

Parent Handbook

A Parents Council Collaboration



SEMESTER AT SEA®



www.semesteratsea.org
800.854.0195



Colorado State University
ACADEMIC PARTNER

Dear Parents, Guardians, Family, and Friends,

Congratulations on your student's enrollment and welcome to our Semester at Sea family! Your child's voyage across the world is a non-stop opportunity for growth and learning. Traveling is an intimate experience and each person will tackle it in a different way; some will listen to live music in port while others will volunteer at orphanages, participate in homestays, dig into local cuisine, hike through local wildlife or experience a little bit of everything. **The benefit of Semester at Sea is that your child will have the support network of over 550 students, faculty and staff.** One day the students are in class learning about ancient Chinese civilizations and the next they are close enough to touch the Terracotta warriors.

We have been in your shoes and remember feeling a little nervous but mostly enthusiastic for our child to set sail on an unforgettable global adventure. This guide was created as a resource to help prepare you for your child's voyage.

This parent handbook was created as a labor of love with input from parents, former voyagers, faculty and staff. Members of the Parents Council hope that this handbook will help guide your journey and answer some of the same questions that we dealt with as our children prepared for their semester of a lifetime.

After traveling the world, students return home with a new level of confidence and a profound sense of independence. They will join the Semester at Sea community, which is a large, yet tight-knit group of dreamers, doers, thinkers, and change makers. It is impossible for their Semester at Sea experience not to leave an indelible mark in their hearts and in their lives, as the world as they know it, will change.

Semester at Sea will do everything possible to ensure the safety of all students and to maximize their experience. In turn, we ask you to take this opportunity to discuss with your child the importance of appropriate behavior abroad. Each voyager must remember that they are representing their school, their family, their country, and Semester at Sea. This voyage is a unique opportunity to experience new countries, cultures, and customs. Please encourage

your voyager to be open-minded, as he or she will be encountering many ideals, traditions and beliefs which will be different from his or her own.

For the safety of our students and the shipboard community, the ship has a zero tolerance policy for drugs. The ship has random and purposeful drug testing and cabin searches. Voyagers found with any illegal substances will be sent home at the student's expense without refunds.

Students who are 18 years of age and older are able to drink in moderation both on the ship and in port. We ask that you discourage excessive drinking or partying, as the loss of sobriety and focus can lead to danger. For everyone's safety, our students must always be aware of their surroundings and use appropriate and respectful behavior. If your traveler is looking for a bar crawl around the world, this is not the program for them.

Please strongly encourage your student to connect with locals in each port. SAS offers a variety of trips that include intercultural activities and local service projects. Help us by eliminating overt and excessive displays of wealth i.e.; encourage your child to leave their jewelry, real or fake, at home. Please do not send limos to pick up your student and their friends at the ship, and do not arrange for hotel parties where excess is endorsed.

Students need to be respectful of local environments, keeping places in the same or better condition in which they were found. If you would like to do something extraordinary, give your son or daughter the ability to choose a non profit organization to contribute to during their voyage.

Please help us with feedback. If you have unanswered questions, or suggestions for future inclusion, please let us know. We are here for you and will try to both answer your questions and include suggested information in future versions.

Congratulations again on your selection of Semester at Sea and welcome to our Family!

Sincerely,

[The SAS Parents Council](#)

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STUDENT PRE-DEPARTURE TO-DO LIST

9-12 MONTHS BEFORE VOYAGE

- Read the Semester at Sea website
- Submit application
- Upon notification of acceptance, make \$1,000 deposit to hold your place on the ship
- Apply for a passport if you do not already have one

4-5 MONTHS BEFORE VOYAGE

- If necessary, apply for scholarships and financial aid - inquire at your home institution about the process to transfer aid to Semester at Sea, if available
- Check the SAS website to not miss any deadlines
- Apply for visas, if the voyage requires them
A list of necessary visas will become available 4 months before departure. Students are responsible for all necessary visas. Complete visa requests in a timely manner. Students will not be allowed on the ship without required visas
- Familiarize yourself with your travel itinerary and do research as to what you would like to do and see in port
- See family doctor or travel doctor to make sure you have all necessary vaccinations and medical paperwork - medical history form should be filled out by a physician no earlier than 4 months before the voyage
- Book flights to and from the ship, but wait until you receive notification from Semester at Sea, as port locations may change - ISE may arrange a room block in a local hotel near the port for voyage participants
- Register for Course and Field Programs

A FEW WEEKS BEFORE DEPARTURE

- Notify your bank and credit card company of the countries that you will be visiting so that there are no interruptions in your account
- Look over the packing list, and make sure you have everything you will need
- Create a blog to update your friends and family about your travel
- Make copies of important travel documents such as passport, visas, credit card, ID
- If desired, obtain foreign currency for each port that you will be visiting - foreign currency can usually be obtained from ATMs in the local ports at a better exchange rate
- Create a Skype, Whatsapp, or Viber account for use in port (Skype is not available on the ship)

THE NIGHT BEFORE

- Relax! You are in for the experience of a lifetime
- Confirm your travel arrangements to the ship
- Finish packing - place your computer and last minute items in your carry-on
- Double-check for passport, visas, wallet, prescription medications, yellow fever card (if applicable), and other essential items - Be sure to pack these in your carry-on and not in your checked luggage
- Sleep well. See you tomorrow!

PACKING

STUDENT PACKING TIPS

- Once you have laid out everything that you think you'll need, pack half that amount
- Check the temperature in ports before packing
- Drip-dry and lightweight clothing is very helpful to have
- Bring clothing that you can wear in a variety of climates
- Bring sturdy, comfortable footwear as you'll be doing a lot of walking while in port
- Dress is casual most of the time, with the exception of in-port experiences like Field Classes, occasional meals out, special events, and an on-ship formal ball at the end of the voyage
- Visits to many cultural sites (mosques and temples) require covered knees and shoulders, and closed-toe shoes - Ladies: check your itinerary and, if you need, pack a lightweight shawl and a crushable long skirt you can wear over your shorts when needed for religious dwellings
- Bring all necessary toiletries with you
- Individuals have varied preferences and the supply of specific brands onboard and on shore is limited. Consider the potential for air travel within countries - bringing travel sized items may be beneficial for both convenience and for air travel regulations

The bottom line: come prepared, but travel lightly. The student's belongings (including the luggage itself) are stored in their cabin.

The following list is intended as a suggestion only and is not exhaustive. Please use your personal judgment and best discretion when considering the items in the following pages. The list will serve you best if you use it as a guide to planning out what best suits your individual and unique needs.

Luggage

Students are limited to two pieces of luggage plus a carry-on. Pack for maximum versatility. Luggage will be stored in the cabin under the bed in most cabins. Do not pack hard suitcases. We strongly recommend collapsible duffle bags with wheels. Also bring a weekend size travel bag that is small enough to fit in an airplane's overhead compartment. Students will **not** be able to check a bag on SAS trips involving air travel. Have your laptop and any fragile or valuable items accessible to hand carry onto the ship.

Laundry

The ship offers a laundry service that costs \$6 per bag to wash and fold. There is no dry cleaning service. There is a clothesline in the bathroom to hang your clothing to dry should you choose to wash some clothing in the sink. Your cabin steward will provide bed linens and bath towels; you do not need to pack them. However, linens and towels cannot be removed from the cabins, so a beach towel is recommended for use at the ship pool and in port.

SUGGESTED PACKING LISTS

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Passport
- Extra copies of passport photo page x 4
- Extra passport photos x 2
- ID and several copies of ID
- Visas and photocopies of each visa page
- SAS paperwork
- List of emergency contacts including home physician's name and phone number plus a copy of eyeglass prescription information if needed
- Copy of birth certificate
- Copies of credit card (front and back); remember to always leave in safes when not in use
- Copies of immunization papers; yellow fever proof is required for some voyages
- Health insurance card with instructions on how to get care, coverage, approvals, etc. (Note that students will receive a Cultural Insurance Services International Insurance card on the ship)
- Parents may also want to keep copies of important documents listed above

CLASS MATERIALS

- Bring all required textbooks with you - you may be able to purchase some on the ship, but not all
- Laptop - REQUIRED - there are no computer labs on the ship
- Sharpies
- Pens
- Pencils
- Notebooks
- Ruled paper
- Notecards
- Highlighters
- Post-it notes
- Binders
- Folders
- Small stapler

* *Extra supplies are available in the campus store on the ship*

CLOTHING

Bring some clothes you do not care about, as they may get ruined, traded or left behind

- T-shirts (you may purchase more as you travel)
- Long-sleeved shirts
- Warm shirt or sweatshirt (strongly suggested)
- Shorts
- Workout clothes
- Swim suits
- Pajamas
- Jeans
- Zip-off pants
- Khakis or other non-jean pants
- Socks
- Glasses (with case)
- Sunglasses (with case)
- Contacts (with care solutions)
- Underwear – suggest buying quick-dry underwear available at sporting and travel stores
- Belt
- Light jacket (windbreaker or rain jacket/poncho)
- Hat
- Sneakers
- Hiking boots or sturdy athletic shoes
- Sandals
- Flip flops
- Water shoes (if you think you will participate in trips that will need them)
- A semi-formal outfit for the alumni ball and any field classes or field programs that require more formal attire

* *An inexpensive pair of closed shoes is recommended to leave behind in India*

TOILETRIES

- Four month supply of shampoo, conditioner, soap, or body wash
- Aloe
- Chapstick
- Shaving supplies
- Face wash
- Toothpaste x 2 (large and travel)
- Nail clippers, files, tweezers, etc.
- Dental floss
- Travel-size options of toiletries
- Feminine hygiene products
- Hand sanitizer
- Make-up
- Deodorant
- Hair supplies
- Q-Tips
- Sunscreen
- OTC medicine: Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Tums, Dramamine, Imodium, Rx's

ELECTRONICS

- Camera (extra batteries, chargers, cords, case, and memory cards)
- Alarm clock
- Phone/phones and necessary chargers
- International SIM cards
- Laptop/computer and accessories (charger, cables, etc.)
- Flash drive and external hard drive to backup computer (always keep computer backed up and the hard drive on the ship)
- Converter/adaptor - **The MV World Odyssey uses European outlets and will require an adapter for all plugs**

FOOD

SAS will keep students well-fed, but it is nice to have snacks in cabins for times when voyagers sleep through breakfast or are up late studying. There are “snack bistros” where food can be purchased at night or in-between meals. Students must pay for snacks with their shipboard accounts. Prepared foods are prohibited from being brought on the ship, but below are some suggested items that students may bring in their original sealed packaging:

- Tea bags
- Candy
- Dried fruit
- Powdered juice
- Crackers or chips
- Trail mix packages
- Breakfast foods
- Peanut butter
- Meal replacement or granola bars
- Food seasoning (i.e. hot sauce)
- Instant coffee
- Hot chocolate mix
- Instant soups

Items for Gifts/Trade

This is optional. When you meet locals in port it is fun to trade or give away items to someone who has impacted you overseas. Suggested items: T-shirts and hats from home – U.S. landmarks, sports teams, colleges, logo wear, etc.

For children (on service learning trips):

- Pencils, pens, markers, crayons, coloring books
- Instant Polaroid type pictures - in many countries people will have seen digital images of themselves but have never had a photo of themselves to keep - and if you are really organized, pre-create stamps or stickers with contact information to put on back of pictures
- Toothbrushes and toothpaste, soap

Misc. Items to Bring

- Individual laundry detergent packets/Woolite/stain remover stick for in-room hand washing
- Journal
- Inexpensive watch (not glitzy)
- Music player, speakers/headphones
- DVDs
- Nalgene bottle and travel mug
- Maps
- Playing cards/favorite board games (there are some board games on the ship)
- Travel bag (different sizes - for ship use, carry on, travel, shopping, etc.)
- Safety pins
- Luggage tags or labels (with name, address, and SAS ship name)
- eBook/reading material
- Photos to make you feel at home (please note that you may not tape anything to the cabin walls)
- A lightweight beach towel (remember, bath towels cannot be removed from the cabins)
- Shoe bag/clothes organizers
- Pillow (if you prefer your own)
- Sleeping bag (if you think you will go camping)
- Slim hangers (a limited amount will be provided in your cabin)
- Small and large ziploc bags
- Travel sewing kit (needle and thread)
- Bug repellent with DEET
- Sore throat lozenges
- Ginger-tea, ginger-chews, Sea-bands for seasickness

DO NOT BRING

- Drugs or alcohol
- “Loud” jewelry (fake diamonds included)
- Heirloom or non-replaceable items
- Hot irons/steamers (Exceptions: Hair straightener and curling irons with automatic shut off. *Must have visible proof of automatic shut off*). Hair dryers are provided in all cabins.
- Duct tape (or any type of adhesive)
- Extension plugs, power strips, and surge protectors
- Two-way radios
- Large items (oversized suitcases, steamer trunks, large musical instruments, exercise equipment, surfboards, bicycles, scuba gear, etc.)



For a more extensive list of prohibited items, check the Semester at Sea website:

www.semesteratsea.org/life-at-sea/packing-prohibited-items

MEDICAL CARE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

This checklist summarizes the medical care requirements and recommendations for Semester at Sea participants. Additional details are provided on the MyPassport website, the *Voyager's Handbook*, and materials sent electronically to participants. Your student must meet the requirements noted below. Our recommendations are presented as general guidelines to inform your decisions. On topics such as which immunizations to obtain and what to do about malaria prophylaxis, we defer to your personal physician's recommendations. These will change depending on the countries visited on each voyage.

Required for most voyages

- ***A Yellow International Certificate of Vaccination Booklet Stamped with Documentation that You Have Received Yellow Fever Vaccination.*** * You must bring this with you to board the ship. Copies not accepted. Only immune compromised individuals, vaccine-allergic individuals, or individuals whose religious beliefs prohibit vaccination are exempt; they need to bring waiver letter from their physician or religious leader, documenting the exemption. Please keep in mind that this waiver letter does not guarantee entry into ports requiring the Yellow Fever vaccine.
** For designated voyages only.*
- ***ISE's Medical History Form.*** The SAS Medical History Form must be completed and signed by your doctor and approved by our medical team. Because our medical team may ask for additional information, this should be completed and submitted in plenty of time for the review and approval process to take place (1-3 months before the voyage). No one will be allowed to board the ship without a completed Medical History Form.
- ***Enough of All Prescription Medications You Take for the Entire Voyage.*** The shipboard medical clinic does not provide routine, ongoing medications. Therefore, you should bring enough of all prescription medications for the entire voyage. This includes behavioral medications (such as medications for ADHD or depression), medications for chronic illness (especially narcotics or other medications you take for chronic pain), and contraceptives. All prescription medications must be in the original bottle with the student's name and the corresponding number of pills.

Recommended

Over-the-Counter Medications that You Are Likely to Need

Because the ship has a limited supply of nonprescription medication for sale, and because it is often difficult to find them in a pharmacy on shore, we recommend that you bring a few over-the-counter medications. Some suggestions are:

- **Cold medicine.** Respiratory infections are common, so bring whatever you tend to use in case you get one.
- **Medication for minor aches and pains.** Minor injuries, headaches, and other painful conditions are common on voyages, so bring a supply of whatever medication you take at home for minor aches and pains.
- **Seasickness medicine.** The ship gives out free meclizine pills. However, if you are prone to seasickness and think you will need something else (such as a scopolamine patch), bring a few.
- **Allergy medication.** Because the voyages put you in contact with many different environments and foods, allergic reactions are not uncommon. Therefore, if you are at all allergy prone, we recommend that you bring diphenhydramine (Benadryl), loratadine (Claritin), or whatever you would take at home if you had an allergic reaction.

Other Tips

1. Visit websites regarding international travel tips, vaccinations, malaria prophylaxis, and travel advisories:
 - a. www.cdc.gov
 - b. www.tripprep.com
 - c. www.who.org
2. Make an appointment with your university, local travel clinic, or family physician.

Many vaccines need to be given several weeks before SAS voyage.

Highly Recommended

- **Up-To-Date Immunizations.** Please consult with your doctor at least 3 months prior to the voyage about immunizations for the semester. The only requirement is typically the yellow fever immunization; however, it is recommended for travelers to be up-to-date on the following vaccinations: polio, tetanus-diphtheria, measles-mumps-rubella, hepatitis A, and typhoid.
- **Vaccines.** Should be taken care of at least one month prior to departure.
- **Malaria Prevention Medication.** Malaria is a very real threat in many of the countries SAS visits. ISE's Health History Form requires you to either list the name of the medication you will carry onboard or to provide an explanation from your doctor as to why they are contra-indicated. Choice of medication and how much to bring depends on your itinerary and the on-shore activities you have planned, but do be sure to bring enough for the entire voyage. For guidance on choosing malaria prevention medication, see the materials provided by our medical team and the international guidelines of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>.
- **Medication for the Prevention and Treatment of Traveler's Diarrhea.** To prevent infection, Pepto-Bismol tablets (2 pills, 3 times a day) will reduce the chance of infection by about 70 percent. They are for sale on the ship; however, travelers are encouraged to bring some with them as well.
- For acute infection, ciprofloxacin or azithromycin are currently recommended. Note that short courses of antibiotics often are effective so voyagers need not bring large amounts. Ask your doctor to make a recommendation.
- For diarrhea, we recommend that you bring at least a few tablets of Imodium or a similar over-the-counter treatment.

OVERVIEW OF MEDICAL CARE PROVISION ON SEMESTER AT SEA

A medical team member is on call and available 24 hours a day for emergencies both at sea and in port.

The *MV World Odyssey* medical team includes a voyage physician, a nurse practitioner or physician assistant, the ship's medical doctor, and two nurses. They work as a team to provide care for the passengers and crew, with the voyage physician being primarily responsible for SAS participants and the ship doctor being primarily responsible for the crew. Below are some key points about care provision.

The *MV World Odyssey* Medical Clinic is a six-room suite that includes one examining room, an acute care room with supplies for managing emergencies and performing procedures, and two observation rooms with a total of seven beds. The clinic has limited laboratory and x-ray facilities and a limited formulary of medications commonly needed for acute medical problems.

The medical clinic typically is open twice a day at sea and once a day in port. Patients are seen on a first-come basis, with exceptions made for patients with especially urgent problems. The most frequent medical conditions treated by the clinic include respiratory infections, skin problems, diarrhea and related gastrointestinal conditions, seasickness, animal and insect bites and stings, ear problems, and injuries such as lacerations and fractures.

Some voyages encounter medical problems serious enough to require urgent care on shore. When such conditions arise, the medical team works in consultation with Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI), an international travel insurance and emergency assistance program with connections worldwide, to which the medical team has 24-hour telephone access. All voyagers are automatically enrolled in the CISI emergency medical insurance program, which provides limited secondary coverage for emergency services not covered by the participant's primary health insurance.

Interactions between medical team members and patients are confidential except in unusual circumstances where the wellbeing of the ship may be compromised. Parents who wish to contact the medical team during a voyage should contact the Program Administration and Student Affairs team in Fort Collins, Colo., at (800) 854-0195. As most SAS students are adults, communication from the medical team back to parents requires the consent of the student.

Prescriptions

Those you already use:

Contact your insurance company to authorize a four-month supply of all regular prescriptions you will require while traveling, including all oral medications, diabetic products – Insulin/needles/KetoStix, inhalers, topical products, birth control pills, etc.

Talk to a Travel Clinic or physician about prescribing the following:

- Antibiotics for traveler's diarrhea
Azithromycin or Ciprofloxacin are common
- Antibiotic for respiratory illness (good for strep throat, tonsillitis, sinus infection, bronchitis)
Azithromycin
- Motion sickness
Scopolamine patches, ondansetron

Above all else, the health and safety of program participants and employees is the highest priority for all planning decisions.

TRAVEL PLANS

● PROGRAM DATES

Your student will receive a detailed calendar from SAS closer to their departure date. For a detailed and updated itinerary including dates for each port, consult the Semester at Sea website: www.semesteratsea.org.

● MAKING TRAVEL PLANS

Your student will be responsible for getting to the departure port and back from the arrival port. Semester at Sea will send you specific travel information on where and when to meet the group. Take into consideration how far your student must travel to meet the ship, number of plane changes, layovers, etc. It is strongly recommended to arrive a day early to allow time for weather and general travel delays. For more information on traveling to the ship, please see the Voyage Prep email sent to students and parents approximately five months before the voyage departs. Travel plans should not be made prior to that communication due to possible itinerary changes.

● BON VOYAGE PARENT RECEPTION

A reception for parents and family members who are not voyaging will be held the night before embarkation aboard the ship. Sign-up in advance is required, as we need your name, date of birth, and passport information for immigration and customs. All family members who are not voyagers are welcome and we encourage you to join us.

● EMBARKATION

On Embarkation Day, students will board the ship or buses between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. (a more detailed embarkation schedule is sent out approximately 1 month in advance of the voyage). Once students board the ship or embarkation buses, they are not able to get off.

It is possible that luggage will be searched by customs or ship officials. Your student will need to show proof of automatic shut-off switch for hair straightening and curling devices. Refer to full contraband list on page 8 of this document.

● WELCOME HOME RECEPTION

There will be a reception held the night before the ship arrives in the disembarkation port. Registration will be available shortly after the voyage departs, and will be a great opportunity to hear highlights about the voyage and meet fellow voyage parents.

● DISEMBARKATION DAY

Semester at Sea can never predict exactly what time students will disembark on the final day of the voyage. We expect the ship to be fully disembarked by 2:00 in the afternoon, and do not recommend booking flights for prior to 5:00 p.m. that day.

IN-COUNTRY TRAVEL

FIELD CLASSES

Experiential education lies at the heart of Semester at Sea. On each voyage, students visit 10-12 different countries, each providing unique opportunities to bring the learning of the classroom to life.

Time in country comprises approximately 40% of the voyage and plays an important role in achieving Semester at Sea's overall learning outcomes and mission to educate individuals with the global understanding necessary to address the challenges of our interdependent world.

Our world-class faculty design one Field Class, or in-country educational component, for each of their courses. Field Classes are required and constitute an additional day of class. The same expectations are placed on a Field Class as are placed on any class day at sea. Field Classes constitute approximately 20 percent of a student's grade, as well as 20 percent of the course's required contact hours. Participation in Field Classes is limited to the students taking the course and the cost of the Field Class is included in each voyager's tuition. Once a student registers in their preferred courses, they will be automatically registered in the corresponding Field Classes. For the Global Studies core course, which all students are required to take, voyagers may choose one Global Studies Credit Eligible Field Program that will count toward their Field Class credit for that course. The cost of this program is also included in each voyager's tuition.

FIELD PROGRAMS

The Semester at Sea International Field Programs office organizes a variety of In-Country Field Programs that allow participants to maximize their time and learning in each port country, and also provide a sense of connectedness to other members of the shipboard community (faculty, staff, and Lifelong Learners). We collaborate with reputable service providers to create meaningful, safe, and engaging travel opportunities to popular cultural and historical sites, as well as exchange opportunities with local universities and community organizations. All programs feature vetted local guides and have a voyage faculty or staff member serving in a trip liaison role. SAS In-Country Field Programs range in duration from half-day excursions to multi-day expeditions and fall into the categories of IMPACT, INTERCONNECT, and ILLUMINATE.

IMPACT programs feature volunteer or service components that aim for a positive impact on both the local community and our voyagers. INTERCONNECT programs offer a unique cultural insight into the host country through people-to-people interaction and intercultural learning. These programs include university exchanges and homestays and provide unique experiences that would be difficult or impossible for voyagers to arrange on their own. ILLUMINATE programs are designed to showcase the best of a destination and give voyagers a vetted and pre-planned opportunity to experience popular activities in port while maximizing valuable time and money.

There are a selection of Field Programs that are Global Studies Credit Eligible and can count toward the Global Studies Field Class requirement. These programs provide opportunities for students to connect with local peers and communities on a more personal level, allowing students to apply concepts and awareness learned in the Global Studies course to their in-country experiences.

For more information on Field Classes or Programs, please see our [Semester at Sea In-Country webpage](#) as well as the respective voyage's In-Country Programs or Courses pages. Please consult the most current version of the Voyager's Handbook for Field Class policies or Field Program Terms & Conditions and cancellation policies.

Discussions for Parents to have with Students

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR DRUGS

The ship has random and purposeful drug testing and cabin searches. Voyagers who do not cooperate will be sent home at the student's expense without refund. If your traveler is looking for a bar crawl around the world, this is not it.

Students must remember that they are not in their home country. Safety is SAS's first priority and each person needs to do their part. Body language, intonation, choice of dress, word choice – all of these may change in connotation and meaning as one travels across cultures. It's safe to always err on the side of over-politeness. Voyagers need to be aware of their surroundings and the cultural norms and expectations of each country. Students need to look out for their friends and themselves, travel with others, and make sure someone always knows where they are.

Voyagers Handbook

The handbook provides information to help your student prepare for the voyage, as well as outlining all policies and procedures.

Click below to view the Voyager's Handbook:
www.semesteratsea.org/discover-sas/student-life/voyagers-handbook

SAFETY

● THE SHIP

The Institute for Shipboard Education is fully committed to ensuring that our program participants have a safe and meaningful international learning experience. At Semester at Sea, we aim to surpass all U.S. and international safety regulations as prescribed by the International Maritime Organization, established in 1948 by the United Nations as the first international body devoted exclusively to maritime safety.

We undergo a series of detailed inspections each year to ensure we are in full compliance with regulations, and have a record of excellence.

Semester at Sea partners with V.Ships - the world's largest and most reputable international fleet management company in the world - to manage the technical and operational aspects of the *MV World Odyssey*.

The ship holds regularly scheduled Life Boat Drills that are mandatory for all participants.

A permanent cross-functional Risk Management Committee constantly monitors world events and convenes to troubleshoot potential issues. Information is received daily from a number of sources, including:

- OSAC Daily alerts and reports
- U.S. Department of State travel advisories
- U.S. Maritime Advisory System

ISE also maintains strong, ongoing relationships with knowledgeable representatives in host nation universities and travel agencies around the world, and collaborates with Colorado State University's Office of Risk Management. All SAS voyagers are also required to register in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) to receive email updates with travel alerts and other information for every country on the voyage itinerary.

On occasion, the ship's course or itinerary may be altered, as warranted by changing global conditions.

If necessary, we will replace a port if current events so warrant. You can explore the Health and Safety portion of the SAS website for more details: www.semesteratsea.org/advisors/health-safety.

● ON BOARD DISCUSSIONS

A number of efforts are in place to create health and safety awareness among our students and other participants.

Student Orientation – The first day on the ship before classes begin, students have a mandatory orientation that covers topics such as health, safety, and student conduct.

General Awareness Programs – ISE uses the ship's closed circuit TV system and other media channels to continuously educate students on safe traveling tips.

Mandatory Pre-Port Briefings – The evening prior to the arrival in each country, all students must attend a pre-port briefing in which safety and up-to-date traveling practices are discussed for that specific country. Briefings cover travel logistics, immigrations and customs procedures, health and security information. All participants receive a “green sheet,” which provides critical information (duty deans, port agent, hospitals, consulate or embassy) in case of an emergency. SAS intentionally engages international faculty, inter-port lecturers, and international students who have expertise in each port of call and who can speak to a variety of safety issues from a host country national's perspective.

Diplomatic Briefings – Occasionally, U.S. Diplomats from the local U.S. Embassy will come on board to provide students with information on safety, local conditions, customs, currency, and travel. Student attendance is typically optional, but highly encouraged.

Independent Travel Forms – Participants are asked to complete an Independent Travel Form if they will not be traveling on a Semester at Sea sponsored field program. We ask that they include names of everyone they are traveling with, contact information in the case of an emergency, and flight/hotel information if applicable. These are kept with the Duty Dean (a member of the administrative team on call 24/7).

TIPS FROM ALUMNI

Make the most of ports by planning ahead. Learn a few of the words of the language and common customs, get to know the locals (not just SASers), and attend all pre-port and diplomatic briefings that take place on the ship.

Prepare! The more prepared you are, the better off you're going to be. This includes thinking ahead for what to bring into port that might be useful and discovering as much as you can about the history and culture of the places you will be visiting. Go to the library and check out some travel guides, go to a bookstore and flip through travel magazines, and talk to some of the international students on the ship. Be sure to check out the blogs of SAS alumni and talk to your fellow voyagers about their plans.

Be in the moment! You'll quickly acclimate to a new norm of not having social media and text messaging at your fingertips - embrace it! Sit down with your fellow students, faculty and staff and have face-to-face conversations.

Be flexible! You can't take 550 students traveling through the world without having a few things not go as planned.

Be safe! There are risks associated with international travel. However, they can be greatly diminished if you are aware of your surroundings and make good choices. Alcohol consumption is often a key factor when students put themselves in compromising or dangerous situations. Use good judgment. Safety is SAS's number one concern and should be yours, too.

Read your "Voyagers' Handbook" on the Semester at Sea website at www.semesteratsea.org/discover-sas/student-life/voyagers-handbook. The Handbook provides you with a wealth of information to help you prepare for the voyage and it outlines all of the policies and procedures that you will need to follow.

Pack light! Bringing too much or buying too much in port can really be a pain, not only for you but also for your roommates. Forget looking cute; take advantage of the fact that it doesn't matter on this program.

SAS alums over and over again say it's the people they met on their voyage that made it special. This includes fellow students, professors, adult passengers, and especially people in port. You may not be able to speak a common language but you'll be amazed at how much you can communicate nonverbally.

Wake up for port entry – the people I know who made a point to wake up while we were entering a port really enjoyed it. When you wake up and you're already docked, something is lacking, the magic is somehow taken away. Being on deck for port entry is a good time to be introspective about what you want to get out of that port.

Join an extended shipboard family – this is a great way to meet professors, staff, and their families as well as adult passengers and other students. Most families gather routinely and some even meet up after the voyage.

Meet people the first week or two – many close friendships are formed during the beginning of the voyage. Most people on the ship start off not knowing anyone, so most of you are in the same situation. Meals are a great time to meet people, just sit down in an empty seat at a crowded table and introduce yourself. This includes joining professors and lifelong learners.

Remember: The ship is small; rumors fly.

Take advantage of small classes and knowledgeable professors. Get to know your professors; they will come in handy when you are looking for recommendations to grad school, jobs, etc.

WHAT TO EXPECT

● PRE-VOYAGE

Expect lots of high-energy nervousness and mixed emotions of excitement and fear. Spend time researching what to see and do in port. Ask to look at the SAS Field Program Guide with your voyager.

Discuss how you will communicate while your student is traveling. What are realistic expectations? Many students create a blog to keep family and friends abreast of their activities. Your student will receive a Semester at Sea email address, which is free on the ship and easier to access than most other email accounts.

At the last minute, surprise your voyager by sneaking favorite snacks, photos, and letters into his or her luggage. Please share with your child that most people come on to the ship knowing no one and are eager to make friends.

● THE VOYAGE BEGINS

The first few days are extremely busy so you may not hear from your voyager right away. Students are immersed in orientation and busy acclimating to ship life and making new friends.

● POST-VOYAGE – THE RETURN OF YOUR WORLD TRAVELER

When your student disembarks they will probably be exhausted (from staying up the last few nights) and lonely for their shipboard community. Be patient and be a good listener. Your student may be very excited about new people they have met and places they have been. You are a very important part of your voyager's life. Embrace their stories and pictures as you embrace them!

On the other hand, don't be upset if your student does not want to talk right away. Be prepared to help your student through this adjustment process, which may require time and a little space.

● WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR VOYAGER

Expect a changed person; expect a new circle of lifelong friends for your voyager; expect a global perspective as well as a new view of home; expect time – weeks, months, or years – to pass before they can make sense of what they have experienced. Please give your voyager the time and space they need to process. Let them come to you with their perspectives, ideas, things learned, etc.; expect them to entertain a major change of direction of school major, of travel plans, etc.

Staying in touch and reaching out to your child

- Send snail mail and refer to the bottom of the online Voyage Calendar page for recommended dates to send mail with confidence. Add photos from home and encourage friends and family to write as well.
- You are able to communicate with your student via phone cards, cell phones, Internet on ship (be patient as the ship Internet is not fast), internet café, mail (yes, snail mail), and shipboard phone.
- Keep in mind Skype is NOT available on the ship. You may send packages but please know that there is a fee to the student's shipboard account as the ports charge ISE for accepting packages. There is also more of a chance for delayed delivery with packages than there is for letters.
- Students are often having such a great time that they do not call home as often as they normally would. Have no fear, as "no news is usually good news."
- Be there for your voyager but understand that your student is changing and growing with each new experience and each new port. They will gain confidence and become more and more independent as the voyage progresses. Don't expect too much feedback or analysis; everything comes in time.
- Challenges that may be encountered during the voyage include time on and off the ship, spotty communication, slow and/or non-existent technology options in some ports, and close quarters on the ship with little sense of privacy.
- If your voyager has any issues or questions, encourage them to talk with one of the staff members on the ship. They all want to help maximize each experience and ensure their incredible journey.

Supporting SAS

Semester at Sea is a 501c3 non-profit education organization, and is completely dependent upon enrollment revenues, established endowed funds, and philanthropic gifts from parents, alumni, friends, and corporate sponsors. Gifts from parents through the Annual Fund support every aspect of Semester at Sea. Annual Fund revenue supports student programming on the ship, student leadership opportunities, faculty initiatives on the voyage, special field and travel opportunities that arise during the semester, and student support services. In addition, your gift strengthens the overall visibility and international recognition of Semester at Sea throughout the world.

We invite you to get involved! If you are interested in joining us, please email parentprograms@semesteratsea.org

GET INVOLVED WITH SEMESTER AT SEA

● SAS PARENT TRIPS

Semester at Sea offers two opportunities per voyage for parents to join their students and experience in-port excursions first-hand! Visit www.semesteratsea.org/info-hub/for-parents/#parent-trip for more information.

● BON VOYAGE AND WELCOME HOME

See your student off or greet them as they arrive for disembarkation during Bon Voyage and Welcome Home Receptions. Semester at Sea staff will be on hand to educate parents and students about the voyage and answer questions.

● WELCOME TO THE SAS FAMILY

Once your student voyages, you will also become part of our extended family. We appreciate that you are entrusting us with your child, and we are so excited to have your student on board. Please share your voyager's photos and stories. Word of mouth is our primary means of recruitment. Learn more at www.semesteratsea.org/events/category/parents/list.

● SAS PARENTS COUNCIL

The mission of the SAS Parents Council is to support, educate, develop, and recruit. The Council supports parents of voyagers throughout their entire Semester at Sea experience; educates and develops those parents into passionate advocates for and strong financial supporters of Semester at Sea; recruits students, lifelong learners, and parent participants for all voyages and voyage-related programs; and supports the mission of Semester at Sea financially with leadership gifts.

● BECOME A LIFELONG LEARNER

Make the world your classroom, just as your child is doing. Expand your horizons by participating in a wide array of undergraduate courses, global seminars and stimulating lectures. Contribute your skills to a diverse, inter-generational shipboard community by mentoring students, hosting an extended family, leading a seminar, and/or supporting professors and student activities. Learn from other like-minded members of the community, and build lasting friendships - with students, professors, and other lifelong learners.

CONTACT US WITH YOUR QUESTIONS

You are invited to *Ask a Parent* by visiting www.semesteratsea.org/alumni/parent-resources/ask-a-parent. We are happy to answer any other questions that you might have.

Additionally, the SAS Office of Enrollment and Admissions is here to answer your questions about the application process, financial aid, and upcoming voyages.

● CONTACT US

Call 800.854.0195 or email admissions@semesteratsea.org. You will be assigned an admission counselor by the state in which your child currently attend school.

● OTHER WAYS TO CONNECT WITH US

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