

COMING HOME



RESOURCES FROM THE METRO BOSTON STUDENTS STUDY ABROAD REENTRY CONFERENCE



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CULTURAL BINGO



traveled to 5 countries	speaks 3 languages	got lost on the subway	saw a foreign play	walked 2 miles a day
lived in a different hemisphere	traveled to an island	hiked up a mountain	had a part-time or full-time job	drove a rental car
met a significant other	started to smoke	traveled on a boat	visited a famous museum	stayed in a fancy hotel
learned how to play a new card game	taught someone English	rode a horse	swam in the ocean	went to a local festival
wrote all their papers for school by hand	did an internship	tried an exotic new food & liked it	bought new clothes to blend in with the locals	borrowed books from the local library



■ ■ ■ COMING HOME ■ ■ ■

“In a sense, it is the coming back, the return, which gives meaning to the going forth. We really don't know where we've been until we come back to where we were – only where we were may not be as it was because of who we've become, which, after all, is why we left.” -Bernard from “Northern Exposure”, upon returning from Africa

Returnees quoted in Craig Storti's *The art of coming home* (2001)

“People pushed and shoved you in New York subways or they treated you as if you simply didn't exist. I hated everyone and everything I saw here and had to tell myself over and over again, Whoa, this is your country, it is what you are part of.”

-American college student

“I found it difficult to adapt back to a situation that now seemed less ideal. This was not a bad thing, and meant in fact that one carved out a new position for oneself, in terms of relationships with people who were significant—but the reassessment on both sides was difficult at times.”

-New Zealand Foreign Aid Worker

“I finally realized that I was truly home when I became less judgmental and perceived China and America as they are, as cultural entities, each with an up side and a down side, both of which I could criticize and laugh at.”

-Marcia Miller

“[I felt] dejection at not being able to communicate to others the intensity of my China experience. I was expected to be much the same person I was before going to China. But I was no longer that person. I was so saturated with my Chinese experience that I felt I was half Chinese. I may have looked like the same blue-eyed, light-haired Westerner, but a significant part of me had changed radically. I wanted to discuss these changes and have them acknowledged.

-anonymous expat

Returnees quoted in *Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use* (2002)

“Coming home is for many much more of a challenge than going to a foreign culture. Students need to be aware of this. I don't think it is emphasized as much as the culture shock going over, and I think it should be, at least as much if not more so. This is where it all falls into place, or begins to. My suggestion? Keep writing a journal – a lot of reflection is necessary to truly get the most out of it all.”

-A.J. Fleming, Spain

“I found that I had the hardest time dealing with being home when I was bored. Being occupied, whether it be at school or work or just hanging out with friends you have not seen in awhile will help with the re-entry process.”

-Tammi Brussegard, France

“Re-entry is much more difficult than people anticipate. Many people feel that they can no longer relate to their old life, but people should be warned not to get a condescending attitude toward their old life.”

-Elizabeth Hook, Australia

“Don't look at things as better or worse. Accept your home culture as an entity that you can look at from an outsider's perspective. This could help cause a harmony from the blending of your two cultural identities.”

-Dan Jakab, Spain



REENTRY "WORM"

Initial Excitement:
Enjoy being at home

Judgmental Stage:
Nothing at home seems
good; finding fault.

Realization Stage:
Noticing significant changes
at home and in oneself.

Balanced Re-adaptation:
Integrating the experience
abroad with living at home
or finding other ways to
cope with reentry.

REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK
Frustration

© Margaret D. Pusch, 1997



▪ ▪ ▪ TEN TOP IMMEDIATE REENTRY CHALLENGES ▪ ▪ ▪

As Rated by University Students

Dr. Bruce La Brack

There are lots of reasons to look forward to going home, but there are also a number of psychological, social and cultural aspects which can prove difficult – often because they are unanticipated. The following list was generated by interviewing students like you who have been through the experience and survived nicely. However, they say you should take the process seriously by being realistic and thinking about it and your possible reactions. They offer the following thoughts on reentry for your consideration in the hope they will make your return both more enjoyable and more productive.

1. BOREDOM

After all the newness and stimulation of your time abroad, a return to family, friends, and old routines (however nice and comforting) can seem very dull. It is natural to miss the excitement and challenges which characterize study in a foreign country, but it is up to you to find ways to overcome such negative reactions – remember a bored person is also boring.

2. “NO ONE WANTS TO HEAR”

One thing you can count on upon your return: no one will be as interested in hearing about your adventures and triumphs as you will be in sharing those experiences. This is not a rejection of you or your achievements, but simply the fact that once they have heard the highlights, any further interest on your audiences’ part is probably unlikely. Be realistic in your expectations of how fascinating your journey is going to be for everyone else. Be brief.

3. YOU CAN’T EXPLAIN

Even when given a chance to explain all the sights you saw and feelings you had while studying abroad, it is likely to be at least a bit frustrating to relay them coherently. It is very difficult to convey this kind of experience to people who do not have similar frames of reference or travel backgrounds, no matter how sympathetic they are as listeners. You can tell people about your trip, but you may fail to make them understand exactly how or why you felt a particular way. It’s okay.

4. REVERSE “HOMESICKNESS”

Just as you probably missed home for a time after arriving overseas, it is just as natural to experience some reverse homesickness for the people, places, and things that you grew accustomed to as a student overseas. To an extent it can be reduced by writing letters, telephoning, and generally keeping in contact, but feelings of loss are an integral part of international sojourns and must be anticipated and accepted as a natural result of study abroad.

5. RELATIONSHIPS HAVE CHANGED

It is inevitable that when you return you will notice that some relationships with friends and family will have changed. Just as you have altered some of your ideas and attitudes while abroad, the people at home are likely to have experienced some changes. These changes may be positive or negative, but expecting that no change will have occurred is unrealistic. The best preparation is flexibility, openness, minimal preconceptions, and tempered optimism.



6. PEOPLE SEE “WRONG” CHANGES

Sometimes people may concentrate on small alterations in your behavior or ideas and seem threatened or upset by them. Others may ascribe “bad” traits to the influence of your time abroad. These incidents may be motivated by jealousy, fear, or feelings of superiority or inferiority. To avoid or minimize them it is necessary to monitor yourself and be aware of the reactions of those around you, especially in the first few weeks following your return. This phase normally passes quickly if you do nothing to confirm their stereotypes.

7. PEOPLE MISUNDERSTAND

A few people will misinterpret your words or actions in such a way that communication is difficult. For example, what you may have come to think of as humor (particularly sarcasm, banter, etc.) and ways to show affection or establish conversation may not be seen as wit, but aggression or “showing off.” Conversely, a silence that was seen as simply polite overseas might be interpreted at home, incorrectly, as signaling agreement or opposition. New clothing styles or mannerisms may be viewed as provocative, inappropriate, or as an affectation. Continually using references to foreign places or sprinkling foreign language expressions or words into an English conversation is often considered boasting. Be aware of how you may look to others and how your behavior is likely to be interpreted.

8. FEELINGS OF ALIENATION

Sometimes the reality of being back “home” is not as natural or enjoyable as the place you had constructed as your mental image. When real daily life is less enjoyable or more demanding than you remembered, it is natural to feel some alienation. Many returnees develop “critical eyes”, a tendency to see faults in the society you never noticed before. Some even become quite critical of everyone and everything for a time. This is no different than when you first left home. Mental comparisons are fine, but keep them to yourself until you regain both your cultural balance and a balanced perspective.

9. INABILITY TO APPLY NEW KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Many returnees are frustrated by the lack of opportunity to apply newly gained social, technical, linguistic, and practical coping skills that appear to be unnecessary or irrelevant at home. To avoid ongoing annoyance: adjust to reality as necessary, change what is possible, be creative, be patient, and above all use the cross-cultural adjustment skills you acquired abroad to assist your own reentry.

10. LOSS/COMPARTMENTALIZATION OF EXPERIENCE (SHOEBOXING)

Being home, coupled with the pressures of job, family, and friends, often combine to make returnees worried that somehow they will “lose” the experience. Many fear that it will somehow become compartmentalized like souvenirs or photo albums kept in a box and only occasionally taken out and looked at. You do not have to let that happen: maintain your contacts abroad; seek out and talk to people who have had experiences similar to yours; practice your cross-cultural skills; continue language learning. Remember and honor both your hard work and the fun you had while abroad.

© Dr. Bruce La Brack, School of International Studies, University of the Pacific



▪ ▪ ▪ SOME ADVICE FOR YOU... ▪ ▪ ▪

Suggestions on coming “home” from University of the Pacific students (Stockton, CA)

- Talk with others who have come back from abroad and share your experiences, frustration, and joys. These are the people who can help you though it. Almost everyone agrees.
- Accept that you have changed and that things are not going to be the same as when you left and that that's a good thing.
- Exercise. Endorphins kill reentry sadness.
- Read a lot about everything. It will get your brain working.
- Don't isolate.
- Don't brood. Self-pity is unattractive.
- Try new things. If you return to the same place a different person, redefine the place. Take up a new hobby, residence, sport, mode of transport.
- Don't dwell on the past.
- Keep your memories alive – don't store them away in a shoe box. It wasn't a dream and it was important.
- Find local physical supports. Go to the World Market and get German chocolate if you miss Germany, Japanese tea if you miss Japan. And everything is available on the Internet.
- Write down what you thought was great about the US while you were abroad.
- Use your cross-cultural study-abroad skills to observe your own culture.
- Stay spontaneous.
- Don't let failures in your home culture be any less a learning experience than they would have been while you were abroad.
- Continue to reflect on what you learned abroad.
- Focus on how you are now better off from the experiences you have had.
- Look for the good in the present situation.
- Don't be upset if people seem indifferent to your experience abroad.
- Recognize that things at home have changed while you were away and respect those changes. No one's life went on hold just because you were gone, and their experiences are important to them.
- Don't talk about what happened abroad unless your listener wants to hear it. But find a confidant if you can.
- Rekindle the spirit of adventure you had abroad. Explore home.
- Go out of your way to make new friends, just as you did abroad.
- Try to apply what you learned abroad to your life here. What can be saved? What is useful?
- You will need to "rebuild" relationships, not merely "resume" them.
- Don't jump off a cliff: like culture shock, reentry shock passes in time.



▪ ▪ ▪ 25 QUESTIONS –SELF-DISCLOSURE EXERCISE ▪ ▪ ▪

- What was the strangest food you ate?
- How were the restrooms different?
- What was your most memorable experience?
- What was the funniest thing that happened to you?
- What was your most embarrassing cross-cultural communication moment?
- What do you miss most about your host country?
- Where would you go if you had the chance to study abroad again?
- What was your living situation like abroad (host family, dorm, etc)?
- Who did you spend most of your free time with abroad?
- Where did you travel before/during/after your program?
- What was your favorite place in your host city?
- Where did you want to go but didn't get the chance to?
- What was the best language experience you had?
- What was the best present you brought back for a friend/family member?
- What was your favorite thing to do on a Friday night?
- When did you start to feel more "at home" in your host country?
- Who did you wish would visit you abroad so that you could share the experience with them?
- Did you have the chance to see live theater, dance, or music performed?
- What was your first impression of your teachers?
- What was the best photograph you took during your stay?
- What was the biggest change in your daily routine?
- Why did you choose to go on a program to your host country in the first place?
- What was the place you missed most in the US while you were abroad?
- What was the thing (food, clothing, activity, etc.) you missed most while you were abroad?
- What is the most special item you brought back from your host country? Why is it such a treasure?



▪ ▪ ▪ POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF AN INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE ▪ ▪ ▪

from *Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use*

This sheet provides a handy reference of skills you may develop as a direct result of your experiences abroad. Use this to spark ideas for creating a resume, preparing for an interview, and reflecting upon your experiences.

Skills

- Understand cultural differences and similarities
- Adapt to new environments
- Learn through listening and observing
- Establish rapport quickly
- Function with a high level of ambiguity
- Take initiative and risks
- Utilize time management skills
- Identify problems and utilize available resources to solve the problems
- Accept responsibility
- Communicate despite barriers
- Learn quickly
- Handle difficult situations
- Handle stress
- Manage/organize
- Lead others in formal/informal groups
- Conduct research despite language and cultural differences
- Cope with rejection

Qualities

- Self-reliance
- High energy level/enthusiasm
- Appreciation of diversity
- Perseverance
- Flexibility
- Open-mindedness
- Assertiveness
- Inquisitiveness
- Self-confidence
- Self-knowledge
- Independence



▪ ▪ ▪ LIFE-LONG LEARNING AFTER STUDY ABROAD ▪ ▪ ▪

from *Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use*

Here are some suggestions from veteran returnees on how to transform your study abroad experience into life-long learning.

- **CONTINUE YOUR LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION**

Whether through formal or informal instruction, there are many opportunities to continue studying the language and culture of interest after you've returned. Universities and community colleges offer many choices for foreign language instruction, and many offer some of the less commonly taught languages as well. Private language schools also provide opportunities to practice and brush up on language skills through informal classes. Many universities and schools offer language exchange or "tandem" programs that match a native speaker, usually an international student or scholar, with someone interested in that student's home language and culture. In exchange, the partner can tutor them in English.

- **INVOLVE YOUR FRIENDS**

Invite your friends to a dinner once in a while where you have potluck international parties. Use this as a chance to learn not only about the food, but to have your friends share their experiences with other cultures and what they are doing now to keep an international perspective alive.

- **WRITE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES**

Magazines and newsletters, both on campus and off, will be interested in reviewing and possibly publishing accounts of your overseas experience and the unique perspective you now have. This is an excellent way for you to share with others what it's like living in another country. Most of your audience will not have experienced what you did, so by sharing your stories, intercultural encounters, and travels with them, you allow them to enter into your world; and perhaps you may even inspire them to take steps toward their own journey abroad!

- **KEEP THE INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS ALIVE**

Many returnees report regretting that they did not keep in touch with their new friends after returning home. You will feel torn, like your heart and mind is split between two countries. The good news is that with the Internet, it is easier now more than ever to maintain contact with people halfway around the world. Writing letters and e-mail is also an excellent way to maintain your newly acquired language skills. As more and more nations have Internet connections, the amount as well as the variety of information available via the Web has mushroomed. Online newspapers give you immediate access to news on current events that often are not reported in U.S. newspapers.

- **MAKE NEW INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS**

Most universities and colleges have active international student organizations that tend to be organized and attended by both international students and U.S. Americans. Many professional and community organizations exist that have cultural exchange and learning as one of their goals. Find out when the next meeting is and check it out.



▪ **SEEK OUT INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

There are a multitude of opportunities for you to volunteer or find employment that let you utilize your bilingual and bicultural skills:

- Become a homestay family to an international student. Agencies and universities are always looking for suitable homestay families for students, and this is perhaps one of the best means of keeping connected internationally. Be willing to accept a student outside of your own experience and expand your cultural horizons.
- Volunteer or intern in a study abroad office. Your international skills and knowledge about living overseas can be put to valuable use by advising prospective study abroad students and by participating in pre-departure and re-entry orientation programs.
- Volunteer at an office for international students. Offices that work with international students tend to be understaffed and can use volunteers to do a number of vital tasks such as transporting students from the airport, or organizing a drive to collect used household goods and winter clothing for international students, or organizing events or volunteering at orientation for new students.
- Become a buddy or tutor for international students. Already knowing how it feels to go through cross-cultural adjustment in a foreign country, you have a unique perspective and can better understand the needs of international students studying in the U.S. Use those cross-cultural skills to help others and, in turn, deepen your own learning and make valuable international connections.
- Seek out volunteer or work positions at international organizations located in your area. You might be surprised at the number and breadth of international linkages that already exist in your area.
- Volunteer to work with refugees or immigrants in your community. The needs and backgrounds of refugees and immigrants in this country vary tremendously, but they typically do not have the kind of resources that international students have. More and more communities around the country have refugee communities that could use the support of culturally sensitive volunteers.
- Act as a tour guide for visitors from your host country. Many companies now have in-house opportunities for bilingual/bicultural translators and interpreters.
- Seek out opportunities through work, school, or other means to go abroad again. Use your cultural and linguistic fluency to accompany a delegation or tour to your country of interest. They do need you and your skills, even if they might not be aware of it yet!
- A wide variety of materials are available dealing with how to find an international job, whether you want to travel abroad again or be based in the U.S.
- There are also many opportunities for interning or volunteering overseas, which may be a great next step for you. Some of these experiences are longer term (1 to 2 years) and some are available for a few months or less.

Keep in mind that as more and more connections worldwide are formed, there will be even greater need for your international skills and perspectives. As someone who has experienced another culture first-hand, you are well equipped to contribute to the growth in international and intercultural awareness happening at home and throughout the world.



▪ ▪ ▪ BASAA CAREER TIPS ▪ ▪ ▪

Adapted from *International Opportunities* by the Student Resource Center, St. Michael's College (Vermont)

How do I use what I learned while studying abroad to get a job or get into graduate school?

- Start your international job or graduate school programs search early in your college career.
- Build a strong resume, highlighting your experiences.
- Identify skills you want to highlight to employers/ admissions counselors. These should include:

Initiative	Interest in continuous learning
Ownership of projects	Positive outlook toward hardship and adversity
Self control	Relationship building skills
Strong work ethic	Adventurous spirit, curiosity
Adaptability - flexibility and comfort with uncertainty	Creativity
Ability to make “transitions”	Good sense of humor
Goal orientation – clear-cut goals and objectives	Risk taking
Motivation to achieve	Language and communication skills
Intelligence/ability to learn	
- Remember that, according to a study by the Career Services and Placement Collegiate Employment Research Institute at Michigan State University, employers' associate resourcefulness and adaptability with having studied abroad. You may want to demonstrate these traits in your resume or interview.
- Highlight any research/projects you carried out while abroad, focusing on challenges, rewards and outcomes.
- Participate in interviewing skills workshops and practice interviews offered by your college or university. Work on articulating your skills.
- Schedule informational interviews.

How do I establish contacts to find a job overseas or with a U.S. company with overseas travel/operations?

- Reestablish any current overseas connections by phone, email or mail.
- Visit your college's student resource or career center and use the available resources to make a list of overseas companies OR U.S. companies with overseas operations that you would like to pursue as employers.
- Do some preliminary research on these companies.
- Get the names of people to write to in the companies that you have chosen.
- Polish your resume to highlight any international experiences (study abroad, language abilities, work experiences with international companies, course work with international/global aspects).
- Write cover letters, send out with your resume and follow up with your chosen firms.
- Look into working in international education: study abroad or other fields.



▪ ▪ ▪ FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDY/WORK EXPERIENCE ▪ ▪ ▪

Adapted from materials compiled by Alex Trayford for Wheaton College (Massachusetts)

David L. Boren Scholarship

www.iie.org (Boren scholarship link)

- National Security Education Program (NSEP) David L. Boren Undergraduate Scholarships
- Offers undergraduates the resources to study the language and culture of a non-Western country
- Intern for the federal department of your choice

Fulbright Scholarship

<http://www.iie.org> (Fulbright scholarship link)

- For study, research, or teaching abroad
- Applications are to ONE specific country
- If more than one semester of study in a country, don't apply to that country
- Funds awarded

Marshall Scholarship

<http://www.marshallscholarship.org/>

- Marshall Scholarships “finance young Americans of high ability to study for a degree in the U.K.”
- For study at any UK university, including the “Big Three”
- Need a 3.7 GPA minimum to apply

The George J. Mitchell Scholarship

<http://www.us-irelandalliance.org/scholarships.html>

- Scholarship for study in Ireland
- NOT for “Irish Studies”
- Competitive – modeled as the “Marshall Scholarship to Ireland”

Rhodes Scholarship

<http://www.rhodesscholar.org/>

- For study at Oxford University, UK
- Super competitive
- Must have impressive grades and leadership experience

Thomas J. Watson Fellowship

<http://www.watsonfellowship.org/>

- A one-year grant for travel and study outside the US
- Must be a student at one of the 50 participating institutions
- Free-formed, non-study proposals

Additional Graduate Programs and Search Engines

- Association of Professional Schools in International Affairs: <http://www.apsia.org>
- Comparative and International Education Society: <http://www.cies.ws>
- GradSchools.com: <http://www.gradschools.com>
- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators: <http://www.naspa.org/gradprep/index.cfm>
- Peterson's Higher Ed Guides: <http://www.petersons.com/graduate/gsector.html>
- SIT graduate programs: <http://www.sit.edu/degree.html>



Paid International Internships and Work Opportunities

- Carl Duisberg Society (CDS): <http://www.cdsintl.org/>
- Directory of International Internships (MSU): <http://www.isp.msu.edu>
- Idealist - Action without Borders: <http://www.idealists.org>
- International Internships, Jobs, Volunteer Opportunities: <http://www.internabroad.com/>
- University of Michigan Work Abroad: <http://www.umich.edu/~icenter/overseas/work/waoverweb.html>

Alternative Sources of Funding

- Finding Funders: <http://www.fdncenter.org/funders/>
- The Grantsmanship Center: <http://www.grantdomain.com/>

International Funding Sources

http://research.uiowa.edu/dsp/main/?get=internat_funding_sources

- The Annenberg Foundation: <http://www.whannenberg.org/>
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation: <http://www.aecf.org/>
- The Ford Foundation: <http://www.fordfound.org/>
- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: <http://www.rwjf.org/index.jsp>
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation: <http://www.wkkf.org/>
- MacArthur Foundation: <http://www.macfdn.org/>
- The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation: <http://www.mellon.org/>
- Charles Stewart Mott Foundation: <http://www.mott.org/>
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation: <http://www.packfound.org/>
- The Pew Charitable Trusts: <http://www.rwjf.org/index.jsp>
- The Rockefeller Foundation: <http://www.rockfound.org/>
- The Starr Foundation: <http://fdncenter.org/grantmaker/starr/>
- The Robert W. Woodruff Foundation: <http://www.woodruff.org/>



▪ ▪ ▪ INTERNET RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL WORK ▪ ▪ ▪ AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Adapted from materials compiled by the Student Resource Center, St. Michael's College (Vermont)

Alliances Abroad

Work and Volunteer Abroad programs around the world

<http://www.alliancesabroad.com>

Asia-Net

<http://www.asia-net.com>

AIPT: Association for International Practical Training

Internship and Exchange programs around the world

<http://www.aipt.org/>

Best Bets for Student Work Exchange

<http://www.cie.uci.edu/iop/work.html>

BIG Guide to Living and Working Overseas

<http://www.workingoverseas.com/>

BUNAC (British Universities of North America Club)

Non-profit that arranges exchange programs for US and British students

<http://www.bunac.org/>

Cadres Online

Job Recruitment site in French

<http://www.cadresonline.com>

Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers Work Web

<http://www.cacee.com>

CareerBuilder.com

Database of job openings from hundreds of employers across the U.S. and around the world (Asia, Canada, India, UK)

<http://www.careerbuilder.com>

CareerOne

Employment Opportunities in Australia

<http://careerone.com.au/>

CareersIndia

Resumé samples/job search information for career opportunities in India

<http://www.careersindia.com>

Career Strategy Inc.

Career search in Japan

<http://www.csinc.co.jp/english/>

CIEE (Council Exchange)

Permits for work abroad in selected countries

<http://us.councilexchanges.org>

Electronic Embassy—guide to foreign embassies in Washington, D.C.

<http://www.embassy.org>

Employment Guide

Database listings of job opportunities worldwide through key word search

<http://www.employmentguide.com>

Escape Artist

Thousands of articles, contacts, resources, links and tools for finding international employment, artist havens, investments, real estate and the requirements for living abroad.

<http://www.escapeartist.com>

Euro Jobs

<http://www.eurojobs.com>



Eurograduate Information on finding vacancies/writing CVs for most European countries	http://www.eurograduate.com
The European Business Directory Listing of 15000 suppliers from England, Denmark, France, Italy, Spain	http://www.europages.com
European Council of International Schools Placement and job fair agency	http://www.ecis.org
Friends of world Teaching An international placement agency	http://www.fowt.com
Global Business Alliance Site with over 25 business organizations listed in New England that are involved with international trade	http://gbane.org/
Global Careers Job listings and employers with a worldwide perspective. The site is run by a recruitment agency that specializes in international employment	http://www.globalcareers.com
GOINGLOBAL Information on resumes/CV's, work permits, employment trends and job opportunities in the country of your choice.	http://www.goinglobal.com
HotJobs Yahoo-sponsored web site that lists job opportunities in many countries. Select the country of interest and choose the interested career field	http://www.hotjobs.com
Interaction A network of organizations working in international development. Sometimes there is a list of internship opportunities on their homepage	http://www.interaction.org
InterExchange Work, Internship, and Volunteer Abroad programs around the world	http://www.interexchange.org/
International Career Employment Center	http://www.internationaljobs.org
International Research and Exchanges Board	http://www.irex.org/
International University of Japan Information on resumes and cover letters for Japanese & non-Japanese employers, including <i>Rirekisho</i> (traditional Japanese form of a "resume")	http://www.iuj.ac.jp/career
Job Web Job listings and company/career planning information	http://www.jobweb.com
Master's International Compliment a master's degree with overseas service available in a variety of fields at over 40 academic institutions nationwide	http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.whyvol.eduben.mastersint



Monster Provides access to thousands of career opportunities in all fields. Search by location, industry, company, discipline, or key word	http://workabroad.monster.com/
Monster of United Kingdom	http://monster.co.uk
One Small Planet	http://www.onesmallplanet.com
Overseas Job Web	http://www.overseasjobs.com/
Peace Corps	http://www.peacecorps.gov/indexf.cfm
People Bank	http://www.peoplebank.com
Prospects Lists entry-level and graduate-level job opportunities in the U.K.	http://www.prospects.ac.uk
Riley Guide Country by country lists of online job services	http://www.rileyguide.com/
Teaching English in Japan (JET Programme & newsletters)	http://www.jetprogramme.org/ http://www.ohayosensei.com http://www.eltnews.com/home.shtml
Top Margin Résumés Online An Australian pay-for-service resume site that has some good general advice with before-and-after resume examples and cover letter tips	http://www.topmargin.com
United Nations Information on UN programs, employment and internship opportunities	http://www.un.org/aboutun/
United States Department of State Information about career opportunities and student programs	http://www.state.gov
United States Department of State Information about teaching in US Overseas Schools	http://www.state.gov/m/a/os/
University of Northern Iowa Overseas Placement Service for Educators	http://www.uni.edu/placemnt/overseas
U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services	http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/
Volunteer Service Overseas	http://www.vso.org.uk
World Hire Online	http://www.hire.com
World Teach	http://www.worldteach.org
World Wide Web Employment Office	http://www.employmentoffice.net
The WWW Virtual Library: International Affairs Resources Information on international resources/careers in international relations	http://www.etown.edu/vl
YMCA International Camp Counselor Program Positions available in 24 countries	http://www.ymcainternational.org



▪ ▪ ▪ REFERRAL LIST FOR HUMAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS ▪ ▪ ▪

<p>The Academy for Educational Development, AED 1255 23rd Street, NW Washington DC 20037 Phone: 202-862-1904 http://www.aed.org</p>	<p>The Asia Foundation 465 California Street, 14th floor P.O. Box 193223 San Francisco, CA 94108 Phone: 415-982-4640 http://www.asiafoundation.org</p>
<p>Adventist Development and Relief Agency International, ADRA 12501 Old Columbus Pike Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 Phone: 301-680-6380 http://www.adra.org</p>	<p>Doctors Without Borders 333 7th Avenue, 2nd Floor New York, NY 10001-5004 Phone: (212) 679-6800 http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/</p>
<p>The Africa-America Institute, AAI 833 United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017 Phone: 212-949-5666 http://www.aionline.org</p>	<p>Oxfam America 26 West Street Boston, MA 02111-1206 Phone: 617-482-1211 http://www.oxfamamerica.org/art1716.html</p>
<p>African Children Welfare Foundation 2630 South Manhattan Place Suite 1 Los Angeles, CA 90018 Phone: 213-735-6570 http://www.takingitglobal.org</p>	<p>Salvation Army World Service Office 615 Slaters Lane P.O. Box 269 Alexandria, VA 22313 Phone: 703-684-5528 http://www.salvationarmy.org</p>
<p>American Friend Service Committee 1501 Cherry Street Philadelphia, PA 19102 Phone: 215-241-7000 http://www.afsc.org</p>	<p>Save the Children 54 Wilton Rd. Westport, CT 06880 Phone: 800-243-5075 http://www.savethechildren.org</p>
<p>American Red Cross 2025 E Street, NW Washington, DC 20006 Phone: (202) 303-4498 http://www.redcross.org/</p>	<p>The World Health Organization Office at the United Nations (WUN) 2, United Nations Plaza Dc-2 Building Rooms 0956 - 0976 New York, NY 10017 Phone: 212-223-2920 http://www.who.int</p>



▪ ▪ ▪ READING LIST ▪ ▪ ▪

Compiled by Vija G. Mendelson from <http://www.amazon.com> for the 2005 Boston Reentry Conference

BOOKS

- Alternative Travel Directory: The Complete Guide to Traveling, Studying & Living Overseas, R. Mader (2002)
- Alternatives to the Peace Corps: A Directory of Global Volunteer Opportunities, J. Willsea (2003)
- The Art of Crossing Cultures, C. Storti (2001)
- Careers in International Affairs, M.P. Carland & L. Gihring (2003)
- Careers in International Business, E. Halloran (2003)
- Culture Shock! Successful Living Abroad: Living and Working Abroad, M. Rabe (1997)
- Expert Expatriate: Your Guide to Successful Relocation Abroad, M. Brayer Hess (2002)
- GenXpat: The Young Professionals Guide to Making a Successful Life Abroad, M. Malewski (2005)
- The Global Citizen: A Guide to Creating an International Life and Career, E. Kruempelmann (2002)
- How to Get a Job in Europe, C. Matherly & R. Sanborn (2003)
- How to Live Your Dream of Volunteering Overseas, J. Collins, S. Dezerega, Z. Heckscher (2002)
- International Exchange Locator: A Resource Directory for Educational and Cultural Exchange, Alliance on International Educational & Cultural Exchange, Inc. (2000)
- International Jobs: Where They Are and How to Get Them, N. Segal & E. Koucher (2003)
- International Job Finder: Where the Jobs Are Worldwide, D. Lauber & K. Rice (2002)
- Live & Work Abroad Guides (for several countries, check <http://www.amazon.com>)
- New American Expat: Thriving and Surviving Overseas in the Post-9/11 World, W.R. Melton (2005)
- Overseas Americans : The Essential Guide To Living And Working Abroad, W. Beaver (2001)
- The Peace Corps and More: 175 Ways to Work, Study and Travel at Home & Abroad, M. Benjamin & M. Rodolfo-Sioson (1997)
- Survival Kit for Overseas Living, Fourth Edition: For Americans Planning to Live and Work Abroad, R.L Kohls (2001)
- Teaching English Abroad, S. Griffith (2005)
- Teaching English Overseas: A Job Guide for Americans & Canadians, J. Mohamed (2003)
- When in Rome or Rio or Riyadh...Cultural Q & A for Successful Business Behavior Around the World, G. Olofsson (2004)
- Work Abroad: The Complete Guide to Finding a Job Overseas, C. Hubbs (2002)
- Work Worldwide: International Career Strategies for the Adventurous Job Seeker, N. Mueller (2000)
- Work Your Way Around the World, S. Griffith (2003)



ONLINE ARTICLES

- “Becoming an Aid Worker: An Experienced Professional Explains How It’s Done” (Transitions Abroad)
http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0409/becoming_an_international_aid_worker.shtml
- “The Best Work Abroad Resources” (Transitions Abroad)
<http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/work/resources/index.shtml>
- “Build an International Employment Profile” (Transitions Abroad)
http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0503/build_an_international_employment_profile.shtml
- “Education Abroad and Its Value in the Job Market” (Career Watch Fall ‘03 Newsletter in archives)
<http://www.myacpa.org/comm/careerdev/careerwatch.cfm>
- “How to Work Abroad After College” (Transitions Abroad)
http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0411/how_to_work_after_college.shtml
- “Preparing Yourself For a Job Overseas” (The Black Collegian Online)
<http://www.black-collegian.com/career/wsj/overseas600.shtml>
- “What It Takes to Live and Work Abroad” (Transitions Abroad)
http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0401/what_it_takes_to_life_and_work_abroad.shtml
- “Will Studying Abroad Give You an Advantage?” (College Journal from the Wall Street Journal)
<http://www.collegejournal.com/careersqa/findcareerpath/20010621-koen.html>

MAGAZINES

- Abroad View Magazine <http://www.abroadviewmagazine.com/>
- Glimpse Magazine <http://www.glimpseabroad.org>
- Transitions Abroad Magazine <http://www.transitionsabroad.com>



▪ ▪ ▪ COMING HOME: RELATIONSHIPS, ROOTS, AND UNPACKING ▪ ▪ ▪

Written for “Transitions Abroad” by James L. Citron and Vija G. Mendelson (2005)

Cross-cultural reentry—what happens when you come home from living abroad—has interested researchers for more than 50 years. Early writers saw reentry largely as a set of problems or challenges that returnees suffered. One, Asunción-Lande, even compiled a list of 50 types of reentry difficulties, ranging from linguistic barriers to the inability to find a job where you can use your new skills. In the last 30 years, though, it has become more common to think of reentry as a positive challenge or an opportunity for growth and self-discovery rather than as a set of problems.

When you’re the one going through the adjustment, however, it’s normal to experience the transition as both positive and negative. You may even feel like you are on a roller coaster—one minute excited to be home and proud to share all you’ve learned, and the next bored or frustrated and feeling out of sync with those people who have always been closest to you. Having ups and downs is common, and whether you see your glass as half-full or half-empty may depend on whether you are having a good day or a bad day (see sidebar below).

ON A GOOD DAY	ON A BAD DAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ I have the flexibility to fit in anywhere. I adapt easily. I feel horizontally rooted.➤ I am bilingual/multilingual.➤ I can empathize with multiple viewpoints.➤ I respect cultural differences.➤ I have tolerance for ambiguity.➤ I feel challenged/empowered by new experiences.➤ I am aware of global issues (news, politics, media, resource distribution, etc.)➤ I accept challenges to my lifelong beliefs and values.➤ I have a more complex/defined sense of self.➤ I act more socially responsible.➤ I enjoy a personal connection to the larger world; I feel like a “global citizen.”➤ I take risks and embrace the unknown.➤ I am curious and eager to learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ I don’t seem to fit in anywhere. I resist change. I feel rootless.➤ I am semi-lingual in two or more languages.➤ I am frustrated by the narrow-mindedness of people at home.➤ I become impatient with monoculturalism.➤ I am frequently indecisive.➤ I feel bored by the mundane.➤ I am uninformed about local issues and unable to apply what apply what I’ve learned about the larger world to my life at home.➤ I am becoming resocialized into U.S. patterns of thought.➤ I have a more fragmented sense of conflicting identities.➤ I act judgmental and self-righteous in the face of others’ social choices.➤ I feel disconnected/alienated from my home environment.➤ I feel overwhelmed by the known and the unknown.➤ I feel depressed and reluctant to engage.

Research on study abroad has shown that we may gain several new skills and perspectives as a result of our experiences overseas, but when we are having a hard time readjusting to life back home, these can sometimes seem like a liability.



Being able to think optimistically about what you've learned abroad not only helps you feel better as you process your feelings about coming home, but it can also help you articulate how you are different—to family, friends, teachers, mentors, and current and potential employers.

At first, it may be challenging to put your experiences and thoughts into words, and it's normal to have conflicting feelings about being back. Judith Martin, an authority on intercultural reentry and reverse culture shock, says, "Although this confusion may lead to temporary reentry difficulties, effective communication and relationship formation play important roles in processing this identity change and in integrating old and new knowledge, behaviors, feelings, and perspectives—all of which require time and effort."

Relationships

Margaret Pusch, an expert in intercultural communication, has suggested that when you come home from studying abroad, every relationship in your life may need to be renegotiated.

At least four types of relationship changes often occur during re-entry. The first is with those people who stayed at home while you were abroad. You'll likely find some of these relationships to be what a friend of ours likes to call "low-maintenance" friendships, the kind that don't need constant nurturing. You can pick up right where you left off, even after being apart for months or years. Others are apt to be "high-maintenance" friendships, the kind in which after you are apart for a period of time you suddenly discover that you don't have all that much in common any more. Recognizing the difference can help make these changes easier to accept.

It's also helpful to realize that while some of your low-maintenance friends will want to hear all about your overseas experiences—and the most empathetic of them may even be able to relate to many of your stories—sometimes they just won't "get it." Some of your experience may need to be internalized, processed, and integrated into your own life in ways that make sense for you, without your ever being able to fully share them with anyone else. Don't let this discourage you.

A second set of relationships that may change as you come home is with students who were abroad with you and who may be coming home with you to the same town or campus community. These are people who actually can relate to much of what you experienced abroad, and they can be an invaluable source of support when you're feeling down. Seek them out and share your feelings. But just as you may discover that you had some high-maintenance friends at home from whom you've grown apart by being abroad, it's not uncommon for the same phenomenon to occur with your fellow study-abroaders. When you no longer have the common experience of living, studying, or working together overseas, you might start to drift apart, too.

The next set of relationships that usually changes when you come home is with the people you grew close to while you were abroad and who didn't come home with you. These may be host family members, classmates, housemates, or other friends, either from the host country, from third countries, or from other parts of the U.S. As much as you may try to stay in touch with them—and new technologies make this easier nowadays—it's never quite the same as being in the same place at the same time. Knowing that you have friends in far corners of the globe who may visit you and who you can visit someday is exciting and empowering, but not having them with you when you need them—especially when your friends at home can't fully relate to everything that you experienced while you were abroad—can feel isolating and lonely. Starting to view yourself as "horizontally-rooted" with friends all over the globe rather than "rootless" can often make these feelings easier to accept and even embrace.

The final set of relationships to consider: the new ones. If you formed close ties while you were abroad, you have proven how good you are at forming new relationships. The ability to form new relationships is a skill that often grows from venturing out of your familiar environment. Now that you're back, there are countless people out there just waiting to meet you, to learn from you, and to share their own lives with you. This is your chance to establish connections to new people and places.



Roots

People sometimes say they feel “rootless” when they come home. They no longer feel as attached to their home culture as they once were. Yet they also may never feel completely connected to a country where they haven’t grown up. As you live, study, work, and play in your community, you develop ever-deeper roots. We think of people who spend a long time living in one place as being “vertically-rooted.”

When you go abroad, you deliberately “uproot” yourself from the environment where you have always lived and, in the process, lose a lot of familiar reference points and distance yourself from your familiar support networks. At first your host country may present some challenges, but ideally you learn to adapt as you adjust to a new way of life. You meet new people, from many different backgrounds, and you form new relationships that act as your support network abroad. You become comfortable with this new environment, find your place in it, and develop something akin to what David Pollack, an expert on “Third Culture Kids,” has called an extended root system of perhaps less entrenched, but more far-reaching roots that now provide your support.

We think of people who have lived in more than one place as being more “horizontally-rooted,” a trait that may be accompanied by a feeling of wanderlust as you realize how eager you are to explore new places. People who have had the experience of adapting to different ways of living develop skills that can enable them to adjust—plant their roots, if you will—in other new environments with increasing ease. This ability to feel almost at home anywhere—but not quite as totally rooted anywhere as you once did—can be at once exhilarating and frustrating.

This is not to say you forfeit your home connections, your “vertical roots,” by choosing to embrace new experiences and expand your network of relationships. But it is a common experience for people returning home after time abroad to have a confused sense of self and conflicting loyalties about how they fit back into their home culture.

Some of the functions of those vertical roots that served you well for so long were replaced by your horizontal roots while you were gone. Where are you going to plant your roots now? Are you exactly the same person you were before you studied abroad? Do your parents or friends think so? Odds are that you have changed, and you will need to think about these changes in order to come to terms with the “new” you and appreciate the rich hybrid that you have become as a result of blending your home and host culture perspectives and experiences.

Unpacking

How can you tackle the challenge of sorting through your recent experiences, sharing your thoughts and feelings with the people important to you, and blending the key parts of life at home and life abroad to reflect the person you want to be? Here are some ideas on how to “unpack” from your study and travel abroad.

One of the first things you may want to do is communicate the wonder of your experiences to those close to you. But the reality is that few people, even your loved ones, will have the patience to listen to every anecdote about your time abroad or examine with boundless enthusiasm every photo you took.

One way to deal with this is to try to distill the experience so that you can express the importance of your adventures without recounting every single thing that happened to you. Try to think about the moments that stood out for you and the people or places that made a deep impression on you so that you can at least share the highlights.

And be careful about how you talk about your experiences: nothing turns off even a faithful listener faster than hearing about how superior your new (host) country or culture is to the U.S, or about how much wiser you feel now compared to the ignorant person you were before going abroad. Use your newfound cultural sensitivity to avoid alienating your audience.



Another important part of processing your experience is internalizing the most important aspects of it. A lot of times you return home only to be faced with new classes, a new job, new living arrangements, new academic or professional interests, new people, etc. It seems natural to dedicate your energies fully to this challenging and stressful present and to let your study abroad memories fade into the hazy past, mentally filed away under “Surreal, Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience.” This is what Bruce La Brack refers to as “shoeboxing”—when you take the entire experience and put it in a mental “shoebox,” tuck it away in the closet of your mind, and only rarely take it out for periodic reminiscing. This weakens the power of your study abroad experience; without serious thought about what you have learned and gained from your time overseas, it is all too easy to minimize the impact of the experience on your future academic, professional, and personal lives and stifle your own growth.

Bringing it Home

If you are part of the small percentage of the world’s citizens that has had the opportunity to live life on another culture’s terms, you’ve probably found that the experience awakened your senses and led you to new understandings and personal growth. Coming home might feel like a letdown after all that excitement. But it’s also an opportunity to put your new skills to use. The challenge now is to take both your new knowledge and your exploration skills and integrate them permanently into your life ahead. It might sound like a daunting task, but, supported by your horizontal roots, the new you is destined to thrive.

FOR MORE INFO

Articles

“What’s a Month Worth? Student Perceptions of What they Learned Abroad” Chieffo and Griffiths (International Educator, Fall 2003).

“The Benefits of Study Abroad” Dwyer and Peters (Transitions Abroad, 2004).

Books

The Art of Coming Home (Storti, 2001)

Back in the USA (Kepets, 1999)

Maximizing Study Abroad (CARLA, 2002)

Movies

“L’Auberge Espagnole” is a great movie about a French student’s experiences studying abroad in Barcelona, from his preparations to his conflicting feelings about returning home.

www2.foxsearchlight.com/lauberge/

Radio

KUT, Austin’s NPR station, did a feature on returning home from study abroad in early 2005. To listen, visit: http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/kut/news/news.newsmain?action=article&ARTICLE_ID=738167

Web Sites

La Brack’s “What’s Up With Culture?” web site, www.uop.edu/culture, an online resource for cross-cultural training, includes a reentry module with reflection exercises and anecdotes.

James L. Citron has taught courses in intercultural communication and Spanish at the high school, undergraduate, and graduate levels and has worked with U.S. students abroad and international students in the U.S. A regular re-enterer himself, he is Dean of Overseas Studies at Lexia International. jcitron@lexiaintl.org.

Vija G. Mendelson has worked with students abroad in Spain and the Dominican Republic, and has weathered many a reentry experience herself. She is currently Director of Academic Affairs and Assessment at Academic Programs International (API) and also serves on the Advisory Council of The Forum on Education Abroad. Vija@academicintl.com.

Both authors have been involved with planning and facilitating the Metro Boston Students Study Abroad Reentry Conference in past years.

