PRE-DEPARTURE BRIEFING SESSION 2018

See the world!

Ms Emily Wong
Senior Student Advising Officer
CEDARS (Campus Life)
Pre-departure Briefing for Outgoing Students

1. Psychological preparation
2. Safety issues
3. Financial assistance
Your concern:

• Am I safe?
• Can I fit in?
• Will I be able to make friends?
• Can I do well academically?
• Can I adapt to the weather, food, culture?
• Parental pressure
• Own expectation.....
Worry

Preparation

Stop worrying
**The Process of Adjustment**

**How most students experience the early days of life in a foreign country**
- **LEAVING HOME**
  - Farewells
  - Happy & Sad

**ARRIVAL IN VISITING COUNTRY**
- Confused
- Tired
- Basically Happy

**Honeymoon stage**

**differences more apparent**
- Culture Shock
  - Lonely • missing family
  - New • food • study • culture

**frustrations; problems**
- Feeling very unhappy
  - Was I right to come to the visiting country?
  - Will I achieve my goal?

**differences valued**
- Confident
- Study OK
- New friends & activities

**LEAVING VISITING COUNTRY**
- Farewells
- Happy & Sad

**arrival in home country**
- Getting to know family & friends again
- Starting work
- High expressions

**ADAPTATION TO LIFE IN HOME COUNTRY**
- Sense of achievement
- 'I have benefited from my experience overseas'

**RE-ADJUSTING**
- Successfully re-establishing lifestyle

**LEAVING HOME**
- Farewells
- Happy & Sad

**completion of studies**

**differences accepted**

**differences rejected**
- Disappointed if expectations are not met
- Negative feelings about home
- Comparing the visiting country with Hong Kong
Resilience competencies

Positive Thinking

Resilience:
Ability to cope with adversity, ability to bounce back in the event of adversity.

Positive Thinking
A person with positive thinking anticipates happiness, health and success, and believes that he/she can overcome any obstacle and difficulty. You need to adopt the attitude of positive thinking in everything you do.
Avoid falling into Thinking Traps

Examples of thinking traps

• A person did well in some tests in general but failed in a recent test. He then thinks that he is not going to do well in other coming tests. “ Anything less than perfect is a failure.”

• Some people tend to magnify the negatives and minimize the positive.

• Sometimes, we will over generalize things, jump to conclusion too soon, take things personally or have a tunnel vision.
Examples of thinking traps

**Catastrophizing:**

- This is when we imagine that the worst possible thing is about to happen, and predict that we won’t be able to cope with the outcome. But, the imagined worst-case scenario usually never happens and even if it did, we are most likely able to cope with it.
- “I’ll freak out and no one will help.”
- “I’m going to make such a fool of myself, everyone will laugh at me,
- and I won’t be able to survive the embarrassment.”

You are encouraged to study “positive thinking” and “thinking traps” with more details and examples on internet.
### How to overcome thinking traps?

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How to overcome culture shock?

- **Keep an open mind.** Do not automatically perceive anything that is different to be "wrong". Withholding judgment will allow you to be an objective observer and will facilitate the process of cross-cultural understanding.

- **Make an effort to learn the local language.** This increases your communication skills and it helps you to integrate with the local community. It also demonstrates your interest in the new country.

- **Get acquainted with the social conduct of your new environment.** Do not assume or interpret behavior from your own cultural perspective or "filter". Behavior is not data. For example, Americans often use the phrase "How are you?" to mean "hello" or "I acknowledge your presence as I pass you in the hall." A foreigner may wonder why Americans don't respond in detail to this question about one's well-being. Thus they may interpret the behavior of walking away before one has a chance to respond to the question to be "uncaring", "superficial" or even "rude".
How to overcome culture shock?

• Do not take cultural familiarity or knowledge at face-value. It takes a long time to really understand a culture in its social and historical context.

• Make sure you get to know people in your new environment. Respectfully ask questions, read newspapers, and attend a variety of festivals and events.

• Try to achieve a sense of stability in your life. Establishing a routine will give you a feeling of safety.

• Maintain a sense of humor! Don't be too hard on yourself if you make a cultural gaffe or don't know what to do in a social situation. Laugh at yourself and others will laugh with you.
STRESS WARNING SIGNALS

Physical
- Headaches,
- Dizziness
- Racing heart;
- Shallow breathing
- Indigestion,
- Stomachache
- Tight neck, shoulders;
- Muscle tension;
- Easily fatigued
- Diarrhea,
- Constipation

Behavioral
- Avoidance and procrastinate
- Sleeping/Eating too much or too little
- Short-tempered
- Excessive smoking;
- Drug/alcohol use
- Self harm

Cognitive
- Inability to think, make decisions
- Difficulty with concentration
- Forgetfulness
- Constant worry
- Pessimistic

Emotion
- Unhappy, depressed
- Anxious, nervous
- Overwhelming pressure
- Irritable, anger
- Helplessness

Extract from Talk by CoPE
Emotional preparation

• What can I do?
  • Aware of stress warning signs
  • Adopt appropriate coping
    - Problem-solving
    - Take rest and relax
    - Maintain healthy lifestyle
    - Get back to your routine
    - Know your environment
    - Emotional sharing among friends
    - “Think positive” technique

• Ask and seek help in host university
  - Be aware that not all your questions can be answered

Remember to visit the International Students Office in host university upon arrival.
What can I do NOW to prepare?
- Our Counselling Service in CEDARS.
- It is free.
- We may talk about:
  - Psychological preparation for studying abroad
  - Stress management
- Make appointment by phone / email / in person
- Call CEDARS (Counselling and Person Enrichment) at 3917-8388 for an appointment to meet a counsellor.

CEDARS (CoPE) available in Room 301-323, Main Building
CEDARS - CoPE

- We trust that every student has the same right to choose what they want to be; your dream will come true with preparation.

- If you or your family members have history of mental health problems, we highly encourage you to seek professional advice on psychological preparation in response to stress.

- If you have been seeing a counsellor, let him/her know of your exchange plan.

Extract from Talk by CoPE

CEDARS (CoPE) available in Room 301-323, Main Building
Safety…..

• Keep close contact with family, host university and HKU.
• Keep check your university email account regularly.
• Keep contact with CEDARS, including IAO, your faculty office or department, etc.
• Build a strong social support system
• Build positive relationships with roommates, fellow students and within the university community.
• Share your travel experience through iMAP.

Make sure you let someone from home know if you go travelling during your period abroad. Always stay connected.
www.cedars.hku.hk/imap
HKU Global Assistance Programme

• HKU partnered with International SOS to provide worldwide medical and security support for HKU staff and students.
• Not an insurance policy.

Retrieved the HKU membership ID number on the HKU portal.
Register with the University before the trip.

Pre-trip medical and security brief:
• Contact the International SOS’s Hong Kong centre 2528 9900
• Download the “International SOS Assistance App” to have instant access to country-specific medical and security alerts while abroad.

While abroad:
• Contact the nearest 24/7 assistance centre
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FOR OUTGOING STUDENTS
2018
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Safety Issues

- Personal Safety
- Campus Safety
- Home Safety
- Travelling
- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Sexual Harassment
- Romantic Relationship
- Natural Disasters
- Health

Remember the drinking regulations may be different in your host country.
Some general safety tips for you. It is dangerous to

- jaywalk,
- stay alone at night in an isolated area,
- sleep in an unlocked room or open place,
- carry a large sum of money with you,
- accept rides from a stranger,
- take a short cut to a place through dark alleys,
- cross busy streets while you are using your smart phones,
- overload electrical circuits by using too many extension cords or appliances,
- forget to turn off your gas oven,
- get drunk
Some general safety tips for you.

- Avoid high crime rate areas
- Avoid areas with social protest, racial tension
- Beware of strict crime, robbery, burglary, scams, campus theft
- Protect your social media accounts/sites, avoid identity theft or misuse
- Don’t associate with others who commit crimes, e.g. using drugs or alcohol
- Avoid travel alone
- Avoid walk alone in campus when it is in evening
- ........
Safety Issues

- Emergency exits
- Emergency contact number
- What to do if there is a fire......
Handling Alcohol

• No. Thank you.
• I can’t drink alcohol
• Alcohol makes me ill.
• I would like a non-alcoholic drink.
• Avoid criminal offences associated with drugs and alcohol.
• Drinking alcohol is the leading cause of women being sexually assaulted at parties and night clubs, often when something is slipped into their drink, when they are not looking.
Beware of sexual violence against women and dating violence. (Most of these crimes involve people whom the victims know.)

Never stay ALONE with a stranger or even your professor in private or enclosed places. (e.g. their house, hotel or some enclosed area)

Know the boundaries of physical touching.

Be sensitive and do not give out the wrong body language or impressions.

Be firm and say NO and walk out!

If you don’t feel comfortable, you just simply say “NO!”
What should you do if an armed individual is threatening your safety?

Active shooting is remote, result is catastrophic.

If someone is shooting a gun or you’ve heard an explosion...

**Run** – Run away from the sound as far as possible

**Hide** – Evacuate the building immediately if you can (leave valuables behind and get out!) If you can’t, barricade yourself in an office or other rooms that can be locked (move furniture and heavy objects behind it) - Silence cell phones, stay calm and call the Police.

**Fight** – If the shooter is in your immediate area, prepare yourself for the reality that the shooter may come face to face with you. **Prepare yourself to fight that confrontation.**
What should you do if an armed individual is threatening your safety?

• Distract shooter by throwing things.
• Attack the shooter with all weapons available.
• Take the shooter to the ground and physically hold him/her until police arrive.
• When police arrive, obey the commands issued.
• Keep your hands in clear view.
• Do not move suddenly or pick up any type of weapon.
Coping Strategies

• Be alert. - be aware of your surroundings and people around you, be aware of what is happening in your host country
  (It is a reminder to put your phones down and keep your eyes on your surroundings)

  • Street smart
  • Trust your instincts.
  • Be prepared
  • Be assertive
  • Follow safety advices given by your host university.

Observe, Listen, Inquire

Observe and Listen before you know what you don’t know
You can only inquire when you know what to ask
Crisis management

- Do not try to handle it ALONE!
- Contact your host university.
- Keep your parents, HKU and the HK side informed.
- Contact the local Chinese Embassy for assistance.

   PRC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 24-hour hotline: 86 10 12308

- Ring up the HK Immigration Department 24-hour hotline.

   HKID 24-hour hotline: 852 1868

- Worldwide Emergency Support Services by International SOS
5 SERVICES PROVIDED BY HKSAR GOVERNMENT: ‘ASSISTANCE TO HONG KONG RESIDENTS UNIT’

You are advised to familiarise yourself with the services provided by the ‘Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit’. You can read more information on the website of GovHK at http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/immigration/outsidehk.

- Assistance to Hong Kong Residents 24-Hour Hotline
- Assistance to Hong Kong Residents in the Mainland
- Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Travelling Outside Chinese Territory
- Travel Tips and Advice
- Registration of Outbound Travel Information

The “Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Travelling Outside Chinese Territory” (http://www.immd.gov.hk/eng/services/Assistance_Outside_Hong_Kong.html#c) is extracted below for your quick reference.

Consular Protection

Consular protection is the act of diplomatic or consular organs or officers in protecting the national interests and legitimate rights of citizens or legal persons in another country within the limits permitted by international law. When the legitimate rights and interests of a Chinese citizen or legal person are illegally violated in another country, the Chinese diplomatic or consular mission there will, in accordance with customary international law principles, relevant international conventions, bilateral treaties or agreements and the relevant laws of China and the other country, reflect the citizen or legal person’s request and urge the related authorities of the other country to handle the issue in a fair, friendly and proper way.

Consular protection also includes assistance rendered by Chinese diplomatic or consular missions to Chinese citizens or legal persons, such as providing information on international travel safety, assisting in employing lawyers and translators, visiting detainees and assisting in evacuating from dangerous places, etc.
# Emergency Phone Number

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<th>International SoS (the nearest 24/7 assistance centre)</th>
<th>International Office Host University</th>
<th>Local Police (Fire, crime, ambulance, etc.)</th>
<th>Campus Security/Campus Police</th>
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<td>Xxxx xxxx xxxx</td>
<td>Xxxx xxxx xxxx</td>
<td>911 999</td>
<td>Xxxx xxxx xxxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Service of Host University</td>
<td>HK Immigration Department 24-hour hotline</td>
<td>International Affairs Office/ Programme Organiser/ CEDARS, HKU</td>
<td>PRC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 24-hour hotline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xxxx xxxx xxxx</td>
<td>852 1868</td>
<td>Xxxx xxxx xxxx</td>
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• **Student Travel Loan (STL)**
  Interest free loans are available to **LOCAL** students studying for a full-time degree programme who need financial support to take part in exchange programme.

  Submit the student travel loan application. Call CEDARS (Campus Life) at 3917-2305 for an appointment to meet a student advising officer.

• **First-in-the-family Education Fund (FIFE)**
  The fund is available to **LOCAL** students who are the first generation in their families to attend university to take part in different extra-curricular activities.

  Apply **STL** to CEDARS at least **14 working days** prior to your departure.

• **Payment of tuition fee.**
Befriend Us

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/hku.cedars

iMAP: http://cedars.hku.hk/imap

Website: cedars.hku.hk

Enquiry: cedars@hku.hk / 2859 2305