# Table of Contents

Table of Contents ........................................................................................................... 1  
IUHPFL Office Contact Information ............................................................................. 2  
Welcome! ....................................................................................................................... 3  
IUHPFL — A Unique Study Abroad Program ................................................................. 4  
This Student-Guardian Handbook ............................................................................... 6  
Student-Guardian Orientation ...................................................................................... 7  
Pre-Departure—Getting Prepared .................................................................................. 9  
Departure Day ............................................................................................................... 14  
FIRST DAYS OF THE PROGRAM ............................................................................... 17  
Student’s Program Experience ..................................................................................... 18  
Support Systems for Students ..................................................................................... 23  
Parent/Guardian Roles and Support Systems ............................................................... 25  
Program Instructors .................................................................................................... 27  
ONSITE COORDINATORS ......................................................................................... 29  
The Host Family Experience ......................................................................................... 30  
Goal Setting and Teambuilding ..................................................................................... 37  
Student Grades and Assessment .................................................................................. 38  
Program Evaluations ................................................................................................... 40  
IUHPFL Student Management ...................................................................................... 41  
Language Commitment & Communication ................................................................ 43  
Honor Code Infractions and Disciplinary Protocol ...................................................... 48  
Health & Safety Abroad ............................................................................................... 53  
Medical Information & Health Insurance ..................................................................... 56  
Assimilating to the New Environment ......................................................................... 60  
Understanding & Respecting Cultural Differences ..................................................... 62  
Re-Entry: Reverse Culture Shock ................................................................................ 65  
Ways for Contribute to IUHPFL after the Program ....................................................... 67  
Appendix A: Strategies to Prepare For The IUHPFL Experience ............................... 69  
Appendix B: Payments and Refund Policies ................................................................. 71  
Appendix C: The IUHPFL Honor Code ....................................................................... 72  
Appendix D: IUHPFL 8 Core Values .......................................................................... 76  
Appendix E: IUHPFL Pledge of Excellence ................................................................. 77  
Appendix F: IUHPFL Property and Liability PROTOCOL .......................................... 78  

SITE-SPECIFIC SECTION BEGINS AFTER PAGE 81
IUHPFL Office Contact Information

While abroad this summer, you can reach the IUHPFL Office via e-mail or telephone:

Loni Dishong  
Managing Director  
ldishong@indiana.edu  
Skype: loni.dishong  
Office: 812-855-7957  
Cell: 812-369-6333 (for emergencies only)

Amy Dowell  
Program Coordinator  
dowell@indiana.edu  
Office: 812-856-2123

Becky Boustani  
Administrative Coordinator  
rboustan@iu.edu  
Office: 812-855-5241

General Office Email: iuhpfl@iu.edu  
IUHPFL Office Skype: IUHPFL

The best form of communication with the IUHPFL Office is via e-mail to iuhpfl@iu.edu or by calling 812-855-5241. We are a small (but mighty!) staff and always try to return e-mails and calls within 24 hours. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. EDT.

Emergencies while students are abroad:  
- During business hours: Contact us at the office  
- During weeknights and weekends: Call Loni on her cell phone
Welcome!

We are pleased to welcome you to the IU Honors Program in Foreign Languages! In 2019, we will celebrate our 58th summer of providing language and culture immersion experiences to Indiana high school students. Thank you for joining us on this exciting journey!

You are now part of a legacy of over 8,100 IUHPFL alumni who range between 16 and 75 years of age, live all around the world, work in various professional fields, and, in some cases, have children and grandchildren who have participated in our programs.

In addition to significant leaps in language proficiency, our alums tell us that this experience has opened doors for new academic and professional opportunities, as well as friendships with people in the host country and throughout Indiana. As you and your program peers complete your high school and college educations and settle into your career paths in the U.S. or abroad, you’ll find that many of these new friendships will accompany you. Your life will be forever transformed by the things you learn and the people you meet through IUHPFL.

This program is both an individual and a collective experience. Each student is encouraged to set academic and personal goals and to consider the unique talents and insights that he or she brings to the team. Additionally, each team has a unique identity and vision and works toward accomplishing projects and objectives together. We are eager to see how this program and the friendships you create will enrich your life and we are confident that you, just by being who you are, will make your program site team even better!

We wish you safe and happy travels and will be here to encourage and support you along the way!

IUHPFL Office Team
Loni Dishong – Managing Director
Amy Dowell – Program Coordinator
Becky Boustani – Administrative Coordinator
Alex Bleza – Office Intern and IUHPFL Alum (León, Spain 2016)
IUHPFL — A Unique Study Abroad Program

IUHPFL has a long and prestigious history in the state of Indiana for providing high-quality language and culture immersion experiences that transform students’ lives and career paths.

Instructors, Host Families, Onsite Coordinators, and our Office Team are working in unison to help every student achieve the following OUTCOMES:

- Greatly improved language proficiency
- Desire to continue studying the language and culture
- Ability to see commonalities between diverse people
- Self-confidence and independence
- Stronger interpersonal skills
- Strategies for problem solving
- Creative thinking and expression
- Clearer vision of their future studies and careers
- Positive relationships with peers, host families, and instructors
- Seeing themselves as global citizens

The 8 Core Values of IUHPFL

IUHPFL wants every participant to have a wonderful, memorable, and transformative experience while abroad. These 8 Core Values express the spirit of the program itself, as well as the spirit of the many people who contribute to its success, including our Instructors, Onsite Coordinators, Host Families, and Office Team. It is our hope and expectation that each program participant will strive to embody these values throughout their IUHPFL experiences and beyond:

- Appreciation: Acknowledging the qualities and kind acts of others
- Diligence: Focusing with enthusiasm on academic and personal goals
- Discovery: Being open to new ways of looking at the world and oneself
- Empathy: Choosing words and actions that express compassion and create connection
- Encouragement: Helping others to reach their goals and see their unique talents
- Honor: Acting with integrity and adhering to the IUHPFL Honor Code
- Respect: Treating others with dignity at all times
- Unity: Fostering team spirit and trust
The 3 Pillars of IUHPFL
We believe that 3 key components, or pillars, make IUHPFL effective:

- Language Commitment
- Academic Excellence
- Host Family Experience

Each one will be discussed in more depth throughout this handbook.
This Student-Guardian Handbook

This handbook is designed with students and parents/guardians in mind and provides answers to common questions and concerns that you will have at some point during the IUHPFL experience. As part of the IUHPFL Honor Code, it is required that all students and parents/guardians read this handbook completely in order to have a complete vision of the program’s structure and expectations and to help students meet pre-departure requirements.

Students should take this handbook with them abroad and consult it when necessary. It is the only English publication they are allowed to take with them abroad, besides a pocket dictionary.

The first section of this handbook contains general information for all IUHPFL students and their parents/guardians. The second section will provide site-specific information.

An electronic copy of this handbook and all other program information can be found at our website: iuhpfl.indiana.edu.

Note: Parts of this handbook were adapted from the ‘Getting Started’ guide offered by Indiana University’s Office of Overseas Study to university students going abroad. Consequently, many of the links made available are associated with the Office of Overseas Study at Indiana University.
Student-Guardian Orientation

Orientation is mandatory for all participants, their parents/guardians, and program instructors. It is held in the Whittenberger Auditorium inside the Indiana Memorial Union (IMU), (900 E. Seventh St., Bloomington, IN 47405) on the IU Bloomington campus. Check-in begins at 9 am EDT, and the event ends at 4 pm EDT.

2019 dates for Orientation are as follows*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Graz</td>
<td>April 14th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Viña del Mar</td>
<td>April 7th</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Brest, Saumur, St. Brieuc</td>
<td>April 14th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Osaka</td>
<td>April 14th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Mérida</td>
<td>April 7th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Ciudad Real, León, Oviedo</td>
<td>April 7th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Orientation is considered to be the first official day of the program, and its purpose is to acquaint students and parents/guardians with:

- Program procedures, policies, and expectations
- Instructors
- Fellow students
- The host culture and its norms

Orientation is extremely important for a student’s acclimation into the program and is therefore mandatory for every student and at least one of his or her parents/guardians. A wide variety of topics are discussed, and afterwards, students and parents/guardians generally feel well informed and ready for the IUHPFL experience. Most importantly, this is the students’ primary opportunity to become acquainted with their peers and instructors in English before Departure Day. Teambuilding is an integral part of IUHPFL, and the sooner a student can get to know his or her teammates, the better!
If a student absolutely cannot attend his or her assigned Orientation date, it is expected that he or she will attend the other date. However, it should be well understood by these students and parents/guardians that they will not be able to meet their program peers or instructors and will receive only general information about IUHPFL; they will have to attain site-specific information through this handbook and other means provided by instructors prior to departure. The importance and advantage of attending one’s assigned orientation date cannot be overstated, and we ask that students and parents/guardians make a serious effort to do so.

During check-in at Orientation, students receive a nametag to wear during Orientation to help instructors and students learn names quickly. Students also receive their IUHPFL t-shirt, which they can wear during Orientation, if they wish. They will be required to wear the t-shirt to the airport on Departure Day, during excursions, and on Return Day. Alums typically keep and wear their t-shirts for years following their IUHPFL summer abroad!

Note: Students should NOT wear their nametags in airports or during the program; they are not necessary after Orientation.

IUHPFL Course Materials Distributed at Orientation
Also during check-in at Orientation, students receive the materials pertaining to the courses they will take abroad: Grammar, Culture, Literature, and Phonetics/Linguistics. They might also receive additional information from their instructors about Afternoon Activities (Choir, Dance, Theater, Sports) and excursions, depending on how their instructor team prefers to share this information with students. For this reason, we ask students to BRING A BACKPACK to Orientation!

Student must also bring a SACK LUNCH to Orientation, because students and instructors eat their lunches together inside or near the Indiana Memorial Union. Parents and guardians will eat lunch at a local restaurant of their choosing; there are several inside the IMU and many others nearby in the downtown area of Bloomington.
Pre-Departure—Getting Prepared

Pre-Departure Checklist

Please be sure to consult the IUHPFL Student Checklist, available on our website and sent to you via email, so you are aware of program deadlines and your responsibilities before departure.

- Pre-departure considerations include but are not limited to:
- Read STRATEGIES TO PREPARE FOR THE IUHPFL EXPERIENCE in this handbook (Appendix A)
- Completing and submitting all Acceptance Materials
- Having doctors and other health professionals complete and sign the Statement of Medical History
- Submitting all Program Fees to IU Accounts Receivable by the deadlines on the Student Checklist
- Submitting final payment for Airfare to Travel Leaders by the deadline on the Student Checklist
- Ensuring that passports (all students) and tourist visas (required for China) are acquired well before departure and sending the Office a copy via our website or by regular mail (Do not send student’s identifying information via email.)
- Watching your email for program updates and information
- Following flight information online to be aware of any changes
- Obtaining a bank debit card and a credit card, both with a security chip (preferably)
- Informing your bank of the dates of your trip abroad
- Obtaining $50-$100 worth of the host country’s currency before departure for the first several days of the program
- Discussing an appropriate travel budget:
  - All meals are provided, although students should be prepared to purchase 4-6 meals on their own.
  - There will be a few optional excursions for no more than an equivalent of $20 each (going to a movie, bowling, etc.)
  - As a general guideline, planning for an equivalent of $50-$100 per week for spending money is a good idea. You might not even spend $50 during one week, but the next you might spend more than $100 while shopping on excursion, etc.
• Journaling about what you want to accomplish academically and personally during your time abroad. Setting and working toward goals is part of the IUHPFL experience.

• Discussing with your parents/guardians how you will deal with limited communication and adhere to the Language Commitment and Honor Code

• Informing your friends and family about your IUHPFL experience, so they are aware of the commitment you have made to IUHPFL and can be supportive of your goals

• Planning what to pack – see advice provided in the site-specific section of this handbook and remember to pack as light as possible.

• Learning more about the host city and host country so you know what to expect and are ready to embrace the culture. YouTube videos and travel programs are a terrific resource!

• Students join their team’s Facebook group to stay informed of pre-departure information (These groups are for instructors and students only.) Links will be provided at Orientation and on our website.

• Parents and guardians check out the Program Site Blog for their student’s team, which will keep them informed and entertained throughout the program! Links will be provided at Orientation and on our website.

• Immersing yourself in your language. Practice, practice, practice!

**Passports and Tourist Visas**

Students cannot travel abroad without a passport; students and parents/guardians are encouraged to doublecheck that their passport is in their backpack before leaving for the airport. Do not pack passports inside luggage, as you need it to board the aircraft. Place one copy of your passport in your checked-in luggage and another in your carry-on luggage, in the event that your passport were lost or stolen during travel.

Note: Visit the travel website for U.S. State Department ([https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html)) to ensure that your passport will be valid for the appropriate number of months after your departure from the host country.

**Hangzhou Students:** Students participating in the Hangzhou Program will also need a China Tourist Visa, which is an adhesive ticket that is placed inside the passport by a visa processing company. Once the student’s passport has been obtained, students must follow the instructions provided to them by the IUHPFL Office and mail their passports to the selected visa office.
processor. Students should allow 3 to 4 weeks for visa processing in order to avoid high fees. One cannot participate in the IUHPFL Hangzhou Program without a China Tourist Visa.

Upon arrival to the host country, all passports will be collected by the instructors and stored safely until the group prepares for its return to the US in July. For this reason, it is important that students keep two copies of their passports in their luggage (one in the checked-in luggage and one in the carry-on). In rare cases when a student might need his or her actual passport while abroad, instructors will be able to provide it easily. Students will carry a copy of their passport at all times during the program.

**Note:** It is also important for parents/guardians to keep a copy of the student’s passports at home in the US during the program, as well as copies of any other identification, debit cards, credit cards, etc. that the student might be taking abroad.

**Luggage Requirements**
As many of us know, international travel can be hurried, stressful, and often cumbersome, especially if when are hauling too much luggage. Although we want students to be prepared with the necessities, we strongly encourage them to pack as light as possible in order to ensure they can move quickly with the group and not be too exhausted during the process. Furthermore, hauling heavy luggage can result in missing trains and subways and can even cause bodily injury when students are hurrying to make flight connections and so forth.

**Note:** Students are encouraged to visit the airline’s website for more information about the requirements for weight and dimensions of luggage.

**Here are some tips for packing, selecting luggage, and traveling:**
- **Pack LIGHT!** You’ll thank yourself later – promise!
- **We recommend no more than three luggage items** (one suitcase to check in, one carry-on case, and one backpack). Large suitcases are strongly discouraged, except for the Viña del Mar, Chile Program, which requires heavier clothing.
- Be sure your luggage is VERY STURDY and has good wheels.
- **Pack travel sized items; larger quantities of liquids in carry-on luggage will not be allowed by airport security and will have to be thrown away**
before boarding. You can buy more of every kind of toiletry, cosmetic, etc. in the host country.

- Don’t take anything that might be considered dangerous by airport security. See the airline’s website for packing advice and restrictions. (No knives, swords, or weapons of any kind (even novelty items) should be transported to or from the host country.)
- Remember to pack your passport in your backpack, along with one or two copies in your luggage.
- Pack your school photo ID, which will be useful for getting student discounts into museums.
- Consider packing or buying while abroad a large canvas bag for gifts and other purchases you will bring back with you to the US.
- Keep the items you will need for immediate and frequent access in your backpack, including money, debit and credit cards, passport, baggage claim tickets, and other ID.
- Also pack a few healthy snacks for the flight, such as granola bars or carrots, and keep them handy in your carry-on luggage.
- Check off each item as you pack it to ensure you don’t forget it.
- Check weight requirements for larger suitcases, so you don’t have to pay high fees to check yours in at the airport; this can be very expensive.
- You will need to guard your backpack while traveling, so we recommend keeping it light enough to wear comfortably at all times.
- In case of lost or delayed luggage, it is recommended that students pack a few clothing items and keep their baggage claim tickets in their carry-on bags. Lost luggage is rare and is typically tracked down and delivered within a matter of hours or one day.
- Wear comfortable shoes and clothing while traveling; sometimes it’s necessary to hustle in order to keep up with the group.

**Important Note:** Students and parents/guardians are responsible for paying any expenses related to luggage at check-in, including overweight or additional luggage. Students will be responsible for carrying their own luggage while abroad.

**General List of What to Pack: Clothing and Incidentals**

Students don’t need to take a lot of clothing with them abroad! You will have access to laundry facilities on a regular basis. During Orientation,
instructors will provide information on local climate, and they will go over specific items you should pack pertaining to your program site. See the site-specific section at the end of this handbook for a detailed packing list provided by your instructor team that complements the general list of items below.

**ALL STUDENTS should remember to pack:**
- Passport and 2 copies
- Student ID for museums, etc.
- Any vitamins or medications that you need or have been prescribed
- Small battery-operated alarm clock
- Digital camera, additional memory card, batteries or charger
- Appropriate electric outlet adapter/converter for your host country
- Water bottle
- Backpack
- A hat and sunglasses for hiking and outdoor activities
- Easy-care, wrinkle-free clothing
- Comfortable shoes; one sporty pair and one dressy pair
- Slippers to wear in the host family home; going barefoot is not common in many cultures
- A journal and/or sketchpad for recording memories and personal insights during the program
- Writing utensils and 5 two-pocket folders for their classes and other paperwork
- A large canvas bag for items you will buy while abroad
- Lightweight gifts for your host family members

**Recommended Reading before Departure**
For comprehensive information on the study abroad experience, the following book is recommended:

This book is aimed specifically at students who want to make the most of their study abroad experience. Its user-friendly design will help identify and implement a wide variety of language and culture learning strategies. It begins with three inventories designed to help you become more aware of how students currently learn language and culture. The book contains many helpful tools and creative activities to enhance a student’s developed learning strategies and try out new ones. It is recommended that students use this guide as they prepare for departure, as well as after they return, when Reverse Culture Shock can have an impact.

Departure Day

During Orientation, instructor teams will give students and parents/guardians specific information pertaining to departure plans. Students will also be given the link to the team’s Facebook group, where students and instructors will communicate prior to and even during Departure Day.

Students and parents/guardians should check online regularly for updates pertaining to the team’s group flight. A simple search of the airline, flight number, and date will provide this information.

**Important Note:** Parents and guardians MUST accompany students inside the airport in order to ensure that students find their teams and they must STAY with students until check-in in order to pay for any possible fees associated with excessive luggage, etc.

Travel to Program Site

Students are responsible for the cost of group flights to and from the host countries, as arranged by Travel Leaders, as well as transportation to and from the airport in the US. Approximately one week prior to departure, in preparation for Departure Day, the IUHPFL Office will email the most recent flight itinerary to students and their parents/guardians, along with the cell phone numbers of students, parents, and instructors for the assigned program site.

**Note:** As flight itineraries can change anytime, it’s important that students and parents check online for any updates during the days and hours leading up to departure.

On Departure Day, arrive at the airport early, allowing 2 or 3 hours for check-in and security procedures. Instructor teams will inform students and
parents/guardians of the group’s arrival time at the US international airport and where to meet inside the airport.

Note: IUHPFL works with a travel agency every year to arrange the group flights. We recognize that departure and arrival times might be extremely early or late and we regret any inconvenience to our students and their families. The travel agency seeks to ensure that all students and instructors are on the same flight and that costs are as low as possible. We thank you for your patience and understanding.

Note: Students MUST travel together to the host country on the same group flight. An exception to this rule will be made only if the student is already in the host country or region prior to the program. After the program, students are free to remain in the host country to travel with their families, etc. They can meet up with an approved adult on the day when the group is returning to the US or the night prior in the case of an early flight. These arrangements must be approved by the IUHPFL Office and then shared with Travel Leaders, once the $500 non-refundable airfare deposit is paid. Instructors will ensure that the student connects with the designated adult as planned.

Note: Students are not allowed to arrive later than the group at the program site, leave for any amount of time during the program dates, or depart from the program before the end (except in cases of emergency, illness, or behavioral issues).

Communication on Departure Day
Departure day is hectic for students, parents/guardians and instructors alike, therefore general questions and concerns related to the program should be addressed to the Office or instructor team prior to Departure Day. Please prepare in advance so that when the day arrives everyone can focus on departure and make it as stress-free as possible.

Typically, at least half of the instructor team (1 or 2 individuals) will fly with the students on the group flight to the host country, and half will return to the US with the students at the end of the program. Instructors arrive at the international airport on Departure Day with the list of students, which includes guardian names and cell phone numbers. Students and parents/guardians will also know how to reach instructors on that day, in case there are any delays.
Note: It is critical that students and parents/guardians take every precaution to ensure prompt arrival at the international airport, as the team will not be able to wait for late students.

Students Who Are Flying Rather than Driving to the International Airport to Meet their Team:
Checking in luggage and going through security check-points can involve long lines and wait times. If your student is flying to the international airport, please be sure that he or she will have enough time to claim his or her luggage and arrive at the international terminal to meet up with his or her team.

In the event that the flight to the international airport is delayed or canceled, students and parents/guardians should be prepared to call their instructors and to work with the airline to make an alternate plan.

Note: If a student’s delay results in additional expenses, such as hotel charges or flight change fees, the student and his or her parents/guardians will be responsible for those, as well as any expenses incurred in order for an instructor to chaperone the student.

Arrival to Host Country and Program Site
Once students arrive at the international airport abroad, they can typically expect a bus ride to the program site, ranging anywhere from 30 minutes to six hours. Students will have opportunities to use the restroom and purchase snacks along the way.

Shortly after arriving in the host country, students will be asked to give their personal smart devices and passports to the instructors for the remainder of the program. Students will receive their program cell phones, which will allow for texting and calling within the host country, and students will carry a copy of their passports at all times.

When the team arrives in the host country, one of the instructors will contact the IUHPFL Office. Depending on the time of day, the Office will notify parents/guardians via email as soon as possible. Please keep in mind that instructors might not be able to inform the Office of the group’s arrival immediately due to Internet connectivity issues or helping students with their luggage, finding the bus that will take the team to the program site, etc. In some cases, instructors might not be able to contact the Office until
they have arrived at the program site, so we ask for patience and understanding from parents/guardians.

**FIRST DAYS OF THE PROGRAM**

During the first several days of the program, students will be adjusting to a completely new setting: new people, new foods, new sounds, new smells, new architecture, and new customs. Even though they have been studying the target language for some time, many aspects of the language will be new as well, including nuances of the local dialect and the speed at which people speak. It is very important for students to care for themselves in these early stages of the program by getting plenty of rest, eating well, and staying hydrated. It’s also essential to have a good sense of humor and not take things too seriously during this time and throughout the program. Being patient with yourself and focusing on what you are learning, rather than what you don’t know, is the best way to maintain a healthy attitude and get the most out of your IUHPFL experience.

Among the adjustments and challenges students will face during the first days and throughout the program are:

- Trying to communicate solely in the target language
- Meeting and getting to know host families. (The Host Family Experience is discussed later in this handbook.)
- Getting over jetlag
- Settling into a new living space
- Learning one’s way around the host city
- Building friendships with teammates
- Becoming acquainted with one’s instructors and understanding program expectations
- Adjusting to new foods, schedules, and customs
- Acclimating to an advanced level of coursework in the target language
- Missing friends and family back home and feeling out-of-touch
- Beginning to discover the breadth of one’s own strengths, qualities and interests

Because of these adjustments and challenges, emotions can run high for some students. Others adjust quite quickly. Each person’s journey is
unique, and each will have challenges somewhere along the way, regardless of how advanced they might be in the target language.

Parents and guardians can best support their students by understanding that this transformation is happening and that it takes time to adjust. The best way to support students during this time is to encourage them, remind them of their strengths and their goals, and give them the space necessary to settle into their surroundings.

Student’s Program Experience

Typical Weekday and Weekend Schedules and Expectations
During a typical weekday, students will attend their academic classes in the morning, which begin between 8:00 and 9:30 am, depending on the host culture. At some program sites, host families pack lunches for students; at others, students eat lunch in a cafeteria; at others still, students go home to their host families and have lunch with them. After lunch, students might have additional class time, depending on what time classes begin. All program sites will have Afternoon Activities, which can include sports and games, dance, choir, theater and art classes.

Students have 2-3 hours of free time later in the afternoon or early evening to explore their communities with their program peers. Whenever students are out and about together, they are always to be in groups of at least three, as per the Honor Code (Rule of 3).

Curfews
The Managing Director works with each Onsite Coordinator to determine an appropriate time on weekdays, when students should wrap up their free time with their peers and be under the care and supervision of their host families. This time is typically between 6:00 and 8:00 pm, Monday-Friday, after students have completed their classes and Afternoon Activities and had 2 or 3 hours of free time. Each site has its own curfew time that typically doesn’t change from year-to-year, because it’s based on host families’ schedules and cultural norms.

At this hour, students do not necessarily have to be in their homes; they simply have to be with one or more members of their families. The purpose of a curfew is to ensure that students are spending quality time with their families during weeknights and weekends, that they are adequately supervised and cared for, and that clear expectations are set for students
and their hosts. At all times, students are to adhere to curfews set by the program and to always respect the schedules and norms of their families.

**Weeknights and Weekends**

As much as possible, weeknights and weekends are reserved for host families, and students are expected to follow their families’ schedules, plans, and requests along these lines. Host families often make special plans for their students during these times and put a lot of time and effort into cooking with them, introducing them to family members and friends, and showing them around their cities.

**Note:** As mentioned in the section of this handbook, *The Host Family Experience*, students may travel with their host families within the host country, as long as they have permission from their instructors and their travel plans do not conflict with scheduled classes, excursions, and other activities. Students may NOT travel outside the host country with their host families, unless permission is granted by the IUHPFL Office AND the parents/guardians.

**Classes and Homework**

IUHPFL is an intensive language immersion program. In addition to living with host families and speaking the target language 100% of the time, students attend weekday classes that address 5 subject areas: Grammar, Culture, Literature, Linguistics/Phonetics, and Communication. Class attendance is mandatory.

Students and their classmates will be divided into smaller groups, according to their initial language proficiency levels, for academic classes. Small class size allows students to hone their speaking skills and receive more individualized attention from instructors. Students are encouraged to be active in their classes and to complete all homework with care.

Homework assignments will prompt students to engage with their host families and communities and should not require more than one hour per night to complete.

**Afternoon Activities**

All students participate in Afternoon Activities, such as sports, games, dance, choir, theater and art classes, all of which are typically tied into or reflect the local culture. The purpose of these activities is to encourage students to practice the language, express themselves creatively, and
become better acquainted with their peers. They do not have to excel at these activities, but they are expected to participate to the best of their abilities. Mostly the idea is to try something new and have fun!

**Farewell Show**
At each program site, students give a Farewell Show for their host families, Onsite Coordinators, and other community friends, before departing from the host city. This show involves musical numbers, skits, dance routines, and sometimes comedy or magic acts, depending on the desires and talents of the students on the team. The show is always funny, entertaining and much appreciated by everyone who attends. Students will spend a portion of their Afternoon Activity time creating and rehearsing their Farewell Show.

**Program Site Magazines**
Students at each program site work with their instructors to create and compile photos, drawings, stories, poems, letters and other memorabilia, which are then printed in black and white, bound into a magazine, and presented to students prior to the Farewell Show at the end of the program. Students enjoy asking their peers, instructors, and host family members to sign their magazines. After the program, a digital color copy is emailed to students and instructors.

**Community Engagement Activities**
When the Viña del Mar, Chile program was established in 2014, Community Engagement activities were included in that program’s calendar from the start. Students in the Viña del Mar program interacted with the Mapuche indigenous community, volunteered at a nature preserve, and engaged with local youth via art projects and soccer games. In 2015, the Mérida, Mexico program provided Community Engagement opportunities, as well. We are proud to say that all ten of our 2018 programs offered Community Engagement experiences, and plans are in the works to enhance and expand these projects for 2019.

Many larger high schools throughout Indiana offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma to their students, which is recognized by universities around the globe. The criteria for the IB involves hours spent helping with community-based projects, and the IUHPFL Community Engagement Activities can count toward these hours.
IUHPFL uses the term, “Community Engagement” to emphasize the mutual respect and benefit that are inherent in these activities between our students and the locals with whom they interact.

**Examples of Community Engagement projects can include:**
- Community gardening
- Visiting senior citizen residences
- Volunteering in primary classrooms
- Cleaning up neighborhoods and beaches
- Helping at animal shelters
- Doing art projects or playing sports with local teens

Students are always accompanied by instructors and oftentimes the Onsite Coordinator during these activities, and host families are invited, if an activity is planned during a weekend.

Typically, no more than 2 days or 4 afternoons are dedicated to Community Engagement activities, and each afternoon session is usually 3 or 4 hours long. Students enjoy these experiences immensely and often request more time, so Onsite Coordinators and Instructors are continually seeking ways to make these projects even more rewarding for students and community members.

**Excursions and Optional Activities**

Students at every site enjoy numerous excursions of historical and cultural significance. Instructors accompany students on every excursion and teach relevant facts about historical sites beforehand.

**Planned Excursions** are organized by the Onsite Coordinators and Managing Director, with input from the instructors. They typically involve travel to other cities, possible overnight stays, and are included in the Program Fees. Whereas Onsite Coordinators sometimes accompany the team on Planned Excursions, host family members are not permitted to participate, because these trips are intended as bonding experiences for the students and instructors.

**Optional Activities** are often decided a few days or weeks in advance and are not part of the Program Calendar nor are they paid with Program Fees. Students can decide whether or not they wish to participate, and the cost
for each activity is typically less than an equivalent of $20 USD. Examples can include going to the movies, getting ice cream, bowling, attending a play or concert, and much more. Onsite Coordinators and host family members can attend, if they wish. These experiences allow students to spend time with their peers, instructors, and host families and to learn more about their communities.

**Transportation at the Program Site**
A student’s mode of transportation to and from school will depend on the program site. Students might walk or use public transportation, depending on whether their host families live in town or in more suburban or rural areas. Public transportation is common abroad and typically very safe; students may be expected to use public transportation as their primary means of commuting to and from the school or classroom facility. A student’s commute could last anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes and might require a change in buses or trains along the way. Host families, instructors and Onsite Coordinators will work with students to ensure that they travel safely to and from school and that they are confident with transportation options and routes. Students are provided with bus and metro passes within the host city, as needed.

**Note:** As per the Honor Code, students may not operate a motorized vehicle abroad nor be a passenger on a motorcycle. They can be a passenger in a car if the driver is a licensed adult host family member, Onsite Coordinator, or program instructor.

More information about local transportation options will be provided by instructors at Orientation.

**Individualized Sports or Music Practice**
IUHPFL attracts students with solid academic performance, good character, and oftentimes athletic, artistic, and/or musical interests. It is common for students to request time during the program to practice an instrument or train for a sport, and these arrangements can certainly be made. Students should communicate their interests and needs to the Office on their Host Family Placement Form, so that their requests can be communicated to Onsite Coordinators and Host Families.

**Note:** We do not recommend that students take large musical instruments abroad, because they will have to be checked in with other luggage and could be damaged during the flight. It is usually possible for
students to rent musical instruments or borrow them from the host families.

**Student Birthdays**

Students and Instructors really enjoy celebrating birthdays together. Parties are organized for one or more individuals, depending on how close their birthdays are. These celebrations include a card for each student, cake, ice cream, and other refreshments. Team members sing customary birthday songs in the target language, play games, dance, and otherwise celebrate according to local tradition.

If parents and guardians wish to provide a special gift to their student, it should be packed in the student’s luggage and not shipped due to high fees that will have to be paid onsite to claim the package. The program will not accept additional funds from parents for a student – all students with birthdays are treated equally.

**Support Systems for Students**

It is common for students to experience a transition period abroad when they feel uncomfortable and vulnerable. Having to speak a different language, not having their family and friends nearby, living and sleeping in a different home, not having their cell phones and daily access to social media... all of this can feel strange and unsettling. This is called Culture Shock. Dealing with Culture Shock requires flexibility, adaptability and a sense of humor!

It is important for students to remember that their feelings are normal and to be expected. You are not alone! Every student experiences Culture Shock to a certain extent, which is why IUHPFL has strong and extensive support systems in place to help students adjust and have a successful study abroad experience.

Support systems for students include (in no particular order):

- Teammates (fellow students)
- Instructors
- Support and Success Groups
- Host Families
- Onsite Coordinators

It is important to note that the students’ US friends and family are **not** mentioned as a support system, because students have such limited communication with
them, per the Honor Code, and because students need to learn to rely on those around them and engage with their surroundings in order to have a fulfilling immersion experience. Additionally, friends and family back home might not have the cultural familiarity and experience needed to help with problems or difficulties onsite. IUHPFL does not ask students to withhold information from their US friends and family; it merely recommends that students reach out first to their onsite support systems in order to resolve matters quickly and to avoid excessive worry and stress for all parties.

IUHPFL recognizes that it might be challenging for students not to reach out to friends and family at home when they are struggling to adjust or dealing with difficult situations abroad, however, in order for students to become more independent and accountable for their own success, they must learn to rely on the onsite support systems that have been put in place for them. IUHPFL highly encourages students to be proactive in forming close bonds with fellow students, instructors, and host family members, a process which can start even before departure.

**Support and Success Groups**

Students are divided as equally as possible into the Support and Success Groups. Each group is led by one instructor and meets at least once per week in order to set personal goals, address questions and concerns, talk about host families and experiences, and celebrate achievements together. Support and Success Groups add yet another network of support and encouragement for students, as the small setting allows them to comfortably share their thoughts, ideas and emotions. Additionally, they fine-tune their conversation skills!

In order for Support and Success Groups to be beneficial for every student, an atmosphere of caring, non-judgement, and confidentiality must exist. Once this happens, students are willing to open up about themselves and listen attentively to their peers. Although sharing with others on a personal level, especially in another language, can be intimidating at first, students find that they value these sessions as one of the most beneficial aspects of the IUHPFL model.
Specific objectives of Support and Success Groups include helping students to:

- Adapt to their new environment
- Realize that they are not alone in their challenges and emotions
- Handle possible miscommunication/issues with the host family
- Manage time and course requirements
- Deal with difficult aspects of the Honor Code
- Set academic and personal goals
- Develop strategies to meet goals and get the most out of their time abroad
- Celebrate their successes with their peers

Individual Student Meetings

Many students benefit from a private meeting with their Support and Success Group leader to share personal concerns, asks questions and seek advice and guidance. Individual meetings with students can replace the usual group meeting during a given week, if instructors decide one-to-one time with students is needed or beneficial. For example, instructors might want to discuss with each student individually his or her academic progress.

A student can also request to have an individual meeting with an instructor. However, one instructor is not allowed to meet with a student alone in a private or secluded setting. Either two instructors must be present to talk with the student or one instructor may talk with the student within eyesight of other adults.

Parent/Guardian Roles and Support Systems

The role of parents and guardians before, during, and after the program dates is essential. Here are just a few ways to help students be successful:

- Be aware of program deadlines and expectations and help students meet them
- Research the host city and country with students
- Help the student to connect with his or her host family prior to departure
- Plan with your student what to pack
- Talk with students about their feelings and goals before departure
- Encourage students to adhere to the Honor Code, particularly the Language Commitment
- Learn about and discuss Reverse Culture Shock upon their return to the US and consider ways that you can be supportive.
- You might even find yourself visiting the host family with your student one day!

It is also recommended that parents/guardians consider the frequency and content of their online messages to students. Sending one update per week is suggested rather than several messages that will take time to read and reply to. Keeping messages positive and upbeat is also very helpful. Oftentimes, what students need to hear most from their parents/guardians, friends, and loved ones back home are words like, “You can do this” and “We believe in you!”

**Note:** If something sad or tragic occurs in the family while the student is abroad, parents are encouraged to call the Office in order to discuss the best way to connect with the student and his or her instructors. Please also consider whether the student truly needs to know the news right away or if it would be better to wait until he or she returns home. The IUHPFL Office Staff is always available to help talk through these matters with you.

**Support for Parents/Guardians During the Program**

It can be very difficult for parents/guardians to “let go” of their students for 5 or 6 weeks, especially when they are in another country and communication is limited. IUHPFL understands that parents and family members also need a support system during the program and suggests the following resources:

- The Program Site Blog
- The IUHPFL Office Team
- Fellow Parents and Guardians

**Program Site Blog**

The instructor who acts as Public Relations Coordinator will create a blog for the program site before Orientation. This blog is specifically for parents, guardians, and other family members and will be updated on a weekly basis.
with photos and descriptions of activities. The links to these blogs will be provided at Orientation and accessible on the IUHPFL website.

**IUHPFL Office Team**

Parents and guardians are always welcome to contact the Office with questions and concerns. Our team is happy to help and can offer helpful information, advice, and ideas. We are the primary support system for parents and guardians during the program.

**Fellow Parents and Guardians** are another source of support during the program. Exchanging e-mail addresses and phone numbers with one another at Orientation is a good idea so you can share stories, ideas and resources with one another. Some parents form their own Facebook group and stay in touch even after the program!

**Program Instructors**

IUHPFL Instructors are highly-qualified educators, who specialize in their respective languages and have diverse professional backgrounds and skills. They are native or near-native speakers of the languages they teach, have traveled extensively, and have lived and studied or worked abroad. Additionally, they enjoy interacting with teens and are able to wear many hats during the program: teacher, mentor, coach, advocate, facilitator, and tour guide, to name a few. Their top priority during the program is each student’s well-being, safety, happiness, and success.

*Note: Each program site has a team of two, three, or four instructors, depending on the number of students. IUHPFL strives for a 7-9:1 student-instructor ratio at all sites.*

Students will become acquainted with their instructors at Orientation. Throughout the program, instructors are the ones who will spend the greatest amount of time with the students, helping them and guiding them at every step. Since most instructors have spent extended amounts of time in countries other than their own, they fully understand the immersion experience and can relate to the stages and challenges of adjusting to a new culture. Students should never hesitate to talk to them about any concerns they might have.
IUHPFL Instructors must meet the following criteria:

- Teach the target language as an Assistant Instructor (AI) or non-tenured Lecturer at IU OR as a licensed high school teacher
- Pass the Indiana University PIC (Programs Involving Children) Background Check
- Demonstrate excellent knowledge of pedagogy and content area
- Apply outstanding classroom management and student engagement techniques
- Be a native or near-native speaker of the target language
- Have familiarity with the host culture
- Complete 3 all-day IUHPFL Instructor Training sessions
- Work within their instructor teams to develop course materials, the site-specific handbook, daily class schedule, community engagement projects, afternoon activities, and the team’s unique identity and mascot
- Enjoy working with and teaching youth

Note: At least one instructor at each program site must be CPR and First Aid certified, and copies of their certification cards are kept by the IUHPFL Office. A fully stocked first aid kit is accessible to instructors at every program site and travels with the group on excursions.

Coordinator Roles of Instructors

Instructors must work closely together to teach students, facilitate Afternoon Activities, lead excursions, and administer the program onsite. The four administrative roles the instructors fulfill are: Student Coordinator, Finance Coordinator, Logistics Coordinator, and Public Relations Coordinator. Although these roles encompass various responsibilities, a general description of each is as follows.

Student Coordinator

The instructor acting as Student Coordinator is primarily responsible for working with the Onsite Coordinator and Managing Director to resolve situations involving host families, as well as matters pertaining to student health and well-being.
Financial Coordinator
The Financial Coordinator implements the program site budget and oversees and tracks all onsite purchases and expenditures during the program.

Logistics Coordinator
This instructor ensures that the Program Calendar and excursion plan are carried out and that all travel arrangements are confirmed in order for the team to tour safely and on schedule.

Public Relations Coordinator
The role of this instructor is also multi-faceted, but primary responsibilities include: creating the Program Site Blog (for parents and family members) and Facebook Group (for students and instructors only); documenting the team’s activities through photos and videos on the blog; arranging for a visit to the Mayor’s Office in the host city and inviting local media to attend; and sending newspaper articles, videos, etc. to the Office for posting on the IUHPFL website.

ONSITE COORDINATORS
Onsite Coordinators play a vital role in the success of each program site. They are the individuals who live in the host city year-round. Most of the Coordinators have worked with IUHPFL for several years and in some cases decades. All of them are dedicated and caring people, who do a tremendous amount of work on behalf of our students and instructors.

The primary responsibilities of the Onsite Coordinators include:
• Finding, vetting, and training qualified host families
• Orienting students and instructors with onsite emergency resources and procedures
• Arranging accommodations and transportation for students and instructors within the host city and while on excursions
• Organizing special tours and events with the team, such as meetings with city officials
• Being present every day to answer questions and lend support to the team during the program
• Helping to resolve concerns and crises
• Facilitating any necessary host family changes
The Host Family Experience

A student’s host family contributes greatly to his or her linguistic progress and cultural assimilation. Students should spend as much time with their host family as their schedule allows, especially during weeknights and weekends, and endeavor to form lasting friendships with them. Students are also encouraged to show appreciation to their families and to participate in family activities as a member of the household.

Students will find that expressing gratitude to their host families can involve a different set of expectations than we have here in the U.S. In some cultures, it may be appropriate to give small tokens of appreciation (flowers or chocolates), while in other cultures, words and verbal communication are more appropriate. Instructors can guide students in the best way to thank their host families for their hospitality. All students will find that if they step outside their comforts zones even a little and find ways to express appreciation, their overall experience and relationships abroad will be more rewarding and fun.

**Tip:** It is customary to bring the host family a small gift upon arriving to their home, perhaps memorabilia from the student’s hometown or a product unique to Indiana. Additionally, it is appropriate to thank them periodically throughout the program with flowers or chocolates, as well as leave them a parting gift before returning to the US. Gift ideas and appropriate ways of expressing gratitude can be discussed further with instructors at Orientation. Please do not give expensive, heavy, or large gifts, as these would not be appropriate or manageable and would be expensive to transport - the sentiment behind the gift is truly what matters.

How Host Families are Selected and Matched with Students

All host families are carefully vetted by the IUHPFL Onsite Coordinator in that city, a process that includes interviews and personal visits to each home. IUHPFL strives to find suitable host families who wish to invite a US student into their home as a member of the family.

Host families receive a stipend for food and utility costs incurred while hosting the students, but the motivation for being a host family should never be monetary. If a family does not show genuine care and concern for a student, then the student needs to inform their instructors right away.

Through the Onsite Coordinator, host families receive general information about IUHPFL, including the Honor Code, Strategies for Hosting Language
Learners, and the IUHPFL Property and Liability Protocol. They also receive
their student’s Host Family Placement Form and sign a Host Family
Agreement, which outlines their responsibilities as an IUHPFL host family.

The Host Family Placement Form (HFPF), which is part of the student’s
Acceptance Materials, lists the student’s food preferences, dietary
restrictions, hobbies, and other interests. It is the primary tool the Oniste
Coordinator and Office Team use to match a student with a host family.
Students’ needs, allergies, and interests are always taken into account,
however students and parents/guardians should understand that the
program cannot meet all requests; the primary goal of the matching
process is to ensure that each student is placed with a family that will give
them the specific care they need and will share at least a few of their
interests and hobbies.

Note: Smoking is quite common in some cultures. Generally, members of
the host family who smoke will do so outside or in another room,
especially if they know that the smoke bothers the student. If a student
has asthma or is seriously affected by cigarette, cigar, or pipe smoke, it
should be made clear in the Host Family Placement Form that the student
wishes to live in a non-smoking household.

Students’ health and medical information, as disclosed on the Statement of
Medical History and doctor’s records, provides the IUHPFL Office with
valuable, sometimes lifesaving, information about the student. It is
safeguarded by the Office staff and shared with instructors, Onsite
Coordinators, and host families in order to ensure that the student receives
proper care during the program. Oftentimes, a student can be matched
with a host family who has familiarity or experience with his or her
particular needs or condition.

**Getting to Know Your Host Family**

Ideally, all students will have started corresponding with their host families
before traveling abroad. In some cases, students will not hear from their
host family until right before departure. It is rare but possible for a host
family to have limited computer access or know-how; in these cases, the
host family might prefer to write letters or have little contact with the
student before the program. This doesn’t mean that they aren’t excited to
welcome the student or that their homes won’t be suitable and
comfortable. Students typically receive their host family placement via e-
mail from the IUHPFL Office two or three weeks prior to departure.
Communication between the host family and the US family before and after the program is encouraged – the more the better! During the program, however, parents and guardians should not contact the host family or encourage frequent interaction. Please remember that IUHPFL is an opportunity for students to have their own unique experience and to take important steps toward independence and adulthood. Parents and guardians should contact the Office with any questions or concerns they have during the program.

**Note:** It is very important for students and parents/guardians NOT to share host families’ contact information with the public via social media, email or otherwise. This information is to be kept confidential and not given to even the friends or family members of the student.

**Tip:** The program suggests that each student prepare a "conversation piece" for the first few days after arrival; perhaps a lightweight album or scrapbook, containing photos, postcards and newspaper clippings of the student’s family, town or school. Be creative and ask your US friends and family to help you!

**Becoming a Part of a Family Abroad**

While being a part of the family involves feeling comfortable in the host family’s home, it also implies participating in household activities and chores as any other member of the family would. Students are asked to make their best effort to communicate well with their host family, to help with chores, and to be courteous and respectful during the stay in their home.

Upon arrival at the host family’s home, the student’s host family should discuss the rules of the house. In the off-chance a family does not discuss house rules, students should ask their hosts about their expectations in order to avoid misunderstandings. It is important to know that the rules of the host family might differ greatly from those of the US family. Students should always **ask permission** for favors or privileges.

**Note:** Utilities (water, electricity, natural gas, etc.) in some countries can be extremely expensive. For this reason, families might limit their use of these amenities and require the same of the students they host. Homes often do not have central heating or air-conditioning, and families will even limit their use of indoor fans. Students must be ready to respect their families’ rules regarding the use of these utilities. For starters, students should: take very brief showers, turn off the lights and other
electrical devices when leaving a room, and only use heating and cooling units with permission and when absolutely necessary.

Students spend weekday evenings and the majority of their weekends with their host families. It is therefore important to cultivate a relationship with each member of the host family. Good relationships with the host family will take time, patience and a concerted effort to build, but the more care students put into developing good relationships with their host families, the more benefits they will reap!

**Tip:** In order to facilitate communication onsite during the early stages of the program, it is recommended that students make a list of key words and phrases in the target language and practice them often before Departure Day. Household items, as well as phrases like, “I’m tired”, “Can you please repeat that?”, “May I help you with the dishes?”, “Thank you, I appreciate it”, etc. can be very helpful in easing initial conversation with the host family.

**Making the Most of the Host Family Experience**

To make the most of any host family experience students should:

- Always be respectful
- Have a kind and helpful attitude
- Express appreciation to the host family
- Inquire about expectations and help with household chores
- Carefully adhere to rules and requests from the host family
- Keep your space clean
- Have an open mind to assimilating to the new family’s way of life
- Be willing to try new foods and show when you enjoy what they serve you
- Be open to communicating daily with the host family
- Ask lots and lots of questions, both to clarify any information that is not clear and to show interest
- Be an outstanding representative of your school, family, and country!

**Students’ Minimum Expectations for Host Families**

Above all, students should remember that host families come in all shapes and sizes. Some host parents will be young, some older. Some might be single or widowed. Some families may live on the outskirts of town, or even
in the countryside; others will live in the downtown area. In many families, both parents work outside the home. Although host families and the “perks” students might gain from their host family experience can vary greatly, students should expect the following minimum criteria from their hosts:

- Privacy while dressing and bathing
- Safety in the presence of all family members and guests in the home
- A separate bed or couch on which to sleep
- A private bedroom or sleeping space OR sharing a room with a sibling of the same gender and the same age or younger or with an IUHPFL roommate of the same gender
- Ample and nutritious meals and snacks
- Eating with family members as often as possible
- Feeling welcome and included; having companionship
- Cleanliness of the home within reasonable standards
- Treated with kindness, patience, and encouragement by all family members and guests in the home
- Respect for the Honor Code by all members of the host family and guests in the home
- Accuracy provided by host family on the Host Family Information Form regarding the accommodations provided, family members living in the home, pets, smoking, etc.

If a student feels that these minimum expectations of his or her host family are not being met, he or she should speak with an instructor immediately. Instructors, particularly the one who is acting as the Student Coordinator, will then tactfully assess the situation and give any needed support to the student with assistance and guidance from the Onsite Coordinator and Managing Director.

**Host Family Challenges**

While most host family experiences are positive, sometimes incompatibilities between a student and host family can arise. Students are asked to follow the protocol outlined below if they experience difficulties with their host family:

- Ask yourself if the Minimum Expectations of Host Families, as outlined in this section, are being met.
• Discuss the issue with the host family. The host family will usually appreciate the student’s honesty and desire to communicate openly with them.

• If talking with the host family directly does not resolve the issue, or if a student needs assistance with how to address the issue with the host family, these concerns should be raised with the instructor team; they are the student’s advocates during the program and can be trusted to always have the student’s best interest at heart.

• Consider filling out and submitting to the instructor team the **Host Family Inventory Form**. This form will be available in hard copy to the student by the Instructor Team and is designed to guide the student’s thoughts regarding the issue(s) he/she may be having with the host family, what measures have already been taken to improve the situation, and what course of action should be taken next.

• If necessary, the instructor acting as Student Coordinator and the Onsite Coordinator can visit with the student and host family to help mediate the situation.

**Note:** Instructors will always inform Onsite Coordinators of any challenges with host families, because the Coordinators are responsible for selecting and supervising them. Onsite Coordinators know the host families well and can be very valuable in helping to settle conflicts and misunderstandings.

A student who has difficulties with a host family, should communicate with their instructors **immediately** and before telling their US family and friends. Whereas instructors and Onsite Coordinators can help resolve host family situations right away, friends and family back home cannot. As soon instructors are aware of a situation, they will inform the IUHPFL Office, which will then notify the student’s parents.

**Property and Liability Protocol**

In cases where a host family alleges that a student has damaged their property or personal belongings, it is important for students and parents/guardians to be aware of the IUHPFL Property and Liability Protocol, which is provided as an appendix to this handbook. This protocol must be followed (with guidance from the Instructors and Onsite Coordinator), because it protects the students and the host families by discouraging false claims and ensuring that legitimate claims are handled promptly.
Policy Regarding Host Family Changes

Students and parents/guardians should expect anywhere from a few days to a couple of weeks for the student to feel fully comfortable in a host family home. Therefore, IUHPFL strongly encourages students to spend at least a week (i.e., enough time to follow the previously outlined protocol) with their host family before making a request to explore a host family change (unless they truly feel unsafe or uncomfortable).

That being said, students should never hesitate to talk with their instructors about their Host Family Experience and can rest assured that their safety and well-being is the #1 priority of IUHPFL.

Should a student face difficulties with their host family, they are asked to follow the previously outlined protocol. If after completing these steps, incompatibilities and miscommunications persist, or if the host family is not meeting the Minimum Expectations required of them, as outlined previously in this section, then the option of changing host families will be explored.

Host family changes happen rather infrequently, but they do happen and for a variety of reasons. Grounds for host family changes can include (but are not limited to):

- The family does not meet the Minimum Expectations of Host Families outlined in this section
- Student’s physical health or well-being is in jeopardy
- Severe incompatibility of personalities (between student and host family)
- Severe incompatibility of personalities (between two IUHPFL roommates)
- Severe lack of communication between the student and family
- Host family’s lack of time or effort to accommodate student (i.e., host parent arrives late to pick-up student, student spends most of his/her free time, meals, etc. alone)
- Inappropriate behavior of host family members towards student or vice versa
- Host family’s failure to comply with the Host Family Agreement or adhere to the IUHPFL Honor Code
- Host family providing inaccurate information regarding the accommodations, who is living in the home, smoking, etc. on the Host Family Information Form.
In the event that a permanent host family change is necessary, at least one instructor and the Onsite Coordinator will mediate the situation and help the student to move to a new family. Instructors will provide the Office with a completed Host Family Change Form, which will give the contact information of the new family, and the Office will forward this form to the US parents/guardians as soon as possible, along with details of the situation.

**Temporary Host Family Changes**

Occasionally, circumstances can arise for a host family that require the student be temporarily relocated to another home. For example, if an out-of-town relative of the host family passes away and the host family needs to travel to attend the funeral, arrangements will be made for the student to live with another host family during that time. In the event that any student is temporarily relocated, Instructors will inform the IUHPFL Office, which will in turn notify the student’s parents/guardians of such arrangements.

**Goal Setting and Teambuilding**

The IUHPFL experience is a journey that encourages each student to set personal and academic goals for their time abroad. Regardless of a student’s language proficiency, each student will face unique challenges and become more self-confident and independent. Working toward specific, personal goals helps students to stay focused and intentional along their journey.

IUHPFL encourages students to set S.M.A.R.T. Goals (Strategic, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic, and Time bound). You can find more information about this model online and in the IUHPFL Teambuilding Guide, which is available on our website.

In addition to personal goals, each program site team will work together to set and reach collective goals. IUHPFL stresses that, while students are ultimately responsible for the degree to which they will personally benefit from the program, they are each also responsible for supporting the success of their peers and their team.

Teambuilding is a core component of our program, and instructors will implement various activities during the Student-Guardian Orientation and throughout the program to enhance team cohesiveness. We want every
Keeping in mind the **8 Core Values of IUHPFL** is always a good idea, because they help our students, instructors, and teams to understand what it means to be a part of IUHPFL and to get the most out of their experience:

1. **Appreciation**: Acknowledging the qualities and kind acts of others
2. **Diligence**: Focusing with enthusiasm on academic and personal goals
3. **Discovery**: Being open to new ways of looking at the world and oneself
4. **Empathy**: Choosing words and actions that express compassion and create connection
5. **Encouragement**: Helping others to reach their goals and see their unique talents
6. **Honor**: Acting with integrity and adhering to the IUHPFL Honor Code
7. **Respect**: Treating others with dignity at all times
8. **Unity**: Fostering team spirit and trust

**Student Grades and Assessment**

As mentioned, IUHPFL instructors are professional language educators, who have broad experience teaching and working with adolescent students. They are qualified to assess students’ linguistic and academic progress, as well as their personal development and acculturation throughout the program and they value the unique talents and gifts of each student. Whereas some students are athletic, others prefer not to engage in sports. Some students are musicians or artists. Some are studious readers and writers. Some students are outgoing, while others prefer to observe and participate quietly. All kinds of skills and personalities are required to form a successful team, and the unique attributes of each student are appreciated and honed in our programs.

**Course Grades**

Students will receive a letter grade in each of their classes, which will take into consideration attitude, effort, and improvement. Students will also meet with their instructors to discuss progress throughout the duration of the program. Instructors are eager to encourage and help students to succeed and give guidance that is constructive and useful.
Assessment of Afternoon Activities and Community Engagement

These activities are designed to allow every student to contribute and shine in their own unique way. Students are assessed based on their attitude and willingness to participate to the best of their ability; they do not receive letter grades for these activities. Students are not expected to be athletically or musically inclined, for example. The goal is for each student to contribute to these activities in a way that benefits themselves and the team.

Final Student Evaluation

Students receive their IUHPFL Final Student Evaluation in early fall, after they have completed the Student Exit Survey online. This evaluation is sent via email to the student, the parents, and the foreign language teacher who submitted the appraisal as part of the student’s IUHPFL Application. The instructors complete this evaluation, which indicates the student’s performance in their coursework, as well as their attitude and participation in Afternoon Activities, Community Engagement Activities, and overall success in the program. The Final Student Evaluation also allows instructors to comment on the student’s success in adhering to the Honor Code and to determine whether the student has earned the IUHPFL Award of Excellence. The student’s scores on the language test administered at the beginning and end of the program are also included.

Note: A student who has completed at least half of the program before having to return early to the U.S. for any reason, will receive their Final Student Evaluation. If a student leaves during the first half of the program, he or she will not receive the Final Student Evaluation.

IUHPFL Recognitions

Students will receive one of three possible recognitions in certificate format after the program:

- **IUHPFL Diploma**
  - Students who participate during the entire program receive the IUHPFL Diploma along with their Final Student Evaluation.

- **IUHPFL Diploma with Award of Excellence**
  - Students who meet the following criteria, earn the IUHPFL Award of Excellence:
    - A **combined grade** of B+ or higher in all classes, taking into account attitude, effort and improvement
- Participating to the best of their ability and with a good attitude in Afternoon Activities and Community Engagement Activities
- Adhering to the IUHPFL Honor Code and not receiving an Incident Report.

**Certificate of Participation**

- Any student who participates to the best of his or her ability but must leave the program due to circumstances beyond his or her control will receive the Certificate of Participation.

**Note:** Students who must return to the US early due to egregious or defiant violation of the Honor Code will not receive the IUHPFL Diploma, the Award of Excellence, or the Certificate of Participation.

**Program Evaluations**

Students, parents/guardians, instructors, and host families participate in various evaluations to help ensure that the program is operating properly and to identify potential areas of improvement.

**Evaluations Overview**

Each of the following evaluations is administered once, sometimes twice, during the program. In all cases, evaluators are asked to be fair, encouraging, and respectful in their evaluations of others.

- Parent/Guardian Orientation Survey allows parents and guardians to share their perspectives on the orientation experience, as well as ideas for improvement.
- Students’ Self-Evaluations offer students important opportunities to reflect upon their IUHPFL experience at different stages of the program and to assess their own progress in working toward personal and collective goals. They also allow them to identify their own strengths and areas for improvement on topics related to their academic progress, adherence to the Honor Code, participation in activities, and overall performance within the program.
- Instructor Evaluations of Students provide instructors with an opportunity to praise students for their progress in goal setting and achievement, as well as to give constructive and helpful feedback on how to improve in specific areas.
• Student Evaluations of Instructors provide students with a chance to comment on the courses, materials and specific methods and approaches to teaching the various subjects.

• Host Family Assessment of Student allows host families to express praise and appreciation, as well as any concerns, for the students under their care.

• Student Assessment of Host Family allows students to discreetly communicate their likes, dislikes, questions and concerns about their Host Family Experience to their instructors.

• Host Family Survey of IUHPFL allows host families to comment on their overall impressions of the program, its staff, policies and procedures. Results of this survey are compiled and shared with the Onsite Coordinators by the IUHPFL Office.

• Student Exit Survey is completed online by students after the program, and allows them to evaluate all facets of their IUHPFL experience: instructors, courses, materials, excursions, host families, Student-Guardian Orientation, IUHPFL Office support, and so on.

• Students must complete this survey before they can receive the IUHPFL Diploma, Award of Excellence (if applicable) and their Final Student Evaluation.

• Parent/Guardian Post-Program Survey is optional and encourages parents and guardians to express their opinions about their students’ and their own IUHPFL experience.

**IUHPFL Student Management**

Program wide, our instructors, Onsite Coordinators, and host families embrace an Authoritative Management Style that provides firm but caring guidance to the students, seeks their contributions, and honors their opinions and perspectives.
# Authoritative vs. Authoritarian Management Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authoritative Style 😊</th>
<th>Authoritarian Style ⚡</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High yet Realistic Expectations</td>
<td>High and often Unreasonable Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear &amp; Respectful Communication</td>
<td>Communication can be Destructive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks Input from Child in Rule Creation and Consequences</td>
<td>Seeks No Input from Child: “My Way or the Highway”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks Ideas and Gives Choices</td>
<td>Doesn’t request or provide collaboration with the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturing and Encouraging</td>
<td>Care and Encouragement not Stressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Oriented</td>
<td>Goals of the Child not Stressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult is Present and Engaged</td>
<td>Adult might or might not be Present and is not Engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair and Appropriate Consequences</td>
<td>Consequences can be Extreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for Redemption</td>
<td>Focus on Punishment, not Redemption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable Follow Through</td>
<td>Unpredictable Follow Through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stresses the Quality of the Relationship and Connection</td>
<td>Stresses the Dominance of the Adult over the Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates and Teaches Empathy and Mutual Respect</td>
<td>Lacks Empathy and Genuine Mutual Respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowers the Child to Grow</td>
<td>Disempowers the child and diminishes his or her self-confidence</td>
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</table>
Students have limited communication with their US family and friends for the duration of the program and they must speak only in the target language 100% of their time abroad. While these rules and guidelines can seem difficult and sometimes challenging to follow, their purpose is to ensure success for the student. IUHPFL provides a unique, time-tested immersion experience that will significantly increase a student’s language proficiency, create lifelong friendships, and instill the skills and confidence to succeed in an increasingly diverse and globalized workforce.

When considering the importance of the IUHPFL Language Commitment, please keep in mind our DESIRED OUTCOMES for every participant:

- Greatly improved language proficiency
- Desire to continue studying the language and culture
- Ability to see commonalities between diverse people
- Self-confidence and independence
- Stronger interpersonal skills
- Strategies for problem solving
- Creative thinking and expression
- Clearer vision of their future studies and careers
- Positive relationships with peers, host families, and instructors
- Seeing themselves as global citizens

In order for students to achieve these outcomes, it is essential to respect and follow all rules and guidelines and to adhere to the Language Commitment, which is one of the Three Pillars of IUHPFL and part of the Honor Code, as well. You will be extremely proud of yourself after the program, because you will see the results!

IUHPFL Language Commitment

The Language Commitment is one of the Three Pillars that make IUHPFL a unique and effective program for language learners and applies to every program participant, without exception. It is enforced by Instructors and Onsite Coordinators and stressed to all host families. The student’s commitment to speak only the target language during the program, except in cases of emergency, is key to his or her success. This means that no devices with Internet capability are permitted onsite (cell phones, tablets, smart watches, iPods, etc.). Additionally, no music or books in English are
allowed, with the exception of this handbook and a pocket dictionary, which students can take abroad for quick reference. See the IUHPFL Honor Code at the end of this handbook and on our website for more information about the Language Commitment.

**Note:** Kindles and other electronic reading devices (with or without Internet capability) are also not permitted, because instructors should not be put into a position of checking that these devices do not contain English content or have Internet capability.

**Phone Communication**
Calls from students to their parents/guardians are permitted only in cases of emergency and with permission from the instructor team.

**Internet Access**
Students are allowed to access the Internet for one hour per week from a computer onsite in order to communicate with friends and family in written English. No Facetime, Skyping or speaking English is allowed. This hour can be taken in one 60-minute session or two 30-minute sessions. Students will have a more successful assimilation process if they make contact with home just once or twice per week versus multiple times.

IUHPFL suggests that parents/guardians respond to their students only once or twice per week in order to encourage them to uphold the Language Commitment, to help curb homesickness, and to foster their student’s independence.

**Tip:** Students might consider making the most of their one-hour-per-week Internet time by posting to Facebook or a personal blog, rather than trying to send individual messages to each friend and family member.

**Note:** Please remember that not all host families own a computer. Students may have to go to an Internet café to access the Internet. The program instructors can provide suggestions for Internet access at cafés computer labs, etc. at each program site.
Encouragement for Parents and Guardians

Until several years ago, international communication limited itself naturally, because high-speed Internet, international calling plans, blogs, Skype and Facebook were less available around the world. Now it seems unthinkable not to be in touch at a moment’s notice. When embarking on a journey such as IUHPFL, however, students and parents/guardians are asked to trust the immersion process, as well as our program policies, which have proven effective since IUHPFL was established in 1962.

The limited access to communication with friends and family in the US serves to empower the students in several ways:

- They become immersed linguistically by relying less on the native language and more on the language of the host culture
- They become immersed culturally and learn new ways of seeing the world, other people, and themselves
- They are less inclined to be homesick, because they are able to focus on the present moment and enjoy their surroundings
- They learn to take control of their own well-being and to rely on their host families, instructors and peers
- They become more self-sufficient and self-confident

In order for students to be successful in their IUHPFL experience, they need their parents/guardians to respect these communication restrictions and to support their full immersion while abroad. They need to feel empowered by the adults in their lives. In other words, parents and guardians are an essential part of their student’s success!

While these restrictions on communication between students and parents or guardians can be difficult for both sides, particularly if the student is having challenges onsite, it can help parents and guardians to remember that each student’s language skills and adjustment to the culture improve a little more every day. During times when a student seems sad or discouraged, it is extremely helpful to simply encourage them and remind them that challenges are a normal aspect of being abroad and an important part of their personal and academic growth. Oftentimes, just hearing that their loved ones at home believe in them and are cheering them on makes all the difference!

Note: Friends and family are not allowed to visit the student during the program except in cases of serious illness or injury. It is common, however,
for families to meet their students on the **final day** of the program and travel together afterwards.

**Note:** Parents and guardians should NOT send packages to students abroad. Customs taxes and delivery charges can be very high (sometimes in the hundreds of dollars) and whoever claims the package for the student, a host parent for example, will have to pay these charges. Cards and post cards in the target language are acceptable and encouraged.

**Sparse or Negative Communication from the Student**

If student communication is uncharacteristically sparse or negative and family members in the US are concerned, they are encouraged to contact the IUHPFL Office Team, who will then reach out to the instructors to assess the student’s state of well-being. The Office Team will report back to the parents or guardians as soon as possible. In most cases, students do not have problems abroad and enjoy themselves immensely. It is also not unusual for a student to deliberately limit communication with family back home, because he or she does not want to use English or disengage from activities onsite. Although potentially frustrating for the student’s family, sparse communication is rarely a cause for concern.

**Flow of Communication between All IUHPFL Parties**

Instructors, parents/guardians and students should all be familiar with how communication should flow between IUHPFL parties, which include the IUHPFL Office, US Families, Students, Host Families, Onsite Coordinators, and Instructors.

**Please refer to these guidelines during the program to understand expectations for communication between parties:**

- Students, Instructors and Host Families are in communication with each other at all times. These constitute the primary support network for students.
- The Onsite Coordinator is present at least a portion of every day and accessible at all times during the program, providing support and crisis management, as needed.
- The IUHPFL Office and US Family provide marginal support during the program, except in cases of emergency when more involvement would be necessary.
- If the student should experience difficulties of any kind during the program, they should first reach out to those they trust within their
immediate onsite support system: Instructors, Program Peers, and Host Family.

- The Managing Director and Program Coordinator are in contact with instructor teams and Onsite Coordinators at each site several times per week, if not daily.
- The IUHPFL Office acts as a conduit for communication between the US Family and the Instructors. As instructors are typically very busy during the program, the Office seeks to find quick solutions and to ease concerns for all parties. **Parents and guardians should not attempt to contact instructors directly, except when given access by the Office during emergencies.**
- The Program Site Blog provides weekly and direct communication to US Families from the instructors. Family members are encouraged to visit the blog often to see photos and to read about the team’s activities and excursions.

**Communication during Urgent or Emergency Situations**

If there is an emergency or urgent situation onsite, the instructors and/or Onsite Coordinator will immediately reach out to the Managing Director, who has direct access with all Onsite Coordinators and Instructors via cell phone at all times. The Managing Director will then contact the US Family.

The US Family can likewise call or email the Managing Director during times of crisis or emergency. For less urgent matters, please call or email the Office during normal business hours. Contact information is provided at the beginning of this handbook.

**Communication about Infractions against the IUHPFL Honor Code**

The Honor Code is an integral part of IUHPFL, and students are expected to follow it while abroad with their team. Upon acceptance into the program, the student agrees to follow the Honor Code and his/her parent or guardian agrees to support him/her in doing so, as well as support the instructor team’s reinforcement of the Honor Code. Students are also expected to encourage and hold one another accountable in adhering to the Code.

If the student receives an Incident Report for violating the Honor Code, parents/guardians will be contacted by the Office during the next business day. Once an Incident Report is received, the student is no longer eligible for the IUHPFL Award of Excellence. Egregious or repeated infractions will likely result in the student’s early return to the US at the expense of their
parents/guardians. An IUHPFL Instructor will accompany the student to the international airport.

**Note:** Per the Payment Schedule & Terms Agreement that parents and guardians sign, if a student must return home early due to violations of the Honor Code or other discipline-related matters, no fees or costs will be refunded and the student and guardian will be expected to cover any expenses related to accompanying the student to the international airport and flying him or her back to the US.

**Honor Code Infractions and Disciplinary Protocol**

It is important for students and parents/guardians to understand that, while IUHPFL is a challenging program with high expectations of its participants and program outcomes, we also provide students with guidance and a strong support system, so they can succeed. Students are invited to participate in the program, precisely because instructors and administrative staff alike have determined that they have the skills and qualities required a) to benefit greatly from all that the program has to offer, b) to strengthen and support their teammates and c) to be an enjoyable and helpful guest for their host family.

Instructors and host families understand that their primary role in the program is to mentor and coach students and to give them encouragement and praise as often as possible. They enjoy this role immensely and want students to succeed in every facet of the program. They take pride in the fact that students return home with wonderful memories and stories to share, increased language and cultural proficiency, a deeper sense of self-confidence, broader horizons for their future plans, and friendships that will last for years to come!

It is also the responsibility of the instructors, oftentimes in collaboration with the Managing Director, to determine appropriate disciplinary responses when students engage in behaviors that defy the Honor Code, and this is not a responsibility that any instructor enjoys. Whenever possible, instructors will first attempt to better engage the student in the culture and group activities, oftentimes by creating an Engagement Plan with the student, before implementing a disciplinary approach, especially when a student’s behavior or actions seem unintentionally amiss. However, in cases where the student’s actions are deliberate, repeated and/or openly disrespectful, a disciplinary approach will be employed, which will include at least one of the following measures, depending on the
severity of the behavior and the amount of time left in the program. Parents and guardians will be informed of these measures by the Managing Director.

A Behavior Plan or Contract, includes the following:

- Specifics of the misconduct, including the instructors’ and the student’s points of view
- Concrete suggestions for eliminating the behavior
- Ways in which the instructor team will support and encourage the student’s growth and success in completing the requirements of the plan
- At least 2 actions that the student will undertake to rectify or compensate for the behavior, possibly involving community service
- A date by which these actions will be completed
- A reward for completing the plan successfully
- Consequences that will be carried out if not completed successfully, including an Incident Report
- The instructors’ and student’s signatures

The Behavior Plan will be shared with the Managing Director, the US family, and possibly the Host Family, if appropriate.

An Incident Report

- If the student does not successfully complete the Behavior Plan or if the student knowingly violates a major tenet of the Honor Code, such as the No-Smart-Device Rule or No-Alcohol Rule, an Incident Report will be issued.
- At this point, the student cannot receive the IUHPFL Award of Excellence at the end of the program.
- The Managing Director and parents/guardians receive a copy of the Incident Report.
- The Managing Director emails or calls the parents/guardians to discuss the matter.

Student is Sent Home

- For cases involving ongoing, dangerous, or egregious acts that violate the Honor Code and affect the well-being and safety of any one
individual or the group, the best option is to send the student home to his or her US family.

- This measure is not taken lightly and must be discussed with and condoned by the Managing Director, who will inform the parents/guardians and arrange for the student’s flight back to the US.
- All expenses related to the student’s early dismissal from the program must be paid by the student’s parents/guardians as stated in the Payment Schedule and Terms Agreement signed by students and parents/guardians prior to departure.
- At this point, the student will not receive the IUHPFL Diploma.

**Important Note:** Although instructors prefer to implement an Engagement Plan or Behavior Plan as a first step in responding to a student’s actions or behavior, these measures are not always helpful or appropriate. In cases where behavior is intentionally harmful, disrespectful, or contrary to the major tenets of the Honor Code, an immediate Incident Report can be issued or the instructors can recommend to the Managing Director that the student return home early. The Managing Director will work with the instructors and the parents/guardians to best resolve cases where the student’s actions or behavior pose an immediate threat to him or herself, another person, or the integrity of the program.

**Alcohol**

The IUHPFL Honor Code outlines a strict policy against alcohol and non-prescription drug use. Not only are participants prohibited from consuming alcohol during the program, they are also not permitted to purchase it for themselves or as a gift, nor are they allowed to receive it as a gift for themselves or their family. **Violations related to alcohol and non-prescribed drugs are considered egregious and will merit an Incident Report and/or an immediate return to the U.S.** This policy applies to minors, as well as to students ages 18 and above.

With respect to managing money abroad, a few general suggestions follow. Instructor teams will have additional suggestions for their individual program sites at the Student-Guardian Orientation.

**A Debit Card (preferably with SECURITY CHIP and four-digit PIN)** is necessary to allow students to withdraw money directly from a US checking account at an ATM. This option is fast and convenient and typically offers a
decent exchange rate. It also allows parents/guardians to provide spending money to students gradually, which can help them to budget while abroad.

- Students should use their card at least once before leaving the US and search online or ask at the bank for information on overseas ATM fees, as well as limits on a single withdrawal or the number of withdrawals allowed in a 24-hour period, etc.
- ATMs are plentiful throughout all of the host countries, but students need to be sure their particular debit card/bank affiliation will be recognized by ATMs abroad.
- Talk to your bank to learn about their partners and affiliates in the host country and ask if they participate in one of the “global ATM alliances”. Major banks are often members of large financial networks that allow account holders to use ATM’s worldwide without high withdrawal fees.

**A Credit Card (preferably with SECURITY CHIP and four-digit PIN)** is a good idea for unexpected costs such as visits to hospitals or clinics. These also permit cash advances, if necessary, although fees and high interest can apply. VISA and MasterCard are widely used throughout the world, but Discover and American Express are not as commonly recognized or accepted. Traveler’s Checks should be avoided altogether.

**Important Reminder:** Be sure to tell your bank (and possibly your credit card company) the dates when these cards will be used abroad and where they will be used. Otherwise, there is a strong possibility that they will block purchases and disable the cards as a security measure against identity theft.

**More useful tips on currency exchange and managing money abroad:**

- IUHPFL recommends exchanging $50-$100 USD for host country currency before departure. This way, students arrive in the host country with the ability to buy snacks and incidentals during the first week or so of the program.
- Instructors and students will locate convenient and low-fee ATM’s for students, as they tour the host city together.
- Students and parents/guardians can plan ahead and order host country currency from a local bank in their town or arrive early at the international airport in order to exchange currency before meeting the group at the check-in counter.
• Students should avoid taking US dollars to exchange at banks abroad, because they are likely to not get a good exchange rate, and they will need to go to the bank in person, which might be tricky due to their scheduled Classes and Afternoon Activities.

• Students and their parents should come to an agreement on how much spending money is reasonable for the duration of the program. Each family’s unique financial circumstances determines a student’s travel budget. Generally speaking, an equivalent of $50-$100 per week provides sufficient spending money; most weeks students will likely spend less than $50, other weeks when excursions take place, they might spend $100 or more.

• Using a debit card or credit card abroad to make purchases will involve additional fees every time and can use up a student’s spending money at a rapid pace. The best approach is to use the debit card to withdraw money at an ATM perhaps once or twice per week and to make purchases with cash, while using the credit card only for emergencies. The trick when withdrawing money from an ATM is to know how much to take out at one time. Students need to find that comfort zone between having the funds they need for a few days and not having too much money on hand, in case of theft or loss.

• Students should be prepared to purchase 4-6 of their own meals during the program at an equivalent of $10-$15 per meal. Sometimes when the team is traveling together, it isn’t possible for everyone to eat at the same location. Especially in large cities and airports, students and instructors will divide into small groups and eat at venues within close proximity to each other. Aside from these occasions, all meals and snacks are provided to students and included in the Program Fees.

• Students should not commit themselves to buying a souvenir for every friend and relative. A good alternative to buying gifts would be to send postcards from the host country, as postage abroad is inexpensive in comparison with souvenirs.

• Additionally, large souvenirs and gifts can require the purchase of more luggage, which incurs additional and often high fees on the return flight to the US.

• If you pack a large canvas bag, as recommended, it can be used as carry-on luggage for a few small gifts and souvenirs.

**Financial Issues, Banking Problems**

Occasionally a student might experience problems accessing funds from their bank accounts. This may be due to a number of different reasons,
including faulty ATM machines, wrong PIN numbers, trying to withdraw more money than the bank limit allows, etc. In such cases, instructors will help the student to locate another ATM or contact their parents/guardians or banks in a timely fashion.

**Tip:** Students are encouraged to know the PIN for their debit cards by the numbers, not by letters, because letters aren’t always available on the keypads at ATM’s abroad.

Again, having both a debit card and a credit card, as well as a small amount of currency on-hand at all times provides the student with options and prevents situations where they are without a means to make purchases onsite.

**Important Note:** Under no circumstances are instructors, Onsite Coordinators, or the student’s host family permitted to lend money to the student — for purchases large or small, emergency or non-emergency. Instructors will help the student contact his or her parents or guardians immediately should he or she need additional funds. In the meantime, parents can rest assured, knowing that all basic needs of the student are provided by the program. Running out of spending money is not considered an emergency, but will be addressed in a timely manner.

**Health & Safety Abroad**

The IUHPFL Office, instructors and Onsite Coordinators are careful to protect students’ health and safety overseas, but students must ultimately take responsibility for the consequences of their decisions, choices and behavior. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to read this section carefully and to be aware of how they can help ensure a safe and enjoyable summer abroad.

**How IUHPFL works to ensure student safety and well-being:**

- Qualified, dedicated, and experienced Onsite Coordinators and host families
- Careful selection and extensive training of Instructors
- At least one Instructor per site is CPR and First Aid certified
- One instructor carries a well-stocked First Aid Kit at all times
- Health & Medical Insurance is provided for every student and instructor
• A licensed therapist or counselor is aware of program and is available at every program site
• Identification of high-quality health and medical facilities at every site
• IUHPFL registers all program participants who are US citizens at the respective US Embassies in each host country (Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) https://step.state.gov/step/)
• Careful adherence to Indiana University student safety and study abroad procedures

First steps to staying healthy and safe abroad:
• Be sure to read the IUHPFL Honor Code thoroughly to understand how it is intended to keep students safe during the program. It is provided at length at the end of this handbook.
• Before the program, students should consider any special conditions or needs of the student and be sure to disclose these to the Office right away, so reasonable accommodations and support can be provided.
• Parents/guardians and students are also encouraged to consult the US Department of State website for Consular Information Sheets and Travel Alerts or Warnings, and the Centers for Disease Control website:
  o http://travel.state.gov/
  o http://www.cdc.gov/

Emotional Health
Students are likely to experience some form of culture shock during their time abroad, but this should not be confused with a real emotional crisis. If a student feels withdrawn or detached and cannot cope with the environment, he or she needs to talk with an instructor right away. If necessary, the student can see a licensed therapist or counselor onsite; such visits are covered under the health and medical insurance provided by the program.

Public Disturbances and Protests
Students will not be permitted to attend political events and protests abroad. If Onsite Coordinators or Instructors inform students of such events or protests in the city, students are to stay clear of those areas and blend in with local residents as much as possible. Dressing to fit in with the local culture and not drawing attention to oneself are essential to one’s safety abroad, regardless of one’s nationality.
In the event of public disturbances abroad—including violent demonstrations or terrorist acts—the Instructors and Onsite Coordinator will immediately contact
all students and their host families about the appropriate protocol. If such an event occurs, the IUHPFL Office will send an email to all US families, informing them of the students’ safety and whereabouts. If possible, students will also be allowed to contact their parents and guardians, once they are out of harm’s way.

**Sexual Harassment**

If a student feels like he or she is a victim of sexual harassment, it is essential to speak with the Instructors immediately. They will help sort out the difference between unacceptable harassment and culturally typical behavior, which may be nonetheless uncomfortable, and they will know how to advocate for and protect the student’s safety and privacy in such situations.

If the harassment were to involve a member of the host family or a family friend, the student would be moved *immediately* to another host family and the standard protocol for reporting the incident to the appropriate authorities and protecting the student’s safety and privacy would be implemented.

**Note:** IUHPFL Instructors are required to complete Title IX training on preventing and responding to sexual harassment and violence, so that they are better able to protect and assist students. All such matters are reported to the IUHPFL Office, parents, and the appropriate authorities, as required.

**Personal Safety**

When traveling abroad most risks to tourists involve petty theft, such as pickpocketing and purse snatching. However, it is still important to take measures to prevent becoming a victim of a crime.

By following the IUHPFL Honor Code, students will be on the right path to maintaining personal safety. What follows is even more practical advice on how to be safe while in an unfamiliar environment anywhere and while abroad.

**What you should do:**

- Always remain in groups of three or more, as per the IUHPFL Honor Code
- Take care of your teammates at all times, including telling instructors if one of them is at risk
- Wear clothing that helps you to blend in with your environment
- Be cognizant of your surroundings at all times - do not appear to be lost or wandering around
• Avoid areas where protests or demonstrations are taking place
• Do not draw attention to yourself as a non-resident
• At night, stay in a group and remain in well-lit areas
• Never accept food or drink from a stranger
• Do not carry large sums of cash on you and keep your valuables in a secured backpack or other apparel worn close to your body
• Know local traffic patterns and pedestrian signs and move through city areas watchfully and with purpose
• Listen to your instructors, Onsite Coordinator and host parents at all times and understand that they care about you and wish to keep you safe and happy!
• Do not consume alcohol or illegal substances under any circumstances
• Always be where you should be!

Medical Information & Health Insurance

Medical History
Living abroad can prompt emotional and physical stress and may exacerbate pre-existing conditions, as students adjust to changes in climate, diet, exercise and living conditions. Therefore, accurate and up-to-date information on the student’s Statement of Medical History is essential to the student’s health and safety and helps IUHPFL to acquire the appropriate assistance for a student in case of an accident or illness.

Note: Incomplete medical records and undisclosed medical conditions can complicate or delay a student’s treatment abroad. For the student’s well-being, students and parents/guardians are encouraged to provide current and complete information about medications, drug allergies, and chronic or recurring physical and psychological conditions, including eating disorders, depression and anxiety. To ensure accuracy, students and parents/guardians should inform the IUHPFL Office of any significant changes to the student’s Statement of Medical History before departure.

Students who are currently under medical or psychological care should talk frankly to their physician and/or counselor about the support they might need abroad and relay that information to the IUHPFL Office. In most cases, the program can accommodate a student’s needs, but only if these needs are known.
For general information on health abroad, visit the websites for the Center for Disease Control and the World Health Organization:

www.cdc.gov/

www.who.int/en/

Differing Abilities
The passage of legislation, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, has thankfully spurred schools in the US to accommodate students with varying abilities. Other countries are not bound by US legislation, of course, and facilities and resources can vary from one country to another.

IUHPFL complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and engages in the interactive process required by the ADA to provide reasonable accommodations for eligible students. The first step in this process is disclosure and documentation on the part of the student and parent of any special or disabling condition (physical, emotional, learning, etc.) If you anticipate needing accommodations during the program, call or email the IUHPFL Office as soon as possible and certainly prior to May, including information about accommodations that might be necessary.

Note: If a student requires a level of care that program instructors and host families cannot reasonably accommodate, then the student’s parents or guardians will be requested to arrange for these additional services at their own expense.

Medications Abroad
Students who currently take medications should talk to their physician about continuing the medications abroad. Students should make sure to take the amount of medication they will need for the entire five or six weeks. If this is not a possibility, students should ask their physician to provide a typed prescription with the generic name of the medication (not the commercial name) clearly indicated in order for adequate supplies to be filled while abroad.

Note: Students should not alter their medication—type, dosage, or frequency of dosage—within one month prior to departure or during the program.
Any medications carried overseas should be left in their original containers and clearly labeled. Students should also carry a letter from their physician describing the medical condition and any prescription medications, including the generic name of each medication. Any liquid medications in carry-on luggage must meet the airline’s quantity restrictions, or they might be thrown away during the security check.

Osaka Students: Special permission from the Japanese government is required for most prescription and some over-the-counter medications to enter the country. The IUHPFL Office will send you information about the Yakkan Shoumei approval process via email in the spring.

Student Privacy
Details related to a student’s current health condition, medications, and/or treatment are typically shared by the Office with Onsite Coordinators, Instructors, and host families, so that the student can receive the care and attention that he or she needs while abroad. Other information, such as past conditions should be shared with the Office, but will not be provided to outside parties, unless necessary for the purposes of the student’s care onsite.

IUHPFL adheres to the strict guidelines of Indiana University in the storage, distribution, and sharing of students’ critical and sensitive data.

Information pertaining to Data Management at IU can be found here: https://datamanagement.iu.edu/types-of-data/data-guide/index.php

Health & Medical Insurance
Included in the Program Fees paid by students and parents/guardians is the premium for health, medical and emergency evacuation insurance coverage. Students in Austria, China, France, Japan, and Spain are insured by Geo Blue Global Health and Safety Services (formerly HTH Worldwide Insurance Services) during the program dates. Students in Mexico and Chile are covered through CISI (Cultural Insurance Services International).

Information on the coverage provided by GeoBlue and CISI is provided during the Student-Guardian Orientation.
Should a student become ill while abroad, he or she should not hesitate to see a physician. At all program sites, medical professionals are available to provide excellent care. An instructor and typically a host parent will accompany the student to the clinic or hospital. It is primarily the responsibility of the instructor acting as Student Coordinator to oversee the student’s care and needs during their illness, but all instructors will assist to ensure the student receives excellent care. Onsite Coordinators provide additional support during these times, often checking in on the student and attaining updates from the medical staff. Onsite Coordinators and instructors work together to provide updates to the Managing Director, which are then shared immediately with parents and guardians. In serious cases, the onsite staff can be connected directly with parents and guardians to facilitate timely communication.

Onsite Coordinators are aware of all clinics and hospitals in the host city and make recommendations to students, instructors, and host families based on the quality, type, and cost of service. Whenever possible, Onsite Coordinators seek facilities that are already partnered with either GeoBlue or CISI Insurance, in order to save students and their parents/guardians from paying for medical care out-of-pocket. If an arrangement does not exist between the facility and the insurance provider, the student and his or her parents/guardians will need to arrange payment up-front. The following documents will then be submitted to the insurance provider by the parents in order for a claim for reimbursement to be processed:

- A claim form (instructors have access to these)
- A description from the doctor of the condition and treatment (the Office will acquire these and send to the parents)
- If possible, an itemized bill from the hospital or clinic
- Copies of all prescriptions
- Copies of all receipts for payments made (the Office will acquire these and send to the parents)

**Note:** Per Indiana University policy, no one except the student and his or her parents can pay for the student’s health and medical care while abroad. The IUHPFL Office, Instructors, Onsite Coordinators, and host families cannot pay for such expenses or sign any promissory note for payment on behalf of the student and his or her parents.

In rare cases, should care beyond the extensive coverage of GeoBlue or CISI be needed for the student, parents/guardians should be informed of their
family insurance coverage and the provisions for health and medical care that are available to the student while abroad. Students will want to carry an identification card or other documentation from their insurance company as proof of coverage.

**Note:** Students who plan to spend some time abroad after the program may need to purchase supplemental medical insurance to cover the additional time. Students are only insured by GeoBlue or CISI for the duration of their specific program dates.

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**Assimilating to the New Environment**

**Consider Perceptions about the US**

Part of a student’s success abroad will depend on how well he or she has prepared for cultural adjustments and personal growth in the host culture.

Before a student can understand another culture, it is important to understand his or her own. What does it mean to be American? What characteristics, values and attitudes typically define American culture? What generalizations can the student make about American attitudes towards education, gender, family, money, politics, race, relationships, religion, success, time and work? How do American values affect attitudes toward others, friendship patterns, work habits, spending free time and money? How do Americans measure success in life? What role does tradition play in the U.S. culture? A clear understanding of what is characteristically “American” (and its many variations) will give students a better chance of appreciating similarities and differences in another culture.

Every student abroad is inevitably put in the position of having to explain (or even defend) the home country’s political or economic system or its stance on global issues. If a student begins to keep abreast of the US role in global activities now, s/he will be more articulate when questioned about US policies and reactions to world issues. In addition, students often report that they wish they had brushed up on such basics as how a bill becomes a law in the US, the names of the US Presidents, and other aspects of American history, as well as current foreign and domestic affairs, before going abroad.

Students should remember, however, that they will not want to get into a hostile debate with questioners or automatically defend everything that is American. A student may want to think of some strategies for deflecting potentially hostile questions so that they lead to conversations in which everybody listens respectfully and everyone learns something new.
One useful point to consider and acknowledge when speaking with people from other countries about global politics: There is always more than one side to every issue, and access to complete and unbiased media coverage can be challenging, no matter where we are from. It is okay to concede when you have not been following an issue or when you do not know the answer to a question.

Note: Some cultures are more open to political discussion and debate than others. In some countries, such topics are not permitted, while in others American students can find themselves presented with frequent questions about US politics from their host families, friends, and acquaintances. Students should consult with their instructors about the best way to engage or not engage in political discussions in their host culture.

Learn about the Host Country
Students are encouraged to learn as much as possible about the country to which they are traveling, since understanding the history and culture will facilitate their adjustment to living there. Students are encouraged to research the host culture before departure. Online videos and TV travel programs are excellent resources, in addition to magazines, books, and movies.

Have Realistic Expectations
Students are encouraged to take a personal inventory of their expectations. What does a student hope to get out of their IUHPFL experience? Students may want to identify their individual goals — linguistic, academic, personal and career. How can these be achieved? How can personal growth during this experience be measured?

Outlining goals now and keeping a journal abroad in the target language will help map both the inner and outer journeys. Daily writing, which attempts to interpret the cross-cultural meanings of the experiences, may be a powerful learning tool. Students will be exploring these topics in Support & Success Groups.

Dress According to Norms of the Host Culture
Students should carefully consider how to dress in the host country. US students often comment that their clothing “gave them away” as American tourists. This can make them more vulnerable to derogatory remarks and as potential targets for petty thefts or worse. While it shouldn’t be necessary to buy a new wardrobe for going abroad, students may want to wear clothing that fits in with the local culture. Instructors will discuss this topic during Orientation.
Understanding & Respecting Cultural Differences

Culture Shock
“Culture shock” is the term used to describe the disorientation that every student experiences to some degree when spending an extended period of time in a new culture. The common symptoms include homesickness, boredom, withdrawing from the culture by spending excessive amounts of time alone or with other Americans, excessive sleeping, compulsive eating, irritability, stereotyping or hostile feelings toward locals, weepiness or even some psychosomatic illnesses (physical ailments that result from emotional or psychological stress). Although most students will inevitably experience some degree of culture shock, they certainly won’t have all of these symptoms.

One of the greatest ways to combat culture shock is to stay busy and active, which is one of the reasons why IUHPL has established a consistent routine of Classes, Afternoon Activities, Community Engagement Activities, and Excursions. Students will explore the topic of Culture Shock consistently in their Support & Success Groups.

The Stages of Culture Shock are:
- **Initial Euphoria.** On arrival in the new culture, everything seems wonderful and exciting, and students are struck with how similar people around the world can be.
- **Irritation and Hostility.** The focus changes from the similarities between cultures to the differences, and the differences become irritating and frustrating. Small problems can seem like major catastrophes.
- **Gradual Adjustment.** The crisis of adjustment passes. The new culture seems more familiar and the student moves more confidently within it. New friends are made. Students learn to interpret some of the subtle cultural cues.
- **Adaptation and Biculturalism.** Students are able to function in two cultures with confidence. They are so well adapted to the new culture that returning to the US will provoke a “reverse culture shock.”

Ways students can minimize the impact of culture shock:
- Learn as much as they can about their host country before departure
- Expect things to be different and attempt to see differences as interesting and fascinating rather than irritating or inconvenient
• Keep an open mind. There will be many surprises, and the more open a student remains to them, the more exciting and wonderful the experience will be.

• Combine the best of your host country’s culture with all the good things in American culture. This “best of both worlds” approach will help you to get the most out of the cultural immersion experience.

Even though the term “Culture Shock” implies a jolting and immediate clash of values and norms, students more often react and adjust to their new surroundings in small steps over a period of time. While there are many differences between the US and other countries, the following might be particularly significant.

**Discussing Sensitive Topics**

It is important for students to understand that some cultures might not openly address or discuss sensitive issues. Still others might be even more open to broaching these topics than we are in the U.S. Students should follow their instructors’ advice about how to broach the following topics:

- Religion
- Gender Roles
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Ethnicity
- Socio-Economic Differences
- Immigration
- Politics

**IUHPFL deeply respects the diverse views, values, and qualities of all program participants and we want students to have an enjoyable and safe experience abroad. Therefore, we advise students to consult with their instructors and to pay attention to cultural norms before broaching any of the above topics with local residents, even your host families.**

**Religion**

Few countries have the religious diversity and pluralism found in the US and few have such a strong tradition of separation of church and state. As a result, students may be struck by the number of public holidays that are based on a religious calendar or the extent of public prayer and public religious ceremonies in their host countries. Or, in other host countries, students might be perplexed...
by the complete absence of religious or spiritual expression in the mainstream culture. Students may probe to understand the relationship between the external, ritual manifestations of religion and individual beliefs or the role of religion as a political element or an active social force. The instructor team and the Onsite Coordinator can be good resources for questions regarding the presence or absence of religion in the host country.

**Gender Roles**

Both male and female students abroad will discover that growing up in the US has prepared them for different roles in society than the ones their contemporaries in other countries might expect. Many events in recent decades have heightened US awareness of gender stereotypes, sexism, and the limitations of traditional male-female roles. However, it is not appropriate to suggest to friends in the host country that US patterns would also be suitable for their culture. Instead, students may look at gender differences within the host culture from their historical and sociological perspectives and try to be understanding and flexible in their attitudes toward these differences.

**Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

Just as traditional gender roles have been questioned in the US, we also have had extensive dialogue regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. It should come as no surprise that other cultures might approach these topics differently. For more information about sexual orientation and gender identity and how they may be viewed abroad, the bibliography of international LGBTQ issues is available at: [http://www.rainbowsig.org/](http://www.rainbowsig.org/)

**Ethnicity**

US citizens often identify strongly with their family’s cultural and ethnic heritage and refer to themselves as Asian-American, Italian-American, African-American or Hispanic-American. In other countries, such ethnic differences might be viewed as less important, and oftentimes students have reported that for the first time they have been identified (and have identified themselves) as simply “American.” Sometimes, students might find that physical features that distinguish them from the host population may result in stares, comments or overt prejudice. Students will explore topics of ethnicity and self-identification in Support & Success Groups.

**Personal Space and Boundaries**

Some cultures have very different norms pertaining to personal space and appropriate social behaviors. For example, you might find that your host
family members stand closer to you or farther away from you than what feels comfortable. People might also comment on your looks; your height, weight, hair color, ethnicity, etc. In some cultures, strangers might want to touch your hair or have a photo taken with you. It is important to discuss these norms with your Instructors, so that you know what to expect and how to react in a constructive way. Keeping in mind that these behaviors are not intended to be harmful or offensive is also helpful.

Re-Entry: Reverse Culture Shock

Expect to find yourself changed in ways large and small upon return to the US. Coming home can represent a huge challenge to the student who has just spent several weeks in another country, acclimating to a new language and culture. Students and parents/guardians alike should put as much time and thought into preparing for Re-Entry into the US culture as they spent preparing to travel to the host country.

In particular, some struggles upon re-entry to the US can include:

- Not wanting to speak English
- Re-assimilating to the home culture
- Uncertainty of how to deal with increased maturity and independence
- Rollercoaster of emotions: mixed feelings of joy, elation, sadness, depression, being overwhelmed
- Missing host family members and friends in the host country
- Longing for certain foods or aspects of the host culture
- Feeling like you don’t really “fit in” to U.S. culture anymore

Once students have adapted to life abroad, coming home will require readjustment to U.S. culture. Students will have to integrate what they learned abroad into their US lives. For many people, Re-Entry, or Reverse Culture Shock, is more difficult and unexpected than initial culture shock. Most will cope with re-entry at various levels:

1. **Family:** Students may be expected to fit into the U.S. family, but find it difficult to communicate effectively because their families have obviously not shared the same international experience. The family may have difficulty adjusting to the student’s new independence and changed perspectives or values.

   **Strategies:**
Students should try to share their experience with the family (photos, stories, etc.) and let them know how much they appreciate the chance to grow in new ways by studying and traveling overseas.

Family members are encouraged to continue to learn about the host culture and share the experience with their students.

Consider planning a future trip to the student’s host city together!

2. **Friends:** Students and their friends may no longer be as close. Students may need to be sensitive about discussing their experience with them. They may also miss their new friends they made abroad.

**Strategies:**

- Students should ask and listen to what their longtime friends experienced in their absence and ask them for updates on local events.
- Trying to do new things together may get the relationship on a new footing.
- Students are encouraged to maintain contact with other IUHPFL alumni... What fun events can you plan together?

3. **School and Academics:** Students are likely to look at their high school in a new light, and may miss being part of a close-knit group of American students.

**Strategies:**

- Students may want to discuss the academic experience abroad with their counselor, especially if considering new career goals as a result of the experience abroad.
- Ask your foreign language teacher how you might be able to help them or other students.
- Students should consider making contact with international students on the high school campus and volunteer to talk to students who plan to study abroad through IUHPFL, including seeking out other students in the community who have studied abroad.
- It might be helpful for students and parents to begin researching international programs at the university level, including further study-abroad opportunities, in order to keep students forward-focused.
4. **Country:** Aspects of the US may no longer be entirely to the student’s liking and he or she might have the sense they no longer fit in. Students will probably evaluate ideas and events in the context of the broader cultural perspective acquired abroad.

**Strategies:**
- Students should recognize that we all tend to look past the shortcomings of our home culture when we are away, and to criticize it on the basis of changed perceptions when we return. Try to be aware of the “Grass-is-Always-Greener-on-the-Other-Side-of-the-Fence Syndrome” and be grateful for all the things you like about life in the US.
- Keeping up an interest in world events and participating in organizations or clubs with an international focus might be helpful.

5. **Self:** Students may have become accustomed to a level of activity and independence that their life in the US might not be able to accommodate right away. It is natural to feel a little restless or a bit depressed for a while after the return.

**Strategies:**
- Students benefit from giving themselves time to rest and recuperate from the fast pace of the program.
- It is a good idea to continue to write in your program journal: How have you changed through IUHPFL? What have you learned? What are your aspirations for the future?
- Talk with your parents and guardians about ways to steadily and wisely develop your level of independence. What new challenges are you ready for?
- Continue to explore your interests and boldly pursue future opportunities to learn, grow, and travel! IUHPFL is just the beginning!

**Ways for Contribute to IUHPFL after the Program**

Whether a student is still attending or has graduated from high school at the time of their participation in IUHPFL, adjusting to life in the US will have its challenges and its rewards. IUHPFL values its alumni and hopes that they will stay connected to one another, their host families, Instructors, and the program. There are several opportunities and activities that you will want to be aware of after your program ends:
• Students will want to complete the Student Exit Survey online, which will allow them to express their impressions of the program, as well as particular aspects that they enjoyed or would like to see changed.

• Every fall, alums are invited to submit their photos and videos from the program to the IUHPFL Office for the IUHPFL Photo & Video Contest! Winners receive prizes and special recognition, including a featured spot on the IUHPFL website and our annual newsletter, The Polyglot Press!

• Alums who receive the Award of Excellence are encouraged to act as Alumni Ambassadors the following school year and help to give presentations in their schools and around the state to new potential participants.

• Every alum can act as a Class Ambassador and help to maintain their team’s Facebook group page, organize ongoing reunions, and keep the Office updated with current contact information for their teammates.

• Alums who attend IU Bloomington can become members of the IUHPFL Alumni Association, which was formed during the 2016-17 school year on the IUB campus. All alums will be informed of events that they can attend!
Appendix A: Strategies to Prepare For The IUHPFL Experience

New experiences and unfamiliar situations happen every day during the program. The better prepared participants are, the more confidently they will be able to navigate these experiences. Below are a few suggested strategies to improve proficiency in the target language and help prepare students for some of the cultural challenges that lie ahead.

**To improve language proficiency:**
- Participate in a Language Club in your school.
- Participate in a conversation group in the target language.
- Label items around the house.
- Watch movies & listen to music in the target language.
- Read books in the target language.
- Arrange for a language exchange with a native speaker.
- Change the settings on your cell phone and computer so that the display language is your target language.

Upon arrival at the program site, students will need to acclimate to new family members and friends, a new city, a new culture, and a language that are typically not accustomed to speaking. We highly recommend that participants prepare for this significant degree of change by getting out of their comfort zone before departure.

**Some suggestions to ease cultural adjustment:**
- Research the city/region where you will be spending the summer.
- Try new foods. Many cultures demonstrate caring through food; refusing to try a meal that has been prepared for you can be very offensive to your host family.
- Stay at a friend’s home for an extended period (3 days to a week). Note the ways that the routine and expectations are different from your own home.
- Go without your cell phone and/or social media for an extended period (3 days to a week—or more!).
- Watch YouTube.com videos about the host city and country, so you are more familiar with the landscape, foods, cultural traditions, and
appearance of the city. Knowing what to expect before you arrive can ease culture shock greatly.

- Consider your routines—whatever it is that you do or eat regularly, places that you often go, even driving routes that you frequent. Recognize these patterns and challenge them!
Appendix B: Payments and Refund Policies

Parents and guardians should follow instructions for payment of Program Fees as indicated on the Payment Schedule and Terms Agreement on the IUHPFL website.

Refund Policy for Program Fees:

Withdrawal before the Program Begins: If a student withdraws from the program for any reason other than critical illness or emergency before departure, a refund of Program Fees will be calculated based on the following schedule:

- **Before March 1**, all but the $500 non-refundable deposit refundable
- **Before April 1**, all but $1,000 is refundable
- **Before May 1**, all but $2,000 is refundable
- **On or after May 1**, program fees are 100% non-refundable (with rare exceptions)

Withdrawal from the program is only considered effective on the date that written notification is received by IUHPFL.

- Exceptions to this timeline will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Early returns to the US due to illness, injury, family emergency, or violation of the Honor Code are not eligible for a refund and can involve airfare costs for the student, as well as hotel accommodations for the student and a chaperone.

Refund of Airfare Fees:

Any request for refund of airfare or exchanges must be discussed with Travel Leaders directly at 812-339-7800. Travel Leaders must respect and apply the refund policies of the individual airlines they serve.
Appendix C: The IUHPFL Honor Code

The IU Honors Program in Foreign Languages (IUHPFL), as an “honors” program, outlines clear norms of conduct for its students to follow and relies upon the individual student’s sense of responsibility and honesty to understand and abide by this Honor Code. In order for a student to participate in the program, he or she must agree to and abide by the following terms:

1. **At all times during the program, students are expected to uphold the 8 Core Values of IUHPFL:** Appreciation, Diligence, Discovery, Empathy, Encouragement, Honor, Respect, and Unity.

2. **IUHPFL Pledge of Excellence:** In the IUHPFL model, the strength of the program as a whole is only as strong as its individual students. This means that the Pledge of Excellence is as much a pledge to one’s team as to oneself. Students recite the pledge in unison at the Student-Guardian Orientation before departure:
   
   • “As I embrace my IUHPFL journey and commit to the Honor Code, I pledge to speak only the target language, uphold the 8 Core Values, celebrate my host family experience, and remain self-disciplined. I will choose to discover the best in myself and others, foster team unity, represent my school, family, and community with pride, and be a good ambassador for IUHPFL.”

3. **Students must understand the 3 Pillars of IUHPFL,** which make it such a unique and prestigious program for high school students:
   
   • **Language Commitment, the 1st Pillar:** The student’s commitment to speak only the target language during the program, except in cases of emergency, is the first pillar and is key to his or her success.
     
     o **Communication with U.S. family and friends** is limited to one hour per week via the Internet, taken in one 60-minute or two 30-minute sessions, according to the student’s preference, and using written English only; no video calls or speaking English during this hour is permitted. No other contact with U.S. family or friends is allowed, except in cases of emergency and only with instructor permission.

     o **All personal cell phones and all electronic devices with Internet capability are prohibited** during the program (including all smart devices, laptops, and tablets), because such use proves detrimental to the
student’s ability to fully immerse in the language and culture and to engage with those around him or her.

- **A pay-as-you-go program cell phone** will be provided to each student upon arrival at the program site to be used solely by him or her for local calls and text messages to fellow students, instructors and host family members in the target language. The program will pay an ample amount toward minutes for each phone, and if a student should exceed that amount, he or she is welcome to pay for additional minutes. Misuse or loss of the program cell phone could result in additional costs for the student.

- **No books or music in English are allowed during the program.** If students have summer reading assignments, these need to be completed before or after the program, unless the student can acquire them in the target language. Students may also freely listen to music in the target language, as long as the listening device does not have Internet capability.

- **Academic Excellence, the 2nd Pillar:** Students are required to give their best effort in all their program coursework, maintaining the highest level of academic honesty and refraining from academic misconduct, which is defined by Indiana University’s Code of Student Responsibilities as “any activity that tends to undermine the academic integrity of the institution,” and in which human, hard-copy or electronic resources are misused.

- **Host Family Experience, the 3rd Pillar:** Students are to treat their host families with respect, keep their space clean, and make every effort to follow household norms like a member of the family. Specific policies and procedures described in the Student-Guardian Handbook are designed to ensure student safety and well-being within the host family setting.

4. **No Dating Rule:** IUHPFL students may not date anyone in the host country during the program, including other program participants at their site, because focusing on one person can be counterproductive to the unity of the student team, the student’s interaction with his or her host family, and his or her overall learning experience.

5. **Alcohol, Tobacco, and Prescription Medications:** Even though the laws of other countries may differ from those of the U.S. with regard to
the consumption of alcohol, tobacco and other substances, IUHPFL students are to conduct themselves abroad as minors from the state of Indiana. This means that students are not allowed to purchase or consume alcohol, tobacco or other substances at any time. Discos and other establishments whose primary business is serving alcoholic beverages are prohibited to IUHPFL students. It is also strictly forbidden to bring alcohol, tobacco and other substances back to the U.S. Students may only purchase, possess and use prescription medications that have been prescribed specifically to them for current medical conditions, and these medications and conditions must be disclosed to the IUHPFL office before departure.

6. Risky Activities: Operating a car or other motorized vehicle is forbidden during the program, as is riding passenger on a motorcycle. Students are only permitted to ride as a passenger in a vehicle with an adult driver who is a member of the host family or has been authorized by the host family or the onsite instructor and coordinator team. Students are also not permitted to engage in risky, high adrenaline activities or get tattoos and/or piercings during the program.

7. Weeknight and Weekend Activities: It is expected and encouraged for students to engage with their host families during weeknights and weekends. During these times, students must be accompanied by a member of the host family. Any weekend travel away from the program site with the host family must have approval from the instructor team and must not interfere with classes and other program activities. Under no circumstances are students allowed to travel during the program dates without being accompanied by their host parents or program instructors.

8. Rule of Three: Depending on the program site and with permission from their host families, students may spend one or two hours in the town center after daily classes and activities. Whenever students are outside the classroom facility or the host family home and are not under the direct supervision of their instructors or host parents, they are required to stay in groups of at least three program participants at all times. The only exception to this rule is when students are commuting to and from classes.

9. Students are not to host or meet up with U.S. or international friends or family while the program is in session. However, students sometimes travel with their families after the program ends. The official end date for each program is the day when students are
scheduled to depart from the host country to the U.S.; students may meet up with family members on that day.

10. **Post-Program Language Commitment:** IUHPFL students commit to helping to their schools' language programs in any way possible and to continuing to study their foreign language through their senior year in high school or at the university level, if possible.

11. **Honor Code, Handbook and Orientation:** Students are required to read and abide by this Honor Code, as well as the Student-Guardian Handbook. It is also mandatory for students to attend the Student-Guardian Orientation with their guardian(s) before departure, on Indiana University’s Bloomington campus. Final acceptance into the program is contingent upon successful completion of the orientation.

12. **Terms and Conditions:**
   - Adherence to this Honor Code is of critical importance. Any infraction against the Honor Code can result in repercussions, including communication with U.S. parents/guardians and possible expulsion from the program.
   - Infractions against the Honor Code that result in an Incident Report for the student will disqualify that student from receiving the Award of Excellence at the end of the program.
   - In the event that this Honor Code is violated by a large number of students collectively, the consequences can apply to the entire group of students. For this reason, students are highly encouraged to hold one another accountable for their actions and adherence to the Honor Code.
   - A student who is expelled from the program will also not receive the IUHPFL Diploma at the end of the program.
Appendix D: IUHPFL 8 Core Values

- **Appreciation** – Acknowledging the qualities and kind acts of others
- **Diligence** – Focusing with enthusiasm on academic and personal goals
- **Discovery** – Being open to new ways of looking at the world and oneself
- **Empathy** – Choosing words and actions that express compassion and create connection
- **Encouragement** – Helping others to reach their goals and see their unique talents
- **Honor** – Acting with integrity and adhering to the Honor Code
- **Respect** – Treating others with dignity at all times
- **Unity** – Fostering team spirit and trust
IUHPFL Pledge of Excellence: In the IUHPFL model, the strength of the program as a whole is only as strong as its individual students. This means that the Pledge of Excellence is as much a pledge to one’s team as to oneself. Students recite the pledge in unison at the Student-Guardian Orientation before departure:

“As I embrace my IUHPFL journey and commit to the Honor Code, I pledge to speak only the target language, uphold the 8 Core Values, celebrate my host family experience, and remain self-disciplined. I will choose to discover the best in myself and others, foster team unity, represent my school, family, and community with pride, and be a good ambassador for IUHPFL.”
Appendix F: IUHPFL Property and Liability PROTOCOL

The following protocol has been developed by the IUHPFL Office in collaboration with Indiana University Legal Counsel. Its purpose is to a) protect IUHPFL students and their U.S. families from fraudulent or excessive claims of property damage or loss by host families b) to protect host families in cases where their claims of such damage or loss are legitimate c) to prevent fraudulent and excessive claims on the part of host families from occurring in first place and d) providing a way for legitimate claims to be reported and managed quickly and effectively.

The policy reads as follows and is distributed to every IUHPFL host family at all program sites and in the respective host language:

Indiana high school students who are selected to participate in the Indiana University Honors Program in Foreign Languages (IUHPFL) are typically high achieving youth and excellent students. They participate in a variety of school and community activities, often volunteering their time to help others, and are considered excellent role models to their peers by educators and adult mentors. In order to qualify for the program, they must demonstrate high academic proficiency in their target language, complete an extensive application, receive outstanding recommendations from three adult appraisers, and then be accepted into the program by two screeners, who are program instructors and administrative staff. Some students are further interviewed to ensure their likelihood for success in the program.

Incidents of damage or loss to personal property caused by IUHPFL students in host family homes are extremely rare. In the program’s history since 1962, only a few minor cases have occurred to the present date. Our students take great care to respect their host families and to contribute to their host family households in positive ways. In order to prevent incidents or to address rare cases of damage or loss to property in a host family home, the following IUHPFL policy has been established.

Homeowners Liability Coverage:
IUHPFL recommends that host families and U.S. Families include appropriate “general liability” coverage on their homeowners or renters policies. It is advised that host families and U.S. Families check with their insurance provider to ensure they have the proper type and amount of liability coverage in place before the IUHPFL programs begin.
Storing Items Away:
IUHPFL also recommends that all high-value, non-essential items (e.g., collectibles) and items of high sentimental worth in host family households be stored away by host families prior to the program in order to avoid incidents of damage. Host families, IUHPFL Students, and U.S. Families will be better served, if host families take measures in advance to protect these items from potential damage. It will not be the responsibility of Indiana University, the IUHPFL Office, or Program Instructors to compensate host families for damage to or loss of personal items or property.

Reporting Incidents to Appropriate Parties:
The host family must contact the Onsite Coordinator within 24 hours of discovering an incident of damage or loss. The Onsite Coordinator will immediately inform the Program Instructors and the IUHPFL Office, who will then inform the U.S. Family of the incident as soon as possible.

Visit by Program Instructors:
Within 2 days of an Incident, at least 2 Program Instructors must visit the host family household together to gather evidence pertaining to the incident (e.g., take photos of any damage) and to ensure that the dynamic between the host family and the IUHPFL Student is healthy and safe for everyone in the host family household. When an incident involves bodily injury, a visit is to be conducted within 24 hours.

Statements and Photos of the Incident:
If the host family wishes to seek compensation for any damage or loss of their property incurred by the IUHPFL Student, the following must be provided to the Onsite Coordinator, the IUHPFL Office, and the U.S. Family within 3 days of the incident:

- A statement from the host family describing the incident and stating how they wish to resolve the situation
- Statements from the Program Instructors who visited the host family household describing their impressions of the incident and making recommendations as to how to best resolve the situation
- A statement of explanation of the incident from the IUHPFL Student
- Photos and/or any other evidence pertaining to the incident from the host family, Program Instructors and/or IUHPFL Student

U.S. Family Response:
After receiving copies of all statements and photos of the incident, the U.S. Family will be encouraged by the IUHPFL Office to respond to the host family via the IUHPFL Office within 2 days in one of the following ways:
• agree to pay the host family the suggested compensation amount directly
• negotiate a different amount
• submit a claim to their insurance provider
• refute or deny the host family claim

Permission for IUHPFL Student to Pay Directly:
The IUHPFL Student is not to compensate the host family directly for any incident of damage, loss or injury in the host family household unless instructed to do so by his or her legal guardian/s.

IUHPFL Office Facilitation:
In the event of a dispute between a host family and a Student or a Student’s family in the U.S., Indiana University and IUHPFL will encourage both parties to reach an amicable resolution on their own accord. Under no circumstances are Indiana University or IUHPFL responsible for claims or for dispute resolution between the parties.

Excessive or Suspicious Claims:
Host families who make excessive and/or suspicious claims of property damage or loss within their households incurred by IUHPFL Students, as determined by the IUHPFL Office, will not be invited to host IUHPFL Students in future IUHPFL programs.

Indemnity of IU and IUHPFL:
Neither Indiana University nor the IU Honors Program in Foreign Languages is responsible for accidental or intentional incidents of bodily injury or damage or loss of items or property in host family households caused by IUHPFL students or other individuals.

Questions regarding this protocol should be emailed to iuhpfl@iu.edu. Thank you!
Study Abroad Handbook: Mérida

Indiana University Honors Program in Foreign Languages

Summer 2019
# Table of Contents

Preliminaries ................................................................................................. 3  
Program Dates ............................................................................................. 3  
Emergency contacts ..................................................................................... 3  
Team Mérida 2019 ....................................................................................... 4  
Our vision ....................................................................................................... 5  
IUHPFL Mérida online .................................................................................. 6  

The program in Mérida ................................................................................. 7  
  Departure from Chicago & Arrival in Mérida ........................................ 7  
  Daily schedule ............................................................................................. 9  
  Afternoon activities .................................................................................... 9  
  Excursion descriptions .............................................................................. 10  

Life in Mérida ............................................................................................... 11  
  Where is Mérida? ...................................................................................... 11  
  Regional history ....................................................................................... 12  
  Weather ...................................................................................................... 14  
  Eating out ................................................................................................... 14  
  Getting Around in Mérida ....................................................................... 17  
  Health & Safety ........................................................................................ 19  
  Medical Care .............................................................................................. 19  
  Hospitals/Doctors .................................................................................... 19  
  Hydration ................................................................................................... 20  
  Money/Currency ....................................................................................... 21  
  Packing ....................................................................................................... 23  
  Mérida Course Calendar ......................................................................... 26
Preliminaries

Program Dates

Arrival in Mérida: Monday, June 6\textsuperscript{th}, 2019
Departure from Mérida: Saturday, July 12\textsuperscript{th}, 2019

Emergency Contacts

**Emergency**
066 (from stationary phone)
113 (from cellphone)

**Fire Rescue**
924 92 42 & 923 29 71

**Mérida Police**
942 00 60

**State Police**
930 32 00

**Federal Police**
946 12 23 & 946 12 03

**United States Consulate/Consulado de los Estados Unidos**
David Mica
Calle 60 No. 338 K x 29 y 31
Colonia Alcalá Martín, Mérida,
Phone: (999) 942 5700 (dialing within México)
Fax: (011)(52)(999) 942-5777 (dialing from the U.S.)
Méridacons@state.gov
Team Mérida 2019

Daniel Jung
Linguistics and Literature
instructor
Student and PR Coordinator

Daniel Jung is a PhD student in the department of Spanish and Portuguese. This is his fourth summer with the program and his third summer in Mérida. He has spent time teaching in Spain as well. He is originally from Kansas but has lived in Indiana since 2013. He has taught a wide range of language classes at Indiana University, as well as Introduction to Hispanic Linguistics.

Odalys Miranda-Reyes
Culture and Grammar instructor
Logistics and Financial Coordinator

Odalys (pronounced O’dallas) is a PhD student in Hispanic Linguistics. This is her 3rd summer with the program and her first summer in Mérida. Her family is from Puerto Rico but she has lived in the mainland since infancy. Odalys has previous teaching experience in Spain as well as teaching a range of language classes at Indiana University.
Our vision

Our vision for the Mérida site is to help our students grow in multiple ways on multiple levels—as students, as individuals, and as world citizens. Our program is based upon extensive interaction with the host families, high quality academics, and community engagement.

It is our belief that personal growth is a transformative, conscious action, and it happens as we make purposeful decisions about who we want to be and how we want to present ourselves to the world. With that in mind, we will follow our vision of building a pyramid to reach success together as a group. Our symbol (the Maya pyramid with triumphant eagle perched above, and a serpent encircling it) represents the stages of development which lead to our success, beginning with the foundation which represents the formation of strong set of relationships between student peers, instructors and host families—without which the structure will crumble. Once this strong foundation is in place, students then have the resources necessary to develop their language competence and confidence, which in turn builds communicative competence, which helps develop cultural and pragmatic competence, which leads to an overall successful and life-shaping journey. Best of all, each obstacle becomes less and less difficult to overcome the higher we go, as long as we do it together! ¡No nos rindamos!
IUHPFL Mérida Online

Throughout the summer, a blog will be updated to keep US families informed of the activities on site. This blog will feature posts that contain photos and a recount of the week onsite. The blog can be found at: https://iuhpflmerida.blogspot.com/

Additionally, students are required to join the Mérida Facebook group, to connect with each other before leaving and ask instructors any questions pertaining to their preparation for the program. This page is exclusively for the IUHPFL students that will be in Mérida in Summer 2019 and it is a great way to get to know each other before the trip. The group can be found at:

http://tinyurl.com/FBMerida2019

OR

https://www.facebook.com/groups/830218363980989/

Remember that during the program dates, video chat by any means (Whatsapp, Facetime, Skype, Messenger, etc.) is prohibited. Students may use one hour of internet time a week to communicate with the US family and friends through text only (e.g. text chat, email).
The Program in Mérida
Departure from Chicago & Arrival in Mérida

Departure to Mérida:
The departure flight for Mexico leaves from the O'Hare International Airport in Chicago. Please plan on arriving at least 3 hours before the flight is scheduled to leave. Flight information will be provided on the IUHPFL website as well as the IUHPFL Mérida Blog. Any changes to flight plans will also be communicated through these means. Plan on meeting Odalys and Daniel at the check-in for AeroMexico. Guardians should plan on remaining with the students until their luggage has been checked (in case of extra baggage fees). Guardians will not be able to accompany students past security. More details will be provided via the blog if necessary.

Before arriving at the airport, please ensure:

1. Your student has two photocopies of their passport (and the original). Student will be required to carry a copy of their passport at all times. These should be turned into the office prior to departure, if not please bring them to the airport.

2. You have reviewed the luggage specifications on the airline website (https://aeromexico.com/en-us).

3. You have reviewed the packing list included in this manual. We have a short layover in Mexico City, so please pack lightly and avoid extra carry-on luggage if possible. **Each student should only have one checked bag and a backpack.**

4. You have pre-ordered Mexican pesos to send with your students (see Financial section of this handbook).

5. Your student is wearing their IUHPFL t-shirt. This is non-negotiable, as it assists the instructors in keeping track of the students in the airport.

6. Students may need to pay a baggage fee (typically $25-30, but may vary according to year) in Chicago and in Mexico.
Upon arriving in México you will fill out an immigration form.

It is important that you keep the bottom half of the form and **put it in your passport**. Upon leaving the country, you will have to turn this form in to immigration. Without the form, you will not be allowed to leave México.

The instructor team will collect your passports with these forms upon arrival and store them in a safe location for the duration of the program. It is your responsibility to ensure that these forms are handed in to the instructors along with your passports before departing from the airport.

**Return to Chicago:**
Parents should plan to meet students at the baggage claim in O’Hare at the end of the program. Daniel and Odalys will ensure that the students make it to baggage claim and find their guardians.

Please make sure you check out with them before taking your student from the airport.

Additional information, including flight details for the end of the program, will be provided via the IUHPFL Blog or via e-mail through the office. Any questions about travel information leading up to the program or during the program should be directed to the IUHPFL office.
Daily Schedule

Students will be divided into two different classes, Verdes, and Rojos, and will take classes with their groups. Below you will find the daily schedule that will be followed on class days in Mérida. Class days can be found in the program calendar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Verdes</th>
<th>Rojos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00-</td>
<td>Culture B</td>
<td>Literature A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:50-</td>
<td>Literature A</td>
<td>Cultura B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:40-</td>
<td>Grammar B</td>
<td>Linguistics A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-</td>
<td>Linguistics A</td>
<td>Grammar B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12:20-</td>
<td>Mon, Wed, Thurs</td>
<td>Choir/Dance,</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theater</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday-</td>
<td>Support and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support and</td>
<td>Success groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Success Groups</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00-</td>
<td>Sports Activities</td>
<td>Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Recreation Park</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CURFEW: Students</td>
<td>Wednesdays</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with host</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Afternoon Activities

During the course of the summer, students and instructors will be collaborating to produce a farewell show. Students will be divided into two groups: choir and theatre. Theatre will be supervised by Daniel, while Odalys will supervise the choir and dance. The farewell show will consist of performances by each group. The instructor team will be counting on your input, creativity, and ideas to pull the show together!

Support and Success Groups (Grupos de apoyo y éxito) are small groups of students, led by one of the instructors. These groups are designed to help students process their experiences and push them to reflect on their successes, their failures, their improvements, and their strengths during the program. They provide a safe space for students to discuss various aspects of the program, both success stories and things they struggle with, to give and receive advice. The success of these groups depends largely, if not entirely, on you, the students!
Excursion Descriptions

Chichén Itzá & Izamal (June 14th)
Chichén Itzá is one of the most popular Maya archeological sites in México. We will see different Maya ruins and there are two large sinkholes, called cenotes, in the area. Izamal is known as the Yellow City because most of its buildings are painted yellow and it is another Maya archeological site. There will be a combination of a guided tour and free time to explore both archeological sites. We recommend that students buy their souvenirs here as it is cheaper than some of the other archeological sites.

Uxmal & Loltún (June 21rd)
Uxmal is approximately 40 miles outside of Mérida. It is a Maya archeological site and, along with Chichén Itzá, it is considered to be one of the most important sites in México. Loltún is a cave in México that contains Maya paintings. It is one of the most extensive cave system in México.

Celestún (June 28th)
Celestún is approximately an hour and half outside of Mérida. We will be visiting the biosphere reserve, which is a wetland and home to flamingos. We take a small boat tour of the area and have time to go to the beach. Additional costs, such as food and drinks range from $50 to $150 pesos.

Campeche (July 5th)
Campeche is approximately 2 hours from Mérida, and is a colonial town. During this excursion, students will have time to explore the town as well as visit an archeological site.
Life in Mérida

Where is Mérida?

The city of Mérida is the capital and largest city of the Mexican state of Yucatán. It is located in the northwest part of the state, about 35 kilometers (22 miles) from the Gulf of Mexico coast.
Regional History

Mérida is the capital and largest city in Yucatán State and the cultural and financial capital of the region. It is a modern, cosmopolitan city with museums, art galleries, restaurants, shops, and boutiques. A major center of commerce, Mérida is considered the crossroads of the region and one of the most important places to experience the Maya heritage.

Mérida was founded in 1542 by Francisco de Montejo “el Mozo” (the lad), and built on the site of the ancient Maya city T'ho, meaning “city of five hills.” T'ho was the center of Maya culture and activity in the Yucatán region. After the arrival of the Spanish, the ancient city’s five main pyramids were destroyed and their ruins used in the construction of Mérida's cathedral (located in the central plaza, or downtown) and other important buildings.

Mérida was built as a walled city and several of the old Spanish city gates remain. The city boasts the second-largest historic center in México; only México City’s historic center is larger. Mérida gets its nickname, La Ciudad Blanca (The White City), from the predominance of white limestone that was used as a building material; although locals today will tell you that it also has to do with the cleanliness of the city’s streets and public areas, not to mention how safe Mérida, México, is.

The central plaza (also called Plaza Principal) is of great social, historical, and cultural interest. Here, you can see The Cathedral, on the east side of the Plaza, Palacio Municipal, which is Mérida's town hall built in 1735, Casa de Montejo, former home of the conqueror of Yucatán, and Palacio de Gobierno. A variety of stately homes, shops, and quaint restaurants can be seen along the Paseo de Montejo, a historical boulevard fashioned after the famous Champs Elysée in Paris, France, which is only 10 blocks away from the center. One of the Mérida Walmarts is located at the north end of the boulevard, which is quite surprising.

As a result of its unique geographic location, strong Spanish influence, and isolation from other parts of México, Mérida developed a distinct cultural and political identity. The unique culture and traditions that you’ll experience when you travel to Mérida, México, are overwhelmingly apparent in the local dress, language, cuisine, and the observance of holidays and celebrations.

Not only is Spanish spoken with a distinct accent in Yucatán, but Yucatec Maya is spoken by one third of the population of Yucatán State. The cuisine in Mérida Yucatán is also distinct in that it differs from traditional Mexican...
cuisine and is representative of the local indigenous culture and the Caribbean, Mexican, European, and Middle Eastern influences in the region.

The traditional music and dance of Yucatán is known as Vaquería Regional. It plays an important role in the Vaquerías Feast, which was originally associated with the branding of cattle on Yucatecan haciendas. You can catch weekly performances in Mérida’s central plaza.

Chances are that you'll spend at least part of your stay shopping for handicrafts. Besides multiple arts and souvenirs, Mérida is famous for the guayabera, a loose fitting men's shirt with tucks and pockets. Traditional guayaberas are white, made from cotton or linen, and often embroidered. Here you'll also find hipiles, dresses or tunics worn by the indigenous women of the region. Hipiles are often white with colorful embroidered designs that traditionally convey some sort of meaning within the local community. Hammocks are another popular and practical local craft, and they are very commonly used throughout the region. Those you'll find in Mérida, Yucatán, are of a high quality and made from cotton string that's woven into a fine mesh.

Finally, the city is an excellent base from which to explore the rest of the region, including the famous archaeological sites of Chichén Itzá and Uxmal and many other ruins in the vicinity, as well as several ecological wonders, such as cenotes (underwater sinkholes) and exotic bird sanctuaries.

Sources:
http://www.travelYucatán.com/Mérida_México.php
http://studioabroad.is.depaul.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=programs.ViewProgram&Program_ID=10034
http://www.lonelyplanet.com/México/Yucatán-peninsula/Mérida
http://www.mexperience.com/guide/colonial/Mérida.php
Weather

Mérida, México, is at 20°57’N, 89°39’W, 11 m (36 ft). It has a hot, high-humidity tropical climate with a pronounced dry season in the low-sun months, no cold season, and a wet season in the high-sun months, including June and July. The average high temperature in June and July is around 94F. The average low temperature in June and July is around 74F.

Torrential rains are very frequent in June and July, but mostly happen in the afternoons and are accompanied by a refreshing drop in temperature but a rise in humidity index.

Students should be expecting hot days which cool off slightly at night. Please plan accordingly (see packing list and suggestions). Air conditioning is not commonly used and students should not expect to have access to it during the program.

Source: http://www.Mérida.climatemps.com/

Eating out

As you know, Mérida is a traditional city with a historic legacy of the Maya civilization. Its culinary offer includes restaurants of different specialties. However, without any doubt, the cuisine from Yucatán is the most representative of the city. It includes influences from the local Maya culture, as well as Caribbean, Mexican, European and Middle Eastern cultures.

Yucatecan food is in many ways different from what people of the U.S. think of when they imagine Mexican food. There will be plenty of rice and beans, yes. But there will also be lots of tropical fruit (Mango, Papaya, Banana, etc.). Pork and Chicken are very common as well.

What about Vegetarians? Soups and Stews also are very common, and there are many foods that are prepared with lots of different spices, flavors, sauces and condiments.

Although there are numerous options, the most popular dishes are the following:

- **Cochinita pibil**, by far the most renowned from the Yucatecan food, this typical dish consists of pork prepared with bitter orange and *achiote*, wrapped in banana leaves and cooked in the oven. It is served with red onion in lemon juice and sliced habanero pepper.
- **Achiote**, a popular spice in the area. It is derived from the hard annatto seed found in the region. The whole seed is ground together with other
spices and formed into a reddish seasoning paste, called recado rojo. The other ingredients in the paste include cinnamon, allspice berries, cloves, Mexican oregano, cumin seed, sea salt, mild black peppercorns, apple cider vinegar, and garlic.

- Hot sauce in Mérida is usually made from the indigenous chiles in the area which include: Chile Xcatik, Chile Seco de Yucatán, and Chile Habanero.
- **Panucho**, is a typical snack that consists of a fried corn tortilla stuffed with beans, served with roasted chicken, tomato, avocado, and red onion. It is accompanied by habanero sauce, commonly used in the southeast area of México. This dish and other snacks from the Mexican state of Yucatán are served at Eladio’s restaurant.
- **Sopa de lima**, is a kind of chicken soup with a light taste of lime. It is prepared with shredded chicken, fried corn tortilla, tomato, and onion. If you want to try it, go to Hacienda Teya restaurant.
- **Poc-Chuc**, is one of the most famous dishes in the cuisine from Yucatán that consists of pork or chicken meat cooked over a grill and seasoned with bitter orange, oregano, thyme, and onion. If you wish to try it, we recommend you to go to Los Almendros restaurant.
- **Marquesita**, is a sweet snack that consists of wheat flour cooked until it becomes crispy. It is filled mainly with Edam cheese, but you can have it with jam, milk caramel, or Nutella®. You can try it at most of the street food stalls around the city.
- **Salbutes** are soft, cooked tortillas with lettuce, tomato, turkey and avocado on top.
- **Queso Relleno** is a "gourmet" dish featuring ground pork inside of a carved edam cheese ball served with tomato sauce
- **Pavo en Relleno Negro** (also known locally as Chilmole) is turkey meat stew cooked with a black paste made from roasted chiles, a local version of the mole de guajalote found throughout México. The meat soaked in the black soup is also served in tacos, sandwiches and even in panuchos or salbutes.
- **Bul keken**, (Maya for "beans and pork") is a traditional black bean and pork soup. The soup is served in the home on Mondays in most Yucatán towns. The soup is usually served with chopped onions, radishes, chilies, and tortillas. This dish is also commonly referred to as frijol con puerco.
- **Brazo de reina**, (Spanish for "The Queen's Arm") is a traditional tamal dish. A long, flat tamal is topped with ground pumpkin seeds and rolled up like a roll cake. The long roll is then cut into slices. The slices are topped with a tomato sauce and a pumpkin seed garnish.
• **Papadzules**, elaborated with corn tortillas filled with boiled eggs, dipped in a sauce of pumpkin seeds.

• **Relleno negro**, prepared with turkey and *recado negro*, which is a Maya seasoning;

**WATER**: be sure to keep yourself very hydrated drinking several bottles of water daily as it is very hot and humid in Mérida.

• **DO NOT DRINK the tap water**, drink only bottled water.

• Bottled water can be purchased very inexpensively at local grocery stores and convenience stores—a liter of water (about 32oz) may be purchased for as little as P$10 pesos (60 cents in the U.S.!)!

• **Please** review the dehydration symptoms before traveling to Mérida! Dehydration can sneak up on students who are not used to living in tropical climates. Please also be **patient** with the instructors during excursions, as we will regularly be asking about your water intake during excursions. [https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dehydration/symptoms-causes/syc-20354086](https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dehydration/symptoms-causes/syc-20354086)
Getting Around in Mérida

Getting to school and around town:

Students will typically walk to school, although it is possible that some of you will have to take the bus. Most host families live within a 20-minute walk of the school.

During the first week in Mérida, your host families will show you the route to and from school and will accompany you until you feel comfortable doing it by yourself. A number of students will live close to each other and we encourage you to find out where each other lives so that you can walk together.

Additionally, during the first week, your host family will show you how to get from your house to the downtown area. In order to get to downtown, you will need to take a bus and your host family will show you where the nearest bus stop is and how to get to the city center. Please remember if you decide to go to the city center for whatever reason you MUST follow the rule of three, no exceptions. If after the first week your family has not shown you how to get to school or how to get to downtown, please talk to one of the instructors immediately.

Taxis:

Taxis can be called or found in the downtown area, in El Centro (see contacts below). Taxi fees vary a lot, it can go from P$40 pesos if you go a few blocks to P$80 - P$100-P$250 to the airport and back. At night the prices of taxis go up, especially if you look foreign, unfortunately.

Contacts for various taxis:

**Econo Taxi**
Calle 61 No. 589 B between 102 and 104 Francisco I. Madero
Phone: (999) 945 00 00

**Promo Taxi**
Calle 22 No. 86 F between 11 and 60, North
Phone: (999) 920 79 98

**Sitio de Taxis**
Calle 69 No. 533 A, San Juan Grande, Downtown Area
Phone: (999) 928 74 32

**Radio Taximetro del Volante**
Calle 54 No. 590, Downtown Area
Phone: (999) 928 30 35 and 928 30 30

**Buses:**

Getting around Mérida overall is safe and inexpensive, however, it is a bit slow, so you do have to plan your day carefully and try to learn the rush hours in terms of traffic, when to go where, etc., but it is doable.

Your host family will more than likely be glad to show you the ropes as far as getting around the city, specifically how to get from home to the office and to El Centro, but here are a few general facts: Bus fare is P$7 (43 cents) per ride (no transfers though, remember).

The most uncomfortable thing is, perhaps, that buses do not run with any particular schedule, nor do they have clearly marked bus stops. Some do, but most do not. Buses come by every 15 to 20 minutes and although they do go out to every little *colonia* (neighborhood), which can be convenient, this can also waste a lot of time. Buses don’t use a transfer system and don’t have direct routes.

Aside from the two *circuitos* (loops): Circuito Colonia y Hospitales and Circuito Metropolitano Ruta 1, every other bus line goes to El Centro to get to most other places, so unless you know where the bus passes near your house, you will probably have to go to downtown first. The other two bus lines are Circuito Aviación-Pacabtún and Circuito Poniente y Plazas.

Link to bus routes in the whole city:
Health & Safety

We encourage you to explore the city, but we ask that you always be safe, aware of your surroundings, and always follow the Rule of 3. The Rule of 3 simply asks that you always travel in groups of no less than three students when not accompanied by your host family or an instructor. We encourage you to organize trips with fellow students ahead of time to ensure that there are always three students present.

For phone and emergency numbers, please see first page.

Medical Care

If something medically related happens to you, do not panic. As you should always be in groups of three, someone will wait with you while another goes for help. Remember that your host family cannot pay for your medical bills, you must pay them upfront with a credit card, and then the program insurance will reimburse you. The IUHPFL Mérida team should be informed as soon as possible if you have a medical emergency.

Hospitals/Doctors

Dr. Oswaldo Basto Moguel
943-0045 (h)
944-6682 (w)
9999 473896 (cell)
Calle 17 No. 182 B x 16
Colonia México Oriente
He charges $300 pesos in his office and a bit more for house calls.

There is a laboratory next door.
Q.F.B. Andrea C. Pérez Cardeña
C. 17 No. 182B x 16 Col. México Oriente (Contra esq. Gasolinera Prado Norte)
Monday thru Friday 7am-1pm y 5pm-7pm
Saturdays 7am-12
(999) 948 31 27
Emergencies: (999) 141 05 84
anserlab@prodigy.net.mx

Hospital Starmedica
Hydration

One of the most common ailments that students encounter during the program is dehydration. Mérida is very hot and humid, and students will sweat more than they are used to in the states, which can lead to dehydration. Students should plan on spending money in the host country to buy bottled water for each excursion. Instructors will require that each student bring a filled water bottle, at least two liters of additional water and highly recommend a sports drink, such as Gatorade or Powerade, for all-day excursions. Symptoms of dehydration can be found at:

https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dehydration/symptoms-causes/syc-20354086
Money/Currency

General information

- México’s currency is the Mexican Peso. 1 peso = 100 cents (centavos).
- The exchange rate is approximately 1 U.S. dollar = 19 pesos (i.e. 1 peso = ~5 U.S. cents). Exchange rates fluctuate daily. Check for most current rates online: http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/convert/?Amount=1&From=USD&To=MXN
- The symbol for the Mexican Peso is $. To distinguish this from the Dollar, you sometimes see it presented as MX$ or the value with the letters "MN" after it, e.g. $100 MN. The MN stands for Moneda Nacional, meaning National Currency.
- Mexican bank notes are printed in denominations of $20, $50, $100, $200, and $500 pesos. Smaller peso values are also found in coins in denominations of $1, $2, $5, $10, and $20 pesos. These are used frequently in México, especially for paying small tips.
- Mexican cent coins are minted in denominations of 5, 10, 20 and 50 cent (centavo) pieces. It is very common to receive coins as change in Mexico. Be sure your wallet has a good size coin purse on it, or consider purchasing a small coin purse to hold your coins.

Money exchange in México and in the US

Money can be exchanged at banks and money exchange houses in Mexico. There is no longer a place to exchange money at the Merida airport, so it is recommended that you already have a small amount of Mexican pesos in hand before departure, as we may not have time to exchange money in the Mexico City airport. This is easy to do with your US bank before departure. Banks are open at 9am (M-F). Lines may be longer at banks and exchange hours may be limited, but rates are sometimes better than at exchange houses. Money exchange houses or Casas de Cambio will easily exchange money throughout the day and into the early evening with rates varying depending on local competition.

Making small change in México

Getting change always seems to be a perennial problem in México: try to make as much change as possible to use with independent traders by spending larger denomination notes in big stores; you will need the smaller notes for taxis, local buses and other small purchases where the traders often don’t have the available change to hand.
Payment options

Cash is the easiest and most preferred method for low-ticket items. Again, students should arrive in country with some local currency, including large and small bills. Small cash is necessary to pay for small items and bus rides. Debit cards can be used to make purchases or to make cash withdrawals from ATMs. Debit cards are not as widely used in Mexico, so expect to pay with cash. Credit cards are widely accepted for substantial purchases, obtaining cash advances for a small fee, and are required in cases for emergency. Your purchases will be charged in pesos, and your bank will convert the amount back to the equivalent in the local currency where your account is held and charge it to your account. Travelers' checks are NOT recommended.

Money management (guardians and students please review together)

Students should be prepared to spend ~$3 U.S. dollars a week on water and liquids during the program to remain hydrated. It is recommended that students keep ~$50 U.S. dollars in their host homes during the entire program as an emergency fund. Instructors are prohibited from lending money to the students.

Sources:
http://www.mexonline.com/Yucatán/Mérida-info.htm
Packing

As you pack for your trip, make sure you know which items are NOT allowed in a carry-on bag: hazardous sharp and flammable objects, liquids, and foods (unless bought past the security checkpoint). Travel-size toiletries are allowed and should be placed in a transparent zip lock bag, which will be checked at security. Check what the weight and size restrictions are on your carry-on on your airline’s website. Keep your most important items in your carry-on or purse. For checked luggage, you may want to leave 10-20% of your suitcase space empty for any souvenirs that you would want to bring back. Some great general packing tips can be found here: [http://www.wikihow.com/Pack-for-a-Trip](http://www.wikihow.com/Pack-for-a-Trip).

Make a packing checklist, which should include the following essentials:

- US Passport (and 2 copies)
- Student ID and Driver’s License (and 2 copies of each)
- IUHPFL-required documents
- Only travel-size shampoo and conditioner (more can be purchased)
- Lots of sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Sunburn and bug bite relief
- Any vitamins and prescription medication that you may use (make sure it is clearly labeled), an asthma inhaler, contact lenses, glasses, etc.
- Products of personal hygiene, small pack of baby wipes, waterproof makeup (it’s humid!)
- Backpack for classes and excursions
- School supplies (writing utensils, notebooks, dictionaries)
- Safe place to carry passport and money
- Travel-size alarm clock (you won’t have your smartphone!)
- Lightweight clothing (see below for specific recommendations)
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Flip-flops as house shoes
- Sunglasses, sun hat
- Umbrella
- Camera with extra memory cards and batteries or charger
- iPod (no wifi connectivity)
- Water Bottle
Mérida is a large, well-supplied city, so do not over pack. You will be able to find most common necessities there. Be aware that because of humidity and heat, you may want to change clothes more often, and that during the rainy season, your laundry may not dry as quickly. You will want to make sure that most of your clothing is **100% cotton** since synthetic fabrics don’t breathe as easily. As a rule, **short shorts are not acceptable** street attire in the city of Mérida or the surrounding pueblos, but **mid-length shorts** are acceptable within your home, the beach and on some field trips. Be sure to pack a few pairs. You may want to bring exercise/workout clothes. You will want a range of clothing, from work-out to dress clothes, for the program. **All students must bring a white outfit for the farewell show.**

Here are some good guidelines and ideas for what to pack for Mérida:

**For the young ladies:**
- 1 set nice and dressy clothes for formal occasions (including nice shoes)
- 4-5 knit or wash-and-wear shirts (strappy tank tops are discouraged)
- 1-2 pairs jeans/pants (not too heavy)
- 1-2 pairs **mid-length** shorts, bermudas, or capris
- 1-2 **mid-length** dresses/ **mid-length** skirts
- 1 sweater or cardigan
- 1-2 sets exercise/sports wear
- 2 pairs **comfortable** shoes for walking/hiking/sports
- 2 sets pajamas
- 5-7 sets of undergarments and socks
- 1 light jacket (or raincoat)
- Swimsuit and towel
- Hair brush and accessories

**For the gentlemen:**
- 1 set of nice clothes for formal occasions (including nice shoes and a tie)
- 4-5 knit or wash-and-wear shirts (in other words, not dry-clean shirts)
- 1 sweater
- 2-3 pairs jeans/pants (not too heavy)
- 1-2 pairs shorts for sports
• 2-3 t-shirts for sports
• 2 pairs comfortable shoes for walking/hiking/sports
• 2 sets pajamas
• 5-7 sets of undergarments and socks
• 1 light jacket (or raincoat)
• Swim trunks and towel

Sources:
http://www.central.edu/abroad/parents/supportDocs/MéridaStudentSurvivalGuide.pdf
http://www.soleducation.com/México/handbook
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<td>11 S&amp;S groups 1pm-2pm</td>
<td>12 Sports 6-8pm</td>
<td>13 CECUNY Comm. work 5pm-8pm</td>
<td>14 Chichén Itzá &amp; Izamal</td>
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