

## Suggested Contents for a Pre-Departure Orientation

One of the best ways to ensure the safety of students and minimize the occurrence of litigation over negligence is to provide a thorough pre-departure orientation. The Buckman Center has created an online Pre-Departure Guide for students with information on cultural adjustments, health issues, and student conduct and safety. However, it is not a substitute for a pre-departure orientation session(s).

An orientation should include:

- Cautions about alcohol and drug abuse and a warning not to carry, buy or sell illegal drugs
- A warning that students are subject to local-not U.S.-laws and that little can be done by Rhodes College or the U.S. Embassy to help students who are caught breaking the law
- Region-specific health information such as the nature, prevention, and treatment of region-specific diseases; required and recommended vaccinations; water and food risks; and descriptions of persistent and epidemic diseases. You may wish to distribute health information from the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>
- Advice for students to prepare a customized medical kit including prescription medications in labeled bottles, generic prescriptions for refills, and an extra pair of eyeglasses and contact lenses (if needed)
- Information about the physiological and psychological consequences of jet lag, culture shock, homesickness, loneliness, changes in diet, lack of exercise, and so on
- General instructions for emergency medical situations-using an emergency telephone system (like 911) calling an ambulance, a hospital or doctor, or an embassy or consular office
- Advice on how to minimize the possibility of being the victim of a crime
- Advice to avoid local political activity
- Local diet and eating patterns, including ways to accommodate students with special nutritional needs or preferences
- How to locate routine and emergency professional medical help
- Facts on crime and the political situation.
- Cards that include daytime and evening telephone numbers and addresses for the program.

As a faculty leader, you should also retain a photocopy of the information pages in students' passports and the visa page, if relevant.