Preparing for Study Abroad

- To maximize the study abroad experience, students should prepare themselves by learning about their host country, its history, and culture. Students might want to begin with: www.economist.com/countries or http://www.britannica.com/ for a summary.
- Know what is happening in the news in the host city by reading the local newspaper at: http://www.allyoucanread.com/nepal-newspapers/
- Engaging with and adapting to a different culture is an inherent component of study abroad. Students may find the following websites useful to learn about intercultural communication before they leave home: http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/ and http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/educators/enrichment/culturematters/index.html
- Customs and traditions in the host country are different from those at home. To learn a little about the local customs and traditions, students may want to visit the following website: www.hthstudents.com
- Students and their parents should refer to the Office of International Programs website (www.bc.edu/international) and specifically to the Study Abroad Handbook for more information regarding the abroad experience.
- Prior to departure, students will meet with their International Study Advisor at an orientation to help them further prepare for their study abroad experience.

On-Site Contact Information

- Gregory Sharkey, SJ
  On-Site Coordinator
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gcsharkey@yahoo.com

Travel Information

- Students are responsible for making their own flight arrangements. Students will be picked up from the airport by CBS (Center for Buddhist Studies) administrators. More information will be provided by CBS.
- **Visa Information:** Students must apply for a tourist visa, which can be extended up to 120-150 days through CBS after their arrival. Please visit http://www.nepalembassyusa.org/ to view necessary visa information.
- **Registration/Embassy Location:** Americans living in or visiting Nepal are strongly encouraged to register at the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Nepal and to obtain updated information on travel and security within Nepal. The U.S. Embassy is
located at Maharajgunj in Kathmandu, telephone (977)-(1)-400-7200 Fax: (977)-(1)-400-7272. For US Citizen Services, contact (977)-(1)-400-7200 and ask for American Citizen Services. Students may also register by accessing the U.S. Embassy's home page (http://nepal.usembassy.gov/mfe.html) or by e-mail at consktm@state.gov. You will be asked to provide the following information: full name; date of birth; U.S. passport number, date and place of issue; home address and phone number; emergency contact person's name, phone number, fax or e-mail address, HTH information.

### Academics

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- Check in at [http://www.ryi.org/academic-calendar](http://www.ryi.org/academic-calendar) for updated dates and holiday information.
- Course approval information will be found at: [http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/academics/courseapproval.html](http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/academics/courseapproval.html)
- Information about transcripts and grades is available at: [http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/academics/transcripts.html](http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/academics/transcripts.html)
- If you have a learning disability you should discuss with your ISA whether your host university is able to make appropriate accommodations; if so, bring documentation from your doctor or the BC Disabilities Office to support any request for accommodations at your host university

### Housing and Living

- The Center for Buddhist Studies will find appropriate housing for Boston College students with established Tibetan families who live near the Centre. By living with Tibetan families, students will enhance their cultural and linguistic learning. Payments are made directly to BC and include room and board (2 meals/day).
- Additional information about the estimated cost of housing may be found at: [http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/2012-2013%20estimated%20student%20budget%20housing%20Aug%202012.pdf](http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/2012-2013%20estimated%20student%20budget%20housing%20Aug%202012.pdf)
- **Local Transportation:** CBS will also provide information regarding local transportation. Students will be expected to use public transportation to commute between their home and classes.
- **CBS Cultural Activities:**
Apart from the incredible cultural immersion provided by your academic experience in Nepal, CBS offers other extra-curricular activities. CBS arranges a trip to Bodhgaya for one week in November when Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche, the abbot of the monastery, teaches there. It is a great opportunity to visit India and a sacred Buddhist site. CBS normally arranges for both bus and plane travel in order to accommodate different student budgets. BC students are encouraged to attend. Fees apply. The trip is no longer part of the BC mandatory program.

• **Meals:**
  Information about meals will be provided by CBS. The following website can be used to outline the Nepali diet [http://www.nepalvista.com/travel/food.html](http://www.nepalvista.com/travel/food.html)

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**Wellness, Health and Safety**

• Make sure that you have had any required or recommended vaccinations for your travel destinations by consulting the Centers for Disease Control website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

• HTH Worldwide Insurance Services is an emergency health and emergency services provider. All registered BC students are covered by our blanket policy while living and traveling outside of the United States. For more information, visit the following website: [http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/travel-health-safety.html](http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/travel-health-safety.html)

• You are encouraged to consult HTH online services for health and safety information about all world destinations, travel illnesses, and as a resource for international medical providers

• Students are advised to visit the U.S. State Department website: [http://www.state.gov/](http://www.state.gov/) for important travel information including travel advisories.

• Adjusting to a new culture and environment can be stressful. Students will have a smoother transition by making sure that they prepare to remain healthy. Following are some websites that provide important information and advice about how to have a healthy and safe experience abroad:
  - [http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/cultural-services/articles/cultureshock-stages.html](http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/cultural-services/articles/cultureshock-stages.html)

• Be aware that the manner in which medical help is obtained, the way patients are treated, the conditions of medical facilities, and how health care is afforded may be quite different from U.S. practices. U.S. health care values, assumptions, and methods are not universally practiced; even notions regarding the onset of an illness or the timing of expert attention may be considered culturally based.

• Refer to your Study Abroad Handbook for further information about health and safety issues including women, LGBT, disabled people and others

• In the event of a large-scale emergency, such as a natural disaster, you should first text your onsite coordinator; follow the emergency procedures discussed in the onsite orientation; and call or text your parents to let them know where you are and that you are safe
  The emergency phone number in Nepal is 100/103 for Police and 101 for Fire, and 102 for Ambulance.

• Be sure to visit the OIP website for additional information about Health and Safety: [http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/travel-health-safety.html](http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/travel-health-safety.html)

BC emergency contact information:
OIP (617) 552-3827 (Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
Alcohol and Drugs
In many cultures, alcohol consumption is an acceptable part of the culture and people are taught to drink in moderation at home. Many countries have a lower drinking age than the U.S. while other countries have drinking and drug abuse laws that may be more severe. Students are subject to the laws of their host country, so if students choose to drink alcohol abroad, always drink responsibly and be knowledgeable about their host country’s laws by visiting:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#drug_offenses

Finances
• The OIP website provides information about estimated expenses for study abroad:
  http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/2012-2013%20estimated%20student%20budget%20w%20housing%20Aug%202012.pdf
• Scholarships and Financial Aid information can be found at:
  http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/Scholarship_Opportunities.html

Returning to BC
• Complete a Program Evaluation. Upon completion of their program, OIP will e-mail the link to the evaluation.
• Mentor an exchange student from the host university by contacting oipexchange@bc.edu
• Volunteer for Discovery Night, Pre-departure Orientation, Re-entry seminar by contacting the International Study Advisor, Christina Dimitrova at dimitroc@bc.edu
• It is not uncommon when students return from studying abroad to experience “reverse” culture shock. The following may help students transition back to home:
  http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/handbook/handbook5.html#shock

References
• Useful websites:
  http://www.roughguides.com/ travel guidebook
• Student and parent guides at http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/index.html