

Travel Advisory - Study-Abroad Mexico

This is not a complete list of travel advisories.

Please visit the [U.S. State Department travel site](#) for an up to date and extensive listing.

Mexico Entry Requirement

- U.S. PASSPORT - You must obtain a passport to participate. Your passport should be valid at least six months after your return date.
- NON-U.S. CITIZEN PARTICIPANT - International students must be sure to have appropriate documentation for entry into Mexico and re-entry into the United States. Documentation is the responsibility of the student. Please contact the Office of International Education for assistance.

Emergencies Abroad

If an emergency happens while abroad, contact the on-site representative of the Mid Continent Consortium and ask for assistance. You can contact APSU at any hour by calling 001-931-221-7786. Please be prepared to provide your name, the telephone number where you can be reached, your BANNER I.D. number and the nature of the problem.

The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Mexico is 066.

Crime Abroad

Crime in Mexico continues to occur at a high rate, and it can often be violent. Keep in mind, pick-pocketing and purse snatching is a worldwide problem. There have been instances in which U.S. citizens have had their card numbers “skimmed” and the money in their debit accounts stolen or their credit cards fraudulently charged. (“Skimming” is the theft of credit card information by an employee of a legitimate merchant or bank, manually copying down numbers or using a magnetic stripe reader.)

- You should never leave your baggage unattended and never put bags containing valuables, such as your passport, down on the ground. Do not check luggage for anyone else onto airplanes, trains or buses. Do not borrow suitcases and do not allow anyone to put anything in your luggage.
- You should never carry large quantities of money. Money should be carried in security wallets. Do not carry all of your money in the same place.
- The loss or theft abroad of a U.S. passport should be reported immediately to the local police and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

For your safety, you should always be aware of your surroundings, travel in groups and avoid traveling after dusk. You may also want to exercise caution when using credit or debit cards in ATM machines or unestablished facilities.

Mexican Laws

While in Mexico, you are subject to Mexican laws. Penalties for breaking Mexico’s law and regulations are more severe than in the United States. If you violate the law, even unknowingly, you may be expelled, arrested or imprisoned. Penalties for possession, use or trafficking in illegal drugs in Mexico are severe, and convicted offenders can expect large fines and jail sentences of up to 25 years. Be aware that a number of Americans have been arrested for passing on counterfeit currency they had earlier received in change. If you receive what you believe to be a counterfeit bank note, bring it to the attention of Mexican law enforcement. You should inform yourself of rules and regulations of Mexican law prior to arriving in Mexico.

Studying in Mexico

- **Transportation:** Public transportation in Mexico is not of good quality and is not the recommended method of travel. Avoid using metro during busy commuting hours in the morning or afternoon. Robberies and assaults on passengers in taxis are frequent and violent in Mexico City, with passengers subjected to beating, shooting, and sexual assault. U.S. citizens visiting Mexico City should avoid taking any taxi not summoned by telephone or contacted in advance.
- **Politics Abroad:** You are strongly encouraged to avoid political protest and other potentially volatile situations.

Student Conduct Abroad

You are required to participate and attend all classes and excursions for academic credit and continued participation in the program. While you are studying abroad you are a representative of Austin Peay State University. You are expected to follow the Austin Peay State University student code of conduct at all times and abide by the student

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code of conduct for University of Guanajuato. Failure to do so could result in expulsion from the program and academic penalties.

Trip Cancellation

You are encouraged to consider purchasing trip cancellation insurance. Many travel agents and private companies offer insurance plans that will cover the cost or part of the cost of your trip.

- **International Student Identity Card (ISIC)** offers limited travel and health insurance as well as discounts abroad.

Health Precautions

Please note that tuberculosis, hepatitis, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS are worldwide problems. Protect yourself and act responsibly to ensure your health.

Please consult with your medical physician on the following vaccinations recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Routine - Recommended if you are not up-to-date with routine shots such as, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine, etc.

Hepatitis B - Recommended for all unvaccinated persons traveling to Mexico, especially those who might be exposed to blood or body fluids, have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment (e.g., for an accident).

Hepatitis A - Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to Mexico (high level of hepatitis A virus infection), where exposure might occur through food or water. Cases of travel-related hepatitis A can also occur in travelers to developing countries with "standard" tourist itineraries, accommodations, and food consumption behaviors.

Typhoid - Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to Mexico.

- You should report any illness to your local host coordinator, roommate, APSU or local faculty and ask for assistance. Keep receipts for any medical care, prescriptions or other medical costs.
- If you wear glasses or contacts, bring a backup pair in case your primary pair is damaged and make sure you have your prescription with you.

Medical Insurance

Consult with your medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether your policy applies abroad. If your insurance policy does not cover you abroad, you should consider purchasing a short-term policy. You should consider a policy that includes the following: emergency expenses such as sickness, injury, emergency medical evacuation, emergency reunion, accidental death and dismemberment, and repatriation of remains; coverage mental health issues; and 24-hour emergency assistance and coverage payment at the point of service. Many travel agents and private companies offer insurance plans that will cover health care expenses incurred abroad.

Medical Conditions

You should consult with your medical physician and take appropriate precautions before traveling. If you have medical conditions, it is recommended that you bring a letter from your physician detailing your condition, prescription medications, including their generic names and treatment that you are undergoing.

Medical Prescriptions

Medicines may be brought into the country as long as they are intended for personal use. Have all your prescriptions filled that you will need during your stay prior to your departure. Keep all medications in their original containers and clearly labeled. You should check with the foreign embassy to make sure any required medications are not considered illegal in that country.

Mental Health

It is normal and expected for a person who has just entered a new culture to feel overwhelmed, excited, nervous, sad, frustrated, happy, etc. all at once. Moving away from friends, family and the familiarity of home is both positively and negatively challenging. Do not be alarmed or surprised if you find yourself feeling confused or frustrated as you make the big move and adjustment to life abroad. Remember that you are not alone. There are

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several places where you can seek help and support if you are feeling overwhelmed. You are encouraged to contact International Education and/or the Student Counseling Services with any questions or concerns.

Cultural Differences

Adapting to a new culture is a continual process that will last throughout your stay. It is important to hold on to your basic values, while inevitably assimilating to some new cultural values as well. Understanding the adjustment process will help you accept cultural differences and the occasional feelings of alienation and frustration. Common adjustment stages are outlined below:

Honeymoon - Exhilaration and anticipation characterize the “honeymoon stage” when you are generally fascinated with all that is new and are open to meeting new people. However, in an enthusiasm to please, you may nod or smile to indicate understanding when in fact, you may not truly understand what is being said or done. When misunderstandings build, you are likely to experience the second stage of cultural adjustment.

Hostility - Frustration, anger, anxiety, and sometimes depression take over during the “hostility stage.” The initial excitement is replaced by frustration with bureaucracy and the weariness of speaking and listening in another language. At this point, you may display hostility toward people of the new culture and minor frustrations may manifest into fear, mistrust and lack of interest in the new culture.

Humor - The “humor stage” follows when you begin to relax in the new culture and to laugh at the minor mistakes and misunderstandings that previously caused headaches. This often occurs after the individual has gained friends and is able to manage the new environment.

Home - The “home stage” occurs when you feel at home in the new culture yet retain allegiance to your home culture - gaining the ability to live successfully in two cultures.

Try to stay busy, walk around and explore your host-site, and keep a journal of your experience to help communicate some of your feelings and remember your experience.

Trip Orientation

Orientation is mandatory to participate in APSU study-abroad and exchange programs.

The Mid-Continent Consortium also requires a one-day orientation for all students participating in the program.

Trip Preparations

- You should register your trip with the [U.S. Department of State](#).
- You are encouraged to visit studentsabroad.state.gov for valuable information regarding American students abroad.
- You should make two copies of your passport. Leave one with APSU and take the other with you in a safe location separate from your original passport to Mexico in case your passport is lost or stolen.
- You should send a copy of your flight itinerary to the APSU Office of International Education prior to departure.
- Contact your academic advisor to inform them of your trip prior to departure. You may need to register for classes while you are abroad. You will need internet access to register abroad with APSU Self-Service.
- Contact Housing if you are requiring university housing after your time abroad.
- You should take approximately \$50-\$75 in pesos with you on the flight or purchase it in the airport.
- Contact your bank prior to departure to let them know that you will be out of the country.