Personal Safety and Security Abroad:

A few quick reminders in just a dozen slides!

For UW-Madison Faculty and Staff

International Division
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

Before You Go

Visit the **U.S. Department of State** (DOS) country-specific webpage for your destination and read the information under all the expandable tabs: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html.

Visit the **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) country-specific webpage for your destination and read through any applicable travel health notices: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list/.

Enroll in the **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program** (STEP) to receive messages/alerts directly from the U.S. embassy at your destination: https://step.state.gov/step/.

Travel Prep

- Make two copies of your passport ID page and credit/debit cards including the phone number to report a lost/stolen card. Leave one copy with a trusted individual at home and keep another copy with you abroad in a secure place (e.g., room or luggage) – and email a copy to yourself.
  - Some countries require you to carry your original passport in public; be sure to ask on arrival.
- Bring two valid photo IDs and store them separately in case one gets lost or stolen.
- Know how to call local emergency services.
- Create an emergency action plan and a communications plan if traveling in a group.
  - You may use the ISSD's Emergency Action Plan template found on the Emergency Preparedness page: https://internationaltravel.wisc.edu/emergency-preparedness/

Medical Planning

- Schedule a pre-travel consultation with a specialized travel health provider as soon as possible. Many needed immunizations should be initiated several weeks before you depart.
  - In the event a travel health provider is unavailable, travelers should seek advice from their personal medical provider(s).
- Travelers with any ongoing health conditions should discuss their travel plans early with a personal medical or mental health provider. Arrangements should be made for any ongoing medications and medical care that may be required.

Traveling with Prescription Drugs – *Plan early!*

- Ensure needed prescription drugs are legally allowed prior to entering a foreign country (CISI can check this for you once enrolled), and pack them in your carry-on luggage. Check any documentation requirements for prescription medications in the host country and research the process for acquiring them abroad.
- In case of emergency, the U.S. Department of State recommends you always have enough of your prescribed medication on hand to last at least five days. If possible, the DOS encourages you to bring enough of your prescribed medication to last two weeks beyond your scheduled time abroad.

Enroll in Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI)

- Enrollment in CISI coverage is ***mandatory*** for all UW–Madison employees, students, and other university agents traveling abroad for university-related business and/or educational programs regardless of how the travel is funded (grants, awards, etc.).
- CISI enrollment for employees is considered a necessary and allowable expense for travel reimbursement purposes.
- CISI policies can be purchased by UW employees for immediate family dependents traveling with the sponsoring employee as well.
- Once enrolled, print your personalized CISI insurance card and carry it with you during travel.
- For more information on CISI:
  - Contact UW-Madison's Risk Management Office at 608-262-8926
  - See International Health Insurance: https://businessservices.wisc.edu/managing-risk/insurance-programs/risk-management-while-traveling/international-medical-travel-and-security-insurance/.

CISI
CULTURAL INSURANCE
SERVICES INTERNATIONAL

Export Controls

- The Export Control Office works with UW–Madison researchers and administrative staff to ensure compliance with the U.S. Export Control laws and regulations, including the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), Export Administration Regulations (EAR), and Foreign Asset Control Regulations (FACR).
- There are a number of activities that have potential export control implications. It is important to contact the Export Control Office for guidance if you plan any of the following activities:
  - Shipping items abroad
  - Working with foreign collaborators, whether in the United States or overseas
  - Working with controlled items, such as lasers, thermal imaging cameras, select agents, space qualified equipment and encryption, etc. (The list is long, so please contact the Export Control Office for advice on specific items.)
  - Working with a grant or other contract that has an export control clause, publication restriction, or personnel restriction
  - Doing any work with a person, business or organization that is a citizen of or headquartered in **Iran, Syria, Sudan, North Korea, Cuba or the Crimea**.
- See "Export Control Considerations for International Travel" at the following link for more information: https://research.wisc.edu/integrity-and-other-requirements/export-control/trainings-and-guidance/.
- If you have doubts about whether an activity falls within export control, please contact the Export Control Office at exportcontrol@grad.wisc.edu.

Personal Safety While Traveling

The first hours and even days at your destination put you at greatest risk; take it easy while building a little local awareness!

- Examine your lodging for safety/security; lock your room behind you each time you enter and ensure the door closes when you leave. Note how you can exit via stairs in an emergency. Think about how you might block the door if there were a need to do so.
- Avoid going near public protests or demonstrations -- they can quickly turn violent. In some countries, it may be illegal for you to participate in any political event.
- Avoid large crowds/lines whenever possible (queueing outside museums, sporting events, theaters, etc.); they often are targeted for terror or other criminal acts.
- Go early or slightly late to a large event; or arrive at a museum or gallery (etc.) at times when it is less likely to be crowded.
- If you are robbed/mugged, give up your wallet/purse and never try to follow the criminal. Call the authorities, cancel your credit/debit cards, and report the incident to the embassy/consulate when able.
- Dress so you are unlikely to stand out from others in public and carry as little as possible
- Never carry more cash than needed for an outing; divide it up in more than one place on you – pockets, in a sock, etc.

Remain with others whenever able.

Locations of Increased Risk

Airports

- Pre-arrange safe transportation to and from the airport.
- Monitor civil unrest at your destination that could affect travel, including to/from the airport.
- Minimize your time outside of secure areas because criminal and terrorist threats are more likely there.
- Do not use the airport Wi-Fi.

Hotels

- Research the hotel's safety and security measures before booking.
- Walk the layout of the hotel and scan your room;
- Confirm you can lock the door to your room securely.
- If possible, stay between the second and sixth floors.
- Have no expectation of privacy anywhere in a host country and certainly not in a hotel or other lodging.
- Do not use the hotel's Wi-Fi.

Conferences

- While in public, remove your credentials from the conference.
- Avoid traveling in large groups to and from the conference center.
- Consider security threats to the sector involved at the conference and hosting city.
- Be aware that conferences are an attractive target for industrial and political espionage – *everyone who is interested in your work may not be a colleague!*

Personal Safety While Traveling (cont.)

Plan each outing with deliberate forethought for your safety.

- Plan safe ground transportation for your arrival. Ask your hosts, a professional network, or the desk/concierge at your hotel for advice – this is especially important for your first ride from the airport to your lodging!
- Always avoid public transportation at night, and especially if alone.
- Do not rent a vehicle/drive in another country if avoidable; local laws may prevent you from departing for a long time, even for a minor accident.
- Do not hail a taxi on the street; have one called for you from a reputable company.
- Look into the front and back of any taxi, Uber/Lyft, or similar ride before entering.
- Do not share a ride with anyone unknown to you – refuse the ride and find another!

- Avoid public transportation late at night, especially if alone.
- Do not rent a vehicle/drive in another country if it can be avoided. Even a minor traffic accident can prevent your departure for weeks or months!

Vehicle accidents are one of the top killers of U.S. citizens abroad!

Personal Safety While Traveling (cont.)

- Do not post anything adverse or unflattering to the host government. Consider the content history in your social media apps – might it appear subversive or give a reason for unwanted scrutiny?
- If you have a history of activism related to the destination country, you may need to reconsider your travel plans – your activities may be considered illegal by the destination government.
- Avoid politically charged or contentious social discussions while abroad, especially in public places with host-country nationals.
- Do not photograph any government, police, or military facility/personnel/vehicles/etc. or political protests.

If authorities ask for your ID/passport or question you for any reason, comply with their request, cooperate, remain respectful, and answer them honestly.

If you are detained or arrested by authorities for any reason, notify your nearest embassy/consulate when able, and later notify your UW-Madison department.

Beware of anyone trying to entrap you by cultivating a relationship now to coerce cooperation later. It is very unlikely but has happened in the past!

If your interaction with someone seems questionable, odd, or contrived for any reason, politely discontinue the conversation or relationship and report it to the embassy or contact the ISSD on your return to UW.

Do not accept any sort of payment for services or items in your possession; it can present the appearance of wrongdoing and it can be manipulated to coerce or entrap you.

See the other safety and security-related modules before traveling internationally…

They are short and quick reading – everyone can use a reminder!

- Cyber and Data Security Abroad
- Financial Security Abroad
- Undue Influence and Transnational Repression

International Safety and Security
UW-Madison International Division

Ronald Machoian, PhD

International Safety and Security Director

256 Bascom Hall

ronald.machoian@wisc.edu

608-890-2446

Website: https://internationaltravel.wisc.edu/