

Past Dickey Intern Tips

- **Take photos** of the people and staff you work with to help solidify your experience.
- **Keep a day-to-day journal.** Be personal with it, express fears and hopes, stressful and happy situations while abroad. This will be helpful when reflecting on these experiences later; especially when applying for internships and jobs!
- **Network.** Meet every person possible and get their business card/contact info. Most likely you will impress that person through your work, and your relationship could lead to a future job.
- **Live outside your comfort zone.**
- **Set a budget** and stick to it; something will always come up that you don't expect.
- Get a **cell phone** if at all possible.
- Look for **local student organizations** that you can join; this is a great way to make local friends that can enhance your experience.
- **Value the time.** This will be a unique experience that you may never have again.
- Have discussions locals on their **perceptions of the United States.** The US has a complex history of interaction and engagement with other nations and that history may impact your time within your specific country.
- Make sure from the get-go you are 100% **aware of your surroundings.** Don't make any assumptions; people may not always have good intentions; take precautions.
- Use the **international student base at Dartmouth.** Talk with a student from the country you are traveling to about their country's culture, cities, places to travel, things to bring, etc. You should also talk with past **Dickey or Tucker interns** who have been to that country.
- Assume everything you bring with you will get **stolen, broken or lost** and prepare accordingly.
- **Upload pictures** to Picasa (or some other online picture sharing tool) as often as possible. This will ensure that at least some of your pictures are saved when your camera is lost/stolen and your hard drive crashes.
- **Carry toilet paper** everywhere you go!
- **Don't over plan.** Leave room for change. Be flexible with your time and schedule; allow things to affect you. Relax in your new environment; don't rush to see all the touristy things.
- **Blog.** It is a great way to put your experience into words; force yourself to constantly re-imagine your experience within the context of your professional and academic background. It's easy to write certain experiences off as "indescribable" or "amazing" - but it's difficult to rationalize such an experience in media res. Challenge yourself to communicate your experience in a simple, cogent way (aka, in a blog) so you can enhance your understanding of things around you.
- **Pack lightly,** and don't worry. You won't use half of the "necessities" you think you need.
- **Don't make assumptions.** If you assume that your destination is some sort of hostile, unlivable environment, you won't enter the experience with the right mindset.
- **Read about the culture** you're travelling to - not just "traveler's culture" (culture with a lower case c) but real culture: indigenous philosophy, ontology, visuality, religion. Especially in countries like Thailand, it's easy to fetishize the "culture" without understanding it. Do not be afraid to endeavor a critique of the culture you are visiting.
- **Bring medicine** with you - night quill tablets, stomach relievers etc.
- Make sure you have all your necessary **vaccines.**

- When staying in a **hotel**, don't put money in your room safe (everyone has a key to it). It is best to hide your money somewhere in your stuff.
- Send out **updates**; but only share personal stories with your closest friends.
- **Take risks** but always keep your eye on all your belongings and consider potential scenarios before they occur.
- **Meet up with Dartmouth students** who are also in your country. This is a good way to share individual experiences before they are diluted by being back on campus.
- **Meet locals**; have conversations with them, cook meals together, etc.
- **Eat** the local food; but make sure it is hot or that you can peel it.
- **Create a list of questions** to ask the people you were working with before you leave. This is a great way to compare and contrast your perceptions of your experience with their perceptions of your experience.
- Get up-to-date with the **country's media** before traveling there; this is what most people will be discussing.
- Learn about the **country's culture** beforehand so you don't have to exclaim or gape at things you see people doing.
- **Engage in the community**; go to market, participate in celebrations, attend soccer matches, play with the kids, etc.
- Attend the **Tucker/Dickey intern mixers** when you return to campus; this gives you an opportunity to meet people who have had similar experiences and share/reflect on these together. It also gives you a chance to dispense advice to new interns who may be traveling to the country you were in.
- **Put safety first**; no hitch hiking, no random eating, and no mysterious night life.
- Make an appointment with a **travel clinic** before departing for your country (you can do this through Dick's house).
- Bring back **souvenirs!**
- **Learn the local language.** At the very least learn greetings, light conversation, standard questions and answers, etc. This will enable you to better engage with the local community
- Drink **sealed bottle water!**
- **Travel around**; don't contain yourself to the city/area you work in. You will discover how rich the larger region can be and gain a better cultural immersion experience.
- **Talk about yourself.** Bring photos of your family that you can share with people. This will help you create connections with people that will enhance your experience abroad.
- Take **cold showers/bucket baths** at home to get used to them; also try and get comfortable with insects as much as possible.
- **Don't convert all of your money** to the local currency when you arrive, chances are the US dollar might appreciate against the local currency during the course of your stay, so staying denominated in US dollars as long as possible will help you maximize your budget.
- **Don't be afraid** to enthusiastically say hello when people stare at you in a way that Americans would be perceived as rude and mean spirited; they are most likely staring because you are obviously different and will most likely open up if you make an effort.
- Keep your family and friends in the loop via **updates**; this will let them know what you are up to and also help alleviate feelings of loneliness you may be experiencing.
- **Be flexible** during your time there; remember that time is constructed very differently in other cultures and things will not always go as planned.