- Once the completed, return the form to Steve Smith at [slsmith@messiah.edu](mailto:slsmith@messiah.edu) or fax 717-691-2368.

**Please note: If you do not fill out the form before you leave Messiah, there may not be any parking spaces available when your return. Parking is very limited and is a high demand for all students.**

Messiah's Department of Safety requires everyone to have a parking permit. The Department will not hold spaces for students for the Spring semester who are not attending classes in Grantham. A space will be assigned to you when you return.

# CHAPEL

Students who are planning to study off campus are expected to keep a clean chapel record. Please be sure to check the current chapel policy for the ramifications of chapel probation. Students who are planning on studying off campus and who incur chapel probation the semester before they leave should take time to inform themselves of what will be involved for them to clear probation at their study abroad site before they leave campus. Chapel recordings are available on MCSquare and the response forms can be downloaded from the College Ministries Web site. **Students studying abroad at sites with limited internet access will need to take steps to clear their probation before they leave campus or will have to delay their registration until they return to the States.**

# FINANCIAL AID

## Financial Aid Information for Students Studying at Approved Off-campus Programs

The purpose of this form is twofold - (1) To provide information to you, the student about how your financial aid may be affected by your decision to study at an approved, off-campus program, and (2) to give you the opportunity to let the Financial Aid Office know about any additional expenses that you may incur as a result of studying off-campus.

- (1) - Generally speaking, all of the same financial aid provisions that apply when you study at the Grantham or Philadelphia campuses apply when you study at an approved off-campus program. These provisions include, but are not limited to, items such as Grade Point Average requirements for academic scholarships and academic

progress requirements. For more information about these and other financial aid regulations, please contact the Financial Aid Office and/or see the Financial Aid Information booklet available on the Messiah College Financial Aid Office Webpage at:

[http://www.messiah.edu/offices/financial\\_aid/booklet/](http://www.messiah.edu/offices/financial_aid/booklet/)

It is often the case with students studying at off-campus programs that their grades are not received in the Registrar's Office until many weeks (and sometimes months) after their period of study has ended. This makes it difficult for the Financial Aid office to prepare your financial aid package because we do not know if you will make Satisfactory Academic Progress and/or meet the GPA requirements for renewing any academic scholarships that you hold. For this reason, we are asking all students who plan to study off-campus to sign the attached document demonstrating their understanding of these issues. The Financial Aid Office will then prepare your financial aid package with the assumption that you will complete enough credits to make academic progress, and we will tentatively reinstate any academic scholarships on the assumption that you will achieve the appropriate Grade Point Average to reinstate the scholarship. Of course, at the point the grades are received, it will be necessary to verify your continued eligibility to receive all of the financial aid that has been awarded. If you fail to meet any of the requirements, adjustments must be made to your financial aid package, regardless of the point in the academic year when the grades have been received. For this reason, you can help by alerting the Financial Aid Office to any possible problems (usually with grades) as soon as you become aware of them.

- (2) - Before you can determine if you have any additional costs associated with attending an approved off-campus program, you need to know the costs that are being used to determine your financial aid eligibility for your attendance at our Grantham and Philadelphia campuses. The following are yearly figures for the 2009-2010 academic year (divide by two to determine the cost for one semester) -

Tuition	- \$25,900
Fees	- \$ 800
Room	- \$ 4,170
Board	- \$ 3,710
Books	- \$ 1,050
Personal	- \$ 1,220
Travel	- \$ 680
<b>Total</b>	<b>- \$ 37,530</b>

If you anticipate that your total educational expenses for the period you will be studying off-campus will exceed the figures listed here (or half this amount if you are studying off-campus for only one semester), please provide the Financial Aid Office with documentation (an official list of costs, a letter detailing the costs signed by the advisor of the program, etc.) of your expected actual costs. We will then make a determination about whether or not you qualify for any additional financial aid as a result of your additional expenses. **The fact that you have additional expenses is not a guarantee that you will receive additional financial aid to attend your approved off-campus program.**

If you do anticipate that your expenses will exceed those listed above, you may want to talk with Wendy Lippert in the EpiCenter before contacting the Financial Aid Office, as Wendy may already have provided information about your program to the Financial Aid Office.

**MAKE SURE YOU SUBMIT YOUR OFF CAMPUS STUDY FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE**  
**UNDERSTANDING TO THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE**

# POST OFFICE

The Messiah College Post Office handles mail for students who are off campus in the following manner:

If you are off campus for a semester, you are considered **not here** for the entire semester at Grantham, regardless of the start date of the program. There are too many programs with different start dates to deliver mail to you for a short time before you leave. If you leave an off campus program and return to Grantham, it is your responsibility to let the Campus Post Office know, so we can resume mail delivery to your mailbox. Below is how we handle the mail for the different programs:

## **Messiah College Philadelphia Campus:**

Philly students will receive their mail from Grantham in a mailbox at the Philly Campus. Mail is forwarded by courier at least once a week during the school year from Grantham. We can send all mail received for you including campus mail.

## **American Studies, Contemporary Music Program, LA Film Studies, Oregon Extension:**

The Campus Post Office is able to forward first class mail, first class packages, and magazines to these programs. Campus mail, UPS and FedEx packages are not able to be forwarded and will be returned to the sender.

## **All Other Study Abroad Programs:**

The Campus Post Office is **not** able to forward mail to these programs. All first class mail, first class packages, and magazines will be forwarded to your home address. Campus mail, UPS and FedEx packages are not able to be forwarded and will be returned to the sender.

# LIBRARY RESOURCES

## **Locating Country Information - Books**

To locate the books that Murray Library owns or that the Epicenter owns, search the catalog in this way:

Do a **Keywords** search using some of the following words/phrases:

- social life customs [name of country]
- guidebooks [name of country]
- description travel [name of country]

Example: social life customs Spain [Do NOT add words between, such as "and."]

## **Locating DVDs/Videos in the Library**

In the library catalog, Limit to Videos/DVDs. Do a **Keywords** search using some of the following words/phrases:

- social life customs [name of country]
- guidebooks [name of country]
- description travel [name of country]

Example: description travel Germany [Do NOT add words between, such as "and."]

## **Helpful Web Resources**

[Portals to the World](http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/portals.html) (Library of Congress) <http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/portals.html>

[Country Information](http://www.state.gov/countries/) (U.S. Dept. of State) <http://www.state.gov/countries/>

[World Factbook](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/) (CIA) <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

[UNStats](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm) (International country statistics) <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm>

### International Newspapers

<http://www.messiah.edu/murraylibrary/resources/newspapers.html>

### Find Journal Articles

Begin at the Library's [Databases by Subject](http://www.messiah.edu/murraylibrary/alpha_databases.html) [http://www.messiah.edu/murraylibrary/alpha\\_databases.html](http://www.messiah.edu/murraylibrary/alpha_databases.html) page (under Articles/Databases on the library website) to find articles that focus on the aspect of the country that you are researching. Example: If you wish to explore schools in a specific country, select "Education" to search for articles in one of the education databases.

### Having Difficulty Accessing the Library's Databases?

Students studying abroad sometimes have difficulty linking directly in to the library's resources. In this case, under "Library Services," on the library website, click on "Database Access from Off Campus." Follow directions under #3.

# STUDY ABROAD CONTRACT

## The Student agrees as follows:

- I. **Academic Conditions.** Credit-bearing international programs approved by Messiah College are not travel tours. While travel during free time can be quite educational in itself, the College does not grant academic credit for travel. International study programs are strictly academic in nature, and students must expect to invest at least the same amount of time and effort that would be required for courses at a comparable level on the Grantham campus. Travel on weekends and holidays must not conflict with scheduled lectures or classes. Students are responsible for making travel plans which will permit them to attend all regularly scheduled class activities and field trips.
  - A. **Application Process.** I am aware that College officials consider a variety of academic, health, behavioral, financial and safety issues in evaluating the appropriateness of an individual's participation in a study abroad program, and that the College reserves the right to decline any application. I authorize the release of all of my academic and disciplinary records to the person designated by Messiah College to be responsible for the program for which I am applying.
  - B. **Course Registration.** I have complied with College requirements to register for all off-campus credits through the Registrar's Office prior to leaving the Grantham campus. I have deposited my Off-Campus Study Course Approval Form containing the requisite signatures with the Registrar's Office.
  - C. **Program Participation.** I understand that students enrolled in international programs are required to attend all scheduled classes, lectures, activities and field trips. This also includes mandatory attendance at predeparture orientation sessions provided by Messiah College.
  - D. **Grades.** I am aware that I will receive letter grades for credit-bearing international work earned through Messiah's approved programs. All of Messiah's official pass/fail (P/F) policies apply while I am off-campus. Courses taken through an approved off-campus study program, along with their corollary grades, will be reported on my Messiah College transcript and are calculated into my cumulative grade point average.
- II. **Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability.** This portion of the Study Abroad Contract involves a release of certain legal rights. Be sure to read and understand it before signing.
  - A. **Risks of Study Abroad.** I understand that participation in the Messiah College-approved program specified above (the "Program") involves risks not found in study at the College. These include risks involved in traveling to and within, and returning from, one or more foreign countries; foreign political, legal, social, and economic conditions; local medical and

weather conditions; different standards of design, safety and maintenance of buildings, public places and conveyances; increased potential for theft of personal property (which is not covered by the College's insurance), as well as other matters described in the information posted on the Messiah College EpiCenter website, which I have reviewed and will continue to check prior to departure. I have made my own investigation and am willing to accept these risks.

**B. Institutional Arrangements.** I understand that the College does not represent or act as an agent for, and cannot control the acts or omissions of, any host institution, host family, transportation carrier, hotel, tour organizer or other provider of goods or services involved in the Program. I understand that the College has exercised its best efforts in regard to these matters, but that it is not responsible for occurrences that are beyond its control. I release the College from liability for any injury, loss (including loss of luggage or other personal property), damage, accident, delay or expense arising out of any such matters.

**C. Independent Activity.** I understand that the College is not responsible for any injury or loss I may suffer when I am traveling independently or am otherwise separated or absent from any College-supervised activities.

**D. Health and Safety.**

1. I have consulted with a medical doctor with regard to my personal medical needs. I have provided the College with all medical data and any other personal information necessary for a safe and healthy study abroad experience. There are no physical or mental health-related reasons, problems, or special dietary requirements or restrictions which preclude or restrict my participation in this Program.
2. I am aware of all applicable personal medical needs. I have secured health insurance coverage to meet any and all needs for payment of medical costs (including those incurred outside the United States) while I participate in the Program. I recognize that, while the College will use its best efforts to see that I receive adequate medical care while in this Program, I assume all risk and responsibility for my medical or medication needs and the cost thereof. If I require medical treatment or hospital care in a foreign country or in the United States during the Program, I authorize the College to secure any necessary care deemed appropriate. I am aware that a separate Medical Authorization and Release must be signed prior to participation in the Program.
3. The College (including the faculty member or other person responsible for leading the trip or supervising the Program, acting in his/her own absolute discretion) may take any actions considered to be warranted under the circumstances to protect my health, safety, or welfare or the health, safety, or welfare of others participating in the Program. These actions may include my removal from the Program or the removal of other Program participants. If I am removed from the Program, I understand that I will be sent home at my own expense with no refund of fees. I agree to communicate any health, safety, or welfare concerns promptly to Program staff.
4. **Information for students with disabilities who may require accommodation:**  
Messiah College makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified to participate in its activities and programs. However, the Americans with Disabilities Act does not govern accessibility standards in other countries. The College does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admissions for study abroad programs, but is not responsible for assuring accessibility in international locations and cannot guarantee that accommodation will be available. While the College will try to arrange accommodation for special needs, students with disabilities must understand that some international experiences may not be appropriate for them.

In order to address this concern, College policy requires students with special needs who require accommodation to self-identify at the time of application for participation in an international experience. These students must notify the Disability Services office of their interest in participating in an international experience and of their need for accommodation. The Director of Disability Services will meet with the student, sponsoring faculty and program representative to determine whether the student's needs can be accommodated.

**E. Standards of Conduct.**

1. I understand that each foreign country has its own laws and standards of acceptable conduct, including dress, manners, morals, politics, drug use and behavior. I recognize that behavior which violates those laws or standards could harm the College's relations with those countries and the institutions therein, as well as my own health and safety. I am aware that if I violate laws of the host country, I may place myself in legal jeopardy and that U.S. standards of due process may not apply. I will become informed of, and will abide by, all such laws and standards for each country to or through which I will travel during the Program.
2. I also will comply with the College's rules, standards, and instructions for student behavior. I waive and release all claims against the College that arise at a time when I am not under the direct supervision of the College or that are caused by my failure to remain under such supervision or to comply with such rules, standards and instructions.

3. I agree that the College has the right to enforce the standards of conduct described above in its sole judgment, and that it may impose sanctions up to and including removal from the Program for violating these standards or for any behavior detrimental to or incompatible with the interest, harmony and welfare of the College, the Program, or other participants at any time prior to or during participation in the Program. I recognize that, due to the circumstances of the Program, procedures for notice, hearing and appeal applicable to student disciplinary proceedings at the College do not apply. If I am removed from the Program, either before or during participation, I understand that I will be sent home at my own expense with no refund of fees.
4. I agree that I will not operate a motor vehicle of any kind while participating in the Program. I further agree that I will not engage in any of the following activities while participating in the Program (unless required by the Program and supervised by a certified instructor): scuba diving, skiing, mountain climbing, sky-diving, hang gliding, glider flying, parasailing, piloting an aircraft, bungee jumping, and any other like activity normally considered to be ultra-hazardous or regarded as an “extreme sport.”
5. I will attend to any legal problems I encounter with any foreign nationals or government at my own expense. I understand that, while the College will use its best efforts to assist me, it is not responsible for providing me with legal representation.
6. I understand that during time designated for independent travel before, during or after the Program, I may have the option to travel at my own expense. I agree to inform a representative of the Program of my travel plans, understand that the College is not responsible for me while I am engaged in independent travel, and understand that any such travel is at my sole risk and expense.

**F. Program Changes.** The College has the right to cancel the Program at any time prior to departure, in which case all moneys paid will be refunded in full. It also reserves the right to cancel a Program in progress and to require all participants to return to the United States if it determines that conditions pose a heightened potential of danger to students. I understand that the College may alter the Program’s itinerary, travel arrangements, or accommodations due to emergency or changed conditions, and agree to be responsible for additional costs. I understand that the College’s fees and program charges are based on current airfares, lodging rates and travel costs, which are subject to change. If I leave or am removed from the Program, I will receive no refund of fees already paid. Understanding that the College will make every reasonable effort to minimize the effect of same, I accept all responsibility for loss or additional expenses due to transportation delays, necessary Program changes, sickness, weather, strikes, or other unforeseen causes. If I become separated from the Program group or fail to meet a departure bus, airplane, or train, I will at my own expense seek out, contact, and reach the Program group at its next available destination.

**G. Assumption of Risk and Release of Claims.** Knowing the risks described above, and in consideration of being permitted to participate in the Program, I agree, on behalf of my family, heirs, and personal representatives, to assume all the risks and responsibilities involved in my participation in the Program. I release and agree to indemnify Messiah College, its officers, employees and agents, from and against any present or future claim, loss or liability for injury to person or property which I may suffer, or for which I may be liable to any other person, during my participation in the Program (including periods of travel), except for such injury as may be caused by the gross negligence or willful misconduct of Messiah College.

**I have read this Study Abroad Contract carefully before signing it, and agree that it contains my entire agreement with Messiah College as to my participation in the Program.** This agreement shall become effective only upon acceptance by the College of my application for the Program, and shall be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

## SAFETY INFORMATION

### U.S. State Department Consular Sheets

The United States Department of State compiles helpful information about countries throughout the world and publishes these sheets on their website at: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1765.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html) Each sheet provides travelers with a wealth of information about safety issues, foreign entry requirements, and a brief description about the country. Each also includes the location and contact information for the U.S. consulates and embassies within the country. You will want to read this carefully. A link to this information for your program location has been included in the email to you with this Handbook.

## **Current U.S. State Department Worldwide Caution (July 29, 2009)**

The Department of State has issued this Worldwide Caution to update information on the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against American citizens and interests throughout the world. In some countries, the worldwide recession has contributed to political and economic instability and social unrest. American citizens are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness. This replaces the Worldwide Caution dated February 2, 2009 to provide updated information on security threats and terrorist activities worldwide.

The Department of State remains concerned about the continued threat of terrorist attacks, demonstrations, and other violent actions against U.S. citizens and interests overseas. Americans are reminded that demonstrations and rioting can occur with little or no warning. Current information suggests that al-Qaida and affiliated organizations continue to plan terrorist attacks against U.S. interests in multiple regions, including Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. These attacks may employ a wide variety of tactics including suicide operations, assassinations, kidnappings, hijackings, and bombings. The July 17 bombing of the JW Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels in Jakarta, Indonesia, where at least nine people were killed and six Americans were among the 50 or more injured; the February 2009 kidnapping of an American UNHCR official in Pakistan; the kidnapping of four European tourists in January on the Mali-Niger border; the kidnapping of two Canadian diplomats in Niger in December 2008; and the kidnapping of NGO workers along the Kenya-Somali border in July 2009 all illustrate the continuing desire of extremists to strike Western targets and perceived interests.

Extremists may elect to use conventional or non-conventional weapons, and target both official and private interests. Examples of such targets include high-profile sporting events, residential areas, business offices, hotels, clubs, restaurants, places of worship, schools, public areas, and locales where Americans gather in large numbers, including during holidays. Terrorists attacked two hotels, a railway station, restaurant, hospital, and other locations frequented by Westerners in Mumbai, India, on November 26, 2008. Over 170 persons are believed to have been killed, including six Americans, and hundreds were injured. On September 20, 2008, terrorists bombed the Islamabad Marriott Hotel killing two U.S. Department of Defense employees and one Department of State contractor. One private American sustained minor injuries. A July 9, 2008, terrorist attack on Turkish police guarding the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey, killed three police officers and wounded other police personnel. The March 15, 2008, bombing of an Italian restaurant in Islamabad, Pakistan, injured several Americans.

Americans are reminded of the potential for terrorists to attack public transportation systems. Bombs exploded near city buses in Tripoli, Lebanon, on August 13 and September 29, 2008, killing twenty-one people. Other incidents include multiple anti-personnel mine detonations on passenger buses in June 2008 in Sri Lanka, multiple terrorist attacks on trains in India in 2006, the July 2005 London Underground bombings, and the March 2004 train attacks in Madrid. Extremists also may select aviation and maritime services as possible targets, such as the August 2006 plot against aircraft in London, or the December 2006 bomb at Madrid's Barajas International Airport. In June 2007, a vehicle was driven into the main terminal at Glasgow International Airport and burst into flames, but the bomb failed to detonate.

### **The Middle East and North Africa**

Credible information indicates terrorist groups seek to continue attacks against U.S. interests in the Middle East and North Africa. Terrorist actions may include bombings, hijackings, hostage taking, kidnappings, and assassinations. While conventional weapons such as explosive devices are a more immediate threat in many areas, use of non-conventional weapons, including chemical or biological agents, must be considered a possible threat. Terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. Increased security at official U.S. facilities has led terrorists and their sympathizers to seek softer targets such as public transportation, residential areas, and public areas where people congregate, including restaurants, hotels, clubs, and shopping areas.

In January 2009, unidentified gunmen opened fire outside the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, Yemen. No injuries were reported. On September 17, 2008, armed terrorists attacked the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, Yemen, killing several Yemeni personnel, one embassy security guard, and a few individuals waiting to gain entry to the embassy. On January 15, 2008, a roadside explosion in Beirut, Lebanon killed three Lebanese and injured an American citizen. On December 11, 2007,

two vehicle-borne explosive devices were detonated at the UN headquarters in Algiers and the Algerian Constitutional Council. There were a series of bombings in Morocco in March and April 2007, two of which occurred simultaneously outside the U.S. Consulate General and the private American Language Center in Casablanca. Additionally, an attack took place on the American International School in Gaza in April 2007. These events underscore the intent of terrorist entities to target facilities perceived to cater to Westerners.

Potential targets are not limited to those companies or establishments with overt U.S. ties. For instance, terrorists may target movie theaters, liquor stores, bars, casinos, or any similar type of establishment, regardless of whether they are owned and operated by host country nationals. Due to varying degrees of security at all such locations, Americans should be particularly vigilant when visiting these establishments.

The violence in Iraq and conflict between Palestinians and Israelis has the potential to produce demonstrations and unrest throughout the region. The armed conflict between Israeli forces and Hamas in Gaza in December 2008 and January 2009 raised tensions and sparked demonstrations throughout the world. The Department of State continues to warn of the possibility for violent actions against U.S. citizens and interests in the region. Anti-American violence could include possible terrorist actions against aviation, ground transportation, and maritime interests, specifically in the Middle East, including the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula, and North Africa.

The Department is concerned that extremists may be planning to carry out attacks against Westerners and oil workers on the Arabian Peninsula. Armed attacks targeting foreign nationals in Saudi Arabia that resulted in many deaths and injuries, including U.S. citizens, appear to have been preceded by extensive surveillance. On February 22, 2009, there was a bomb attack targeting a popular tourist destination in Cairo, Egypt's Old City. Tourist destinations in Egypt frequented by Westerners were also attacked in April 2006 resulting in many deaths and injuries, including Americans. Extremists may be surveilling Westerners, particularly at hotels, housing areas, and rental car facilities. Potential targets may include U.S. contractors, particularly those related to military interests. Financial or economic venues of value also could be considered as possible targets; the failed attack on the Abqaiq oil processing facility in Saudi Arabia in late February 2006 and the September 2006 attack on oil facilities in Yemen are examples.

## **East Africa**

A number of al-Qaida operatives and other extremists are believed to be operating in and around East Africa. As a result of the conflict in Somalia, some of these individuals may seek to relocate elsewhere in the region. Americans considering travel to the region and those already there should review their plans carefully, remain vigilant with regard to their personal security, and exercise caution. Terrorist actions may include suicide operations, bombings, kidnappings, or targeting maritime vessels. Terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. Increased security at official U.S. facilities has led terrorists to seek softer targets such as hotels, beach resorts, prominent public places, and landmarks. In particular, terrorists and like-minded extremists may target international aid workers, civil aviation, and seaports in various locations throughout East Africa, including Somalia. On July 17, three NGO workers were kidnapped by unidentified gunmen from their base in Mandera, Kenya, located on the border with Somalia. Americans in remote areas or border regions where military or police authority is limited or non-existent could also become targets.

Americans considering travel by sea near the Horn of Africa or in the southern Red Sea should exercise extreme caution, as there has been a notable increase in armed attacks, robberies, and kidnappings for ransom at sea by pirates in recent months. Merchant vessels continue to be hijacked in Somali territorial waters, while others have been hijacked as far as 300 nautical miles off the coast of Somalia, Yemen, and Kenya in international waters.

The U.S. Government maritime authorities advise mariners to avoid the port of Mogadishu, and to remain at least 200 nautical miles off the coast of Somalia. In addition, when transiting around the Horn of Africa or in the Red Sea, it is strongly recommended that vessels travel in convoys, and maintain good communications contact at all times. Americans traveling on commercial passenger vessels should consult with the shipping or cruise ship company regarding precautions that will be taken to avoid hijacking incidents. Commercial vessels should review the [Department of Transportation Maritime Administration](#)'s suggested piracy countermeasures for vessels transiting the Gulf of Aden.

## **West Africa**

The terrorist group, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), has become increasingly active in the West African countries of Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, as well as in parts of North Africa. AQIM uses regions of these countries as safe havens and platforms from which to conduct operations. Formerly known as GSPC (Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat), AQIM has been designated a terrorist organization by both the United States and the European Union.

AQIM has declared its intention to attack Western interests and targets. AQIM is known to operate in the northern region of Mali, the southeastern region of Mauritania, and along the border between Niger and Mali. In addition to being a threat to Westerners, AQIM contributes to civil unrest and banditry, which reinforce longstanding security concerns in West Africa. U.S. citizens are urged to avoid travel to these areas. U.S. government personnel are required to obtain advance written approval to travel to these areas. For additional information about travel in this region, please consult the Country Specific Information (CSI) for Mauritania, Mali, and Niger.

## **South and Central Asia**

The U.S. Government continues to receive information that terrorist groups in South and Central Asia may be planning attacks in the region, possibly against U.S. Government facilities, American citizens, or American interests. The presence of al-Qaida, Taliban elements, indigenous sectarian groups, and other terror organizations, many of which are on the U.S. Government's list of foreign terror organizations, poses a potential danger to American citizens in the region. Terrorists and their sympathizers have demonstrated their willingness and capability to attack targets where Americans or Westerners are known to congregate or visit. Their actions may include, but are not limited to, vehicle-borne explosives, improvised explosive devices, assassinations, carjacking, rocket attacks, assaults or kidnappings.

In June 2009, gunmen stormed the Pearl Continental Hotel in Peshawar, Pakistan, and detonated a bomb that resulted in several deaths and scores of injuries. In February 2009, Taliban insurgents conducted a coordinated terrorist attack in Kabul, Afghanistan, which resulted in the death of at least 26 and the wounding of 50 individuals. Between October 2008 and June 2009, several American citizens were kidnapped in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In November 2008, coordinated terrorist attacks on luxury hotels, a Jewish community center, a restaurant, train station, hospital, and other facilities frequented by foreigners in Mumbai, India, killed more than 170, including six Americans. On November 12, 2008, an American government contractor and his driver in Peshawar, Pakistan, were shot and killed in their car. In September 2008, more than fifty people, including three Americans, were killed and hundreds were injured when a suicide bomber set off a truck filled with explosives outside a major international hotel in Islamabad, Pakistan. In August 2008, gunmen stopped and shot at the vehicle of an American diplomat in Peshawar. Also in August, three western non-governmental organization (NGO) employees, along with their Afghan driver, were gunned down as they traveled south of Kabul, Afghanistan. On June 2, 2008, a large bomb exploded in front of the Danish Embassy in Islamabad, killing at least six people and wounding nearly 20. In May 2008, a series of coordinated bombings occurred in market and temple areas of the tourist city of Jaipur in Rajasthan, India. In Afghanistan, kidnappings and terrorist attacks on international organizations, international aid workers, and foreign interests continue.

Previous terrorist attacks conducted in Central Asia have involved improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers and have targeted public areas, such as markets, local government facilities, and, in 2004, the U.S. and Israeli Embassies in Uzbekistan. In addition, hostage-takings and skirmishes have occurred near the Uzbek-Tajik-Kyrgyz border areas.

## **Before You Go**

U.S. citizens living or traveling abroad are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the [State Department's travel registration web site](#) to obtain updated information on travel and security. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to maintain a high level of vigilance, be aware of local events, and take the appropriate steps to bolster their personal security. For additional information, please refer to "[A Safe Trip Abroad](#)".

U.S. Government facilities worldwide remain at a heightened state of alert. These facilities may temporarily close or periodically suspend public services to assess their security posture. In those instances, U.S. embassies and consulates

will make every effort to provide emergency services to U.S. citizens. Americans abroad are urged to monitor the local news and maintain contact with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

As the Department continues to develop information on any potential security threats to U.S. citizens overseas, it shares credible threat information through its [Consular Information Program documents](#). In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or, outside the United States and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Friday, Eastern Time (except U.S. federal holidays.)

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/pa/pa\\_1161.html#](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1161.html#)

# HEALTH INFORMATION

## Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Travel Information

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website offers some valuable information on health issues for the region in which you will be studying. Their website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx> provides information about recommended vaccines, tips on staying healthy while studying abroad, and suggestions of items that you may want to bring with you while traveling. A link to this information for your program location has been included in the email to you containing this Handbook.

Please also carefully read the following important information from the CDC regarding the H1N1 flu:

### 2009 H1N1 Flu: Global Situation

Updated: **October 15, 2009**

#### **Current Situation**

2009 H1N1 flu cases have been reported in many countries around the world, including the United States. For the most up-to-date information about where cases of 2009 H1N1 flu are occurring, see the following pages on CDC's H1N1 Flu website:

- 2009 H1N1 flu in the United States, see [2009 H1N1 Flu: Situation Update](#)
- International 2009 H1N1 flu situation, see [2009 H1N1 Flu: International Situation Update](#)

Other resources with information about the outbreak situation include the following websites:

- [World Health Organization \(WHO\) Influenza A \(H1N1\) website](#)
- [Pan American Health Organization website](#)

On June 11, 2009, WHO raised the worldwide pandemic alert level to Phase 6 in response to the ongoing global spread of the 2009 H1N1 flu virus. A Phase 6 alert level means that a global pandemic is under way and that community level outbreaks are now ongoing in multiple parts of world. The Phase 6 pandemic alert level is a reflection of the spread of the virus, not the severity of illness caused by the virus. For more information, see [CDC's H1N1 Flu](#) website.

Health authorities around the world are monitoring the situation. If the situation changes, further information and travel recommendations related to this outbreak will be posted on [the CDC Travelers' Health website](#).

## **Basic Information about 2009 H1N1 Flu**

The 2009 H1N1 flu virus is a new, unique flu virus that had not been seen in humans until the spring of 2009. People who are infected usually have flu-like symptoms (see below). Even though some severe illnesses and deaths from 2009 H1N1 flu have been reported, most cases have been similar to seasonal flu and have not resulted in severe illness. Most cases have occurred in children and younger adults.

### **Symptoms of flu (including 2009 H1N1 flu) include:**

Fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.

### **Recommendations for Travel to Areas Reporting 2009 H1N1 Flu**

CDC recommends that travelers who have an increased risk for complications from the flu (see list below) talk with their doctors about what they should do if they develop symptoms of flu and whether they should consider taking antiviral medications with them on their trip as a treatment option (in case appropriate medical care is delayed or not available). Together, they should look carefully at the 2009 H1N1 flu situation at their destination and the available health-care options in the area when considering what would be best in their situation. Some travelers at increased risk of complications from flu may want to consider postponing travel.

People at **high risk** for complications include:

- Children younger than 5 years old, but especially younger than 2 years old
- Adults aged 65 years or older
- Pregnant women
- Persons with any of the following conditions:
  - Cancer
  - Blood disorders (including sickle cell disease)
  - Chronic lung disease [including asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)]
  - Diabetes
  - Heart disease
  - Kidney disorders
  - Liver disorders
  - Neurological disorders (including nervous system, brain or spinal cord)
  - Neuromuscular disorders (including muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis)
  - Weakened immune systems (including people with AIDS)

Healthy people may make travel plans as they normally would and take common sense precautions to protect their health during travel.

### **Before Your Trip**

If you are planning travel, especially to an area where cases of flu are being reported (including 2009 H1N1 flu), the following recommendations will help you reduce your risk of infection and stay healthy.

#### ***Prepare for your trip***

- Stay informed. Check updates from the sources listed in the “Current Situation” section above.
- Be sure you are up to date with all your [routine vaccinations](#), including seasonal influenza vaccine, when available.
- Find out about the other health risks and travel recommendations for your [destination](#).
- Pack a [travel health kit](#) that contains basic first aid and medical supplies.
- Identify the health-care resources in the area(s) you will be visiting.

- Find out if your health insurance plan will cover medical care during your trip; many insurance companies do NOT cover these costs.
  - CDC recommends purchasing additional insurance that covers medical care costs during international travel and medical evacuation.
  - For more information, see [Medical Information for Americans Traveling Abroad](#) from the U.S. Department of State.
  - Remember that U.S. embassies, consulates and military facilities do not evacuate or give medications, vaccines, or medical care to private U.S. citizens during international travel.

### ***Check your own health***

Do not travel if you are sick. This is both for your comfort and to keep others from getting sick.

If you have severe illness or you are at high risk for flu complications, contact a health-care provider or seek medical care. Otherwise, stay home and avoid travel for at least 24 hours after fever or fever-like symptoms are gone. Your fever should be gone without using a medicine that reduces fever.

### **During Your Trip**

#### ***Follow local guidelines***

- Pay attention to announcements from the local government and monitor the local health and security situation. In addition to CDC's [Travelers' Health](#) website and the [U.S. Department of State](#) website, these announcements may come in many ways, such as through the local news media.
- Follow any movement restrictions and prevention recommendations.
- Be aware that some countries are checking the health of arriving and/or exiting passengers and screening them for illness due to 2009 H1N1 flu to prevent others from getting sick. For more information, see the [Possible 2009 H1N1 Flu Screening for International Travelers](#) announcement.

#### ***Practice healthy habits to help stop the spread of 2009 H1N1 flu***

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub,\* when your hands are not visibly dirty.

\* If soap and water are not available and you do not have an alcohol-based product while you are traveling, other hand sanitizers that do not contain alcohol may be useful.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and put your used tissue in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.

#### ***What to do if you feel sick***

- It is expected that most people will recover without needing medical care.
- If you have severe illness or you are at high risk for flu complications, seek medical care.
- A U.S. consular officer can help you find local medical care in a foreign country. To contact the U.S. embassy or consulate in the country you are visiting, call Overseas Citizens Services at:
  - 1-888-407-4747 if calling from the U.S. or Canada,
  - 00-1-202-501-4444 if calling from other countries, or
  - Visit [Websites of U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and Diplomatic Mission](#) to find the contact information for the local U.S. Embassy of the country you are visiting.
- Avoid further travel for at least 24 hours after fever or fever-like symptoms are gone. Your fever should be gone without using a medicine that reduces fever.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub,\* when your hands are not visibly dirty.

\*If soap and water are not available and you do not have an alcohol-based product while you are traveling, other hand sanitizers that do not contain alcohol may be useful.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Follow all local health recommendations. For example, if you are sick, you may be asked to put on a surgical mask to protect others or to stay in your home or hotel to prevent the spread of 2009 H1N1 flu.
- For more information about what to do if you become sick while you are traveling outside the United States, visit [Your Survival Guide for Safe and Healthy Travel](#).

For information on CDC's recommendations for antiviral use during the 2009 H1N1 flu outbreak, please visit [CDC's Updated Interim Recommendations for the Use of Antiviral Medications in the Treatment and Prevention of Influenza for the 2009-2010 Season](#).

### After Your Trip

- Closely monitor your health for 7 days.
- If you become ill with fever and other symptoms of 2009 H1N1 (see box above), follow the steps in the section above titled "[What to do if you feel sick](#)" and the [What To Do If You Get Sick: 2009 H1N1 and Seasonal Flu](#) page on the [CDC H1N1 Flu website](#).
- Travelers returning from a country with endemic malaria should see a health-care provider if they experience symptoms of flu. The first symptoms of malaria usually include fever and chills, similar to the symptoms of flu. However, if malaria is left untreated, the disease can quickly become serious and even life threatening.

### Possible 2009 H1N1 Flu Screening for International Travelers

Updated: **October 15, 2009**

#### Current Situation

Due to the circulation of 2009 H1N1 influenza in the United States and many other countries, airport staff in some foreign countries may check the health of arriving passengers. Many other countries, including Japan and China, are screening arriving passengers for symptoms of the flu.

*If you are sick with symptoms of flu-like illness, you should not travel.* These symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.

The United States is **not** screening travelers who arrive from other countries or depart for other countries.

In other countries that are conducting entry screening for 2009 H1N1 flu, travelers may be checked for fever and other symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu, and their **travel may be delayed**. Consult the embassy of the country, or countries, in your travel itinerary for information about entry screening procedures (see [Websites of U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and Diplomatic Missions for contact information](#)).

When you travel internationally from the United States, officials in other countries may ask you to:

- Pass by a scanning device that checks your temperature. (The device may look like an airport metal detector, a camera, or a handheld device.) In some countries this may be done before you disembark at your destination.
- Have your temperature taken with an oral or ear thermometer
- Fill out a sheet of questions about your health
- Review information about the symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu

- Give your address, phone number, and other contact information
- Be quarantined for a period of time if a passenger on your flight is found to have symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu
- Contact health authorities in the country you are visiting to let them know if you become ill

If you have a fever or respiratory symptoms or are suspected to have 2009 H1N1 flu based on screening, you may be asked to:

- Be isolated from other people until you are well
- Have a medical examination
- Take a rapid flu test (which consists of a nasal swab sample)
- Be hospitalized and given medical treatment, if you test positive for 2009 H1N1 flu

**Please note that the U.S. Department of State usually cannot interfere with the rights of other countries to screen airline passengers entering or exiting their countries, nor can it influence the number of days a traveler is placed in quarantine.**

Because these outbreak-related delays, which could include several days of quarantine, may affect planned activities and lead to unexpected costs, CDC strongly recommends that travelers consider purchasing travel insurance. To find a list of possible travel health and medical evacuation insurance companies, visit [Medical Information for Americans Abroad](#) (U.S. Department of State).

Updates to this notice will be posted as information becomes available.

### **For More Information**

U.S. Department of State

- [Travel Alert: China - H1N1 Quarantine Measures](#) (September 25, 2009)
- [Travel-related information](#)
- [General website](#)

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Homepage](#)
- [2009 H1N1 Flu website](#)

U.S. Government [Flu.gov website](#)

If you have specific questions about 2009 H1N1 flu cases, see the [Contact CDC webpage](#) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

To learn more about seasonal flu, visit the [CDC Seasonal Influenza \(Flu\)](#) website.

To learn more about travel health, visit the [CDC Travelers' Health website](#).

# EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

**In the event of an emergency while abroad, contact your on-site program director immediately.**

Following are a list of Messiah College emergency contacts:

**24 Hour Dispatch Office**

(will accept collect calls for emergencies only)

Messiah College

p: 717.691.6005

**Wendy Lippert**

Director of International Programs and the EpiCenter

Messiah College

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**Faith Minnich**

Assistant Director of International Programs and the EpiCenter

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[FMinnich@messiah.edu](mailto:FMinnich@messiah.edu)

p: 717.796.1800 x7373

**Engle Health Center**

Messiah College

One College Avenue, Box 3028

Grantham, PA 17027

[EngleCenter@messiah.edu](mailto:EngleCenter@messiah.edu)

p: 717.691.6035 (health services)

p: 717.796.5357 (counseling services)

**Kristin Hansen-Kieffer**

Vice Provost/Dean of Students

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[KHansen@messiah.edu](mailto:KHansen@messiah.edu)

p: 717.796.5234