

## Preparing Emerging Adults for Study Abroad

### Pre-Departure Advising Questions for Students

*Below is a list of questions to discuss with students during study abroad pre-departure and preparation. These questions consider elements of emerging adulthood theory and offer considerations for helping students negotiate and plan for cultural shifts and transitions effectively.*

- 1) Describe skills you already have that might make it easier to settle into your new program?
- 2) Reflect on an experience where everything was new and you figured out/found help to adjust (e.g. starting school, moving). What was the challenge? How did you approach the situation? What worked? Who helped? What was the hardest part?
- 3) Describe a time you asked for help. Whom did you approach? What happened?
- 4) Describe an experience when you relied on others. What was it like?
- 5) How do you know when you feel overloaded or stressed? What strategies work for you to feel calmer?
- 6) Describe your daily routine. How will that be similar or different when you're abroad?
- 7) Who and what will be particularly hard to leave? How will you prepare?
- 8) What skills do you have/know about yourself that help when you feel confused, frustrated or overwhelmed (these are normal feelings when studying abroad that you will likely encounter!)?
- 9) How do you take care of yourself when you run out of energy? How will you practice self-care while abroad?
- 10) How often do you plan to communicate with your parents/family and friends at home while you are abroad? Is this similar or different to your communication patterns today? Have you discussed this with them to set expectations?

## Pre-Departure Advising Questions for Parents and Families

*Below is a list of questions that parents/families of students preparing to study abroad can discuss and consider. These questions consider elements of emerging adulthood theory and offer considerations for helping students and families negotiate and plan for cultural shifts and transitions effectively.*

- 1) What do you hope your student gains from their study abroad experience?
- 2) Reflect on an experience where something was new for your student and how they figured out/found help to make the adjustment (e.g. moving, starting a new school, etc.). How did it turn out? What were the lessons learned? What was your role in this process?
- 3) What do you anticipate might be the biggest challenge for your student while they are abroad? How can you help support them to navigate the challenges they might experience abroad? What challenges do you consider to be “normal” as part of the process of studying abroad?
- 4) Describe a time when your student faced a difficult decision. Who do they turn to for assistance? Do you trust your student’s decision-making skills? Why/Why not? How can you best support and coach your student to make good decisions for themselves?
- 5) How does your student seek help when needed? Who can they utilize (in addition to you) to help address challenges they might experience abroad? How can you support them to navigate normal challenges they will inevitably encounter abroad (homesickness, frustration, feeling overwhelmed, etc.)
- 6) How will study abroad help your student learn key skills such as independence, good decision-making, and adaptability while they are abroad? What is your role in this process?
- 7) How often do you plan to communicate with your student while they are abroad? Is this similar or different to your communication patterns today? Have you discussed this with them to set expectations?
- 8) When your student returns from their study abroad experience, how can you best support them? How might your relationship with them evolve and expand to accommodate their new found growth, independence and interests?