



CLI 2024

Student Handbook

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

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General Information

Welcome to Bishkek!

Congratulations on being selected to study Russian in the Arizona State University Critical Languages Institute Russian program in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan! Housed at the London School of Languages and Cultures, this immersive language program helps students progress from intermediate to advanced levels of Russian in a compressed interval.

This handbook provides an orientation to the program and reference materials for your use during the program. This handbook is to be used as a guideline only. Information is subject to change. If you have a specific question regarding the program, please reach out to cli@asu.edu.



Kyrgyz Man with Eagle by Joseph McLaughlin (2023 CLI Student)

CLI-Bishkek Important Contacts

The Bishkek program is a cooperative effort of three organizations: Arizona State University’s Critical Languages Institute (CLI), the School of Russian and Asian Studies (SRAS), and the London School of Languages and Cultures. You will work with staff from each of these three organizations during your time in Bishkek. If you are ever unsure who is responsible for any aspect of the program, please contact your CLI Resident Director.

CLI Staff

CLI Main (Arizona) Office

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CLI Director

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Sr. Program Coordinator

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London School Staff

The London School of Languages and Cultures

Phone: +996 (312) 54-44-30

Email: office@londonschool.kg

Esenbekova Aikerim

London School Program Coordinator

Phone: +996 (705) 204 402

Email: acad@thelondonschool.org

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London School Academic Director

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Renee Stillings

Program Director

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Emergency Services

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Your Course Spans Multiple Summer Sessions

8-week courses in Bishkek take place over two summer sessions as shown in the table below. You will receive two grades, one for each session. You will take final exams at the end of each session.

8 + 4-week hybrid courses (Tempe followed by Bishkek) take place over three summer sessions, as shown in the table below. You will receive three grades, one for each session. You will take final exams at the end of each session.

*Please note: CLI Session dates **do not** match standard ASU Summer Session dates. Please use the dates below, **not** the ASU-wide Summer Session dates published by the ASU registrar's office.*

Important Dates

8 + 4-week hybrid classes	Date(s)
Return all CLI forms	March 15, 2024
Arrive in Tempe	May 19
CLI Summer Session A	May 20 – June 14
Add/Drop for Session A	May 23
No Class; Memorial Day	May 27
No Class; National Holiday	July 4
CLI Summer Session B	June 17 – July 12
Add/Drop for Session B	June 19
Travel to Bishkek	July 13
CLI Summer Session C	July 15 – August 9
Add/Drop for Session C	July 17
Last day of class	Aug 9
Depart Kyrgyzstan	Aug 10 or slightly later
8-week classes	Date(s)
Return all CLI forms	ASAP
Arrive in Kyrgyzstan	June 16
CLI Summer Session A	June 17 – July 16
Add/Drop for Session A	June 19
CLI Summer Session B	July 17 – August 09
Add/Drop for Session B	July 19
Last day of class	August 9
Depart Kyrgyzstan	August 10 or slightly later

No class in Tempe on:

May 27th – Memorial Day

July 4th – National Holiday

Arrival and Departure

CLI students arrange their own travel. (Exception: CLI arranges group itineraries for participants in the ROTC Project GO program. Students interested in traveling with the ROTC group may contact CLI for the group itinerary.) **FLAS and Title VIII scholarship recipients must be in compliance with the [Fly America Act](#) when booking flights.**

8-week students should plan to arrive at Manas International Airport, FRU, on **June 16th** or slightly before and to depart on **August 10th** or slightly after.

4-week students should plan to arrive at Manas International Airport, FRU, on **July 16th** or slightly before and to depart on **August 10th** or slightly after.

Manas International Airport lies 16 miles northwest of downtown Bishkek and is readily accessible by taxi. You will be met at the airport by a representative of The London School.

Books and Computers

Bring a laptop or tablet. The London School of Languages and Cultures uses an electronic, online textbook. Most students find that working from a laptop with a full-size keyboard is much more effective than working from a tablet.

Academic Load and Extracurricular Activities

CLI classes meet for half of each day. Each class provides the equivalent of a week's regular instruction. Each day, you will be expected to complete a week's worth of homework and learn a week's worth of vocabulary, in addition to participating in program projects and activities. Please keep this in mind. Opportunities for independent travel during the program will be limited.

Travel and Visas

What to Pack

Be aware of weight and size restrictions for backpacks and carry-on suitcases for **ALL** flights as regulations may vary by airline. Pack small enough and light enough for the most restrictive airline in your itinerary. Students are highly advised against checking bags as lost luggage may not be recovered.

If you transit through Istanbul or Dubai, you do not require a visa as long as you do not leave the international terminal and do not check bags. Participants transiting through other countries should check visa requirements and obtain any necessary visas in advance.

E-mail your itinerary to cli@asu.edu as soon as your tickets are booked to ensure airport pick up.

Backpack

- Passport*
- Cash, credit cards, ATM card*
- Cell phone, charger, earbuds/headphones*
- Laptop, charger, adapters
- Portable power bank (optional)
- Change of clothes (including undergarments)
- Extra jacket/sweater/sweatshirt/or light blanket
- Travel pillow, ear plugs, eye mask for sleeping
- Toothbrush, floss
- Comb/Brush
- Glasses/contacts with case/sunglasses (inexpensive)
- Essential medications and prescriptions (Make sure your prescription meds are not controlled substances in-country)
- Toiletries, including deodorant, hand sanitizer, toothpaste, contact lens solution, nothing over 3 oz, all should fit into 1 quart-sized Ziploc bag
- Small medicine kit (Imodium, Advil/Tylenol, Pepto Bismol (tablets), band-aids, thermometer, Neosporin, cold medicine, Benadryl)

- Reusable Water Bottle (empty)
- Snacks for flight
- Printed flight confirmations
- Printed boarding passes (in case your phone is lost)
- Copy of passport/visa
- Photocopies of bank cards/credit cards
- Pen (for filling out customs entry form)
- Reading material or e-reader
- Face masks, 2-3 (just in case)
- Sanitizing Wipes (optional)
- Small Kleenex Packet
- Females: Small purse for everyday use; feminine products

***Keep these on your person while traveling**

Airplane Outfit

Wear comfortable clothes, and dress in layers. You may decide to wear your pair of comfortable shoes on the flight or your hiking boots, depending on suitcase space.

Carry-On Suitcase (should you want/need one)

- Pants/Skirt (2-3)
- Shorts (2-3)
- Short-sleeve shirts/blouses (5)
- Long-sleeve shirts/blouses (3)
- Nicer shirt (button down or blouse) (1)
- Sweatshirt/Light sweater (1)
- Socks (5 pairs)
- Undergarments (5 pairs)
- Sleepwear (1)
- Belt (1)
- Comfortable Walking Shoes (1 pair)
- Hiking Boots (1 pair)
- Sneakers (1 pair, optional)
- Ball cap (optional, non-military design or insignia)
- Rain Poncho
- Sunscreen
- Razor (not electric)
- Small shampoo/conditioner/soap (only enough for 1 week) - put in sealed quart-sized bag to protect the contents of your suitcase.
- Cosmetics
- Feminine Products
- Passport-sized photo for local ID card
- Trinkets/Small gifts for your host family/teachers (optional)
- Headphones with microphone (for OPI testing)
- Laptop (for OPI testing)

Do Not Pack (Buy in Bishkek)

- Towels
- Toilet paper
- Umbrella
- Additional Soap / Shampoo / Detergent

Suggestions

Roll clothes and/or use packing cubes to save space. Also, don't bring anything you care about and don't over-pack. You'll want some space for souvenirs on the way back and you also won't feel bad if you must leave a few things behind.

Project GO: No Military Displays

Project GO students may not display any military insignia, logos, or patterns while abroad. No uniforms, no U.S. flags, no Army T-shirts, no camo backpacks, no ROTC pens or notebooks, etc.

Visas

United States citizens may enter Kyrgyzstan and stay up to 60 days visa free. Since neither of CLI's programs lasts 60 days, CLI participants holding U.S. passports do not require visas.

Participants planning to reside in Kyrgyzstan for over 60 days must make their own visa arrangements.

*Note: If you are ever asked the purpose of your visit in Bishkek, say: "tourism." If you say: "education," you may be asked to produce a student visa. Student visas are for students enrolled in Kyrgyz universities only. CLI participants are not enrolled in any Kyrgyz university and therefore have **tourist** status.*

Pick-Up

A CLI representative will meet you at the airport and take you to your host family. Please inform CLI, by phone and/or email, of any changes to your itinerary as soon as they are made to ensure a smooth pick up.

Carrying Your Passport

You are required by law to carry identification with you in Kyrgyzstan. Carry a copy of your passport (and a note explaining where the original is) with you at all times. You can be subject to fines if unable to produce identification when asked. Document checks can occur at any time, any place. When your documents are checked, give a copy to the policeman, not the original.

Financial Matters

Billing Schedule

All CLI-related charges will be billed to your ASU student account, accessible through the main student portal, found at my.asu.edu, on the schedule below. Please keep in mind that all fees are non-refundable once posted. Payments are usually due the 25th of the month in which the charges are posted.

FEE	POST DATE ¹
8-week program	
\$500 (non-refundable)	When you enroll in class
Remainder of Program Fee	2 nd day of class during the 1 st summer session
4-week program	
\$500 (non-refundable)	When you enroll in class
Remainder of Program Fee	2 nd day of class in Bishkek
All fees <u>non-refundable once posted</u>	

¹ The Post Date is the date the charge appears on your student account. Payment is due on the 25th day of the month following the post date (and is indicated in your student account online).

Insurance

All participants are covered under Cultural Insurance Services International's insurance through Arizona State University's Study Abroad office. You may access an overview of ASU's CISI resources [here](#), and read plan information and coverage details [here](#).

One month before you depart, you will receive a welcome e-mail from CISI providing an insurance card and online access. Once you receive that welcome email information, you can login to the [myCISI Portal](#). Register online with the login information from the email to access your electronic ID card, locate trusted providers, and arrange direct payments to your provider.

If you have not received a welcome email from CISI one month prior to departure, please contact studyabroad@asu.edu.

We strongly recommend you download the *myCISI* app to your smart phone to have the most up-to-date list of trusted providers. For treatment at any facility in Kyrgyzstan **a case should be opened with On Call so a Guarantee of Payment (GOP) can be placed to cover medical expenses**. On Call should also be contacted to assist with arranging appointments; however, students should always proceed to the Emergency Room or call local Emergency Responders in the event of an emergency.

CISI recommends the following provider:

- Medi Ltd, Ulica Suyerkulova 5/3, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. Phone: +996.312.59.56.27

Other local area providers include:

- National Center of Cardiology & Internal Medicine 3 Togolok Moldo Ulica , Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic Phone: +996.312.62.56.82 www.nccim.kg 24/7 Emergency Department Government Operated Inpatient Facility.
- Neomed 46 ulica Orozbekova , Bishkek, 720040 Phone: +996.312.90.60.90 www.neomed.kg
- Infectious Disease Hospital RIKB 70 Lev Tolstoj , Bishkek, 720035 Kyrgyz Republic Phone: +996.321.590.154 24/7 Emergency Department Government Operated Inpatient Facility.

Academic Information

Transcripts, Credit Transfer, Auditing

Participants in 8-week Bishkek courses receive 10 credits (2nd year) or 8 credits (3rd year and up).

Participants in the hybrid course received 10 credits for their first 8 weeks and 3 credit for their third a final 4-week session.

All CLI courses must be taken for credit. You cannot audit a CLI class.

To request a copy of your ASU transcript, visit <http://my.asu.edu> and click on the “Grades and Transcripts” tab in the “My Classes” section of the homepage. You will need your ASURITE username and password.

Please consult your university’s registrar office regarding fees and procedures for transfer of ASU credit.

Your ASU Student Account

Every student receives an ASU e-mail account, even students studying abroad. It is important that you check it or set it to forward to an account that you check.

Past students who failed to check their ASU mail have missed events and incurred late fees because they did not read the messages sent to them by the ASU system.

You can configure your ASU account to forward using the MyASU. (<http://my.asu.edu>) ; Click the “profile” tab, then look in the “Contact Details” section for the “Update Email Forwarding” link).

Placement Exam

CLI-Bishkek staff will place you into the course most closely matching your level, as determined by your placement test. Their decisions are final, but they will be communicated to you before you are charged any CLI fees.

Housing and Logistics

Housing

Students will be provided host-family accommodation throughout the program. Breakfast and dinner will be provided by your host family. Since this is an immersion program, you will be expected to communicate solely in Russian, as the host family you will be staying with will speak Russian as their primary language.

Cell phones

CLI staff and other staff in Bishkek will review cell phone policies and instruct students on how to add minutes to their phones during in-country orientation.

Code of Conduct

You are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct you signed as part of your intake materials as well as the Code of Conduct for students staying with host families. The relevant forms can be found in your study abroad portal.

Location Details

Region, Safety, Etiquette, Resources

The London School of Languages and Cultures

CLI summer programs are hosted by the London School of Languages and Cultures, a private language school in downtown Bishkek and specializing in teaching Russian and Kyrgyz to foreigners. The school boasts fully outfitted classrooms, Wi-Fi, and an international staff. CLI works closely with the London School faculty to ensure a smooth articulation between U.S. and Bishkek-based courses.

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan's history spans over 2,000 years and encompasses a wide variety of cultures and empires, including Persian, Mongol, Russian, and Soviet. While the country is geographically isolated by its high, mountainous terrain – which has allowed for the preservation of its ancient culture – Kyrgyzstan has historically been at the crossroads of several great civilizations as part of the Silk Road.

Since gaining independence in 1991, Kyrgyzstan has been a unitary parliamentary republic. Kyrgyzstan is a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Turkic Council, the TÜRKSOY community and the United Nations.

Kyrgyzstan's population consists of Kyrgyz (73%), Uzbek (14%), and Russian (6%) peoples, with smaller populations of Dungans, Uyghurs, Tajiks, Kazakhs, and Ukrainians making up minority populations. The most common religions are Sunni Islam (80%) and Russian Orthodox Christianity (11%).

The City of Bishkek

Bishkek is the capital and the largest city in Kyrgyzstan. The name is thought to derive from a Kyrgyz word for a churn used to make fermented mare's milk or *kumis*.

Bishkek lies at 800 meters (2,600 ft), just north of the *Tian Shan* mountain range, which rises up to 4,855 meters (15,928 ft) and provides a spectacular backdrop to the city. North of the city, a fertile and gently undulating steppe extends far north into neighboring Kazakhstan.

SRAS provides an excellent overview of the city in [its city guide](#).

Many streets in Bishkek have two names. The newer names were established when Kyrgyzstan became independent, but many people still use the old Soviet-era names. For instance, The London School is on Baitik Baatyr street, but taxi-cab drivers often still call it "Sovietskaya." Be sure to find out both names of the street you live on from your host family.

Culture Shock

Culture shock is normal and nearly universal. You are virtually guaranteed to experience it throughout your trip (and after your return). ASU will discuss during your orientation the symptoms and stages of culture shock and suggest ways to deal with its effects. As your orientation staff will emphasize, recognizing the symptoms is 75% of the battle. Students who recognize culture shock when they experience it are much more likely to adapt and respond effectively than students who experience culture shock without understanding what is happening to them.

Meals & Lunch Options

The London School cafeteria provides an inexpensive lunch option. Located in the facility, the cafeteria is self-serve and you must bus your own table. Your host family will provide breakfast and dinner.

Other options include the third-floor food court in the Vefa Center (across the street from the London School), or any of the restaurants and cafes that line ул. Байтик Баатыра (aka улица Советская) and the downtown streets. For Kyrgyz cuisine, the London School recommends Café Фаиза on ул. Медерова. See the SRAS city guide (<http://srasstudents.org/region/bishkek/>) for more recommendations. If you find a great place that has not been included on the student site, please send them a review.

Vegetarian Options:

<https://lemountainsandthesea.wordpress.com/2014/08/20/vegetarian-eating-in-bishkek/>

Time Zone

Bishkek is 6 hours ahead of GMT. During the summer, the time difference from Bishkek to locations in the U.S. is:

Bishkek–Washington, DC	add 09 hours	noon in Washington, DC is 9PM in Bishkek
Bishkek–Chicago	add 10 hours	noon in Chicago is 10PM in Bishkek
Bishkek–Denver	add 11 hours	noon in Denver is 11PM in Bishkek
Bishkek–Los Angeles, Phoenix	add 13 hours	noon in Phoenix or LA is midnight in Bishkek +1 hour

Calling to Bishkek

The international telephone country code for Kyrgyzstan is 996 and the city code for Bishkek is 312. (Cell phones may have different city codes.)

Calling to Kyrgyzstan from the US & Canada

011 + 996 + city code + number (Example: for the London School main office, dial 011-996-312- 544430.)

Calling from Bishkek

You may make international calls using the London School Wi-Fi, although you may find connections faster at the Shmel Internet café in the Vefa Centre across from the School.

CLI-Bishkek staff discuss local and international calling in detail during on-site orientation.

Internet

The School provides Wi-Fi in its facility, although bandwidth is limited. Students will receive a portable wifi router that they can use most anywhere in the city. Numerous internet cafes and restaurants provide free wifi in the city in the city.

The London School computer lab is open Monday-Saturday 10am–7pm.

Printing

London School does not provide printing services. If you need to print, you can take advantage of any of the numerous, inexpensive copy shops in the city.

Mailing to and from Bishkek

The post office is centrally located at the corner of Sovyetskaya and Chui Prospekt. You can purchase stamps and mail letters there. Mail can travel slowly, however, and is not always reliable.

Courier services are reliable but expensive.

FedEx

217 Moskovskaya str
Bishkek 720010
Kyrgyzstan
Tel +996-312-353111
+996-312-352842

DHL

Kievskaya str., 107
Bishkek 720001
Kyrgyzstan
Tel +996-312-611111

UPS

240 Chokmorov str., 3rd floor
Bishkek 720010
Kyrgyzstan
Tel +996-312-979713
+996-312-699988
+996-705-999900

Transportation

Taxis: Taxis are widespread and inexpensive in Bishkek. Taxi etiquette, pricing, and safety will be covered during in-country orientation.

Trams, Trolleys, Buses, etc. Bishkek has an extensive network of minibuses, or *Marshrutkas*. The *marshrutka* travels a fixed route like a bus, stops only when flagged down or when a passenger requests to be let out, like a cab. They generally cost KGS10 (KGS12 at night). Visit <http://bus.kg> for route maps, or download the Android app for offline route information. Bishkek also has a bus system, but it is less extensive and slower. Bus service ends at 22:00. Buses cost KGS8. Yandex is also a popular cab service.

Banks & ATMS

ATMs are plentiful in Bishkek and they are connected to most major networks. Most students carry cash enough for a week or two, but rely on ATMs to “recharge.” Contact program staff if you have concerns about your bank’s network being present in Bishkek.

Be sure to tell your credit card company that you are traveling to Kyrgyzstan. Otherwise your card may be disabled for security reasons while you are overseas. Most US banks now allow you to input your itinerary on their website; if yours does not, call the customer service number on your card to notify them.

The bank nearest the School is Demir Bank (“DKIB-Gorky” Branch). Program staff will point it out to you.

The nearest currency exchange is inside the Vefa center mall across the street from the London School. Program staff can provide directions.

Credit Cards

Although credit cards are accepted in some locations, Bishkek is largely a cash economy. Bring cash with you and use trusted ATMs (ATMs inside banks) to withdraw additional funds as needed.

Card fraud is a problem in Bishkek. Do not use free-standing ATMs or ATMs in stores. Use only ATMs in banks.

Do not assume it is safe to pay with a card, even where cards are accepted. Instead, withdraw money from trusted ATMs and pay in cash.

Currency

The official currency of Kyrgyzstan is the Kyrgyz *som*. The exchange rate as of March 30th, 2023, was 89.32 KGS to \$1USD.

Embassies and Consulates**U.S. Embassy Bishkek**

171 Prospect Mira

Bishkek 720016 Kyrgyz Republic

Tel.: (+996-312) 597-000

Fax : (+996-312) 597-744

E-mail: BishkekPAS@State.gov

Electricity Conversion

Kyrgyzstan has a 220 v/50hz current and uses a two-pronged “Type C” CEE 7/16 Europlug.

You can find ADAPTERS, (from US\UK\Other to local) in some Bishkek markets. CONVERTERS are better to bring from home and can be used to power hairdryers and other devices that don't have a built in converter (as most laptops do). Remember, U.S. devices run on 110 volts. The local 220 volt/50hz current can burn up your devices if a converter is required.

Most laptops and tablets can run on both American 110v/60Hz and European 220 volt/50hz. Consult the documentation that came with your equipment to be sure. Even if your equipment supports 220 volt/50hz, you will probably need an adapter for the plug.

Souvenirs, Museums, Theaters, etc.

SRAS provides an excellent and up-to-date guide to Bishkek: <http://srasstudents.org/region/bishkek/>

General Health and Safety

Safety

Bishkek is generally safe, but street crime does occur and tourists can be targeted. Petty crime is particularly common near establishments favored by foreigners (Metro, Golden Bull, Old Edgar's, the Hyatt), TsUM, the Beta Center, and the bazaars. Avoid walking alone after dark, and take normal precautions; don't flash cash, don't dress ostentatiously, etc.

The Embassy also recommends that you change your route and routine frequently, and that you pay close attention to your surroundings.

Medical Care and Medications

Leave a copy of your insurance information at home with a person empowered to make medical decisions on your behalf (parent, guardian, other named individual).

Keep a copy of your insurance card with you at all times.

Inform CLI staff immediately if a medical situation occurs.

Emergency assistance is available 24/7.

Bring any and all prescription medications with you.

You do not need to bring common over-the-counter products, like cold medicine or vitamins. There are easily available in Bishkek.

Drinking Water

Tap water in Bishkek and the surrounding vicinity should **not** be considered safe. Please drink only bottled water or water that has been boiled. Do not drink beverages with ice cubes. Avoid shaved ice desserts. Be careful not to consume tap water when brushing teeth (use bottled water). When in doubt, err on the side of caution.

Fitness

There are numerous gyms and pools available for your use, at your expense. The nearest gym is *Fortuna*, very close to the London School. For more information on health and fitness in Bishkek consult London School or CLI staff, or consult section 10 of the SRAS Bishkek City Guide: http://www.sras.org/guides_bishkek

Personal illness

In case of personal illness, contact your resident director or your local health contact. (See contact pages at the beginning of the book. Your resident director or health contact will accompany you to the doctor's office.

The clinic most Americans utilize in Bishkek is the **Eldik Medical Clinic** at the intersection of Ул. Боконбаева and Молодая Гвардия. It is not part of the CISI preferred provider system, so you will need to retain receipts and then process them for reimbursement after the program's end.

<p>National Center of Cardiology & Internal Medicine 3 Togolok Moldo Ulica, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic Phone: +996.312.62.56.82 www.nccim.kg 24/7 Emergency Department Government Operated Inpatient Facility</p>	<p>Neomed 46 ulica Orozbekova, Bishkek, 720040 Phone: +996.312.90.60.90 www.neomed.kg</p>
<p>Infectious Disease Hospital RIKB 70 Lev Tolstoj, Bishkek, 720035 Kyrgyz Republic Phone: +996.321.590.154 24/7 Emergency Department Government Operated Inpatient Facility</p>	<p>Medi ltd Ulica Suyerkulova 5/3 , Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic Phone: +996.312.59.56.27 www.insult.kg</p>

Emergency health care

If you need emergency health attention, call an ambulance, then call your resident director or local health contact. All numbers are indicated on the “Important Contacts” page at the beginning of the book.

Natural disasters, civil unrest, and public health crises

In case of natural disasters, civil unrest, or public health crisis, you may be required to evacuate. Follow the following steps:

1. Contact your resident director or local health contact for instructions.
2. If you cannot make contact by phone, e-mail or smartphone app, gather your belongings and proceed to the primary evacuation location.
3. If the primary evacuation location is unsafe, proceed to the secondary evacuation location.

Evacuation locations

- Primary evacuation location: the courtyard of the London School
- Secondary evacuation location: Teacher’s Residence, Teachers’ residence Vodoprovodnaya street 22, suite 1

APPENDIX A

Detailed safety and security

Pre-Departure Preparation

Your safety and security abroad begins with intentional preparation prior to your departure. This handbook has outlined a number of these preparations already, including storing important phone numbers and contact information to take with you and being prepared ahead of time for potential emergencies. In this section, you will learn a little about the steps ASU takes to maximize the safety of our study abroad programs, as well as steps you should follow to take your safety and security into your own hands.

ASU Risk Monitoring

The ASU Study Abroad Office (CLI) uses various sources of information to assess risk pertaining to overseas study, including in areas of political or social unrest, terrorism, and the threat and actions of war. These sources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- U.S. Department of State (DOS) - the Study Abroad Office monitors U.S. Department of State travel advisories and warnings and regular consults the DOS Country-Specific Information to identify known risks in all ASU study abroad program locations.
- iJET – the Study Abroad Office receives helpful, timely, and actionable intelligence information from this third-party travel risk management company.
- Concur – ASU’s enterprise travel software provides the Study Abroad Office with robust health, safety and security information about every country around the world.
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) - ASU is a member of OSAC, a division of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security in the U.S. Department of State. This gives us access to daily international news digests, as well as a direct line of contact to the U.S. Department of State’s regional security analysts.
- ASU Study Abroad Health and Safety Committee - Representatives from the Office of the Provost, General Counsel, and Risk and Emergency Management regularly review study abroad programs in locations of concern, advising CLI on issues related to travel in risky locations.
- PULSE – ASU coordinates with this consortium of security professionals from more than 50 other institutions.

Student Safety Precautions

- Prior to your departure, register for the state department [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). This free service is specifically geared toward students living or traveling in a foreign country. STEP allows you to enter information about any upcoming trips abroad so that the Department of State can better assist you in an emergency. Also, by providing your email address, you will be added to a consular listserv to receive local security updates related to road closures, transportation strikes, civil unrest, etc.
- Review travel websites, consular reports, and the [Department of State Country Information](#) before traveling. Be mindful that a normally peaceful place can erupt in violence due to protests, elections, or other current events. Public opinion about Americans can change quickly around the world depending on current events and U.S. actions, so keep up on what is going on around your region of the world and back home in the U.S.
- Inquire with the U.S. Consulate before you leave home or as you enter a large city about

any local unrest or for advice about areas to avoid.

- If you have the opportunity to travel during your program, e-mail your travel itinerary and details to your Faculty Director and to your Study Abroad Office International Coordinator. If you realize that you will not be back at the time stated on your itinerary or if you get stuck somewhere, contact your Faculty Director and, if applicable, your host family, and inform them of the situation. If necessary, call the Study Abroad Office or the Study Abroad Emergency Hotline.

Your Travel Safety

ASU takes all reasonable steps to help students be safe during their study abroad program. However, the most important person responsible for keeping safe is you, the student.

- You are responsible for reviewing the safety information provided to you by ASU and your program leaders, providers, and host institutions.
- You are responsible for handling the advice provided by local staff about how to stay safe abroad, particularly when on your own.
- You are responsible for any poor choices you make that may jeopardize your health or safety, or the health and safety of those around you.

While You Are Abroad

It is important to be cognizant of your surroundings and to understand that your host culture might be drastically different than your own. Both before you leave and once you arrive in your program's location, your program leaders will facilitate an orientation, which will offer tips and suggestions for staying safe in your particular location. Though you will often be traveling as part of a group, we hope that you will find time to travel independently, whether that be before, during, or after the official program dates. In this section, we include general safety advice to prepare you in advance for your time abroad.

Personal Safety

- Be informed. Watch and learn what the locals are doing, and follow their lead. If you have questions pertaining to safety issues in your host country, ask your Faculty Director or Program Assistant.
- Learn the local equivalent to "911" in your host country.
- Exercise extreme caution when swimming abroad, particularly in developing countries where emergency services may not be readily available. In locations that experience heavy seasonal rains, currents can rapidly change in strength and speed. Swim only at designated beaches with clear warning systems, and never swim alone. Swim between the flags only where a lifeguard is present and heed all warning signs/flags. Never consume alcohol before or during swimming activities.
- Each ASU study abroad program will be a little different, but in all cases, keep your passport, credit cards, and travel documents in a safe place. Depending on the situation and your program leader's advice, this might mean keeping these items in a money belt or inside pouch. In other situations, it may be safer to keep these items in a hotel safe and carry copies of these documents instead. If you are unsure, ask your program leaders.
- When traveling on your own, try not to arrive at an unknown town late at night, especially if you haven't made arrangements for spending the night. Make sure you have a reservation before arriving at a hotel or hostel because space can be limited.
- Avoid demonstrations. In many countries around the world, demonstrations occur frequently (sometimes without warning) and can escalate into violence. You are best advised to avoid any demonstration that you may come across while traveling abroad – better to be safe than to be caught in a violent protest (or a violent response from local authorities).
- If traveling on your own before or after your program, be sure to reference the [CLI website](#) for

tips on safe housing abroad.

Safety Tips

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times! Anything that could distract your attention (someone asking the time, asking directions, spilling something on you, etc.) is an opportunity for theft.
- Always have everything of value (passport, money, important documents, etc.) on your person in a money belt or inside pouch, and never leave your bags unattended. *Do not carry your passport or large amounts of money in your purse or backpack.*
- When sleeping on a train, keep your backpack by you and wrap the strap around your arm or leg.
- Be especially careful in crowds where pickpockets are likely to gather.
- Leave any expensive or irreplaceable jewelry at home (USA) as well as any other items you would be devastated to lose. Avoid wearing expensive jewelry or clothing, and try not to provide any overt indication of wealth (including a visible smart phone).
- Be cautious of anyone asking you for money. Giving money is a personal decision, but use common sense. If you are in an uncomfortable situation, say “no” forcefully and leave.
- Follow the advice of local and international authorities.
- Avoid the vicinity of any public demonstrations.
- Avoid overnight travel by road.
- Avoid travel to any location where the U.S. government has restricted or forbidden U.S. government personnel from visiting.
- Walk with a purpose; try to avoid using maps while walking around – prepare your route before you begin your journey.
- Do not be tied/chained to your smart phone – Look up from your phone, make eye contact, note driver, car, be aware of the logistics, people meeting you, where you are going etc.;
- Do not accept rides or drinks from strangers.
- Travel with someone, whenever possible – avoid walking around alone in an unfamiliar environment, especially after dark.
- Do not be complacent (even if you have been there before, know everyone etc.) - treat each trip as if your first, be aware of surroundings, know your plans for logistics, etc.;
- Consider removing any banking apps from your smart phone (consider also removing any passwords or other sensitive information stored on your phone).
- Consider editing your contact list in your phone (if using personal phone) in case of a lost or stolen phone.

Road Safety

Traffic accidents are a leading cause of death of Americans abroad, particularly among college students. Contrary to popular belief, this is not just a risk of the developing world

- 85% of fatal crashes occur in industrialized countries, according to the Association of Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT). Travelers can minimize their risk by assessing the road culture in travel areas and implementing safety precautions before traveling by road.

[ASIRT](#) suggests that travelers:

- Select the safest form of transportation in the travel area
- Avoid late-night road travel in countries with poor safety records and/or mountainous terrain
- Understand how seasonal hazards affect road conditions
- Know the dates of local holidays (when road accident rates rise) Additional

Suggestions for pedestrians are:

- Be aware of traffic patterns in the travel area (they may be very different from those in the U.S.)
- Be especially alert at intersections
- Wear reflective clothing if jogging at dusk or dawn (especially in locales where jogging may be uncommon)
- Do not walk where pedestrians cannot easily be seen
- Remember that most road fatalities are pedestrians
- Avoid hitchhiking

Additional suggestions for passengers are:

- Avoid riding with a driver who appears intoxicated, irrational, or over-tired
- Always ride in the back seat of a taxi cab
- Wear seat belts whenever possible

While many travelers may be tempted to rent cars, mopeds, or motorbikes during their time abroad, they often do so without regard to the risks of driving in a country whose rules of the road are unfamiliar. Although it may seem fun or convenient to travel this way, ASU strongly recommends against students renting or driving any kind of motorized vehicle abroad.

Rest assured that your program leaders carefully consider road safety when determining modes of transportation to/from any program activities. Road travel in some developing countries poses additional road risks. Public transportation in some areas may consist of overcrowded, overweight, and top-heavy minivans or buses. Taxis may not appear to be in good condition, and drivers may or may not be licensed. Sidewalks may or may not be lit, or exist at all.

More information about safe road travel is available on the [ASU website](#).

Water Safetyⁱ

River and ocean currents have the potential to be swift and dangerous. There may be no lifeguards or signs warning of dangerous beaches. It is critical that you exercise extreme caution when swimming abroad, particularly in developing countries where emergency services may not be readily available. In locations that experience heavy seasonal rains, currents can rapidly change in strength and speed. Oftentimes individuals from non-coastal areas lack experience in assessing ocean currents for riptides and other water hazards related to coastal life. When possible, swim at designated beaches with clear warning systems. Swim between the flags only where a lifeguard is present, and never swim alone. You should not consume alcohol before or during swimming activities. If you are unsure which locations you should avoid, ask your program leaders.

Consider the following in order to keep safe:

- Be clear about your swimming abilities
- Stay in areas designated by program leaders
- Heed all warning signs/flags
- Do not swim in unfamiliar bodies of water or at isolated beaches

- Never swim alone
- Never swim while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Never dive head-first
- Check local information for details of tides, currents, and pollution
- Rip currents and undertows can be very common at many beaches
- Do not swim where there are no lifeguards present, whenever possible.
- Check for possible hazards from jellyfish, sea urchins, coral, sea snakes, sharks, and venomous fish. Saltwater crocodiles live in coastal estuaries in many countries.
- Human sewage and animal feces make some beaches no-go areas for swimming or even wading
- If you find yourself unable to reach shore, wave your arms and yell for assistance

How to Avoid and Survive Rip Currentsⁱⁱ

Rip currents are particularly dangerous for weak or non-swimmers. Rip current speeds are typically 1-2 feet per second. However, speeds as high as 8 feet per second have been measured; this is faster than an Olympic swimmer. Thus, rip currents can sweep even the strongest swimmer out to sea. The following tips will help you swim safe.

When at the beach:

- Whenever possible, swim at a lifeguard-protected beach
- Never swim alone
- Learn how to swim in the surf. It is not the same as swimming in a pool or lake
- Be cautious at all times, especially when swimming at unguarded beaches. If in doubt, do not go out!
- Obey all instructions and orders from lifeguards. Lifeguards are trained to identify potential hazards. Ask a lifeguard about the conditions before entering the water. This is part of their job.
- Stay at least 100 feet away from piers and jetties. Permanent rip currents often exist alongside these structures.
- Consider using polarized sunglasses when at the beach. They will help you to spot signatures of rip currents by cutting down glare and reflected sunlight off the ocean's surface.
- Pay especially close attention to children and elderly when at the beach. Even in shallow water, wave action can cause loss of footing.

If caught in a rip current:

- Remain calm to conserve energy and think clearly
- Never fight the current
- Think of it like a treadmill that cannot be turned off; instead you need to step to the side
- Swim out of the current in a direction following the shoreline. When out of the current, swim at an angle -- away from the current -- towards shore.
- If you are unable to swim out of the rip current, float or calmly tread water. When out of the current, swim towards shore.
- If you are still unable to reach shore, draw attention to yourself by waving your arm and yelling for help

If you see someone in trouble, do not become a victim too:

- Get help from a lifeguard.
- If a lifeguard is not available, have someone call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number
- Throw the rip current victim something that floats -- a lifejacket, a cooler, an inflatable ball
- Yell instructions on how to escape
- Remember, many people drown while trying to save someone else from a rip current

Safety and Diversity

The CLI is proud to send a diverse population of ASU student ambassadors abroad, but we want you to recognize that certain groups of people may be treated much differently in a foreign culture than in the US. Be aware of how you identify yourself or are identified (women, religious affiliation, LGBTQIA, race, etc.), and educate yourself as to appropriate behaviors in your host country. Find out what non-verbal messages (eye contact, tone, gestures, dress) to avoid, and strive to blend in and be discreet.

Always socialize in pairs or groups, be aware of your surroundings, and have the phone number and enough money for a taxi home.

If you are verbally hassled on the street, doing anything but ignoring it may provoke the situation. If you feel harassed and ignoring does not help, if you are touched, or if your safety is threatened, it may be appropriate to yell out, defend yourself, and inform the local authorities and your program leaders. Again, your program leaders will cover issues relating to safety and diversity at both your pre-departure and on-site orientations.

Additional advice for various diverse populations is available on the [CLI website](#).

Compliance with Local and National Laws Abroad

Students must comply with local rules and expectations as with national laws. Most host countries have laws similar to the laws governing the U.S., and law-abiding students need have no fears. However, law enforcement and court procedures may differ sharply, and students should not assume that offenses largely ignored in the U.S. are also taken lightly abroad. Some laws (often drug laws) are more strictly enforced for foreigners than they are for locals, and harsh penalties often govern drug possession and trade. American students may be particularly vulnerable to accusations. Those who sell drugs to Americans are often those who inform. Punishment for drug offenses that may be considered minor by U.S. law may be as severe abroad as life in prison or death!

Make Copies of Important Documents

One more way to help protect your security prior to departure is to make copies of your important documents including your passport, visa (if applicable), credit and debit cards, your CISI insurance card, and any other necessary travel documents. Leave one set of these copies at home with a loved one, and take one set with you in case you lose one of your important documents.

ⁱ Water Safety information from Northwestern University and the University of California Education Abroad Program. ⁱⁱ Additional Water Safety information from http://www.weather.com/activities/recreation/boatandbeach/ripcurrents_avoid.html