PRE-DEPARTURE BRIEFING SESSION 2017

See the world!

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

1. Psychological preparation
2. Safety issues
3. Financial assistance
The Process of Adjustment

How most students experience the early days of life in a foreign country:
- LEAVING HOME
  - Farewells
  - Happy & Sad
- Honeymoon stage
- ARRIVAL IN VISITING COUNTRY
  - Confused
  - Tired
  - Basically Happy
- 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?
- reject all differences
dislike; angry; frustrated
- coping well
  - Adjusting
    - Confident
    - Study OK
    - New friends & activities
- differences valued
- LEAVING VISITING COUNTRY
  - Farewells
  - Happy & Sad
- differences accepted
- ADJUSTING
  - Getting to know family & friends again
  - Starting work
  - High expressions
- ADAPTATION TO LIFE IN HOME COUNTRY
  - Sense of achievement
  - ‘I have benefited from by experience overseas’
- RE-ADJUSTING
  - Successfully re-establishing lifestyle

How most students experience life returning to their home country:
- LEAVING HOME
  - Farewells
  - Happy & Sad
- COMPLETION OF STUDIES
- LEAVING VISITING COUNTRY
  - Farewells
  - Happy & Sad
- ADJUSTING
  - Disappointed if expectation are not met
  - Negative feelings about home
  - Comparing the visiting country with Hong Kong
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 on 3/F, Main Building
Psychological preparation

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 408, Meng Wah Complex
• Keep close contact with family in HK.
• Keep check your university email account regularly.
• Keep contact with CEDARS, including IAO, your faculty office or department, etc.
• 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.
Pre-Departure Notes
For Outgoing Students
2016
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(852) 1868 Hong Kong Immigration Department Hotline 香港入境事務處求助熱線電話
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.
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.

*Retrieve 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
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
- ......
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.
Sexual Harassment

• 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!”
Coping Strategies

• Be alert.
• 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
• **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 2859-2305 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

Twitter:  
https://twitter.com/HKU_CEDARS

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

Website:  cedars.hku.hk

Enquiry:  cedars@hku.hk / 2859 2305