

November 2015

Risk Assessment Inventory List: SOUTH AFRICA

Safety Is Everyone's Responsibility

INTRODUCTION

This document highlights several risks associated with studying and living in South Africa. The review of risks in this document is limited in scope and reflects UCEAP's current information. Circumstances may change over time.

Parents and students have a role to play in minimizing potential dangers. *Please share this list with your parents and discuss a personal safety plan for your time abroad.*

- UCEAP cannot guarantee the safety of participants or ensure that risk will not, at times, be significantly greater than on a UC campus.
- UCEAP cannot monitor the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of individual participants any more than is the case on the home campus.
- You are responsible for gathering information about possible risks, and to make final decisions about participation on UCEAP.

This inventory list identifies some of the most common hazards associated with particular activities or the environment (e.g., extreme heat or cold, endemic disease, transportation, crime, violence, political instability, lack of electricity, lack of water, etc.).

Voluntary risks are those associated with activities that students may decide to undertake (e.g., driving a car, riding a motorcycle, smoking, taking public transportation, abusing drugs/alcohol, etc.).

Involuntary risks are those associated with activities that happen to students that are out of their control. (e.g., acts of nature such as being struck by lightning, fires, floods, tornados, etc., and exposure to contaminants, etc.)

The following resources were used for this report: United States Department of State, World Health Organization (WHO), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), South African Department of Health Country Health Profile, U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office, University of Cape Town, Shoreland Travax, iJET International Intelligent Risk Systems, Inc., Interpol, World Bank, and other university reports and websites.

Consider the following hazards and take preventive measures according to the hazards that have been identified.

HEALTH

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

CDC vaccine recommendations are based on the best available risk information. Please note that the level of risk for vaccine-preventable diseases can change at any time.

Vaccination or Disease	Recommendations or Requirements for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases
Routine (recommended for all travelers)	Recommended if you are not up-to-date with routine shots including measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot.
Hepatitis A (Recommended for most travelers)	CDC recommends this vaccine because you can get hepatitis A through contaminated food or water in South Africa, regardless of where you eat or stay.
Typhoid (Recommended for most travelers)	You can get typhoid through contaminated food or water in South Africa. CDC recommends this vaccine for most travelers, especially if you are staying with friends or relatives, visiting smaller cities or rural areas, or if you are an adventurous eater.

NOTE: All UCEAP students are required to complete the online UCEAP Travel Health course and strongly encouraged to follow through about vaccine recommendations with a travel health professional, ideally 6-8 weeks before departure. **The UCEAP travel insurance does not cover the cost of recommended vaccinations. If you are covered by campus insurance contact them well before departure to get information about travel vaccinations that may be covered by the campus plan.**

HIV/AIDS

AIDS and HIV infection occur worldwide. Sub-Saharan Africa is the region worst-affected by HIV and AIDS. HIV/AIDS in South Africa is the prominent health concern with an estimated 18% of the population infected. South Africa has the highest prevalence of HIV/AIDS compared to any other country in the world with 7.5 million people living with HIV, and 140,000 HIV related deaths recorded in 2013. according to UNAIDS.

Risk Assessment

- Both men and women can become infected and can give HIV to someone else. Only certain fluids—blood, semen, pre-seminal fluid, rectal fluids, vaginal fluids, and breast milk—from an HIV-infected person can transmit HIV. These fluids must come in contact with a mucous membrane or damaged tissue or be directly injected into the bloodstream (from a needle or syringe) for transmission to possibly occur.
- HIV infection is preventable. Factors to consider in assessing risk include the extent of direct contact with blood or other potentially infectious secretions and the extent of sexual contact with potentially infected persons or with persons whose HIV infection status is unknown.

- In countries with high rates of HIV infection, many persons without these risk factors may be infected and be unaware of their status.
- The South African government precautions to safeguard the blood supply are increasing, but at this time the blood supply is not considered to be reliably safe.
- HIV cannot be spread in the following ways:
 - o Shaking hands, hugging or casual kissing
 - o Coughs or sneezes, sweat or tears
 - o Mosquitoes, toilet seats, door knob, drinking fountain
 - o Eating food prepared or handled by an infected person
 - o Everyday contact with HIV-infected persons at school, work, home or anywhere else
- There is no vaccine to prevent HIV infection.
- There is no cure for AIDS.

Risk Mitigation

- Understand STD concepts and risks for HIV transmission.
- Discuss non-blood alternatives with your physician before departure during the UCEAP health clearance appointment. When medically prudent, avoid use of unscreened blood-clotting factor concentrates or concentrates of uncertain purity. If transfusion is necessary, the blood should be tested, if possible, for HIV antibody by appropriately trained laboratory technicians using a reliable test.
- If you have insulin-dependent diabetes, hemophilia, or other conditions that necessitate routine or frequent injections, carry a supply of syringes, needles, and disinfectant swabs (e.g., alcohol wipes) sufficient to last your entire stay abroad. Before traveling, request documentation of the medical necessity for traveling with these items (e.g., a doctor's letter) in case official inspection personnel at ports of departure/entry question their need.
- Exercise caution at all times to avoid serious accidents or injuries that could require a blood transfusion, as the local blood supply cannot be guaranteed safe.
- To avoid transmission through sex, the only sure way is not to have anal, vaginal or oral sexual intercourse or to have sex only with someone who is not infected and who has sex only with you. Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are highly effective in preventing sexual transmission of HIV.
- Exercise appropriate precautions if engaging in activities that expose you to risk of infection
- Do not impair your judgment with drugs or alcohol.
- Do not share needles or any devices that can break the skin. That includes needles for tattoos, piercings, and acupuncture.
- If you receive medical or dental care, make sure the equipment is disinfected or sanitized.
- Even though no vaccine is available to prevent infection with HIV, all South African universities have thorough protocol for handling possible HIV exposure or infection.

- If you have unprotected sex or suspect you may have been exposed to HIV through a medical incident or procedure, consult the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) or on-campus Wellness Center for post exposure treatment options. Do not delay as the first 72 hours are critical.

MALARIA

When traveling in South Africa, you should avoid mosquito bites to prevent malaria. You may need to take prescription medicine before, during, and after your trip to prevent malaria, depending on your travel plans, such as where you are going, when you are traveling, and if you are spending a lot of time outdoors or sleeping outside. Talk to your doctor about how you can prevent malaria while traveling. For more information on malaria in South Africa, see the CDC [map](#) for malaria transmission areas in South Africa.

Malaria is present in northeastern KwaZulu-Natal Province as far south as the Tugela River, Limpopo (Northern) Province, and the Mpumalanga Province and in Kruger National Park. Prepare accordingly and use malaria prophylaxis. Transmission occurs throughout the year, and is highest from October through May. For information on malaria, its prevention, protection from insect bites, and anti-malarial drugs, please visit the CDC Malaria web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/>.

Risk Assessment

- Students could get sick from Malaria, temporarily or permanently if travelling to regions where malaria exists. The City of Cape Town is malaria free.
- Malaria is characterized by fever and influenza-like symptoms, including chills, headache, muscle pain, and malaise; these symptoms can occur at intervals.
- Medical complications are a possibility.
- Students who have had malaria before, can get it again and so preventive measures are still necessary.
- No vaccine is currently available.
- Anti-malarial medications purchased overseas may not be manufactured according to United States standards and may not be effective. They also may be dangerous, contain counterfeit medications or contaminants, or be combinations of drugs that are not safe to use.
- No method can protect completely against the risk for contracting malaria.

Risk Mitigation

- Students are required to complete the UCEAP online travel health course and a UCEAP Health Clearance at their campus Student Health Center (versus with a private physician) to understand country-specific health risks, get necessary immunizations, and learn how diseases are transmitted.
- Anti-malarial medications and bug bite avoidance are central components in preventing malaria.
- Malaria transmission occurs primarily between dusk and dawn because of the nocturnal feeding habits of Anopheles mosquitoes in certain regions within South Africa. Follow protective measures to reduce contact with mosquitoes, especially during these hours. Such measures include remaining in well-screened areas, using mosquito bed nets (preferably insecticide-treated nets), and wearing clothes that cover most of the body.

- Use insect repellent on exposed skin. The most effective repellent against a wide range of vectors is DEET (N, N-diethylmetatoluamide), an ingredient in many commercially available insect repellents. The actual concentration of DEET varies widely among repellents. DEET formulations as high as 50% are recommended for adults.
- If you are not staying in well-screened or air-conditioned rooms, use a pyrethroid-containing flying-insect spray in living and sleeping areas during evening and nighttime hours.
- Inform yourself and understand behaviors to minimize exposure to disease-causing vectors. Take the prescribe drug regimen and carefully following anti-mosquito measures will help prevent malaria.
- Prevention of malaria is a complex issue and requires expert advice from travel medicine specialists. Recommendations for prevention of malaria must be individualized.
- Visit a doctor (ideally 6-8 weeks) before your trip to get medicines you may need, if any.
- UCEAP student health insurance provides adequate coverage and medical evacuation coverage, if medically necessary.
- **UCEAP insurance covers anti-malarial medication if filled and purchased within 14 days before departure.**

RABIES

Rabies is found on all continents except Antarctica and is endemic in most African countries. Rabies is a preventable viral disease of mammals most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal.

Risk Assessment

- Risk exists in most of the country and is highest in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Mpumalanga provinces.
- Dog, jackal, mongoose, fox, and bat bites or scratches should be taken seriously and postexposure prophylaxis sought even in those already immunized.
- People usually get rabies from the bite of a rabid animal. It is also possible, but quite rare, that people may get rabies if infectious material from a rabid animal, such as saliva, gets directly into their eyes, nose, mouth, or a wound.
- The risk of rabies in an encounter with an animal and the precautions necessary to prevent rabies are the same as they are in the United States.

Risk Mitigation

- Consult with a health care professional during the required UCEAP travel consultation.
- Consider getting a rabies vaccine if your activities will put you in contact with animals (approximately \$160 at UC Student Health Services).
- It is always prudent to avoid approaching any wild or domestic animals.
- Do not handle or pet animals, especially stray dogs and cats.
- If you are bitten or scratched, wash the wound immediately with soap and water (and povidone iodine, if available), and seek medical attention immediately to determine if mediation or anti- rabies vaccine is needed. Immediate local treatment will substantially reduce the risk of rabies.

FOOD AND WATER SAFETY

Risk Assessment

- Unclean food and water can cause common travelers' diarrhea and other diseases. Diarrhea may be accompanied by nausea, vomiting, and/or fever. Immunocompromised individuals, including those with HIV/AIDS are particularly susceptible to foodborne diseases.
- Diarrhea among travelers occurs when microbes such as bacteria, parasites, or viruses are ingested from contaminated food or water. Traveler's diarrhea is most common when traveling to developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. It has been estimated that 20-50 percent of all international travelers develop diarrhea.
- According to UCT, High-quality tap (faucet) water is available across the city and is both palatable and safe to drink straight from the tap.

Risk Mitigation

- Consult with your doctor or travel clinic specialist pre-departure about medications you can take for self-treatment.
- Local pharmacies stock oral rehydration packets at a reasonable price.
- Wash your hands often and always before handling and consuming foods. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. It's a good idea to always keep some with you when you travel.
- Reduce your risk by sticking to safe food and water habits: eat fully cooked foods, fruits and vegetables you have washed and peeled yourself, and pasteurized dairy products.
- Careful attention to what you eat and drink can minimize the risk of traveler's diarrhea. Avoid food sold by street vendors, food served at room temperature, unwashed fruit and veg, and "bushmeat" (monkeys, bats, or other wild game).
- Do not eat raw or undercooked meat or fish. Some types of fish may contain poisonous biotoxins even when cooked. Barracuda in particular should never be eaten. Other fish that may contain toxins include red snapper, grouper, amberjack, and seabass.
- Bismuth subsalicylate (Pepto-Bismol) taken daily - two tablets, 2-4 times daily - has been shown to reduce the incidence of traveler's diarrhea from 40 percent to approximately 14 percent. This medication should not be taken by those who are intolerant or allergic to aspirin. Pepto-Bismol may cause a blackish discoloration of the tongue and stool.
- Certain antibiotics may be useful in the prevention of diarrhea, but the routine use of antibiotics for this purpose is not recommended. Antibiotics prescribed prior to travel for use if diarrhea develops should be considered for high-risk destinations.
- While tap water is reported to be safe to drink, bottled water that is sealed may be safer, particularly outside of Cape Town. Replacement of fluids and electrolytes is essential. Drink enough to maintain adequate urination. Non-alcoholic beverages such as tea, broth, and carbonated drinks are good. Avoid milk and milk products while experiencing diarrhea.

HEAT AND SUN-RELATED ILLNESSES

Risk Assessment

The sun is very strong in South Africa. This increases susceptibility to sunburn and dehydration. Chronic dehydration makes you feel weak, tired, and lightheaded and increases your risk of developing kidney stones. Heat-related illness, such as heat stroke, can be deadly.

Risk Mitigation

- Increase your daily fluid intake to compensate. At least 2 liters of fluids each day are essential.
- Recognize the symptoms of heat exhaustion: nausea, abdominal pain, dizziness, headache, confusion, poor coordination, and thirst. Stop activity, move into a cool room, elevate feet and legs, and sip fluids, to gradually return the body to a normal temperature.
- Seek medical attention for any of these marked symptoms, or those persisting beyond a few minutes.
- Eat and drink regularly, wear loose and lightweight clothing, and limit physical activity during high temperatures.
- If you are outside for many hours in heat, eat salty snacks and drink water to stay hydrated and replace salt lost through sweating.
- Be especially careful during summer months and at high elevation. Because sunlight reflects off snow, sand, and water, sun exposure may be increased during activities like skiing, swimming, and sailing.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

Risk Assessment

- A high level of medical care comparable to that in other industrialized countries is available in private medical clinics and hospitals in Cape Town, Johannesburg/Pretoria, and Durban. Medical care is substandard outside major cities. In remote areas, air evacuation is sometimes the only option for medical emergencies. Most doctors and hospitals will expect payment in cash. Plan accordingly.
- 24-hour emergency wards and helicopter emergency assist services are available.

Risk Mitigation

- The UCEAP travel insurance adequately covers medical evacuation from South Africa to the U.S. or to a country with suitable facilities, if medically necessary.
- The UCEAP Liaison Officer and the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) at UCT are your main point contacts and are well informed on all medical services available. They will support and guide you to seek care.
- Nearly all private South African hospitals are owned by one of the following three corporations. Information about locating private hospitals can be obtained by accessing these companies' websites.
 - Life Health Care
 - NetCare
 - Mediclinic
- Hospitals in Cape Town are world-class and one also exists on the UCT campus.

- The U.S. Embassy has a list of medical services providers available on their website, as does the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) at University of Cape Town.
- Be prepared for the inevitable cultural differences in medical services.
- If you will need a particular type of medical care, find out in advance whether such care is available, and budget accordingly, as payment will be required upfront. You can submit claims for reimbursement consideration through the UCEAP travel insurance plan following treatment.
- Do you take any medications or have any pre-existing medical conditions? Understand that laws governing availability of medications vary widely. Prescription medications are often not available in the needed formulations or strengths and specialty medical care to treat your condition may not be available locally.
- If you suffer from any allergies or medical condition, you should wear a medical ID bracelet, which is called a MedicAlert bracelet in South Africa, obtainable from MedicAlert.
- Pharmacies are well stocked and the equivalent to most American medicines is available. However, consider bringing a medication supply sufficient for your stay abroad, provided your U.S. doctor can prescribe the whole amount.
- Inform yourself about health management while in South Africa. Discuss options with your physician or health care provider. For example, do you have any allergies, such as to eggs, milk or to antibiotics that could cause problems during the trip?
- If you have diabetes, or other chronic conditions, consult with a physician in the U.S. before departure. For example, some medical devices, such as insulin pumps, may not be available. If you require these devices, take extras. In addition, certain formulations of drugs, such as insulin, may not be available. Be aware of alternative substitute formulations. There are instances where "type A" of insulin is available locally, but, not "type B" or "type C," which may include the kind that a student may currently be taking.
- The International Academic Programmes Office at UCT is available to assist if you get sick or injured. Have the local contact information with you at all times.
- UCT also offers 24/7 emergency response for medical or mental health emergencies including any type of counselling (following trauma/ substance abuse/ poison/ suicide/ bereavement/sexual assault) by dialing 084 124 or 8110 from any UCT line. An ambulance will respond immediately.
- Complete all routine and required medical exams before going to South Africa and obtain all required and recommended immunization.
- Follow advice from your UC Student Health Center, Travel Clinic consultations, and the online health certification course.

MENTAL HEALTH

According to the South African Department of Health, mental health services form part of integrated comprehensive Primary Health Care. The Mental Health Information Centre is South Africa's top mental health awareness initiative. All clinics have regular visits (for patient care, training, supervision and support) from dedicated mental health or psychiatric nurses from health centers, hospitals or mobile teams based in the district. All clinics have access (by referral or by periodic clinic visits) to specialist mental health expertise (psychiatrists, psychologists, occupational therapists) and social workers from district or regional level at least once a month. In every clinic there is a member of staff who has had

continuing education in psychiatry or mental health (including community aspects) in the last year. In every clinic there is at least one person trained in counseling and the management of victims of violence and rape. Records are kept according to protocol with emphasis on confidentiality and accuracy.

University of Cape Town

The Student Wellness Service offers a comprehensive outpatient health service by both medical practitioners and nurses, who are dedicated to helping students to remain healthy, and to make the correct life choices while pursuing their academic goals.

Students are encouraged to seek assistance and guidance as early as possible.

The Upper Campus Clinic will be open from 08:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday during term session on Level 6 in the Steve Biko Student Building.

A Nurse Practitioner is available on a walk-in basis - for more minor complaints.

A Psychologist is available for booked appointments – to be booked through SWS Reception on **021 650 1017**.

For counseling and support, contact the UCT Student Counselling Service (Psychological Services)

Wellness Service
28 Rhodes Avenue
Mowbray
Tel: 021 650 4589

The office is open from Monday to Friday, 08:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

UCT also offers 24/7 emergency response for medical or mental health emergencies including any type of counselling (following trauma/ substance abuse/ poison/ suicide/ bereavement/rape) by dialing 084 124 or 8110 from any UCT line. An ambulance will respond immediately.

Risk Mitigation

- The UCEAP travel insurance covers mental health treatment.
- The U.S. Embassy provides a list of counselors and can help establish contact to provide confidential treatment.
- Find out in advance whether such care is available, and budget accordingly as payment will be required upfront. You can submit claims for reimbursement consideration through the UCEAP travel insurance plan following treatment.
- If seeing a counselor/therapist in the U.S., consult carefully about health and medication management well before departure.
- Bring adequate supply of prescription medication to last through the stay along with a doctor's prescription and a letter indicating condition. Do not recommend sending prescription medication through the mail as packages can take weeks to arrive at their destination and it may be held up in customs for an indeterminate amount of time.

- Be prepared for the inevitable cultural differences in medical services. If you need a particular type of treatment find out in advance whether such care is available. Discuss options with your physician or health care provider.

ILLICIT DRUGS

Illicit drugs are becoming a concern for the local authorities because of the increasing availability and variety.

Alcoholism and multiple drug abuse have been associated with the alarming rate of crime and violence in South Africa. The possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs is not acceptable in South African institutions of education.

The possession or use of drugs is a crime in South Africa. Local law prescribes heavy penalties for drug use convictions, including marijuana offenses.

Risk Assessment

- While in South Africa, a U.S. citizen is subject to its laws and regulations that differ significantly from those in the United States and may not afford the protections available to the individual under U.S. law.
- Students violating South African laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested or imprisoned.
- Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in South Africa are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines.
- If a student is found with prohibited narcotic drugs (cannabis-\$6.00 an ounce; easy to purchase and popular to smoke, morphine, heroin, valium, cocaine, etc.), without a prescription, he/she is committing an offense under local law.
- When students are in an environment where they perceive an easier way to get away with smoking marijuana in public, for example, they may become lax and irresponsible about their choice to smoke and where to smoke it.

Risk Mitigation

- Decide to act responsibly.
- University of California and UCT expect students to comport themselves in a manner consistent with University policy and that they must conduct themselves in a lawful manner at all times.
- Violation of UCT and University of California policies subjects students to disciplinary procedures, including program dismissal.
- Violation of country laws exposes the student to criminal charges and/or arrest.

TRANSPORTATION, TRAFFIC, AND LOCAL TRAVEL

Risk Assessment

- Unlike the United States, where traffic moves on the right hand side of the road, traffic in South Africa moves on the left.
- Main roads and highways are in good condition and well maintained. Secondary roads may be in poor condition.
- The road crash rate is high.

- Public transportation is not recommended, except for luxury services; taxis are expensive and may not be reliable.
- Traffic accidents are largely attributed to poor driving standards (ignoring red lights, speeding, and drunk driving); exercise caution at traffic lights and stop signs.
- Fatal bus accidents are common. The causes range from driver fatigue to poor driver training, lack of highway policing and poor equipment maintenance.

Risk Mitigation

- Female students should never travel in groups smaller than three and never travel at night.
- Do not sit in the front seat of the taxi.
- If traveling within South Africa: Johannesburg, like other major international cities, has specific risk areas. Avoid Berea and Hillbrow. There are frequent muggings around the Rotunda bus terminus in the Central Business District.
- In all areas of South Africa, be cautious when out after dark; use the buddy system. Do not leave public places with strangers, invite strangers over, or leave friends alone or with strangers.
- Streets, even in urban areas, are not brightly lit at night.
- Safety while taking public transport: Try to stay away from isolated bus stops, especially after dark. On an empty bus, sit near the driver or conductor.
- Do not hitch hike.

MINIBUSES AND MINIBUS TAXIS

Risk Assessment

- While minibuses in most parts of Southern Africa are practical and frequent ways to get from one point to another, safety concerns in some areas should make you think twice before boarding.
- Minibus taxis travel everywhere in South Africa, covering relatively short hops from town to town.
- Minibus taxis tend to be old and in poor repair.
- Minibuses cover many routes not covered by the main bus service
- Minibuses are quite cheap and generally not a safe travel option.
- The reputations of minibus taxis in Johannesburg and Cape Town are particularly suspect; robberies are not uncommon, and news of "wars" (anything from scuffles to outright shooting) between competing drivers makes many travelers stick to other options.
- Minibus drivers may swerve in and out of traffic without warning to pick up customers.
- Some mini-buses are not legally licensed.
- Minibus drivers may work for hours without rest, because they are afraid of stopping to sleep along roads where they may encounter bandits.
- Minibus taxis can carry 16 passengers, but they often cram in many more. They tend to travel at high speeds and stop suddenly to pick up or drop off passengers.
- Reckless driving and speeding among South African long-distance minibus drivers has been a major problem in the past, but new, well-enforced legislation that mandates speed limits and license requirements has made this concern more infrequent.

Risk Mitigation

- Talk to local program staff to learn about minibus safety in your area.
- Do not even consider riding a minibus after dark.
- Be aware that minibus taxis are poorly maintained and rarely comply with safety standards. They require patience as they make many detours and changeovers at the taxi rank (hub) where the driver will wait for passengers to fill up the bus.
- If you must travel by minibus, get advice from Study Center staff on which companies are more reputable.

PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL

Risk Assessment

- There is a very high rate—approximately 41%—of pedestrian involvement in road fatalities. It is being reduced through road safety efforts. Nationwide, approximately 60% of pedestrians who are killed in road crashes are intoxicated.
- Failure of pedestrians to obey basic traffic laws is one of the most significant factors in the high number of road crashes
- Insufficient lighting on rural roads makes it difficult to see pedestrians.
- Serious injuries sustained by pedestrians while listening to headphones have increased. The use of headphones with handheld devices may pose a safety risk to pedestrians.

Risk Mitigation

- It is your responsibility to make yourself visible and avoid dangerous behavior and situations.
- Be mindful that traffic flows on the left (opposite of the U.S. driving system).
- Allow more time to reach your destination; do not rush.
- Use marked crossing facilities, e.g., footbridges, pedestrian subways, zebra crossings and light signal crossings.
- Find a safe location to cross the road if no crossing facility is available.
- Where no sidewalks are provided, it is usually safer to walk facing road traffic.
- Alcohol and drugs can impair your ability to walk safely, just like they do a person's ability to drive.
- Be safe and be seen: make yourself visible to drivers.
- Carry a flashlight at night.
- Wear retro-reflective and light colored clothing.
- Stand clear of buses, hedges, parked cars or other obstacles before crossing so drivers can see you.
- Make eye contact with drivers and pay attention to the environment around you. Stand clear of buses, hedges, parked cars or other obstacles before crossing so drivers can see you.
- Don't wear headphones or talk on a cell phone while crossing. If you are wearing headphones or talking on your cell phone while crossing the street, it is important to pay attention to your surroundings and take extra care to avoid dangerous situations.

OCEAN SAFETY

Risk Assessment

- If visiting South Africa's expansive coastline, be mindful of the possible presence of sharks when swimming or engaging in water sports.
- Accidents can occur when swimming in the ocean or walking/climbing on shore areas that are not designated lifeguard-patrolled beaches.
- Visitors from the United States and elsewhere have drowned when swimming in coastal waters, where strong riptides and wave patterns can change unexpectedly and overwhelm even excellent swimmers.

Risk Mitigation

- Swim only in designated swimming areas. Obey lifeguards and warning flags on beaches.
- Practice safe boating—follow all boating safety laws, do not drink alcohol if driving a boat, and always wear a life jacket.
- Do not dive into shallow water.
- Do not swim in freshwater in developing areas or where sanitation is poor.
- Avoid swallowing water when swimming. Untreated water can carry parasites can cause illness and infection.
- To prevent infections, wear shoes on beaches where there may be animal waste.

GENDER AND PERSONAL IDENTITY ISSUES

The number one concern for lesbian, bisexual, transgender and straight travelers, and their families, is staying safe while traveling.

Risk Assessment

- Although South Africa has a progressive legal stance toward LGBT rights compared to other African nations, application is not consistent and lesbians and gays face social discrimination and violence.
- The post-apartheid constitution outlaws discrimination based on sexual orientation, but, according to a 2013 Pew Research Center study, 61 percent of respondents said society should not accept homosexuality.
- According to the U.S. Department of State, societal discrimination against persons with disabilities and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community is a major human rights problem in South Africa,
- LGBT individuals were particularly vulnerable to violent crime due to anti-LGBT attitudes within the community and among police.
- Despite discrimination by some of the population, the South African LGBT community is strong.

Risk Mitigation

- Inform yourself. Research tolerance levels and laws for every country that you visit. Homosexuality is illegal in almost every African country. Remember that legal recognition and social acceptance may not be at the same level.
- Be careful and be safe. Social media sites are often used for entrapment in some countries, so when using a social media network to meet friends or locals.

- Further information is available from:

U.S. State Department LGBTI Travel Information:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go/lgbt.html>

The 2014 Human Rights Report for South Africa:

<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2014&dliid=236364#wrapper>

UCEAP Diversity portal: <http://eap.ucop.edu/Diversity/Pages/LGBTQ.aspx>

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Risk Assessment

- South Africa also has the highest incidence of reported rape in the world. Several foreigners have been the victims of rape.
- Many rape victims are killed or severely wounded either in the initial attack or afterward. Brutal mutilations and immolation of live victims is a disturbing, recent trend.
- One identified technique used by criminals is the use of Gamma Hydroxybutyric Acid (GHB), one form of a “date-rape drug,” to facilitate overpowering their victims. Study abroad students have been victimized in this manner.
- Adult women travelers are targeted, as it is believed that they are disease-free.

Risk Mitigation

- If you use earbuds, remember you cannot hear traffic, or somebody approaching behind you.
- Female students should never travel in groups smaller than three and never travel at night. Walking at night is highly inadvisable; instead, use reliable transportation to reach destinations, even if the trip is short.
- Avoid sitting or standing next to men in public, especially on public transportation.
- Do not sit in the front of the taxi.
- Be vigilant at all times and never venture out alone.
- Use the buddy system; go in groups. Walking alone anywhere, especially in remote areas, is not advised. Should you feel in any way at risk, proceed to a location (e.g. police, shopping center or service station) where help is available.
- Do not take short cuts through dark alleys, parks or across waste ground.
- Walk facing the traffic so a car cannot pull up behind you unnoticed.
- If choosing to drink, "Think before You Drink: Date Rape Drugs are Out There." Females should be alert for feeling dizzy, light-headed and nauseated and for needing fresh air.
- Rohypnol, once touted as the date-rape drug, is now green in color and not as easily soluble as it used to be. But women still need to be on the lookout.
- Never leave your drink alone. Watch as the bartender pours your drink. If you need to go to the restroom, have a friend watch your drink while you're gone.
- Party with a group of friends, and stick together. Do not let someone go off with a stranger, and do not leave someone behind.

- Due to the extremely high rate of HIV/AIDS in South Africa, anyone who is a victim of rape or sexual assault should seek medical attention immediately, to include including post-exposure prophylaxis (“PEP”) against HIV and other STDs, and report the crime to the police.

In the case of a sexual assault, the University of Cape Town recommends the following action:

- Call the CPS office immediately at 021 650 2222/3. CPS officers are trained in dealing with these types of situation, allow them to assist.
- Call a friend or relative for support.
- Ensure that the matter is reported to the local South African Police Service (SAPS) as soon as possible.
- It is important to remember that all evidence will be lost if a rape victim takes a bath, shower, or changes clothes.
- There is always a consultant on duty who can be called out to ensure that all the critical procedures have been conducted and offer advice.

CRIME

Although the vast majority of students live in South Africa without incident, students should be aware that criminal activity, often violent, occurs routinely. Notwithstanding government anti-crime efforts, violent crimes such as armed robbery, carjacking, mugging, "smash and grab" attacks on vehicles and other incidents are regularly reported by visitors. Although law enforcement successes have resulted in statistical declines in most major crime categories in the recent decade, the murder rate remains very high and is among the worst in the world.

Analysis of the most recent crime statistics indicates the number of violent crimes has increased. These crimes include murder, aggravated robbery, and residential robberies / home invasions.

Criminal activity such as assault, armed robbery, and theft is particularly high in areas around hotels, tourist attractions, and public transportation centers, especially in major cities. Despite the statistics, people travel, work, and live safely in South Africa every day.

Victims of crime in South Africa report encountering numerous challenges navigating through the criminal justice system. Slow response times, corruption, and/or lack of follow-up to reported crimes make it very difficult for constituents to seek necessary administrative or even psychological closure.

Risk Assessment

- Criminal activity, such as assault, armed robbery, and theft is particularly high in areas surrounding public transportation centers, especially in major cities.
- South Africa has a high crime rate; crimes including murder, carjacking, serious assault, rape, robbery, and burglary are relatively common. Poverty is a major cause for high crime rates in Cape Town. Crime, especially violent crime, is more prevalent in the poor suburbs of Cape Town than in wealthier areas.

- Theft of passports and other valuables is most likely to occur at airports, bus terminals, and train stations.
- A number of U.S. citizens have reported to the U.S. Embassy that they were mugged or attacked on commuter and metro trains, especially between Johannesburg and Pretoria.
- Crime also occurs in and around railway stations and on trains.
- Crime is significantly higher after dark in the centers of major cities and in township areas. In all areas of South Africa, students should be cautious.
- Muggings have become common along many popular routes on Table Mountain in Cape Town, and at Lover's Walk near the UCT campus.
- Civil unrest is a major problem in South Africa. Disruptive strikes and demonstrations with the potential for violence occur regularly.
- Home invasions and business robberies are common, and deterrent security measures are typically necessary. Most violent crimes involve the use of handguns or knives.
- Criminals may use a variety of ruses to distract targets or draw the attention of potential victims, including pretending to need some type of assistance.
- UCT cautions international students are often approached by street children and beggars for handouts. Many social workers counsel against giving money to the children as it usually gets handed over to an older person or it is used to purchase drugs. Efforts to address local crime by increasing security in and around UCT are ongoing.

Risk Mitigation

- Female students should never travel in groups smaller than three and never travel at night.
- Avoid sitting or standing next to men in public, especially on public transportation.
- Avoid projecting an overtly wealthy image and stay clear of poorer areas.
- Areas that should be avoided include: Khayelitsha, Mitchell's Plain, Kruispad, Gugulethu, Nyanga, Langa, Cape Town Central, and Landsdowne. Most of these suburbs are situated east of the city center in the area of Cape Town International Airport.
- Visitors to the city's main attractions, such as the Virginia and Albert Waterfront and Table Mountain, should also be cautious of theft and physical attacks aimed at robbery.
- During the past few years, several foreigners have been attacked, robbed, and even killed while hiking in unprotected areas of Table Mountain and adjacent mountain trails.
- Pick-pocketing and snatch-and-run theft are common in the city center and waterfront areas.
- Do not sit in the front of a taxi.
- Be vigilant at all times and never venture out alone.
- Use the buddy system; go in groups. Walking alone anywhere, especially in remote areas, is not advised. Should you feel in any way at risk, proceed to a location (e.g. police, shopping center or service station) where help is available.
- Pay close attention to your personal security at all times and monitor the media for information about possible new safety or security risks.
- Avoid isolated beaches, lookouts and picnic areas.
- If out after dark; do not go out alone.
- Avoid the areas of Berea and Hillbrow in Johannesburg and the beachfront in Durban.

- As crime rates are generally high in the townships, you should only visit township areas with an organized group by a reputable company.
- Do not accept "assistance" from anyone or agree to assist others with ATM transactions.
- Remain wary of and situation where a stranger is asking for assistance. Contact police or relevant authorities to respond to them. Police are usually responsive to calls for help, especially by foreigners.
- If giving a credit card to a store or restaurant employee for processing do not let them take the card out of your sight.
- Passport and money (divided into more than one stash and taken as traveler's checks where practical) should be kept separately in inside zipped pockets or under your clothes in a security flat money belts.
- Carry a "decoy" wallet with a small amount of cash.
- Only a minimal amount of cash, sufficient to reach the destination should be carried.
- Carry your bag close to you with the clasp facing inwards. Carry your keys/security entrance cards in your pocket.
- If someone grabs your bag, let it go. Do not offer resistance. If you hang on, you could get hurt. Remember your safety is more important than your property.
- If you go to the clubs, never leave your drink unattended and NEVER stay alone or leave a friend alone.
- Carry mobile phones. U.S. mobile phones may not work in South Africa, but rental mobile phones are widely available and may be rented from kiosks at major airports. The nationwide emergency number for the police is 10111, and the nationwide number for ambulance service is 10177. It is not necessary to dial an area code for these numbers. Note: The rate of response varies from to area to area, but is generally slower than response to 911 calls in the United States.
- Register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's travel registration web site (<https://travelregistration.state.gov/>) so that you can obtain updated information on travel and security within South Africa.

If you think someone is following you, check by crossing the street - more than once if necessary to see if he/she follows. If you are still worried, get to the nearest place where there are other people a pub or anywhere with a lot of lights on and call the police.

- If you use headphones, remember you cannot hear traffic, or somebody approaching behind you.
- Do not take short cuts through dark alleys, parks or across waste ground.
- Walk facing the traffic so a car cannot pull up behind you unnoticed. If choosing to drink, "Think before You Drink: Date Rape Drugs are Out There." Females should be alert for feeling dizzy, light-headed and nauseated and for needing fresh air.
- Rohypnol, once touted as the date-rape drug, is now green in color and not as easily soluble as it used to be. But women still need to be on the lookout. Never leave your drink alone.
- Watch as the bartender pours your drink. If you need to go to the restroom, have a friend watch your drink while you're gone. Party with a group of friends, and stick together. Do not let someone go off with a stranger, and do not leave someone behind. If you are approached by beggars, ignore them. If you wish to help, donate your change to a registered charity, contact SHAWCO. SHAWCO is

affiliated to UCT and their mission is "To improve the quality of life of individuals in developing communities within the Cape metropolitan area".

- All strikes, rallies, and large public demonstrations should be avoided.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones have become everyday accessories - and equally are attractive targets for thieves. A very small percentage of these thefts actually occur when the owner is the victim of a street robbery - most thefts are a result of owners leaving mobile phones unattended in their cars or elsewhere. Listed below you will find some helpful advice from Crime News, South Africa to help you secure your mobile phone:

- Do not bring attention to your mobile phone by leaving it in view on tables in pubs, cafes, restaurants and other public places
- Do not leave your phone unattended in jacket pockets and bags
- Be discreet if you have to use your mobile phone in the street
- Make sure you lock the keypad using a pin number when you are not using your phone. If it is stolen it cannot be used to make calls
- Mark your phone (and its battery and other accessories) with your postcode. Do this by using an ultra-violet marker pen. If your phone is stolen and later recovered by the Police this mark will make it easier to trace it back to you.
- If your mobile phone is stolen, call your service provider and quote your IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity) number (or in some cases the last 9 digits of your SIM card). Using this information, your service provider should be able to isolate your mobile phone so that it cannot be used. Keep a record of your IMEI number.

ATM FRAUD, CREDIT CARD, AND FINANCIAL / ROMANCE SCAMS

Risk Assessment

- ATM fraud includes the placement of a skimming device on the ATM itself. Card skimming is the copying of encoded information from the magnetic strip of a legitimate card, making use of a card reader, for fraudulent purposes and utilizing the data to encode counterfeit, lost, or stolen cards. Another type of ATM scam is the ruse of a "helpful citizen" who offers to assist you during your transaction and then steal your money.
- Credit card scams are also prevalent. Most businesses, including gas stations and restaurants, have portable credit card machines that are brought to the customer to allow them to swipe personally. Despite these safeguards, credit cards are still frequently cloned, resulting in exorbitant fraudulent charges.
- There are continuing reports of "lonely hearts" scams originating in South Africa. "Lonely hearts" scams are a growing problem with fake romantic relations online to lure victims into sending money to support education, health, or job problems. I
- In many scam scenarios, the correspondent suddenly falls into dire circumstances overseas (e.g. an arrest or a horrible car accident) sometime after a connection is made, and requests money for resulting expenses such as hospital bills or legal fees.

- Often, an individual purporting to be a doctor will contact the victim requesting money be sent to the hospital on behalf of the correspondent. Note that any doctor, lawyer, or police offer making contact and requesting money is likely part of the scam.

Risk Mitigation

- If you need to use an ATM do so from inside a controlled area.
- Never give your card or Personal Identification Number (PIN) to anyone, for any reason.
- Never accept help from strangers when using an ATM and be wary of strangers asking for or offering help.
- Stand close to the ATM and use your body and hand as a shield to conceal your PIN when entering it on the keypad.
- Insist credit card transactions be processed in your presence.
- If the merchant doesn't have a wireless point-of-sale (POS) device, accompany the card to the device.
- Do not disclose personal details over the phone or online -- even in your profile on social networking sites. For example, if you are a widow, you may not want to make this known on a dating web site -- scammers thrive on information like this.
- Never send money to someone you have not met in person without verifying their identity.
- Shred any documents containing personal information instead of throwing them away.
- Always secure hard copies of documents containing personal information.
- Carefully consider what information you disclose electronically on the Internet, especially where networks are open. This includes social media, websites, social networks, and chat rooms.
- Do not disclose personal information over the Internet or phone without knowing exactly who you are disclosing information to and for what purpose.

CAMPUS SECURITY

As on UC campuses, preventing crime is a top priority at the South African campuses. UCT has invested heavily in protecting the institution from a security standpoint. Some measures taken include installation of CCTV cameras with wide coverage and a reaction team, lighting installation throughout campus, adding external patrols, a safe walk route also covered with alarm beacons and CCTV, secure fencing around private areas such as residences, and a crime awareness campaign with plans for further improvements underway. Bi-weekly reports are being posted to the UCT's website. Theft is the most common crime on campuses.

UCT

Campus Protection Services (CPS) operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

CPS is committed to protecting the safety of the university community and its property, as well as maintaining order in accordance with university policy.

The staff is available at all times to give assistance. The CPS 24-hour hotline is 021 650 2222 / 3 (Use the last four digits only if calling from a UCT extension).

CPS operates from six service centres:

- Burnage House - adjacent to Leo Marquard Hall, in Burnage Road, just off Main Road, Rosebank
- Upper Campus - Robert Leslie Social Sciences Building, University Avenue
- Middle Campus - Kramer Building
- Medical Campus - Barnard Fuller Building
- Forest Hills Residence - Main Road, Mowbray

Hiddingh Campus - Orange Street, Cape Town

Risk Mitigation

- You are always safer when walking in groups; use a buddy system.
- Anticipate and recognize a crime or safety risk; trust your intuition.
- Involve CPS to reduce or to eliminate any perceived risk.
- Be aware of your surroundings, and particularly the people in your environment. Criminals rely on the community being indifferent.
- Be alert for suspicious persons in and around campus buildings and in parking areas.
- If you suspect anything, call CPS immediately on 021 650 2222 / 3 (use the last four digits only if calling from a UCT extension).

The best way of preventing property theft is to reduce or remove the opportunity.

- Whenever you leave your residence, lock the door and close windows.
- Never leave access doors propped open.
- Do not grant access to anyone you do not recognize.
- Do not leave any backpack or bags in open public places.
- Have emergency numbers handy at all times.

In Residence

- Keep emergency numbers next to your phone or fixed on your desk.
- Secure your door and window when you are alone and while you are asleep.
- Do not leave keys hidden in a traditional location, such as under the doormat.
- Do not put your address on your key ring.
- Get to know your neighbors. You can keep an eye on each other's rooms when you are not there.
- Call 021 650 2222/3 to report suspicious persons or activities in or around your neighborhood if you live on UCT premises.
- Do not leave any messages on your door to indicate that you will be away for any length of time.
- Do not keep large sums of money inside your room.
- Take your valuables home when you go on vacation.

When Walking on Campus

- Remember you are safer when walking in a group, especially at night.
- Do not drink and walk
- Get into the habit, when possible, of being escorted by a security official when walking late at night within UCT premises. Call 021 650 2222 or 021 650 2121 to arrange for an escort. The Jammie

Shuttle also runs till 1am every night. Make use of these during the hours – the service is there for your use.

- Practice using the "Blue Safe Walk" (watch out for the blue flashing lights that starts at Upper campus at the tunnel just below the M3). You have the advantage of being close to the emergency phones, just press the button and it will link you directly to the control room which is monitoring the area 24/7 by surveillance cameras).
- Avoid walking in dark and deserted areas and stay away from short cuts.
- Do not walk with headphones in your ears. This makes you a walking target.
- Do not walk and talk/sms on your cellphone, this makes you an easy target.
- Do not stop or offer help when unknown people try flag you down
- Ensure that you are not walking around with baggage that looks like a laptop holder, try and use backpacks instead.

When Catching a Taxi

- Do not enter an empty or almost empty taxi.
- When boarding, check to see that it's a legal taxi by checking the route on the doors.
- Take only taxis that are clearly identified with official markings.
- Details of owners should be on the door.
- When the taxi goes off route, voice your concern and demand that the driver stop to let you out.
- Refrain from sitting at the back of the taxi.
- Women are advised to not travel alone when using public transport.
- Remember there is safety in numbers, so travel in a group if possible.
- Avoid showing any expensive jewelry, cameras, mobile phones and other valuables.
- Keep your handbag with you, keep it closed or zipped, and do not leave it unattended.
- Keep your mobile phone hidden.
- Do not carry large sums of money with you.
- Carry your wallet in an inside pocket – never in the rear pocket of your trousers.
- If you are threatened, cooperate and hand over your valuables.

Shuttle Services

The Jammie Shuttle provides convenient and safe bus transport between UCT's campuses and residences during term time.

Not only does it provide a constant service during the day from Monday to Friday from 07h30 to 18h00, but it also operates a night service from Monday to Thursday from 18h30 to 01h00 and on Friday from 18h30 to 22h00. Pick up points:

- Leo Marquard / Tugwell
- Forest Hills / Varietas Residence
- Liesbeek Gardens
- Clarinus
- Medical School
- Hiddingh Hall

The Jammie Shuttle offices are based on the lower campus near Leo Marquard Residence.

For more information, contact them on 021 689 3496 or 021 685 7135 or view the [Jammie Shuttle webpages](#).

Safe Escort Service

In the event that the Jammie Shuttle does not function (after 01h00), assistance is offered to students and staff by escorting them on foot or giving them a lift from campus to their residences.

However it important to understand that Jammie Shuttle's core function on campus is not individual transportation of patrons, therefore some patience is required for delays when officers may be attending to other problems.