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IMPORTANT CONTACTS

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE (TALLAHASSEE)

A5500 University Center
282 Champions Way
P.O. 3062420
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-2420

Phones: (850) 644-3272 or 1-800-374-8581
Fax: (850) 644-8817
Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., EST, Mon. – Fri.
Email: ip-info@fsu.edu
Website: international.fsu.edu

Louisa Blenman
Associate Director
Email: lblenman@fsu.edu

Carolyn Barringer
Assistant Director of Program Management
Email: ctbarringer@fsu.edu

Program Management
Email: ip-faculty@fsu.edu

FSU PANAMA CAMPUS

Calle Jacinto Palacios, Building 227
Ciudad del Saber (City of Knowledge)
Clayton
Panama, Republic of Panama

Dr. Carlos Langoni, Email: clangoni@fsu.edu
Resident Director
Phone: (011) 507-317-0367, ext. 228
Cell: (011) 507-6674-2545

Dr. Alexandra Anyfanti Email: aanyfanti@fsu.edu
Vice Rector
Phone: (011) 507-317-0367, ext. 238
Cell: (011) 507-6676-4071

Dr. Raymond George Email: rgeorge@fsu.edu
Director of Student Affairs
Phone: (011) 507-317-0367, ext. 223
Cell: (011) 507-6648-8071

Maria Elena Puerta Email: mpuerta@fsu.edu
Inter. Programs/Housing Coordinator
Phone: (011) 507-317-0367, ext. 224
Cell: (011) 507-6676-4296

Hector Miranda Email: hamiranda@fsu.edu
Program Assistant
Phone: (011) 507-317-0367, ext. 224
Cell: (011) 507 6678-4969

Keila Villarreal Email: kvillarreal@fsu.edu
Program Assistant
Phone: (011) 507-317-0367, ext. 224
Cell: (011) 507 6672-1075
Making international calls from the U.S. to Panama: First dial “011” (for international call), followed by “507” (the country code), then the specified location number.

In emergency situations, the Panama staff may be called at the numbers provided. Please reserve the use of these numbers for emergencies only.

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<td>911</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambulance</td>
<td>(011) 507-236-5050, Code: 13417</td>
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<td>Police</td>
<td>(011) 507-317-9290/104</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Department of Balboa</td>
<td>(011) 507-228-2837</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Department of Clayton</td>
<td>(011) 507-512-6152 (Central Dispatcher 103)</td>
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U.S. EMBASSY AND CONSULATE - PANAMA
Building 783
Calle Basilio Lakas
Clayton, Panama
Republic of Panama
Phone: 507-317-5303
Phone: 507-317-5000 (After hours/emergencies)
WEBSITE [https://pa.usembassy.gov/](https://pa.usembassy.gov/)

Time differences: Panama time is the same as Miami and Tallahassee except when the States are on Daylight Saving Time.
BEFORE DEPARTURE & ARRIVAL IN PANAMA

BEFORE DEPARTURE
FSU International Programs is now a Passport Acceptance Facility. Apply for a passport in our office. Call 850.645.9714 or visit international.fsu.edu/Passports.aspx for details. Additionally, passport photos can be purchased in our office. Please call our Passport Acceptance Facility office for details.

ARRIVING IN PANAMA
Please make sure to arrive in Panama on or before the Approved Arrival Date, which is typically one day before the start of the program. This date can be found in both your appointment letter and Okay to Buy Airline Ticket email.

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION
Tocumen Airport
FSU Panama can arrange for an airport pickup, provided your travel itinerary is available at least two days prior to your arrival. The cost to go from the airport to the Clayton area where the City of Knowledge is located may vary between $40 and $45.

If you choose to use an airport cab service, as you exit the Customs area, walk towards a small kiosk located inside the terminal called “Autoridad de Turismo de Panama”. Tell the agent (in English or Spanish) that you need to take a cab. They will ask you a few questions to better serve you and direct you to a waiting taxi outside. The fare to go to the City of Knowledge, Clayton, should be approximately $40 for one passenger. Although there are plenty of taxis outside to take passengers, there’s better control over the taxis that the Autoridad de Turismo recommends.

In order to receive reimbursement, the faculty member must save receipt(s) and expense receipt(s) must be uploaded to the Concur online travel system. See the attached directions for uploading receipt(s) to the Concur online travel system. If you have issues with the Concur system, please contact FSU Travel or your FSU home department travel rep. Contact ip submitstravel@fsu.edu with any questions about receipts. Travel receipts for reimbursement will not be accepted via email or in person.

TRANSPORTATION IN PANAMA CITY
The safest and ultimately easiest way to travel in Panama City is by cabs, which are readily available. The fare from FSU-Panama to the heart of downtown Panama City should be no more than $7-$10 (one-way). A tip is not necessary. ALWAYS VERIFY THE TOTAL COST OF THE FARE WITH THE DRIVER BEFORE ENTERING THE TAXI!

Following is a list of recommended cab companies:

America Libre 800-8294/224-0122
Taxi Nacional 224-1132
Taxi Concordia 236-7848
Clayton Taxi 317-0386
Metro Taxi 264-8569
Radio Taxi Panama 224-4390

Uber services are also available in Panama, it may cost slightly more than a regular taxi service but it’s very effective. Other companies, like Cabify, offer similar services.

Travel outside Panama City requires a plane, bus, or car. Most in-country flights depart from Albrook Airport, located only two miles from the FSU-Panama campus. Express buses leave from downtown Panama City to all parts of Panama frequently every day. The Bus Terminal is only a 10-minute car ride away from the FSU Panama Campus.

Riding the local buses is also a great cultural experience and a very economical way of going places. The bus system (Metrobus) requires the use of a card which can be purchased at most supermarkets. One of the Metrobus lines goes through Morse Street, only a block away from the dormitory complex, and takes you to the bus terminal at Albrook where you can connect to other areas of Panama either by bus or by the subway (Metro). A bus ride currently costs 25¢. Routes that connect to the suburban areas of Panama City cost $1.25. We suggest you start riding the city buses only when you are familiar with the different places and have a better sense of the distances. Avoid riding the bus at night unless you know exactly where you are going and you are certain about the bus routes.

PANAMA CAMPUS
The FSU Panama campus is located in the City of Knowledge across the street from the Miraflores locks of the Panama Canal. The administrative offices and classrooms are located in Building 227, the main building. The FSU Panama Library is located on the ground floor of Building 225, just a short walk from the main building. The main building houses 14 audio-visual equipped classrooms, administrative offices, and laboratories, including a computer classroom with
30 computers, and laboratories. Also, on the top floor, there’s a study area with computers and a leisure area which includes a little cafeteria.

The City of Knowledge Plaza, a ten-minute walk from the main building, is a shopping area that includes convenience stores, a pharmacy, a bookstore, and a wide selection of little restaurants and eateries. Other restaurant options inside the City of Knowledge are the Hotel Holiday Inn, Taberna del Canal, and Paddy Mick’s (all can be easily found in Google maps, please check the link:

City of Knowledge

Other restaurant options are also available in the Clayton area, only a few minutes away from the City of Knowledge.

A free shuttle service is available within the perimeter of the City of Knowledge, allowing easy access to all areas, including a bus terminal with bus service to the Albrook Mall, the main Panama City bus terminal and the Albrook subway station. FSU Panama also offers a shuttle service which runs approximately 6 times a day between the main building and the dormitories.
PROGRAM SPECIFICS

FACULTY ON-SITE ORIENTATION
Due to immigration requirements, all faculty members are required to attend an on-site faculty orientation at the Study Center. The Study Center will coordinate the orientation date/time with the faculty member before their arrival.

GUESTS & CHILDREN
The FSU Panama Program tries to promote a family-oriented environment as much as possible for all visiting faculty, but our highest priority remains the students. Faculty members must provide the names and if under 18, ages of any people who will be accompanying them on the program to Program Management in the Guest Insurance Form. Faculty members are asked not to bring unaccompanied children to the Study Centre while they are lecturing. International Programs strongly recommends not bringing guests to class lectures or academic events.

Appropriate daycare and/or babysitting arrangements for any minor guests must be made by each faculty member prior to their arrival to Panama. Students attending the Panama program or staff members should not be asked to babysit.

Faculty are invited to attend Centre-wide social-cultural events as guests of the study center. We welcome the opportunity such engagement provides for the enhancement of the student experience. Where space allows, faculty guests are invited to attend Centre-wide social-cultural events at their own and depending on space availability. If children will be attending a study center arranged excursion, they must be at least 12 years of age to ride the coach.

HOUSING
For easier access to the FSU Panama facilities, we highly recommend making every effort to secure housing in the Clayton area as traffic coming in and going out of the City of Knowledge may present a challenge during rush hours. For those staying in Panama for a period of fewer than 4 weeks, one of the options may be the City of Knowledge housing complex. They offer different types of rooms which include night tables, safe, intelligent AC, hot water, balcony, telephone, television and wireless internet. Occupants have access to a kitchenette with microwave, coffee maker and a refrigerator. The complex has a living-dining area and a fully equipped kitchen, coin-operated laundry, and vending machines.

For longer stays, several options of houses and apartments for rent are available in the Clayton area.

FACULTY COMPENSATION
Teaching stipends will be split between the pay periods during the approved program dates. Payments will be deposited automatically to the faculty’s checking account, as currently arranged with FSU. Be sure to keep original receipts for expenses incurred for shipping or airline transportation, shipping, or airline baggage charges.

For more information regarding compensation, including approved teaching stipends and shipping allowance, please refer to your International Programs appointment letter.

SHIPPING/BAGGAGE REIMBURSEMENT
As part of the compensation package, all Panama faculty from Tallahassee have reimbursed shipping/baggage costs for books, extra luggage, or other items up to $100. Receipts for shipping/baggage costs should be uploaded to the Concur online travel system. See the attached directions for uploading receipt(s) to the Concur online travel system. Contact FSU Travel or your FSU home department travel rep with issues with the Concur system. Additionally, contact ip-submittravel@fsu.edu with any questions about receipts. Travel receipts for reimbursement will not be accepted via email or in person.
International Programs is a strong proponent of the concept that “The World is Your Campus.” Class sessions need not meet solely in the classroom; we encourage you to use the host city as a living and interactive classroom. Courses taught internationally should be enhanced by their location, and we recommend that you take full advantage of all the resources available to you. The finest museums, theatres, and historical sites are at your disposal, so you will be expected to get your students out into the streets to explore all Panama has to offer.

CONTACT HOURS
Course-related field trips incorporating academic lectures are classified as classroom contact time for the duration of the lecture or instruction. Course-related field trips without formal accompanying instruction count as half class time for the period allotted by the instructor. For example, if your field trip without formal instruction lasts four hours, only two hours will count as teaching contact hours. The contact time required per credit hour is 750 minutes. A three-credit-hour class will need a total of 37.5 hours of teaching contact time. You are able to utilize travel time to and from the location for instruction.

ACADEMIC RIGOR
Distractions from academic work are part of a student’s life while studying abroad, due to the fact they are in a new and alluring environment. They invariably want to travel and explore. Personal travel and exposure to the culture are important to the educational experience, but this must not be at the expense of academic standards. Therefore, the faculty member or Program Leader should make their courses engaging so that the students will want to attend every session!

Student’s access to library facilities, computers, and reliable internet access will be more limited than on the home campus. Faculty should take this into account when assigning research papers and other assignments that rely on these resources. Focusing outside class assignments on direct contact with the culture is a wise alternative. Whenever possible, assignments should be creative mixtures of traditional materials and the international environment.

When faculty applied to teach abroad, they were asked to submit course descriptions for all study abroad courses. As per the Higher Education Opportunity Act (2008), Section 112, information regarding course materials for courses taught at our study abroad locations must be posted on the FSU Textbook Compliance Portal in Student Central before registration opens for the students. This ensures that students know about any required texts and course materials they will need to purchase prior to their departure. Before registration opens for students, an International Programs staff member asks instructors to submit textbook information for their courses. International Programs enters this textbook information into Student Central on the instructor’s behalf. If there are any questions regarding Textbook Compliance, please contact IP-Faculty@fsu.edu.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
Course descriptions are displayed on the International Programs website for all courses taught abroad.

DIRECTED INDIVIDUAL STUDY (DIS)
Faculty may be asked to accept Directed Individual Study (DIS) requests from students going abroad. There is no additional compensation for accepted DIS courses. Instructors may also be asked to be a Professor of Record by a student participating in an IP International Internship.

SYLLABI
An electronic copy of the Faculty finalized syllabi must be provided to International Programs at the conclusion of the first week of classes. Each syllabus should be as comprehensive as possible, clearly setting forth fully the requirements for the course. Course standards should be absolutely clear in each syllabus at the outset. Objections arise when new requirements are added mid-course. Grade appeals are often determined by the clarity of syllabi.

University and Faculty Senate policy require that a course syllabus be distributed at the beginning of the semester. Please visit the following link for further explanations: http://facsenate.fsu.edu/Curriculum-Resources/Syllabus-Language

The syllabus is required to include:
- University Attendance Policy
- Academic Honor Policy
- Americans with Disabilities Act
The syllabus should also include:

- Information about Free Tutoring from FSU
- Syllabus Change Policy
- Written course objectives
- An evaluation/grading statement that indicates what procedures will be used to evaluate students. It should also be possible to discern the approximate weight of each grade component.
- A statement of the faculty member’s policies and/or expectations regarding classroom conduct and missed work.

Additional helpful information to use when creating syllabi can be found at the following link: http://distance.fsu.edu/instructors/preparing-syllabus-university-approvals

Please keep in mind that faculty members and Program Leaders may be required to provide Non-FSU students with a syllabus of their course(s) so these students can receive pre-approval from their home institution before going abroad.

There may be other required syllabi entries based on a course’s designation. For example, if a course is a Liberal Studies course, there may be additional requirements for the syllabus. Please check with your home department for any requirements specific course(s) may have.

GRADES
All instructors are required to submit their grades online. Grades are submitted through Student Central. For complete instructions on how to submit grades please visit the following link: http://www.sc.my.fsu.edu/Faculty/How-To/Use-Grade-Rosters-in-Faculty-Center. For “Incompletes,” “No Grades,” or any necessary changes to grades even after the term’s grades have posted, please go to http://sc.my.fsu.edu/Faculty/How-To/Request-a-Grade-Change.

ATTENDANCE
Rosters are available through Student Central. Each instructor has the responsibility to ensure class rosters are correct after the drop/add period is complete.

SOCIAL/CULTURAL EVENTS
International Programs provides social and cultural events for all program participants as part of the program fee. These events may include concerts, lectures, special visits, or day-trips to surrounding locations. Program Leaders must attend all program-related social/cultural events, and faculty members are encouraged to also participate in program-planned social/cultural events. Guests of faculty members are invited to participate in such trips on a space-available basis, but they must fund these trips themselves. Past faculty members would agree that participating in such trips was one of the most rewarding aspects of their program because it allowed them to get to know students on a personal basis and share a common learning experience with them.

ACADEMIC FACILITIES
For information on available academic facilities, such as AV equipment, library space, or laboratory space, please contact your Program Coordinator or IP-Faculty@fsu.edu.

PROGRAM EVALUATIONS
Each student is asked to complete evaluations of the program. Program evaluations are provided to students by an International Programs staff member through an online survey. These evaluations help us prepare a report on the program and hear students’ opinions in regard to their overall experience. Faculty and Program Leaders receive a survey regarding their experience abroad.

COURSE EVALUATIONS
Students are asked to evaluate the courses they completed abroad, just as they evaluate the courses on the main campus. Course evaluations are automatically be ordered and provided to the students electronically by the FSU’s Office of Distance Learning.
ONLINE BANKING
We recommend setting up online banking for bank accounts prior to departure from the U.S. This is the best way to track accounts while overseas and will save time calling home to check account balances and transfers. Please, notify banks of travel before departure.

Bring or have access to at least one credit card in the event of an emergency. If you need to visit a doctor or hospital, you will likely have to pay prior to the service, and then submit an insurance claim afterward. Credit cards are also useful for everyday purchases and offer excellent exchange rates. **MasterCard and Visa are the most widely accepted credit cards overseas.** A credit card with “chip and pin” technology is required, as this is the standard abroad.

Before using an ATM or debit card overseas, we recommend the following:

- Contact your financial institution(s) before you leave the U.S. to make sure your ATM or debit card is activated for international use. You will also need to inform them of your dates/locations abroad. If you fail to contact your financial institution(s), it is not unusual for credit card companies to “freeze” an account if suspicious or fraudulent activity is suspected.
- **Make sure your debit/ATM card is linked to a checking account, rather than to a savings account, to have access to your funds.**
- If you have a pin longer than 4 digits or based on letters, you may have trouble using it abroad. You will need to change your pin before departure.
- You may also want to take a Visa or MasterCard with you, in case of an emergency.

You can limit the fees associated with ATM withdrawals if your U.S. bank has a ‘sister’ bank in Panama and/or if you limit your withdrawals.

CURRENCY
Panama’s medium of exchange is the U.S. dollar. Bills larger than $20 are rarely accepted (carry lots of singles and fives).

Visit the following web site for the current exchange rate: **http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/**
HEALTH

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION
Faculty and guests should bring sufficient quantities of prescription medications to last for the duration abroad. Keep these in their original containers with copies of the prescriptions and place them in your carry-on luggage. Be sure to bring a copy of a legible prescription from your doctor. Be aware that not all U.S. drugs are available abroad. Please discuss all medications and their procurements with health professionals, and work with insurance companies regarding vacation prescriptions before departure.

INSURANCE INFORMATION
International Programs provides full medical/evacuation coverage for all approved faculty from the United States through Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI). Students participating in all of our study abroad programs are covered by this same insurance policy. For more information regarding coverage, please see CISI’s insurance policy posted on IP’s website at: CISI Insurance

For Broad Curriculum faculty, IP provides coverage for one guest during your approved program dates. Faculty receive a Guest Insurance Form within the acceptance package, where insurance coverage can be requested. Insurance coverage for other guests can also be acquired at a very reasonable price. Faculty will be billed at a later date for the coverage. Details regarding the billing and prices of coverage are provided on the Guest Insurance Form.
CELL PHONES & COMMUNICATION

CELL PHONES
The country code for Panama is 507. To call Panama from the U.S.A., dial 011 507 followed by the local number. To call the US from Panama, dial 001 followed by the US area code followed by the number. If there is a landline phone in the apartment, faculty members may use International and local calling cards from there. International calling cards are available through the local carriers and they can be bought from any grocery or convenience store. If Faculty plans to use their US phone in Panama make sure the phone is not blocked by the local carrier. Faculty can then buy a prepaid plan from a local carrier. Faculty can also buy cell phones in Panama at very low prices.

OTHER COMMUNICATION OPTIONS
Other popular options to keep in touch with family/friends back home include Skype, FaceTime, and WhatsApp. Faculty with a smartphone, download these apps before traveling abroad to activate the account. Faculty are able to communicate internationally for free through connecting via Wi-Fi.

MAIL
Please share the following information with those in the U.S. who are interested in sending you mail while abroad.

The Panamanian mail system is sometimes unpredictable. Airmail will take from 7-14 days, but local holidays or other contingencies may stretch this time. Use international airmail stamps; regular mail will cause your letter to go by boat, taking about six weeks to deliver. When sending packages, neither overestimate nor underestimate the value of the materials in the package. You will pay up to 30% customs duty on the amount shown as the insured price. There should be no commercial value on the package. When mailing items from Panama you need to buy local stamps available at the nearest post office. Please be advised that the boxes and packages you receive are opened in order to clear customs and you will have to pay a percentage of the registered value of the items in the package. The Panamanian Customs Office will not tax personal packages whose reported insured price is under $50.00. Anything more than $50.00 will be taxed between 5 - 20% depending on the item. Also note, there is no door to door delivery of packages in Panama unless you pay a courier company which is very expensive, and it is not a good idea to send goods and items through Panama Postal office to our P.O. Box because they can get lost. Therefore, think twice before having items mailed to you. You may be able to purchase those items in Panama at a much lower price than the cost of shipping and taxes.

COMPUTERS
The faculty members can bring a laptop computer. The main building and the Library have a wireless internet connection. It is not uncommon for laptop computers to be stolen or broken while abroad, so please note that if you take a laptop with you, it is at your own risk. If you do choose to bring a laptop, check your homeowner's insurance to make sure that it is covered when you are away from your primary residence. If it is not covered by this insurance, you may want to check into laptop insurance through www.safeware.com, a worldwide insurance provider for all electronic devices (e.g. laptop, digital camera, iPod, etc.). They also have a provision for non-electronic personal property.

Desktop computers are available for students and faculty at the FSU Panama Library and also in the Study area on the top floor of the main building.
POLICIES & SAFETY

SAFETY & SECURITY
Our highest priority is the welfare and security of our students, faculty, staff, and facilities. We have emergency plans in place for each of our locations and work closely with our insurers and 24/7 emergency response providers to monitor and respond to all situations worldwide. It is our policy to follow guidance from the respective U.S. Embassies, U.S. State Department, as well as local officials and keep students, faculty, and staff apprised of any new information. For more information on IP’s security policies and procedures, please contact our Director of Risk and Emergency Management, Chris Carroll at 850.644.7823 or ccarroll@fsu.edu.

CAMPUS RESOURCES
Even though you are not on the main campus, you have access to many resources should you encounter issues while abroad. Program staff members are available to support program participants in a variety of ways, including connecting you with other professionals locally and/or on the main campus.

- **Victim Advocate Program** - The University takes very seriously all types of victimization, including sexual violence, relationship violence, and domestic violence. Advocates are available and on-call 24 hours a day to provide confidential support services, even for students who are abroad. For more information on the Victim Advocate Program, visit [http://victimadvocate.fsu.edu](http://victimadvocate.fsu.edu).
- **University Counseling Center** - The Counseling Center is a welcoming and confidential place to discuss questions and concerns such as homesickness, struggles with relationships, sexual identity, cultural issues, and more. Visit [https://counseling.fsu.edu/](https://counseling.fsu.edu/) for more information.
- **Center for Health Advocacy & Wellness** - The Center for Health Advocacy & Wellness encourages healthy lifestyle decisions that facilitate academic success and lead to lifelong health and wellness. For more information, visit [http://chaw.fsu.edu/](http://chaw.fsu.edu/)

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
All faculty members and Program Leaders at study centers are responsible for the pastoral care of their students in class and during academic excursions.

Safety plans, emergency procedures, and emergency telephone numbers are provided at the on-site faculty orientation by the study center staff. Notices of any and all crimes and emergencies are to be given to the study center staff (if the program is in a study center location), the International Programs office in Tallahassee, and to the local authorities as soon as possible.

For study center faculty members and Program Leaders, in case of a personal emergency, contact the study center director for assistance. In case of a program-related emergency, follow the study center contingency plan and contact the study center director.

SAFETY & SECURITY MEASURES
- The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to or living in, a foreign country. STEP allows you to enter information about your upcoming trip abroad so that the Department of State can better assist you in an emergency. We strongly recommend you register here: [https://step.state.gov/step/](https://step.state.gov/step/).
- **Waivers.** All IP participants will be given a Waiver of Liability via email. It must be signed and submitted to IP.
- Be aware that you are subject to the laws of the country in which you are traveling.
- Always carry a photocopy of the picture and signature pages of your passport with you. Keep another copy in your room separate from your passport. Leave one copy at home in the U.S. with your family or a relative.
- Encourage students to use the buddy system—Bystander intervention is a powerful opportunity and responsibility for those within our community.
- **Valuables.** If a safe is available in program housing, it is encouraged that you use it to store your valuable personal items and important documents. If a safe is not available, be sure to keep these items in a secure place. Plan regular visits to the cash machine rather than leaving large amounts of cash in your room. International Programs is not responsible for items lost or stolen during your time abroad. Be sure to also secure your money, passport, and other valuables if you are traveling on public transportation, especially overnight trains.
- **Pickpocketing.** In most large cities throughout the world, pickpocketing is the
most common crime and can happen anytime, anywhere! We caution you to always be aware of your surroundings. While traveling in some areas beware of beggars who try to distract you with papers, boxes, or excessive body movements. Coats and purses are often stolen in crowded areas. Keep them close to you and lock your pack zippers with a combo lock. Secure your valuables if you are traveling on an overnight ("sleeper") train.

- Weapons. You are strictly prohibited from keeping or using firearms, knives, weapons (including pellets, air guns, paintball guns or other dangerous articles or substances). Furthermore, mace and/or pepper spray may be illegal in the countries that you visit. It is your responsibility to know the laws regarding weapons in the host country if you intend to bring any item for self-defense.
The more information faculty find out about the country beforehand, the better at easy they will be once they get there. Here is a list of a few web sites that may be helpful:

(Note: Florida State University is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.)

The Florida State University (the University) is an equal employment opportunity employer and educational provider committed to a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, Keep these in their original containers with copies of the prescriptions and place them in your carry-on luggage. Be sure to bring a copy of a legible prescription from your doctor, age, disability, veteran or marital status, or any other protected group status. This policy applies to faculty, staff, students, visitors, applicants, and contractors in a manner consistent with applicable federal and state laws, regulations, ordinances, orders and rules, and the University's policies, procedures, and processes.

state.gov/travel/
U.S. State Department’s information for Americans traveling abroad

http://www.panamainfo.com
(Panama Travel Guide)

http://www.worldpress.org/newspapers/AMERICAS/Panama.cfm
Panama newspapers and magazines

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panama
General information about Panama

http://www.panamainfo.com
Panama Travel Guide

http://panama.fsu.edu/
FSU-Panama’s own web site

donquijote.org/spanishlanguage/
Brush up on your Spanish!