



LaurentianUniversity
Université**Laurentienne**

Foreign Travel Guidelines



Risk Management and Purchasing Services

www.laurentian.ca/purchasing

Our Mission Statement

"To educate, promote and facilitate risk management practices and due diligence by assisting the University community in designing programs to preserve and protect human, physical and financial assets be they on or off campus."

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Introduction

Visiting foreign countries can be a very enlightening experience. In this communication age, we have come to realize the benefits of experiencing other nations and exchanging our ideas with them for the benefits of education, business and individual and professional growth.

Before embarking on such a journey, however, it is essential that we consider the possible risks associated with visiting a foreign country and take precautions in order to avoid or prepare for these risks. A stolen wallet or an unforeseeable illness could potentially ruin a long-awaited adventure and discourage any future possibilities. The purpose of this publication is to assist you on being aware of certain risks associated with travelling outside of Canada. Such a brief publication could hardly subsume all risks inherent to foreign travel. It should, however, provide a guideline for further research into your trip.

Keep in mind that all university related trips must be given special consideration in terms of risk management as the nature of the visit, length of stay; destination and political and environmental conditions may have an impact on the severity and types of risks facing university faculty, staff and students. *For further information or questions, please contact Risk Management and Purchasing Services at 675-1151.*

Travel Warnings

The trip should be cancelled if either the Canadian or U.S. government issues travel warnings to that effect, for the destination country. If the trip cannot be cancelled or if the warning is issued during the trip, contact the Risk Management and Purchasing Services for further assistance at 675-1151 ext. 1534 or 1555.



The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) provides travel information and advisory reports on its webpage (www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca).

Canadian news and emergency updates for specific countries is broadcasted by Radio Canada International. It can be accessed via the Internet (www.rcinet.ca). A schedule is available with broadcast times and frequencies on the CBC homepage (www.cbc.ca). Another international news website is www.worldnews.com.

Laws and Customs

Don't assume the legal system of another country is the same as in Canada; laws are neither static nor universal.



Canadian citizenship does not offer immunity. You are subject to the laws and regulation of the country you are in. Ignorance is not a defence.

Learn the way of life of your destination. Before you leave, learn what behaviour will probably offend the local citizens, and what is appropriate. Respect the country's laws, culture, class structure, religions and economic conditions.

Even if recreational drugs are readily available, purchase, consumption, import, and export are prohibited almost everywhere. Buying and/or using drugs can lead to criminal charges, heavy fines, and long prison sentences.

If you are in legal trouble, contact the nearest Canadian government office immediately. Canadian consular officials abroad can ensure you receive fair treatment according to the standards of that country, provide you a list of lawyers, and contact your family or friends.

Do not sign anything in a language you don't understand without your lawyer's permission. Also avoid making statements without your lawyer present.

Culture



Learn about your destination. Learn about the political, economical and cultural environment of your destination. Read as much as you can about the country and, if possible, talk to people who have travelled or worked in the same country or organization. Working conditions and pace may be very different from what you are used to.

Find out the dos and don'ts of society abroad. Learning a few key phrases in the native tongue will be extremely beneficial to your experience there. The ways people interact differ greatly by country and region. Observe the interpersonal interactions of the locals can help you decide the best ways to communicate, both verbally and non-verbally, with others in your host country.

Visit the Centre for Intercultural Learning website (www.intercultures.ca) for Country Insights.

Culture Shock

When visiting another country, many people experience culture shock. The intensity varies from person to person and most undergo a period of adjustment. There are 3 stages. The honeymoon stage is where all new encounters are positive and exciting. The emptiness phase is where the traveller feels general unease and dislocation. The adjustment phase is a compromise between the first two phases, where foreigners accept their new surroundings. To better manage culture shock, you can learn the symptoms in order to recognise them and handle



them swiftly and efficiently. The DFAIT website has a list of symptoms and different coping strategies (www.voyage.gc.ca/main/living/culture_shock-en.asp).

It's also important to know that when returning after being abroad for a longer period of time, reverse culture shock can be experienced. (<http://www.studentsabroad.com/reentrycultureshock.html>)

Important Documents

Plan ahead. Some visas can take several months. It currently takes 2-4 weeks for a passport to be processed, which does not include delivery. However, the processing times can vary, depending on the volume of applications received, or the complexity of routine verifications and security checks. You can verify current processing times on the Passport Canada website.



It is recommended that you make copies of all your important documents. Do not keep all copies and documents in the same place. Leave copies with a relative or friend at home as well as lists of your traveller's checks, credit card numbers, and prescription.

Don't pack your passport and other important documents in your luggage or carry-on. They should be worn in a pouch or money belt, as close to your body as possible.

Also, consider that while stamps in your passport are wonderful keepsakes, they can also be red flags when visiting other countries. You might not be allowed into one country due to a prior visit in another country. This is especially true regarding Israel and some countries in the Middle East.

Passport

Your Canadian passport is the only universally accepted and reliable identification and travel document. It's recommended that you also carry your citizenship or birth certificate.

In case of emergency, make sure to complete the "In case of accident or death, notify" section in your passport, to help quickly notify your contact person.

Passports are usually valid for five years. However, some countries will not let you enter if your passport will expire within six months of your scheduled return to Canada. Verify with the other country's consulate or embassy in Canada for rules and restrictions regarding passport validity.



Starting June 1st 2009, Canadians travelling to the United States must present a valid passport, a NEXUS card, or another acceptable document to enter the country. See the DFAIT website for more information.

If you lose your passport or it is stolen while you are abroad, immediately report the incident to the local police. Get a copy of the police report, or the report number, and contact the nearest Government of Canada office. If later you find your missing passport, it has to be sent back to Passport Canada.

Canadian Customs Certificates

Canadian Customs Certificates should be obtained for valuables (i.e. laptops, musical instruments, specialized equipment, etc.) in order to avoid paying duty on them when you return to Canada.

Visa

A visa is permission to enter another country and it is granted and issued by that country. Not all countries will require you to have a visa, but many do. There are different types of visas depending on what you intend to do while abroad. Some of the most common are Tourist/Travel Visas, Business Visas, Work Visas, and Student Visas. The requirements and processing times for your visa depend on which type it is. The country's consulate or embassy in Canada can inform you of the current requirements.

For visits of less than three months, over 150 countries will require you to obtain a tourist visa **before** leaving Canada. Other countries will issue a tourist visa, tourist card or entry stamp to you **upon arrival** (but this is not a common process in most countries and can cause delays).

Do not enter a country with a tourist visa for non-tourist purposes. All countries have special requirements for persons intending to visit for longer periods (usually more than 90 days) and/or for those who plan to reside, work, study or engage in non-tourist activities. Violations may result in serious penalties.



Make sure your visa covers all countries you might have to land in.

If you want to extend your stay past the period allowed by the visa you currently hold, or to change the status of your visa (from a visitor visa to a work visa for example), you should contact the nearest Canadian government office abroad and they can refer you to the proper authorities in that country.

Be prepared to show your return (or onward) ticket, a bank statement, or any visas that demonstrate you plan to visit another country, as some countries will only allow entry if you can demonstrate you will be leaving and have enough money to sustain yourself during your stay.

Dual Citizenship

If you have dual citizenship it is recommended by the Government of Canada that you use your Canadian passport when travelling abroad. Your Canadian citizenship may not be recognized in the country of your second citizenship, where authorities may prevent Canada from providing you with consular assistance. This is especially likely if you do not use your Canadian passport to enter the second country.

A number of problems and risks arise when travelling with multiple citizenships and you may be under more scrutiny from immigration and security officials.

There may be confusion over which citizenship you used to gain entry.

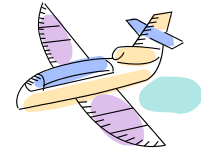
A Certificate of Canadian Citizenship is not a travel document. You may face delays or be denied boarding by transport companies if you return to Canada with documents other than a Canadian passport.

For more information, contact Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.

Transportation

Air

Be sure to reconfirm your flight before travelling. Some airlines do not honour tickets that have not been reconfirmed 72 hours before the flight. Upon arrival, monitor local developments and news broadcasts carefully and follow the advice of local authorities. Be prepared for delays at airports and other transportation facilities and plan accordingly.



Be aware of what is allowed in your carry-on, and what is allowed in your checked baggage. There are new restrictions on liquids, gels, and aerosols. See the Transportation Security Administration or Transport Canada's website.

Avoid clothing with metal, metal jewellery and accessories; they can set off metal detectors at security checkpoints. If you must be inspected further, you can request the inspection be in private.

Arrangements may have been arranged for you to be picked up at the airport by your local contact. But do you really know the individual who is going to pick you? Your trip information can easily be intercepted or given to others. In some countries, tourists mistakenly accept rides from criminal posing as their presumed chauffeur. **Travellers are now adopting a practice of obtaining a photo of the individual who has been assigned to pick them up.**

Driving

Each country has its own driving regulations. Understand that driving conditions may be more dangerous than in Canada. Roads may be narrower or rougher than we are accustomed to and locals may drive faster and/ or with less caution. In short, drive defensively. Also, familiarize yourself with the road signs and traffic rules as well as the language. You may be required to obtain an International Driving Permit and/or additional insurance. Purchase car insurance if outside of North America; see guidelines for auto rental on our [website](#). Always carry your car insurance policy when driving in case of accident.



Public Transportation

Inter-city transportation routes between major destinations can be serviced by a variety of carriers that offer differing levels of safety and comfort.

If travelling by bus, it's suggested you choose carriers who use modern equipment and avoid using vehicles that are in obvious disrepair. On longer bus trips, foreigners have been victims of drugging, where drug-laced food and/or drink are used to sedate the victim and their belongings are then easily stolen. Therefore, travellers should be cautious about accepting beverages or food from other passengers.



Travelers should be wary of using the non-standard minibuses (daladalas for example), which are frequently overcrowded, poorly maintained, a common site of petty theft, and whose operation is generally unsafe.

Try to avoid subways during rush hour as they are a haven for pickpockets.

Crowded trains and buses can be hot spots for anti-social behaviour. If you are targeted, make a fuss. Point at the offender and chastise them in a loud voice. They will probably slink away. To avoid such advances, consider choosing reserved seating. Or take advantage of female-only sections of buses, trains and subways, where available.



Use particular caution when employing taxis or public transportation. In some countries, it can be dangerous to hail taxis from the street. If this is a known risk in your destination country, use “radio” taxis (taxis you hire by telephone). It is especially dangerous to hail them from in front of nightclubs and tourist facilities.

Health

It is strongly recommended by the Public Health Agency of Canada that you obtain an individual risk assessment from your physician or a travel medicine clinic at least 6 weeks prior to departure. They will assess your need for vaccinations, preventive medication, and provide advice on precautions you can take to avoid disease while travelling.

The Sudbury District Health Unit offers travel clinics. You will have to make an appointment. Their website has a list of upcoming clinics as well as safe travel tips (www.sdhu.com).

If you have a medical condition, it is prudent to wear a MedicAlert bracelet.



If upon your return you feel sick, see your physician. Also, if you were sick while abroad, you should see your doctor when you return to discuss any treatment you received.

Learn what diseases are prevalent in your host country and how they are transmitted (<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinationList.aspx>).

It is a good idea to buy bottled water in any foreign country, even if the local claim to drink it. Make sure the bottle is unopened when you get it. Drinking contaminated water could cause you to be sick for days and easily ruin your trip. Also, in areas with unsafe drinking water, refrain from eating fruits and vegetables that have not been washed with bottled water.

Vaccines

Ensure that your routine immunizations are up to date. Some countries require proof of yellow fever vaccination before allowing entry. Also, some countries may require proof of HIV testing. Have the test done and get the results before your trip.



Medication

If you must carry prescription medication with you, first make sure that it is legal to bring into that country. Bring extra syringes and medication with you as it may be unavailable in another area. **Always carry medication in the original, labelled container.** A medical certificate that indicates the syringes are for medical use should also be carried with you.

Also, carry the original copy of the prescription, listing both generic and trade names of the product, with you, as copies are not always accepted. It's advisable to get a note stating the medical reasons for your prescription and the recommended dosage from your doctor.



It would be wise to pack an extra pair of contact lenses and/ or glasses, or the prescription, in case of emergency.

Health and Travel Insurance

While most trips abroad are problem free, unfortunately accidents and illnesses do happen. It is your responsibility to make sure you have supplemental insurance. We are not immune to accidents or illness and we cannot solely rely on government assistance to pay our medical bills. In some areas, medical facilities are below our standards and in many cases; you will be expected to pay up front for services. OHIP offers very limited reimbursement for out of country emergency medical treatment and has strict limitations on extended travel periods outside of Canada - see web site: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/ohip/travel.html> .

Choose your insurance carefully and verify the conditions, limitations, and requirements before you leave.

- Ask about the insurance company's emergency procedures.
- Do they offer 24 hour assistance? In English? Are there translation services for non-English health care providers?
- Emergency medical coverage?
- Cash advances?
- You should get emergency medical coverage of at least \$1,000,000. (This is a bare minimum as a 2-3 month hospital stay in an American hospital could easily put you out \$500,000.
- Ask about repatriation insurance. If you find yourself in an emergency situation, whether you come down with an illness or political or environmental conditions put you in danger, unlimited repatriation insurance will get you home.
- Also, ask if the policy provides any non-medical services (i.e. Will they help if you lose your passport, airline tickets, etc?).
- Do they cover doctor visits and prescription medicines?
- So they make direct payments for bills abroad? That way you don't have to pay and then wait reimbursement.
- Are pre-existing health conditions covered?
- Ask about deductible costs
- Is emergency dental care included?

- Does it include emergency transportation (e.g. ambulance)?
- Are all regions and countries of travel covered?
- Does the policy provide for medical evacuation to Canada or nearest location with proper medical care? Does it pay for a medical escort to accompany you?
- Are costs associated with a death abroad, including returning remains to Canada, covered?
- Is coverage continuous before and after your return?
- Make sure the maximum period of stay is clearly stated. Is coverage renewable from abroad?

It's a good idea to keep insurance claim forms at hand. Also, carry a copy of your policy and the phone numbers of the insurer's service centre with you. It's also beneficial to leave this information with family or friends at home.

If you do pay for medical services, obtain a detailed invoice from the hospital or the doctor and make a copy of submitted documents for your files.

Upon your return to Canada, contact the health department of your province/territory, there might be a waiting period before your government health insurance becomes effective.

Money Matters

Before leaving Canada, you should consult a foreign currency agent or a bank about the most appropriate currency to carry with you. It's a good idea to have some of the local currency on you when you arrive (unless it's illegal to import local currency). You should check currency regulation with the country's embassy or consulate in Canada.

Canadian currency and traveller's checks in Canadian dollars are not always accepted. Debit and or credit cards may not be accepted abroad, you can get information on ATM services abroad from your bank. If credit cards are accepted, it is a good idea to take at least one card with you, if only for emergencies.



Be aware of the cost of living where you are going. Unfamiliarity with the local currency and prices, as well as changes in your needs, can make budgeting difficult. Try to plan accordingly. Investigate current exchange rates and have a calculator handy to help with conversions. It's also a good idea to make arrangements to obtain more funds if needed before you leave.

If leaving for an extended period, it is important that all your financial obligations are settled or that you can do so while out of the country.

When returning to Canada, you should set aside some local currency, as some countries impose a service fee or departure tax at the airport or point of departure.

Other Travel Considerations

Special Activities

Research any tours or outdoor adventures before you book. Be aware of the inherent risks of that activity. Don't assume you will be safe because you are in a group, or because you have a guide. Each person is unique and may be more susceptible to risks than others. Take precautions for your own safety.



Wildlife

Poisonous snakes, insects, wild animals, poisonous plants, etc. pose a particular risk in countries with warmer climates. When participating in outdoor activities, be sure to dress appropriately and, if possible, hire a local guide.



Souvenirs

Be aware of what you are allowed to bring back to Canada. Illegal souvenirs could result in seizure of the item(s) and a fine and/or prison term.

- For food contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- For plants & animals (and products made from animals or plants) contact Environment Canada
- For cultural property (example: antiques, fossils) contact Canadian Heritage or the embassy of the country you're visiting

Understand that you might have to pay duty on items purchased abroad.

Weather

Be aware of the climate of the country you plan to visit so that you can bring appropriate clothing with you (www.cnn.com/weather).

Some areas of the world face more severe weather during certain seasons. For example, the hurricane season extends from early June to late November and affects mostly the east and Gulf coasts of the United States, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. You should monitor local news and weather reports and follow the advice of local authorities. Be aware of how to contact the closest Canadian government office.



More Travel Tips

ALWAYS REGISTER YOUR TRAVEL ITINERARY WITH A CANADIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICE OR EMBASSY ABROAD.

Never take pictures of military facilities, a harbour where naval vessels are docked, or industrial installations. You should ask permission before taking pictures of religious artefacts, buildings, or local people.

Dress appropriately.

Don't wander into unknown places, first find out how safe they are.

Don't accept food or drink from strangers.

Don't pick up hitchhiker or cross borders with people you just met.

Make sure your luggage is locked and keep an eye on it.

Never carry anything across a border for someone else.

Never leave your valuables in your hotel room, use the safety deposit box at your hotel.

If you plan to be away for an extended period, fill out a change of address notice with Canada Post before you go.

Lots of countries don't make allowances for people with special needs or provide access for people in wheelchairs. For more information see the FAQs section of the DFAIT website.

You might not have the right to a legal representation or trial in your language in certain countries.

What is the relationship between Canada and the country you are travelling to? What is their history? How would this impact your travels?

Be aware you can be considered guilty by association.

Further travel precautions may be needed for women, for gays and lesbians, and for other minorities, depending on the destination.

If staying in a foreign country for an extended amount of time, it is suggested that you make a will, both before leaving Canada and in the other country. Also, consider assigning 'power of attorney' to a trusted family member before leaving.

Student Placements outside of Canada

Student learning experiences in off-campus facilities present the potential for injury to our students, property damage, and liability exposure for the University. It is therefore, important to plan and develop strategies, well in advance of student placements and fieldwork, to minimize risk to the participating students and to minimize liability to the University. In particular, student placements usually require an agreement to be signed prior to any experience.



Student Placement Agreements are legally binding documents that commit the University and the Facility to explicit terms and conditions. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the terms and conditions of these documents be reviewed for legal requirements and conformance to Laurentian University policies, and be reflective of good business and risk management practices. **TEMPLATES ARE AVAILABLE FROM OUR OFFICE.** Please contact the Risk Management and Purchasing Department at ext.1534, 1532 or 1555 for further information.

Important Information for Professors and Program Coordinators

Inform your students. Give them promotional, health and safety, and other program materials well in advance. Do not minimize the risks of the trip. Give the students a realistic idea of the risks involved in such a trip and inform them of their responsibilities and expectations.

Encourage students to do research on the country using external sources.

Solicit feedback from returning students and collect feedback from students after the trip.

Insist on students buying travel and medical insurance.

Hold an orientation or information session to educate students about their roles and responsibilities on the trip.

- Invite a returning student to discuss his/her experience with the students and provide them with first hand advice.
- Remind them of the proper documentation required: Passports, Visas, immunization certificates, plane tickets, traveller's cheques, etc.
- Inform them of any country specific risks they may be faced with: climate, political unrest, theft, cultural differences, etc.
- Advise them on keeping a low profile and using a buddy system.
- Explain the importance of purchasing additional health and travel insurance. (Imagine falling ill in a foreign country and coming home with a debt almost high as or greater than your student debt - yikes!)

Ask participants to sign an informed consent or waiver form (includes statement of responsibility) demonstrating that they accept and understand the risks associated with the program and the venue, assume the risks of participation, and release the school of liability. Also advise them that neither the professors nor the university are liable during after hour activity or in cases where the student decides to prolong his/her visit to the foreign country. Refer to Risk Management and Purchasing Department for proper documents and assistance.

Useful Internet Links and Phone numbers

Visit our website -- <http://www.laurentian.ca/purchasing>

Government Resources

Canada Border Services Agency: www.cbsa.gc.ca

Canadian Consular: http://www.voyage.gc.ca/consular_home-en.asp

Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada: <http://www.international.gc.ca/international/index.aspx>

Phone: 1-800-267-6788 (in Canada) or (613) 944-6788

Fax: 1-800-575-2500 (in Canada) or (613) 944-2500

Emergencies

E-mail: sos@international.gc.ca or phone: 613-996-8885 (can call collect from abroad)



Available 24 hrs/day, 365 days/year

The Canadian Passport Office: <http://www.ppt.gc.ca>

U.S. Department of State -International Travel: http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html

General

WorldWide Classroom – Travel Planner:

http://www.worldwide.edu/planning_guide/Safety_Traveling_Solo

Study Abroad - Student Handbook: <http://www.studentsabroad.com/>

The World Factbook of Criminal Justice Systems: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/wfcj.htm>

Country information

Radio Canada International: <http://www.rcinet.ca>

Centre for Intercultural Learning: <http://www.intercultures.ca/>

The Library of Congress: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/>

FlightStats: <http://www.flightstats.com/go/Home/home.do>

Global Risk Management Security News: <http://www.airsecurity.com/hotspots.asp>

Travel Tips

Transport Canada - Fly smart, fly secure: tips for air travellers:

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/aboutus/travel/Air/brochure.htm>

University of Toronto Safety Abroad: <http://utoronto.ca/safety.abroad/guide.html>

Queen's University International Centre, Travel Information Sheets:

<http://www.queensu.ca/quic/wsa/orientation/index.htm>

DestinEducation: <http://www.destineducation.ca/index-flash.htm>

Association for Safe International Road Travel: <http://www.asirt.org/>

Transportation

Transport Canada - Air: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/air/>

Transportation Security Administration: <http://www.tsa.gov/>

Health

Public Health Agency of Canada: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php>

Canadian Society for International Health: <http://www.csih.org/>

Sudbury and District Health Unit: <http://www.sdhu.com/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/>

MASTA Travel Health: <http://www.masta-travel-health.com/travel-health.aspx>

Money Matters

Exchange Rates: <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>

Translator

Babel Fish: http://ca.babelfish.yahoo.com/translate_txt

Weather & News

CNN – Weather: www.cnn.com/weather

World News: <http://www.worldnews.com/>