

bahia brazil

intensive language and culture / summer 2013



cíee

program handbook

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Part I: The CIEE Programs in Brazil | 2 |
| WELCOME TO YOUR STUDY ABROAD ADVENTURE IN BRAZIL | 2 |
| Salvador, Bahia | 2 |
| YOUR HOST | 2 |
| Spanish Speaking Students with No Portuguese Language Background | 2 |
| Faculty | 2 |
| Libraries and Bookstores | 2 |
| Meeting Brazilian Students | 3 |
| Student ID | 3 |
| Cultural Activities and Field Trips | 3 |
| Community Service Opportunities in Bahia | 3 |
| ACADEMIC CULTURE | 3 |
| Nature of Classes | 4 |
| CIEE Community Language Commitment | 4 |
| LOCAL VARIATIONS ON CIEE ACADEMIC POLICIES | 4 |
| Calendar and Grades | 4 |
| Students in Their Senior Year Abroad | 5 |
| Late Arrival/Early Departure | 5 |
| Syllabi Requirements | 5 |
| THE CIEE PROGRAM | 5 |
| Departure and Arrival | 5 |
| Discount on Airfare | 5 |
| Online Pre-Departure and On-Site Orientations | 5 |
| CIEE Program Staff | 6 |
| CIEE Office | 7 |
| HOUSING AND MEALS | 7 |
| Part II: Before You Leave Home | 9 |
| A LOT TO LEARN | 9 |
| ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS | 10 |
| Passports | 10 |
| Visas | 10 |
| Documents for non-U.S. Citizens | 11 |
| Immunization Records | 11 |
| HEALTH | 11 |
| Vaccinations | 12 |
| INSURANCE | 13 |
| Accident and Sickness Insurance | 13 |
| PERSONAL FINANCES | 14 |
| Cost of Living | 14 |
| Financial Arrangements | 14 |
| PACKING AND BAGGAGE | 14 |
| PREPARING FOR CULTURAL ADAPTATION | 16 |
| The Glimpse Foundation | 16 |
| Part III: Living in Brazil | 16 |
| MEETING BRAZILIANS | 16 |
| Cultural Note: Personal Space in Bahia | 17 |
| Cultural Note: Minority issues | 17 |
| Cultural Note: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Students | 17 |
| Cultural Note: Women and Gender Issues | 18 |
| SAFETY PRECAUTIONS | 18 |
| COMMUNICATIONS AND MAIL | 19 |
| MONEY AND BANKING | 20 |
| MEDICAL FACILITIES | 21 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| GETTING AROUND..... | 21 |
| RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS..... | 22 |
| ILLEGAL DRUGS..... | 22 |
| VOTING WHILE ABROAD..... | 22 |
| INCOME TAX..... | 22 |
| EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION | 22 |
| Part IV: Policies and Procedures..... | 23 |
| A NOTE FROM CIEE..... | 23 |
| Credits and Grades..... | 23 |
| CONCLUSION: THE CHALLENGE IS UP TO YOU..... | 25 |
| Part V: Additional Resources..... | 26 |
| RECOMMENDED READING..... | 26 |
| WEBSITES..... | 27 |
| SUGGESTED PACKING CHECKLIST | 28 |

Part I: The CIEE Programs in Brazil

WELCOME TO YOUR STUDY ABROAD ADVENTURE IN BRAZIL

The fifth largest country in the world, Brazil borders all South American countries except Ecuador and Chile, covering nearly half the continent. About two-thirds of Brazilians live in the cities of the mountainous tableland of the south and east coasts. The country's other major geographic region is the Amazon River basin, mostly lowland tropical rain forests, or *selvas*.

I went to Salvador to study Afro-Atlantic religious and artistic continuities. As a CIEE-Bahia student, I volunteered at a Candomblé religious house (Ilé Gantois), took Capoeira classes with one of the city's great *Mestres* (Cobra Mansa), and I took Samba classes at a local dance school (FUNCEB). This is a port city, a land of contrasts. It is one of the most complex spaces I have ever been to and I will always draw from the experience. .

Salvador, Capital of the State of Bahia

Salvador da Bahia is located on the north-eastern Atlantic coast of Brazil and has a population of over 3.6 million inhabitants.

Salvador was Brazil's first capital and it was one of the largest slave ports in the Americas during the African slave trades. The West African and Central West African influence on Bahia is marked. Salvador has thousands of Candomblé houses (a Yoruba religion that thrives in Brazil and especially in Salvador) and it is mainly through the religious systems that West African music, dance, aesthetics, cuisine, languages, and visual arts took root and continue to develop in Bahia.

As a student in the program, you will have the opportunity to volunteer in education projects throughout the city (including projects run inside of a Candomblé house) and explore the multiple layers of the city of Salvador by studying and working in many neighborhoods. CIEE is located in the center of the city of Salvador (the neighborhood of Canela), steps away from the city's most important theatres, music venues, and performing arts spaces (Teatro Castro Alves and Teatro Vila Velha).

YOUR HOST

Universidade Católica do Salvador (UCSal)

Established in 1961, the Universidade Católica do Salvador (UCSal) is the highest ranking private university in northeast Brazil. The University has a particular strength in music,

business administration and communication, but also offers courses in many departments including biology, education, geography, history, mathematics, and music. The UCSal campus is housed in renovated monasteries and modern day buildings. The Portuguese language program is located on the UFBA campus of Letras in the neighborhood of Ondina.

Year-Long Students

CIEE Bahia year-long students take at least one CIEE course during their first semester. During the second semester, year-long students staying in Bahia may opt out of the CIEE required course. In that case, second semester students can take the Portuguese course and all other courses at UCSAL.

Spanish Speaking Students with No Portuguese Language Background

Students who are native Spanish speakers or who have advanced level Spanish are allowed to participate in the CIEE Brazil program. You will be enrolled in a Beginner Portuguese course designed specifically for Spanish speakers (as long as there are at least 5 students for the language class). Spanish-speaking students with no Portuguese are highly encouraged to arrange for an individual class with a Portuguese language teacher prior to departure from the U.S.

Faculty

In Bahia the Portuguese language courses are taught by language professors from the Department of Languages at the Universidade Federal de Bahia. UCSal courses are taught by UCSal professors; and the CIEE electives are taught by CIEE professors. Many of the faculty members are nationally and internationally recognized as experts in their fields.

Libraries and Bookstores

At UCSal, the libraries are located next to the classrooms. These libraries have books, articles, journals, and reading rooms. There are also special meeting rooms where students can gather for study group sessions. Internet access is also available.

Libraries usually have more restrictions on taking out books than in the United States and photocopying (5-10 cents a copy) of large sections of books is common in Brazil. Past participants have noted that photocopying costs add up quickly so please make sure you plan ahead! Gaining access to a required text can be a frustrating experience.

***Tip: Free Activities at the University!**

If you want to save money and meet Brazilian students at UCSal or, you should go to the events that are advertised on signs at the campuses. Most of the activities advertised on campus are free! Head to UCSal or the Portuguese language program at UFBA to study. These are great campuses to meet local students.

Meeting Brazilian Students

Almost all of your classes will be held in buildings filled with Brazilian university students. Taking part in student activities is a great way to meet Brazilian students. Signs announcing student activities (films, sports clubs, parties, etc.) are posted throughout university buildings.

Student ID

In Bahia, students will not receive an ID, but students may purchase an International Student Identity Card (ISIC) on their own to receive student discounts for films, shows and travel. ISIC cards can be purchased from STA in the United States, www.statravel.com. Other student ID cards are often accepted for discounts as long as the card clearly shows that you are, in fact, a current student.

Cultural Activities and Field Trips

CIEE program activities include visits to a marine biology nature reserve, the museum of Afro-Brazilian history, plays and local performances, a soccer game, a folkloric dance show, a percussion lesson, and a Candomblé ceremony. Community service and volunteer opportunities are available for interested students. The resident staff will be able to assist everyone on-site. The program also includes a three-day excursion outside of Salvador. A final schedule of excursions will be available during orientation.

Community Service Opportunities in Bahia

Semester and Year students in Bahia are encouraged to do volunteer work in the community. CIEE works with a handful of organizations such as orphanages, daycare centers, and community centers. CIEE will support individual efforts of students that would like to volunteer at institutions outside the ones it already works with. Community service is always challenging but also an excellent way to become involved and have productive experiences outside the norms of student life. After orientation onsite the resident staff will talk to you about available existing opportunities.

Participants say... The excursions and field trips allow me to understand that the Bahia immersion experience is really about living in what I study and being open to let places, histories, and cultural traditions transform the way I see the world. Cities, towns, villages are texts that can be read on so many levels.

ACADEMIC CULTURE

Adjusting to Brazilian university life and accepting its different perspective on the academic process may be one of the greater challenges confronting you during your time in Brazil. You are probably accustomed to receiving clearly defined curricula with daily or weekly reading assignments outlined, mid-term exam dates set well in advance, and course material outlined at the beginning in a syllabus.

In contrast, Brazilian professors usually leave students on their own to determine how much work to do related to the course. The Brazilian university system is designed for motivated, self-sufficient students who are deeply interested in the subject matter and able to create their own structure to stay on top of the course material. Courses tend to be theoretically oriented and demand that the student uses his/her own time to do case studies and readings that are often not covered during class time. Past CIEE participants have commented that U.S. students may perceive the workload to be light with very few assignments. However, much of the course occurs outside of the classroom and students are expected to be self-drive. You will receive a bibliography, and you will be expected to read as many of the items listed as possible, selecting those that most specifically meet your needs and interests. In some courses, your entire grade is based on a single term paper or critical analysis of a particular article. This paper should be based on fairly extensive reading, some of it specified in the course bibliography.

Remember to consult the CIEE Resident Director regularly to keep your workload in check. Even if you do not feel that you have anything specific to discuss, it is a good idea to meet with CIEE staff and share some feedback on your academic progress during the semester.

Past participants have occasionally received relatively low grades because they did not realize how much they should have been doing during the semester, even though it was not specifically assigned. This relative academic freedom places a good deal of responsibility on you— it may leave you at times without a clear sense of direction. The familiar adage that you get as much out of a class as you put into it particularly applies to study in Brazil!

Group work is another feature of some of the classes in the Brazilian university system. You may find this largely unfamiliar and perhaps difficult to adjust to. Your grade in some courses is based on the submission of a single group project or paper. To get the most out of this experience, you will have to make an extra effort to integrate yourself into the group. Don't be afraid of taking these kinds of classes simply because of possible language difficulties. Brazilian students will generally respect the perspective you have to offer, and you should see it as an ideal opportunity to get to know Brazilians.

Some quick facts: In a given course, you may have only one essay or exam. The rest of the grade will be based on attendance, participation, and group work. Readings are not necessarily touched upon in class but the professor will expect students to be able to incorporate readings in the exam/essay. There is a university-wide exam period (mid-semester and end of semester) so you can expect to have multiple essays and exams simultaneously. Courses are given in units (*unidades*) and after each unit, you should review the materials. Most professors do not provide review sessions and they expect students to do review work on their own or in small groups (a great way to meet more university students).

Participants say...

There is a fundamentally different approach to education here. One of the most valuable parts of my Bahia experience was seeing the differences in pedagogy and learning. I saw a system without a test every week and without someone looking over your shoulder to make sure you'd done the reading; it was extremely eye opening and challenging. I felt in charge of my own learning and did not learn for the sake of tests and grades—I wanted to explore the topic deeply and this system allowed me to do that without worrying so much about staying on top of the small things (homework, quizzes). I could dedicate my time to doing the coursework and also pursuing my own interests within the course.

The CIEE academic year program takes place from late June to mid-June of the following year, and the CIEE calendar year program coincides with the Brazilian academic year, taking place from early January to mid-December. Academic year students have a five week break between the fall and spring semesters and are encouraged to travel independently throughout other parts of Brazil and Latin America. Calendar year students have a break of five weeks between the Brazilian first and second semesters (the North American Spring and Fall

semesters). **Students are responsible for housing and meals during these breaks.**

Nature of Classes

The ILCP courses are with CIEE students only. Semester participants who enroll directly in host university courses at UCSal take classes in Portuguese with Brazilian students.

CIEE Community Language Commitment

Students take part in the CIEE Community Language Commitment by speaking Portuguese at all times (except in emergencies). The commitment fosters a learning community that recognizes the central importance of learning this amazing language. Developing the language is the most direct point of entry into the vibrant cultures of Brazil.

LOCAL VARIATIONS ON CIEE ACADEMIC POLICIES

This section supplements information on CIEE general academic policies contained in [Part IV](#).

Calendar and Grades

Past participants in the CIEE program in Brazil have sometimes had difficulty receiving proper credit in a timely manner. Note that Brazilian universities are on the opposite academic calendar from North American universities.

Semester I (North American Spring) regular university classes begin in early March and end in late June. Semester II (North American Fall) regular university classes begin in early August and end in early December.

If all goes smoothly, grades for Semester I should arrive on your campus by early September. Grades for Semester II should arrive on campus by March. If you are a graduating senior or concerned about the timing of receiving your grades, please consider this information when choosing to participate in this program.

Please note that specific dates are subject to change in Brazil, and schedules can vary from class to class. Though the semester program end dates have been set, it is possible that your exams will end earlier; if this is the case and you wish to leave early, you can change your return flight. However, you may not make special arrangements to take early exams.

Sometimes circumstances will dictate an exam schedule change; e.g., a professor may schedule his or her exam later than the program end date, or a strike may force everyone to change. This is the only case in which you may arrange early exams.

Students in Their Senior Year Abroad

Students who study abroad during their senior year must complete their academic work in a timely fashion. If you are a graduating senior or concerned about receiving your grades, please consider this information when choosing to participate in this program.

Late Arrival/Early Departure

As a CIEE student in Brazil, you agree to abide by the rules and regulations established by CIEE Brazil and CIEE Bahia. Thus you are responsible for participation in the program through its official end date. Students not following CIEE guidelines must understand that once they leave the program site for reasons other than those outlined in the Attendance Policy in [Part IV](#), their grades are final and are not subject to dispute.

In the event of a forced or unforeseen early departure from the program, any alternate arrangement to complete course work must be approved in writing by a representative of your institution and the CIEE Chief Academic Officer.

Syllabi Requirements

Because you will be enrolled in a number of different university courses, you are responsible for collecting the syllabus for each course. CIEE on-site staff has many syllabi on record and may assist you in retrieving syllabi. All syllabus translations are the students' responsibility.

Participants say...

I learned a great deal through my courses especially because I loved the Bahian realities I was studying through my volunteer work at a community center. The community linked me to this city and allowed me to explore the real Salvador. By putting myself out there as a volunteer I now feel like I can do anything.

THE CIEE PROGRAM

Departure and Arrival

How do I get there?

The cost of transportation to and from the program is not included in the CIEE program fee. Students should make their flight

reservations to arrive on the date and time indicated in the **Program Dates, Details and Updates** reading in your account. Those students whose arrival coincides with the stated times will be greeted by CIEE Resident Staff. Students arriving outside of the stated times are personally responsible for transportation from the airport to the designated orientation site. Specific information on the location of the orientation, including the hotel address, contact information, and detailed directions to the site, will be included in a **Final Details** email, sent to both you and your Emergency Contact. This is sent about a month before departure.

Discount on Airfare

As a part of your program fees you will receive an iNext (www.iNext.com) insurance card/student ID that allows a \$15.00 discount on flights costing \$100.01 to \$249.99 and a \$25.00 discount on flights costing \$250.00 or more when you purchase your airfare through Student Universe (www.studentuniverse.com). Simply type iNext in the Promo Code text box when you go to finalize your reservation. Student Universe is a travel agency that offers plane tickets at a reduced student rate. Aside from Student Universe's already discounted student fares and the iNext discount, most Student Universe tickets allow changes to the ticket for as little as \$50. If you have one of these tickets, you can make your plans to travel independently even after you have already arrived on-site. Your iNext card is valid for 365 days and the code can be applied towards any two airfares purchased while you are covered by iNext.

* Tip: Phone home

Upon your arrival, it is a good idea to call your parents or emergency contact(s). A brief phone call telling them that you have arrived and are fine will relieve them of any worries. At this time you can also pass along exact information on how they may reach you.

What happens if I arrive early?

If you plan to arrive before the orientation begins, feel free to contact the orientation hotel listed on the **Program Dates, Details and Updates** in your account to make reservations for additional nights. The orientation hotels tend to be expensive hotels. You may find a more moderately priced hotel in a travel book, like *The Lonely Planet*.

Online Pre-Departure and On-Site Orientations

Students begin their study abroad experience before even leaving home by participating in a CIEE *Online Pre-Departure Orientation*. Meeting

with students online, the Resident Director shares information about the program and site, highlights issues that alumni have said are important, and gives students time to ask any questions before leaving home. The online orientation allows students to connect with others in the group, reflect on what they want to get out of the program, and learn what others in the group would like to accomplish. The CIEE goals for the pre-departure orientation are simple: to help students understand more about the program and site, as well as their goals for the program, so that they arrive to the program well-informed and return home having made significant progress toward their goals.

As an ILCP participant, you will have an onsite orientation when you first arrive. You will then have a second academic orientation after the ILCP, before the start of the regular semester.

All first semester students must attend the two-day orientation at the beginning of the program in Salvador. You will receive an introduction to the country, cultures, and academic program as well as important information about housing (including details about your host family), safety, food, cultures, etc. If you are delayed en route to the orientation site, you must leave a message with the CIEE home office by calling 1-800-40-STUDY as soon as you realize you will be late.

Resident staff is also available to help you with your adjustment throughout the semester.

Participants say...

The orientation is very important to understand the registration process without too much hassle. It is important to stay in touch with your home school if you decide to take totally different courses. There are so many things to think about, you need this orientation to stay focused!

The staff in Brazil was very helpful in providing me with a more personal orientation. Especially, staff was there with support and community resources on my personal issues of being Asian American and gay in Brazil. They were well informed and pointed me in all the right directions.

There will be an additional academic orientation session for semester and academic year students in which registration, add/drop procedures, and deadlines are outlined in detail. You must register and make any changes to your schedule through the CIEE office. Any

special arrangements with professors must also be made with the approval of the Resident Director of the program.

Second semester students who remain at the same location in Brazil do not repeat the orientation for the second semester.

CIEE Program Staff

Salvador, Bahia

Jacob Dyer, Resident Director. Jacob became the director of the CIEE Bahia Study Center in January 2013. He has a Ph.D. in English (Caribbean literatures and translation theory) from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and a long history in Brazil and Latin America. Before joining CIEE, Jacob was a Fulbright Scholar in Salvador (2010-2011, African Brazilian religions) and he also did research in Salvador in 2007 (Romani diaspora studies). Jacob has an M.A. in Caribbean and Latin American Cultural Studies from La Universidad de la Habana (Cuba) and the State University of New York at Buffalo. He knows CIEE from the perspective of a study abroad participant as well: he is a CIEE Bahia alumnus (2002), a CIEE Seville alumnus (1999-2000), and he did a semester-long program in Havana (2001).

Flávia Santana, Operations Manager and Housing Coordinator. Flávia joined CIEE Bahia Staff in June 2003. Her work includes supervising daily operations at the CIEE center and Flávia manages the student housing program (including family issues students may encounter while studying abroad). In her own words: "I am from Bahia and I love working with international students here. I take great pride in showing students my city and helping them learn the most through the study abroad experience."

FlaviaCiee@yahoo.com.br

Luize Silva, Program Administrator and Activities Coordinator. Luize was born in a small town in Bahia called Cruz das Almas and moved to Salvador with her family at the age of eleven. She earned her BA in Business Administration and is working towards an MBA in Human Resources Management. Luize went to the U.S. on an *au pair* exchange program and lived in Virginia and California for two years. She too loves Bahia and she is an adventurous traveler. Luize has a central role in activities planning and she works in a variety of administrative areas.

LSilva@ciee.org

CIEE Office

These addresses should be used for all mail, and for your contact and address on your visa application.

Bahia:

CIEE BAHIA
Rua João das Botas, 121
Canela
Salvador, Bahia
CEP: 41.110.160
Brasil

Calling From US: 011-55-71-3328-7574

Calling from within Brazil: 71-3328-7574

Email:

jdye@ciece.org (Jacob Dyer)
flaviaciece@yahoo.com.br (Flávia Santana)
lsilva@ciece.org (Luize Silva)

The CIEE office has books, newspapers, and magazines for your use; however you may use the phone and fax only in special cases.

Participants say...

I consider the field trips and personal attention I received from the staff great. I consider also the closeness of the CIEE group a great comfort. I have learned to accept and feel totally comfortable with interpersonal relationships. I have become a more social person and a more verbal person.

HOUSING AND MEALS

CIEE arranges for ILCP, semester and year students to live with Brazilian hosts.

Special requests need to be indicated on the **housing questionnaire** in your account. All housing assignments are given out during orientation.

What will my housing be like?

You will live in a private, middle-class home where there are no other native English speakers. The home may be a small house or an apartment, and may have few family members or many. It is important to be aware that Brazilian families come in a diverse range of nuclear and non-nuclear forms. Please note that there is not always a mother, father, and set of small children present. Indeed, usually families with young kids are least likely to host since they have less time and space available. Our family pool includes many people with adult

children living at home, people who are grandparents, people who are divorced, and so on, which reflects a cross-section of "real people" in contemporary Brazil. Each family has its own special set of qualities to offer you. Because students are equally diverse, we also try to vary the families' experiences by not always giving them the same sort of student each time, varying ethnicity, gender, interests, sending-school and so on.

How can I best get along with my host?

Of course you want to be well received by your host family. It is important to remember that although some may treat you as another member of the family, you will also be treated to some extent as a guest in their home. For example, in some housing students may encounter a more contractual and room-and-board atmosphere. Be considerate of your host family and respect their concerns, which may include the following:

- Phone ahead or leave a note if you will be late coming home for a meal or if you will be coming home late at night. Families usually expect you to be home at a reasonable hour, especially on weeknights, so be respectful of their concerns. It may make your host parents uncomfortable to have you coming and going at all hours of the night.
- Respect your host family's belongings. Remember to ask permission to use stereos and other equipment or to go into the rooms of members of your host families.
- Be aware that it is not appropriate to enter the rooms of members of the opposite sex, even if they are brothers or sisters in your host family.
- Don't leave things in the bathroom unless advised to do so. Your host family will show you where to leave them.
- If you smoke, ask where it's permissible.
- To feel secure in your new home, put your valuables (money, travelers' checks, passport, etc.) in a safe place. Your host family cannot be held responsible for theft and neither can CIEE. You can lock valuables in your suitcase or your closet, when you go out.
- Don't develop the habit of lending money to/borrowing money from your host family.

Moving in will involve some adjustments that may be hard at first. Imagine yourself moving back with your own family to live, particularly after having had independence to do things without your family's immediate influence. You must be prepared to live by your host's rules. Try to handle difficulties that come up on your own. Your hosts may not intuitively understand your needs (for example, you may have trouble finding space to store all you bring with you), so communicate your concerns and work things out with them. Only after attempting to resolve any problems by yourself, should you ask help of the resident staff.

One discussion that is difficult to have, but which students have said helps a lot, is to talk about the hosts' expectations in having you stay with them, and yours in wanting to stay there. Another is to establish English-only or Portuguese-only times. Many Brazilians are eager to practice their English with a native speaker. Try to be as patient with their language needs as you expect them to be with yours. Watch out for a tendency to immediately criticize what is different from your own standards. You may find some things you have trouble accepting, but at least try to understand and interpret in terms of societal and cultural differences. Note that Brazilians often have house servants and maids. These class issues are a part of Brazilian reality and you are welcome to speak with the staff if you have any questions or concerns.

*** Tip: Try it!**

Have an open mind and taste everything you are offered before you decide whether you like it. Brazilian cuisine is quite delicious, and you may miss out on a wonderful culinary experience if you reject something because you've never had it before.

Can I have guests?

If you are planning to have guests during your stay in Brazil do not assume that they may stay with you in your family housing. Almost always, it is best for everybody if friends and family stay in a hotel. If you would like for visiting family/friends to stay with you, please ask your host family in advance and be prepared to compensate them for the extra expenses.

Ask your host family upon arrival about bringing friends over, until what time they can stay, and if they permit friends of the opposite sex coming over. This does not mean sleeping over, which is never permitted. Always ask your host's permission before bringing a friend over to eat dinner.

Laundry in Homestays

Weekly laundry service is provided in all the Brazilian homestays and is included in the program fee.

Cultural Note Regarding Laundry: In most Brazilian homes, laundry is done by a cleaning lady or maid who will usually wash by hand. *You will very likely be asked to wash your underwear by yourself*, as it is considered to be a personal laundry item and it is not customary for a cleaner in a Latin American home to wash personal garments.

What about meals?

In Bahia, breakfast, lunch, and dinner are provided by the host family and included in the program fee. However, in several of the homes, the host family provides you with food and access to the kitchen to cook your own meals.

As in the United States, the time that meals are served and what is served varies from household to household. If you do not like a certain dish, say so. Families can be flexible and adapt meals to a certain extent to things you like. You cannot, however, expect them to rearrange their cooking for you nor can you expect them to purchase special items for you because of a special diet. You should receive healthy meals and portions. If this is not the case in your home, discuss it with the resident staff.

Contributing something occasionally towards a meal, such as fresh fruit or bread, is also something most host families greatly appreciate.

What if I follow a special diet?

CIEE cannot guarantee that a home will provide a vegetarian, macrobiotic, or other special diet. If you have a medically certified diet, please notify CIEE immediately. The resident staff will make every effort to find a suitable situation.

Participants say...

I love my host family and know I have made relationships that will last the rest of my life. The family had 2 girls ages 16 and 21 and it was wonderful to interact with young women my own age.

After living in both Bahia and Sao Paulo, I learned to appreciate SPACE. Many Brazilians are (unconsciously) people who will stand close to you when they speak with you. Sometimes, they will pick food from your plate without asking or rub your arm or hands. This is culturally acceptable and will likely happen in your home stay. It was an endearing experience, and made me feel very welcome. But just be aware of it... if you really want privacy; make sure to mention it on your housing form. The staff does a great job at placing students with cool home stays.

Part II: Before You Leave Home

A LOT TO LEARN

Preparing for study abroad entails a lot more than just packing a suitcase. In fact, the thought and effort you put into preparing yourself will largely determine the success of the program you are embarking upon. At CIEE, we will do everything we can to provide you with the information you require prior to departure. But there is only so much we can do, and it is important for you to recognize your own responsibilities, which include:

- Thoroughly discussing your study and travel plans with your financial aid office, study abroad office, and academic advisor.
- Reading all of the materials that are on your checklist, including this handbook. Many of the questions that students ask are answered in this handbook.
- Doing additional reading about the region/country you will be visiting and the customs of the host culture. While you couldn't possibly be prepared for every new experience that awaits you, reading about the host country will give you a base of knowledge that will serve you well in the early weeks of the program. (Refer to the [Reading List](#) at the back of this handout for required and recommended reading.)
- Arriving at the program site with an open mind, a sense of adventure, and a positive attitude toward what lies ahead.

In addition to these required steps, there is a lot more we recommend you do to inform yourself before you go.

Get a Good Guidebook

Past participants recommend that you purchase a good guidebook and read a lot of it before you go! *The Lonely Planet* series is useful. Other guidebooks include the *Let's Go*, and *Real/Rough Guide* series. *Insight* guides provide good background and cultural information. Pay particular attention to sections on obtaining maps and other information from tourist offices, customs of the host country, currency exchange, telephoning home, safety, transportation, and general travel advice.

Tap Other Resources

Other good ways to learn about your new home:

- Check your college or university study abroad office for useful services and information.
- Seek out Brazilians through cultural organizations, international student organizations, and Portuguese or South America area studies departments or centers at your college or university.
- Surf the web. Many websites, such as www.lonelyplanet.com, offer travel information, slide shows, and tips from other travelers.
- Check libraries for detailed information and keep yourself informed of current events through the news media.
- Consult the list of past program participants on the **Program Dates, Details and Updates** reading. They have agreed to be contacted about their experience. Some of their comments are interspersed throughout this book.

Brush Up Your Portuguese

It is a good idea to begin or sharpen your Portuguese skills before departing. Listening to Portuguese tapes, watching films, reading newspapers, and talking to native speakers or fellow students are excellent ways to do this.

Many of you will be arriving in Brazil with a Spanish base and just little background in Portuguese. Even students who have studied Portuguese for several years are surprised to find that they have difficulty understanding the language as spoken by native speakers. This is quite normal. In your foreign language class at home, you can quickly catch your instructor's accent and other personal speech characteristics. However, this may not be possible once you go abroad and are surrounded by native speakers. Don't worry: it gets easier.

Participants say...

I loved learning Portuguese and making Brazilian friends. I took advantage of the program: I not only learned a language, I also started writing poetry and short stories in Portuguese.

Make sure you study Portuguese a lot before coming. You won't regret it.

Learning a whole new language has been fabulous. It has opened me up to a new world of people, literature and culture. I also think it has broadened the possibilities for future careers and opportunities in general. I wouldn't trade my experience for anything in the world.

Check Travel Advisories

The U.S. government issues travel advisories and consular information sheets for most countries. This information may be heard anytime by dialing (202) 647-5225 or at the following website: travel.state.gov. You can also get this information at any of the 13 regional passport agencies, by writing and sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Citizens Emergency Center, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Room 4811, N.S., U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC 20520.

***Tip: Take a lost passport kit**

It happens. So save yourself a major headache. Take with you two U.S.-produced passport photos, a certified copy of your birth certificate (which you can shrink to wallet size), and the face page of your passport. Keep this "lost passport kit" separate from your actual passport. Also leave one copy of the passport face page with your parents or guardian and give another copy to CIEE staff at the host site.

Be Informed About Home

It is important that you be well informed about your own country, region, and hometown. New friends and acquaintances in your host country will be just as curious about you as you are about them. Be prepared to discuss your home political system, culture, traditions, history, holidays, geography, and social structures.

*** Trap: Passport pitfalls**

Under no circumstances should your passport be altered. Guard it carefully against loss or theft. Do not forget to sign your passport. Never pack your passport in luggage while traveling; it should be easily accessible at all times.

ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS

When preparing to travel and live abroad, it is essential that you obtain all the proper documents prior to your departure. CIEE cannot accept responsibility, financial or otherwise, for a student who travels without the proper documents.

Passports

You are responsible for obtaining a passport prior to the start of your program. If you do not have a passport at the time of application, you must contact CIEE and expedite the process. CIEE needs your passport information to request your acceptance letter, a required part of the visa application.

You must have a signed passport, valid for a minimum of three months after the date you enter Brazil or for the duration of your program plus any travel, whichever is longer. If you do not have a passport, apply for one immediately

as the process can take several weeks or even months. If you already have a passport, be sure that it is valid for the required period.

U.S. citizens applying for their first passports must apply in person at a passport agency or at one of the several thousand federal or state courts or U.S. post offices authorized to accept passport applications. Applicants must present the following materials:

1. A completed Passport Application Form (DS-11)
2. Proof of U.S. citizenship (certified birth certificate, expired passport, certificate of naturalization, or consular report of birth)
3. Personal identification bearing your photograph and signature, e.g., a valid driver's license;
4. Two recent passport-sized photographs
5. A check or money order for the required amount.

Visas

A visa is an endorsement or stamp placed in your passport by a foreign government allowing you to enter and stay in that country for a specified period of time. All U.S. citizens are required to obtain a visa in order to enter Brazil. Semester and year students are required to obtain a student visa prior to your departure (semester and year students should **not** obtain a tourist visa). For details on obtaining a visa, and consulate contact information, please refer to the Visa Information document on your checklist.

The program staff will be available to answer questions that may arise during this process. You will have to pay strict attention to detail in this process. Past participants that have not followed every requirement or waited too long, found the process to be very trying, long, and expensive. Please read the directions carefully and **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL TWO WEEKS BEFORE YOUR PROGRAM START DATE TO BEGIN THE VISA PROCESS.**

To ease this process, bring with you to the consulate, all required documents for your visa. Because you will also need these papers to register with the local police upon arrival, you must make photocopies of all documents that you hand into the consulate. The consulates will say in the visa directions that original documents are returned, but in the past this has not happened, please make photocopies. **Do not abbreviate any of your names, including middle names, on ALL your visa and registration forms.** Your name should appear

exactly as it does in your passport. You will suffer needless aggravation of both time and expense if you do not follow the visa instructions carefully. Also do not abbreviate the names of your parents on the visa application.

If you have been in Brazil before and were issued a RNE (Registro Nacional de Estrangeiros), please take the original with you to Brazil. If you do not have it, there will be additional charges to register you again.

*****When you receive your passport back from the consulate with your visa, you must make sure they have given you the Pedido de Visto, which is a photocopy of your Brazilian student visa application with a stamp from the consulate. If you do not have this Pedido de Visto, contact your consulate immediately, you will not be able to register with the Foreign Police in Brazil without this. Sometimes Brazilian consulates forget to include this important document when delivering visas to students.**

It is also important to note that due to on site registering with the Foreign Police, it is not possible to switch sites once you arrive. CIEE helps students with the registration process with the Foreign Police on site. Students are responsible for onsite registration costs with the Federal Police. The total cost (2012) was \$100 USD.***

Documents for non-U.S. Citizens

If you are not a U.S. citizen, check with your consulate for regulations regarding your stay in Brazil and reentry into the United States. As visa procedures may vary, you should also check with the Brazilian consulate that has jurisdiction over your place of residence immediately for their specific visa procedures. Failure to do this may result in your being refused permission to enter the country or not even being allowed to board the aircraft at the point of departure. Also, you should call the nearest district office of the INS, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, for information on the documents necessary for you to leave and re-enter the United States.

Before departure from the United States, non-U.S. citizens must also obtain a Certificate of Compliance-often referred to as a Tax Clearance or a Sailing Permit-from the local IRS (Internal Revenue Service) office. This will certify that you do not owe taxes to the U.S. government. Contact your local IRS office for information on documents required to procure this permit."

What documents do I need as a permanent resident?

Permanent residents need to apply for a Re-entry Permit that serves as a passport while overseas. Being out of the United States for more than one year may jeopardize your permanent resident status. Check with the nearest INS office for information regarding documentation and procedures for return to the United States.

*** Trap: Applying from outside the United States**

A U.S. student applying for a visa from outside of the United States may not be able to obtain one. Please check with the appropriate consulate.

What documents do I need as a stateless person?

If you do not have a country of citizenship, contact the nearest INS office and the appropriate consulate or embassy to determine the procedures you must follow to obtain the proper travel documents and visas. In addition, be sure to check with the consulate of any country where you may be spending a night or more in transit to the country of your study program. Failure to do this may result in refusal of permission to enter that country or even to board the aircraft at the point of departure.

Immunization Records

Brazil does not require vaccinations unless you are a citizen of, or arriving from, one of a number of less-developed countries or sites of disease outbreak. But, if you enter countries where immunizations are required, you must present a record of vaccinations. The most widely recognized document for this purpose is the yellow World Health Organization booklet, International Certificates of Vaccination, which is available from most doctors and health centers. Carry this document with your passport.

HEALTH

What health-related steps should I take before I leave?

You are required to complete the online Student Medical Questionnaire and have a physical within four months of the program start date in order to participate in the program (have the Physician's Medical Report form filled out); please be sure it indicates any allergies you have, in particular to medications. This information is confidential and has no bearing on your participation in the program. If you have a chronic illness that needs medical attention, have your doctor write a clinical report that can be given to a specialist in Brazil if necessary. In

addition, we strongly urge you to have a complete physical and dental checkup before departing. Any required dental work should be done at home. Women should also have a checkup by a gynecologist.

What medical supplies should I take with me?

If you take prescription drugs, take a sufficient supply with you for your time abroad. (Be sure to take these in their original packages and with the original prescription.) Students who wear glasses or contact lenses should be sure to take an extra pair as well as a copy of their prescription. Contact lens solution and cleansers are very expensive, so you may want to bring a supply. If you use contraceptives, please take an adequate supply with you.

Be prepared for the common cold and for stomach and intestinal disorders often caused by changes in diet and drinking water. It might be wise to take along small amounts of medications in case these problems arise; your doctor may suggest which drugs to consider. Remember, however, to be careful about treating yourself, and be sure to seek professional help when necessary.

Pack medication for diarrhea, constipation, upset stomach, surface scratches and cuts, sore throat, coughs or colds. Bring a supply of multivitamins, including calcium and iron (especially for women). Be sure to take medicine for any recent or chronic ailment that might recur in Brazil. Some over-the-counter medications are available, but it is highly advisable that you bring extra supplies of any medications or prescriptions that you use regularly. Bring the generic names, not the brand names. Most people seriously underestimate the amount of medicine they will need.

Use common sense in choosing what to eat, especially when buying food from street vendors. You will no doubt be eager to sample local delicacies, but be suspicious of the vendor who extracts a glass from a tub of murky water to pour you some papaya juice. Don't drink water from the tap in São Paulo or Bahia; even native Paulistas and Bahians drink filtered and purified water.

What other precautions should I take?

Inform the resident staff of any existing health problems, including mental health, or any potential problems you anticipate arising throughout the course of the program. This includes allergies to any medications. CIEE Portland staff will use this information to ensure that appropriate accommodations are made.

Please inform the resident staff if you become ill during the program.

Vaccinations

While no immunizations are currently required for travel to and from southern Brazil, the U.S. Public Health Service recommends that you be immunized against yellow fever as a normal precaution if you plan to travel to the jungle areas. USPHS also recommends that you get shots for typhoid, paratyphoid, and tetanus before you depart.

We strongly suggest that you consult a physician before making any decisions regarding vaccinations. Any vaccinations you receive should be recorded and carried with your passport.

Malaria

If you travel to rural jungle areas such you may be at risk for malaria. Different varieties of malaria are resistant to different drugs. If you are planning a trip to such an area, inquire about the appropriate prophylactic regime once you are in Brazil. None of the program excursions will be to areas of high risk for malaria.

Hepatitis A

If you travel to rural areas where there is poor sanitation, you are at risk for hepatitis A. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid contaminated drinking water and ice, as well as fruits, vegetables, and seafood which have been treated with contaminated water. You should use only boiled or purified water and try to eat only properly cooked/prepared food. You can get Immune Globulin (IG) inoculations (formerly Gamma Globulin) prior to departure. However, since the effectiveness of the IG diminishes with time and must be renewed every 5 months; and since the preparations of the drug in Brazil may not meet acceptable standards, you may elect against having the inoculation.

Hepatitis B

The risk for hepatitis B is high in the interior Amazon basin and moderate for the rest of South America. Hepatitis B is contracted through direct contact with infected blood or secretions.

Dengue Fever

In recent years, dengue fever outbreaks have occurred with increasing frequency in Brazil and most countries of the Tropics, especially in the summer months from November through March.

Dengue is a mosquito-transmitted viral disease occurring chiefly in tropical and subtropical areas of the world. Generally, there is a low risk of acquiring dengue during travel to tropical

areas except during periods of epidemic transmission (during or shortly after the rainy season). Dengue viruses are transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes, which are most active during the day. Mosquitoes that transmit dengue usually are found near human dwellings and are often present indoors. Dengue is predominant in urban centers, but may be found in rural areas.

There is no vaccine for dengue fever. Therefore, the traveler should avoid mosquito bites by using insect repellent on skin and clothing and remaining in well-screened, air-conditioned or well fanned areas. Travelers are advised to use aerosol insecticides indoors and use mosquito nets if sleeping quarters are not screened or air-conditioned.

Dengue fever is characterized by sudden onset of high fever, severe headaches, joint and muscle pain, and nausea, vomiting, and rash. The rash appears 3 to 4 days after the onset of fever. Infection is diagnosed by a blood test that detects the presence of the virus or antibodies. The illness may last up to 10 days, but complete recovery can take 2 to 4 weeks. Dengue is commonly confused with other infectious illnesses such as influenza, measles, malaria, typhoid, and scarlet fever. The symptoms of dengue can be treated with bed rest, fluids, and medications such as acetaminophen. Aspirin should be avoided.

More severe forms of the disease “dengue hemorrhagic fever” or “dengue shock syndrome” are very rare among travelers. Initially, symptoms are indistinguishable from dengue fever, but the illness progresses to faintness, shock, and generalized bleeding. Simple dengue does not produce long-term complications.

You must notify CIEE Resident Staff if you have symptoms of dengue fever.

Rabies

Avoid contact with loose dogs in rural areas and villages. If bitten, see a doctor as soon as possible, since rabies is always fatal if left untreated.

AIDS

The HIV virus is now pandemic, meaning it is present everywhere, including South America. Take the appropriate precautions. Many U.S. doctors are concerned about needle re-use in some countries. Should you need an injection while in Brazil, make sure the needle comes sealed in a special package and is torn open in front of you.

Take the same precautions that you would in your home country. Be particularly careful of

possible infection through intimate sexual contact or blood transfusion.

Smoking

Note that smoking is a bit more common in Brazil and in South America than in the United States. The anti-smoking regulations that are common in the United States are recently becoming common in South America but perhaps not yet on par.

CDC Recommendations

If you plan to travel after the program to other countries or within Brazil, you may want to consult the CDC information specific to those countries. The CDC website is www.cdc.gov.

INSURANCE

If you are covered by a personal or parental insurance plan, CIEE recommends that you continue this coverage while abroad. Prior to departure, you should contact your current insurance carrier concerning coverage for accidents, illnesses, and liability cases that occur outside the United States. Check your policy's limitations before making any assumptions about coverage. Most U.S. based insurance companies will not cover property lost or stolen overseas.

Accident and Sickness Insurance

Each participant is covered by an Accident and Sickness Insurance policy designed to help cover the cost of accidents and/or routine sickness while abroad. Additionally, the policy offers Emergency Evacuation and Emergency Medical Transportation coverage, together with a 24-hour Travel and Medical Assistance Service. The policy also offers travel document replacement and limited travel delay and lost/stolen baggage coverage. Coverage begins two weeks before the program start date and continues for 364 days.

A complete description of the Accident and Sickness Insurance policy is on your online checklist. It is important that you read the policy carefully and note exactly what coverage it provides, and note items that are excluded from coverage.

The Sickness Insurance is designed as an additional or top-up policy only, and does not cover liability. It also does not include routine physical, dental examinations, preventive medicine or psychological treatments. Students are not covered for injuries resulting from acts of war or other political unrest such as riots and demonstrations.

Please note that CIEE does not cover medical expenses on-site. Students pay for any medical costs incurred and then file a claim directly with the insurance company for reimbursement. CIEE does not act as an intermediary between participants and the insurance company.

PERSONAL FINANCES

Cost of Living

The exchange rate is not constant. The *New York Times* and similar publications publish exchange rates daily. You may also reference www.x-rates.com or www.oanda.com for up to the minute exchange rates. You should keep abreast of how a rate fluctuates leading up to departure.

What costs are covered by my CIEE fee?

The CIEE Study Center fees include pre-departure information and services, on-site support services, tuition, orientation, cultural activities, local excursions and field trips, and sickness insurance. The fee also covers housing and some meals. CIEE does not cover local transportation to and from your classes at the university, nor does it cover the cost of any textbooks.

What expenses should I budget for?

You will need money for snacks at home (meals are included in the program), entertainment, toiletries, cosmetics, gifts, local transportation, school supplies, and independent travel. And don't forget to set aside US \$36.00 for the airport departure tax (some airline tickets will include this tax). If you plan to travel out of the country, your independent travel expenses will obviously increase.

Besides inflation and currency exchange, another variable that will affect your spending abroad is your individual taste requirements. When creating a budget, it may be helpful to consider how much you normally spend in a semester and inflate it a bit. The cost of living for a student in Brazil is higher than that of a student in the United States. This fact, the added cost of independent travel, and the impulse to splurge-all make careful budgeting imperative. We suggest you take extra money, if possible, for unforeseeable expenses.

Financial Arrangements

You will need to make arrangements regarding traveler's checks, personal checks, credit cards, and ATM bank cards before leaving home. You must arrange to receive enough money to cover your personal expenses for the time you are in Bahia or São Paulo. You can have money or

bank drafts wired, but you will lose a lot of money on the exchange rate. Whoever handles your finances at home should find a bank or other financial institution that has correspondent banking facilities in Brazil. Try not to send money if it can be avoided. See the section [Money and Banking](#) in [Part III](#) for details.

Please refer to the cost breakdown on our [website](#) to assist in your budget planning. It is based on the amounts spent by students in the program last year.

*** Tip: Forget "Hey Mom, send money"**

It is important that you make arrangements to receive enough money to cover your personal expenses for the time you are in Brazil prior to your departure from the United States.

Tip: Should I bring a laptop computer?

Yes, if you have a laptop it would be worth bringing, although we don't recommend carrying the laptop with you wherever you go during your semester. However, it would be helpful for school work and there are host families and some locations with wireless. There are some wireless locations in the city (including the CIEE Bahia study center). It is also okay not to have a laptop as there are computers at the universities, internet cafés, and at CIEE Bahia.

PACKING AND BAGGAGE

Try to organize and pack a day or two prior to departure so that you can judge if you'll be able to carry your bags (you must be able to do this). Some students have even practiced by carrying their bags around the block! Also, by packing early you'll have time to rest before the long trip.

What are the baggage limits?

Limits vary. Read the weight limitation and baggage allowance information provided by your international airline carrier. Generally flights overseas permit two pieces of checked baggage and one carry-on piece. Each checked bag must weigh less than 70 pounds. Total dimensions (length + width + height) of the first piece must be less than 62 inches, and the second piece less than 52 inches. Total dimensions of the carry-on must not exceed 45 inches and must be able to fit below the seat in front of you or in the overhead compartment. If your baggage exceeds any of these standards you may be charged for excess baggage. Check with your airline regarding any items that are oversized.

Domestic flights have stricter weight limitations and usually only allow 50 pounds. You will want to keep this in mind for the flight from Sao Paulo to Bahia.

What should I pack?

For a complete list of what to take, please see the [Suggested Packing Checklist](#) at the end of

this handbook. Experienced travelers agree: take as little as possible.

Climate

Generally, the temperature in Bahia hovers around 82 degrees Fahrenheit all year round. It is a pleasant, rarely stifling environment. There are beaches everywhere.

Clothing

Plan to dress much as you do in the United States. While most Brazilian students are casual in dress and jeans are popular, a clean, neat appearance is expected. Ragged jeans and tattered clothes may be offensive. Brazilians tend to be very fashionable and the style of dress tends to be cosmopolitan.

Although it is unlikely that you will have the occasion for formal attire we recommend that you bring a nice outfit in case you are invited to attend a graduation or special event. In the summer (November-March), it can get very humid and hot and, as a result, too uncomfortable for jeans. Women often prefer to wear cotton dresses, skirts, or Bermuda shorts in the summer months. You will definitely need rain gear, since it rains a lot in both winter and summer. You will do a lot of walking so bring comfortable walking shoes.

U.S. students have often said they took too much clothing. Don't forget that nothing ruins traveling abroad more than having too much luggage, especially when you have to carry it yourself. You can save packing space by coordinating your clothing so that shirts and sweaters can be worn with different skirts and pants. Bring comfortable walking shoes. Peg the weight of your clothing to the season you go; take wools and heavy cottons for winter and lightweight clothing for the summer.

Participants say...

Try to pack light, but also make sure you have everything you need. Consider not bringing what will be readily available for purchase in Brazil, like toiletries or clothes. It's better to bring perfume or electronic with you because they can be expensive in Brazil.

Budget from the beginning and take advantage of all discounts for students (movies, shows etc).

Be prepared to spend money!

Toilet Articles

Bring with you things you frequently use that may be specific and available only in the US like vitamins, products from special brands or medicines that require a prescription. Most other toiletries will be available in Brazil for approximately the same cost.

Prescriptions

If you take prescription drugs, ask your doctor to give you a copy of the prescription with the name of the generic drug, not a brand name, as your brand may not be available in Brazil. This way, in case you lose your medication or you are unable to get a supply for the entire semester, you will be able to obtain a similar product.

You should bring enough of your medication for your full time abroad plus a little extra in case anything happens to it. When preparing to bring your medicine, package it together in a zip loc bag along with a note from your doctor detailing what the medication is for, and a prescription for a generic version of the medicine.

You will also need to check whether or not your medication is allowed in the country – the best way to do this is contact Fed Ex international shipping. We do not recommend planning on having your prescription medication shipped to you during your semester or year; shipments can be held up at customs in Brazil for an indeterminate amount of time.

CDs/iPods/MP3players

Be sure to bring some music with you. There will be many occasions to listen to it and will fun showing your Brazilian friends or host families what you like.

Books

If you are certain that you will take a course in a definite area, e.g. Brazilian history, U.S.-Brazilian relations, or specific aspects of economics, consider bringing some recent books on the subject, since such courses will probably not use a specific textbook. But remember books take up a lot of weight to travel with. It may be wise to bring a dictionary and/or a book on Portuguese grammar. CIEE has a few travel guides and some literature in English that you can borrow.

Electrical Appliances

Most of Brazil, including Bahia, uses 110- volt current, but some cities use 220 volts, Rio de Janeiro and Santos among them. If you bring anything electric, be sure to check the voltage before plugging it in. You could have customs problems with electrical items, which are usually highly taxed as imports; but if you can assure them that what you are bringing are personal items, you may have no difficulty. If you bring anything new, *make sure you take it out of the packaging*. You might be required to have these items written in your passport by the customs officials, which will force you to take them back out of the country with you.

Most students recommend bringing your laptop with you, but also know that there are computer labs at UCSAL where you can type your papers.

Sports & Recreation

If you plan to use a musical instrument, bring it with you. Sports equipment can be bought in Bahia or São Paulo generally at higher prices than in the United States.

Mementos from home

Bring things from home that you can share with your Brazilian family and friends. This includes pictures of yourself and your family in the United States, recipes you like to cook, typical items from your community, college, or region of the United States, and items related to talents that you might have and wish to share.

Gifts

There may be occasions when giving a gift to someone would be a good idea. Because you will not know your host family until orientation, former students have suggested that you bring something the entire family can enjoy such as a book, a calendar or chocolate. Things from your hometown are always a good idea. Frisbees or little balls are good gifts for children.

*** Tip: Passport and credit card numbers**

Remember; leave a photocopy of your passport and a list of credit card numbers at home.

What if I want to have things mailed to me abroad?

If you are considering having some items mailed to you after your arrival, see the section on [Post Office and Mailing Procedures](#) in this handbook.

PREPARING FOR CULTURAL ADAPTATION

Although cultural adaptation is highly individual, research indicates that most people go through similar stages in adapting to a new environment. Do not underestimate the cultural differences between Salvador and your home country. Any travel you've done abroad has exposed you to culture shock. During your on-site orientation, the resident staff will discuss details about culture shock and give strategies for adapting to your new surroundings. CIEE will also hold a series of cultural adaptation activities to both interest you and assist you through the process of living in another culture. Near the end of the program, they will also provide information on reverse culture shock and suggest ways of coping with returning home. If you've never had to overcome culture shock, you might want to read about it before you depart

The Glimpse Foundation

CIEE is an institutional member of The Glimpse Foundation. As a CIEE student, you get access to a full range of services that will help you prepare for your time abroad and/or enable you to share your insights during and after your overseas experience.

These services include:

- Access to Glimpse's content archive, which currently contains over 400 student-written articles from 88 countries.
- Access to the Glimpse 'Ask the Expert' database so you can connect with current and returned study abroad students in your country/region.

To get started go to [GlimpseAbroad.org](http://glimpse.org) at: <http://glimpse.org/>

Enjoy!

Part III: Living in Brazil

Sometimes living in a university environment abroad makes it easy to forget you're not home. Remember, you are in another country with its own laws and customs, and they are different from the ones you're used to. Be aware of this and conduct yourself accordingly. Also, be sure to attend classes regularly and participate in program activities.

The orientation described in [Part I](#) will also cover practical aspects of living in a new place, Brazilian laws, proper social conduct, and cultural differences, including race, gender, and class. For example, some past participants have found that many Brazilian nationals had a distorted and stereotyped image of U.S. women, often acquired through advertising, television, and movies. The resident staff will provide insights into the local culture's view of women and suggest ways to reduce anxiety and to ensure personal safety.

MEETING BRAZILIANS

Just as it is impossible to define a typical American, it is equally impossible to define a typical Brazilian. You will meet many types of people in Brazil who have different opinions, attitudes, and habits. The more you interact with Brazilian people, the better chance you'll have of forming relationships and understanding the culture. During these interactions, use common sense, intelligence, and a sense of objectivity. Be prepared to discuss your views freely and openly, and try to listen with an open mind.

You may arrive in Brazil with some preconceptions about Brazilians and may encounter some Brazilians with preconceptions about people from the United States. Try to put aside stereotypes and make judgments based on real experiences. If you are confronted with what you feel is a false stereotype about the United States, be frank and truthful, yet tactful in your response. Avoid refuting arguments with odious comparisons to Brazil. This type of response will only create bad feelings. A positive and serious response from you will help dispel myths about the United States.

Cultural Note: Personal Space in Bahia

Past participants in Salvador da Bahia have commented on personal space a lot. Whereas American cultural norms regard a handshake as the "normal" guideline to establish social space, the Bahian culture is known for encouraging closeness and a lot of sharing. Among friends, there is a lot of arm stroking, feeling one's clothing, touching other's hands while talking, taking food from another's plate, etc. Many women walk hand in hand. Bedroom doors are almost always left open and privacy is usually considered as "odd behavior." Bahian life is very much based on street culture, making friends and being outside of the home. Quite the contrary to the value of individualism and privacy as it is known in the United States.

*** Tip: Tipping**

Most services get tipped a mandatory 10%, often included in the bill. If the service is friendly and helpful, you may want to give more.

Cultural Note: Minority issues

African American and Latina/o students have found this program of special interest because of its location in a country with strong African as well as European roots. While Brazil indeed has much to offer minority students of an ethnic background in this regard, it is also true that students encounter attitudes concerning race and color that may be different from what they expect.

Past participants have remarked that students of color may be treated differently than European-American students. They can expect to encounter a culture that is in some ways less secure in its African heritage.

Participants say...

I thought I was prepared for the race issue in Brazil, but I found it very difficult to absorb much of it upon my arrival. It was very helpful to discuss my individual experience with other black students. Brazil is a fascinating country and I am so happy that I am here, but I also realize that communication and discussing your feelings is very important.

I felt that the essay about "Being Black in Brazil" was somewhat preaching about my stay in Brazil. However, now that I am here... I have changed my mind. Read as much as you can about being a black person in Brazil and talk with past participants. The culture shock will be less once you get to this beautiful country filled with the friendliest people you'll ever meet in your life!

Many consider Bahia as the "cultural soul" of Brazil. Much of the popular music, literature, dance, capoeira, visual arts, and religions of Bahia are West African and Central West African in origin (or at least heavily influenced by these regions as a result of the long history of slave trades and slavery in Bahia). Race classification and/or identification are very complex but deeply rooted in Bahian culture (more so than political and civil self-identification, as is more common in the U.S.). There is a high degree of interracial marriage and coupling that is less politicized and perhaps more socially revealing of class structures in Brazil.

Participants say...

As an African-American woman from the U.S. and studying in Bahia, I was surprised to find that so many Brazilians in Bahia don't consider themselves black. In one case, a dark skinned student did not self-identify his race as black or dark-colored but as "nothing." I was shocked. The classes were a real treat and I learned so much here about myself, the purpose of my education, and my role as a citizen of the world.

Being a minority was one of the most valuable experiences I have had in my life – the color of my skin as well as my facial features were pointed out multiple times a day. The thing that was amazing about Bahian culture is that although I should have felt like a complete outsider, Bahians made me feel welcome in their culture. They commonly said, "Voce ja virou baiana!" (You are already Bahian!) It was an incredible experience.

Cultural Note: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Students

Many gay institutions in Latin America, including Brazil, are underdeveloped, with few resources and limited finances to promote and sustain GLBT organizations or NGO's. However, there are numerous individuals and small groups who voice their opinion to promote changes in the laws, offer social services, establish coming out groups, and advocate for hospice/medical care and /or housing for GLBT individuals expelled from their home, etc. as is the case in many underdeveloped countries, such GLBT issues

have not been solidified institutionally and there is typically a lack of funding to establish NGOs that focus on these issues. Instead, GLBT issues are often addressed publicly under the guise of HIV awareness campaigns or other projects related to human rights. Both in São Paulo and Bahia, there are NGOs, albeit small ones, which exist for gay and lesbian issues.

Regardless of their sexual orientation (or class), most men and women who are not married continue to live primarily at their family's home indefinitely. The social and economic function of the family is an important one, especially when gay institutions are not well developed. In many countries there is no welfare state and the family unit becomes a *de facto* security blanket for GLBT individuals. In addition, some researchers have noted that residing with families scattered throughout a city precludes the development of gay neighborhoods (with a possible exception of small clusters of gay entertainment venues, if permitted by law).

This explains some of the differences in regards to GLBT issues in Latin America in comparison to the U.S. (where in many large cities you will not find such considerable obstacles to the formation of a gay consciousness and sense of open community regarding sexuality).

Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students will most likely find a conflicting experience among Brazil's sexual minorities. Announcing your sexual orientation is something that is a very recent concept in Brazil. Gay students who have participated in the program have commented that despite Brazil's image of "open sexuality," gay life may be quite different in Bahia than in the U.S. Resident staff can assist students individually with information about the contemporary gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender scene, general safety guidelines, your housing situation, and how to make your integration more rewarding. All requests are considered confidential.

Cultural Note: Women and Gender Issues

Some students may find that the role of Brazilian women in their society is different than what they are used to in the United States. Both male and female students may experience challenges surrounding the roles each gender plays in Brazilian society.

In public social settings such as dance clubs, it is important to remember to use common sense. If you do not feel comfortable, you should firmly say "no" to an invitation or find one of your friends to help you. Only give your address to

people you know and trust. In time, you will become more comfortable with local values and customs and will begin to make friendships with Brazilians.

Participants say...

Being a white woman from the U.S. is another experience in Bahia and São Paulo. It made me re-think my own values about family, motherhood and being a woman. This world is not perfect and Brazil helped me gain a new perspective on my self-esteem and I feel I matured a lot.

Note to Those Who Have Been to Brazil

Some of you may have been to Brazil before, possibly on a program during high school where you lived with a Brazilian family. That experience will be useful to you in many ways as you go back to Brazil, but keep your earlier time in perspective. You were younger; you had a family to look out for you; you may not have been as aware of, or as exposed to, the intensely political side of Brazilian life as you will be on this stay; and you did not have to cope with the challenges of university student life. Expect that peoples' reactions to you are going to be different, and expect that your reactions to Brazil are going to be different. They may be as positive and rewarding as the first time; they may push your limits more than you can now imagine. One of the former students put it this way: "Warning: the first time you're here you feel like every day you learn something new. The second time is the first time run in reverse; everyday you feel like you understand less." Keep that in mind.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

The health and safety of program participants abroad is understandably an important issue for all concerned. CIEE was a founding member of the Inter-Organization Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad.

The CIEE approach to safety is threefold. First, we conduct a careful safety evaluation of every program we run. Next, when the students arrive on site, we conduct a thorough orientation, which includes tips on reducing risk and handling difficult situations should they arise. Finally, program staff continuously monitors local conditions in order to provide guidance to participants throughout their stay.

Experience has shown that the single most important factor in assuring a safe study abroad experience is the sensible and cautious behavior of the participants themselves. When traveling abroad, you should exercise additional caution until you become familiar with your new surroundings. Always remain alert to what is

going on around you, especially in crowded tourist areas and on public transportation.

Bahia does have, like any other large city in Brazil, a high rate of petty crime and violent crime is also commonplace. Be careful about what you do and where you go, just as you would in any major city in the world. During orientation, the staff will inform you of the areas of town to avoid and the safe times to visit certain places. They will also expand on the information below.

Follow these general rules:

- Tourists are common targets for pickpockets. Be aware of your backpacks and cameras especially on crowded buses. Don't carry large amounts of cash or your passport with you. Never leave belongings in a parked car.
- Keep a suitcase that can be locked under your bed and leave your money, passport, camera, and other valuables secured in it.
- When you carry your passport, wear it around your neck in a thin pouch inside your shirt. If you must carry it in a bag, use one that can be slung diagonally across your chest and that has a sturdy strap that cannot be easily ripped.
- Do not use public transportation late at night.
- At night, don't take shortcuts. Take a cab or walk on main streets. Taxis are a safe option for nighttime transportation. Please budget taxis into your expenses (approximately 20 USD/week if you plan to go out on a Friday and Saturday night with friends)
- When carrying a purse or bag beware of pickpockets in narrow, crowded streets.
- Never carry valuables in the pockets of your pants. Leave valuable jewels at home in the United States.
- Never accept rides with anybody you do not know.
- As noted earlier, keep a photocopy of your passport, ATM cards, and other important documents in a separate place. This will speed up the process of replacing your documents should they be lost or stolen.
- Be especially cautious in areas frequented by tourists, especially when

exchanging/withdrawing money at a bank or money machines.

- If you are the victim of a pickpocket, or if something is stolen, inform the Resident Director who will help you make a report.
- Be aware of the heating situation provided by your host institution and host residence. For locations where carbon monoxide-producing appliances may be present – i.e., any appliance that burns fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal – detailed information on the possible dangers associated with such appliances, along with safe operating instructions, will be provided in the on-site program orientation. For further information, please visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website at: www.epa.gov. You may wish to take a small battery-operated carbon monoxide detector to have in your housing.

*** Trap: Letting down your guard**

When visiting a foreign country, you may well be enchanted by your surroundings and engage in behavior that is not typical of you. This may cause you to let your guard down and be susceptible to crime. Practice common sense and exercise good judgment. Remember that you are more likely to be a victim of crime if you have been drinking alcohol.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MAIL

Telephone

International phone calls and especially collect calls can be expensive. The easiest and cheapest way to make calls to the USA is to use **Skype**. If you don't already have an account we recommend getting one. It's a very user friendly program and can be used from all internet cafés in Salvador and the CIEE office. If you plan on having friends or family call you then to dial Bahia from the United States, dial 011 55 71 + the phone number.

Bahia 1 to 3 hours ahead of the East Coast of the United States, depending on U.S. Daylights Savings time and Brazilian Daylight Savings time. For phone calls in Brazil, the resident staff onsite will help you to secure a cell phone, which will operate on a pay-as-you-go method. You'll purchase airtime cards that you'll use to refill the usage on your phone.

*** Tip: Short phone calls**

Phone service in Brazil is expensive so the telephone is used only for brief messages or for emergencies. Please be considerate, and limit your time on the phone.

Fax

The CIEE Office in Bahia will send a free fax if you need course approval in order to guarantee

a semester credit. Charges for personal faxes will be based on current fax rates in São Paulo. Incoming faxes should be addressed to you, including your full name.

E-mail/Computers

Bahia

You will have access to computers and e-mail at UCSal. The CIEE office has wireless and an extra computer for you to use. There are also numerous Internet cafés in Bahia where students can check their e-mail (for approximately \$1 USD per hour). Most host families have access to internet and/or wireless.

Post Office and Mailing Procedures

Regular mail from the United States takes about 2 weeks, but large parcels may take longer. Don't have things shipped to you; it can take up to 4 months. Electronics of any kind are very heavily taxed when mailing or sending them via courier into Brazil.

*** Trap: Don't mail cigarettes or alcohol**
It is illegal to send cigarettes or alcohol through the mail.

Bahia Mailing Address:

CIEE BAHIA – <Student's name>
EBEC: Rua João das Botas, 121
Canela
CEP: 41.110.160
Salvador- Bahia, Brasil

MONEY AND BANKING

Arrive in Brazil with several ways to obtain money so that in the event one method fails or is inconvenient, a back-up option is available. The best way to get money is with a bank card affiliated with Visa or Mastercard. Most major banks in Brazil will allow you to withdraw using your American card. It is only certain ATMs inside these banks that accept international cards. Visa/Mastercard stickers usually indicate that the ATM accepts international cards. Make sure to advise your bank you will be traveling to Brazil. Often banks will cancel cards for security purposes when they see transactions from other countries appearing. Travelers' checks are a good idea to have as backup in case your card is lost or stops working.

Brazil's economy has been stable for several years now. However, before leaving the United States students should pay attention to the economic situation because the situation could change. The cost of living should be less expensive than what the student is used to in

the United States. However, certain things are more expensive like electronics. The national currency is the real (pronounced hay-ow), broken down into 100 centavos.

Credit Cards

Major credit cards are accepted at restaurants and stores. Past participants highly recommend Visa, MasterCard or Amex. Make sure credit cards will not expire during your stay. If it is not convenient for someone at home to handle your finances and pay your bill, make arrangements to have statements sent to Brazil by airmail. Otherwise the grace period allowed is likely to expire before you receive your statements. Credit cards are a great back up method while abroad in case anything should happen to your ATM/Debit bank card.

ATM/Bank Cards

Maintaining bank accounts at home and withdrawing money from ATM/MAC machines in Brazil is the preferred form of financial access by past participants. ATM/MAC machines with access to PLUS or CIRRUS banking systems are available in Brazil. You can withdraw local currency from the machine without commission charges. Although the conversion rate is best via ATM, most US banks charge a fee between \$5 and \$10 for international withdrawals. Be sure that you have addressed the following questions if you plan to use a bankcard:

- Verify that your bankcard is valid for an international banking system.
- Call your bank before leaving for Brazil to advise them of your travel. As a security measure, banks will usually put a freeze on cards when charges from foreign countries appear.
- Verify if you can access a savings account with your bankcard abroad. Many past participants have not been able to access their savings account while abroad, regardless if it is within the PLUS or CIRRUS network. Depending on the answer, you should consider transferring your savings funds into a checking account.
- Make sure your PIN is in numbers **not** letters (most ATM/MAC machines in Latin America have only numbers on their keypads).
- From your bank, obtain a list of international banking system ATM machines in Brazil and other locations where you plan to travel in Latin America. The following websites also have

international ATM locations:
www.visa.com; www.mastercard.com/atm

- Check with your bank regarding international transaction and access charges associated with using ATM machines.

While some banks do not impose additional charges for using a bankcard abroad, others can charge up to \$10 per transaction. If your bank charges a high fee, you should consider switching to a bank that charges less, or you can plan to make less frequent ATM transactions in larger amounts.

If you decide to use your ATM/Bank card as your primary way to access money, and the fees charged by your bank are high (per a transaction) then consider purchasing a small lock box (or you may not need it if your suitcase/luggage has a lock). That way, once you locate an ATM closer to your host family you can take out larger sums of reais at a time and then go immediately home to put them away.

If this is the way that you choose to access *reais* while in Brazil, you should also bring an “emergency stash” of traveler’s checks or a credit card.

*** Trap: PIN numbers**

For both credit cards and bankcards, inquire with the issuer to verify that the card is valid for an international banking system. And memorize your PIN in numbers not letters; foreign phone pads are often configured differently.

Banking

Foreign students are not allowed to open checking or savings accounts. In any case, there is no advantage to it, as your dollars would be converted to reais and you may actually lose buying power.

Participants say...

Bring money to travel afterwards-it's absolutely necessary to have time to reflect on what you've learned in Brazil.

These days bank cards affiliated with Visa or Mastercard are the easiest way to get money. Traveler's checks are useful in case of emergency or if you lose your card.

To get money wired, go through Western Union. It's easy.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

If you have a medical emergency, please notify your resident staff. They will know of the best facilities for your treatment. For non-emergency visits, students go to the university hospital. It's free and very good since the doctors are either students or professors, but you must be willing to wait for hours. In Bahia, the resident staff will direct you to the best emergency center. Be prepared to have cash money and possibly pay

up to \$100 U.S. for a doctor's visit. Your medical insurance through CIEE will reimburse you later.

GETTING AROUND

Local Transportation

Bahia students most often commute to classes by bus or foot.

CIEE staff has housing that is available close to campus. Please note that past students indicated that on average each spent between \$US4 and \$US6 daily on transportation-more if their classes were early in the morning or late evening.

Participants say...

Living in Brazil has above all taught me to be extremely patient waiting in lines. But I've also learned to be more tolerant of others. I'm a lot more laid back.

Be prepared for the traffic and pollution. Be prepared to have a fantastic time. Travel as much as possible.

Independent Travel

You will no doubt want to explore Brazil, particularly on weekends and CIEE encourages you to do so. Some students leave the city to go to the beaches up or down the coast such as Praia do Forte, Morro de São Paulo or Itacaré parks in Brazil called Chapada Diamantina, a popular place to visit among CIEE students. Airfares to various locations in Brazil are relatively inexpensive and the options are virtually limitless. Some students may choose to travel at the end of the program. The program office has an extensive collection of travel information, from maps and magazines to the tourism supplement of the local newspapers. Former students have also left travel suggestions. Before leaving the United States, gather as much information as possible about places you may want to visit. Of course, this may require additional funds.

Modes of Travel for Long Distance

Bus

Travel by bus combines convenience with low cost; buses are comfortable and well scheduled. For long overnight trips, you may want to go by *leito*, a bus with half the number of seats. Its wide seats recline completely so you can sleep pretty comfortably, and blankets are provided. *Leito* seats cost twice the normal fare, but you do save the cost of a room. Long distance buses have numbered seats and no standing-room passengers. With few exceptions, you can buy tickets only at the point of departure, meaning that you cannot buy round-trip tickets or tickets beyond the first point where you plan to interrupt a long trip. Tickets are non-refundable, and usually sold only when you can present

documents proving your identity. Buy tickets in advance, especially during peak travel seasons.

*** Trap: Wherever you go...**

You must inform the Resident Staff of any travel involving an overnight stay. Failure to do this may result in your dismissal from the program.

Air

Travelling by plane has become less expensive in Brazil and is usually the preferred option both economically and time wise. You can check with travel agencies in the US about purchasing a Brazilian airpass which offers 5 Brazilian cities for a set price. The problem is that it needs to be confirmed and issued with your international tickets and the dates have to be prearranged and are not flexible. The value of the Brazil Airpass is quite good but if you want more flexibility you should wait to purchase inter-Brazil flights when you arrive. There are often very good promotions through the domestic airlines in Brazil such as GOL or TAM airlines.

Hotels and Hostels

If you plan to stay at hostels while travelling, a good website for your search is www.hostelworld.com Some hostels will give you a discount with your hostelling international card but the card is not necessary at most hostels.

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

If you are religious or interested in religious organizations during your stay in Brazil, please ask the Resident staff and host families for information on local churches and/or religious organizations.

ILLEGAL DRUGS

Penalties for drug violations in Brazil are often harsher than in the United States. If you use illegal drugs, you may be expelled from the study program, and the local police may prosecute you as a criminal. Remember that you are subject to Brazilian laws. You are not protected by your own country's laws. The United States and other governments can only seek to ensure that their citizens are not discriminated against; that is, that they receive the same treatment as do citizens of the country in which they are arrested who are charged with the same offense.

VOTING WHILE ABROAD

U.S. citizens who expect to be away from home on Election Day may request absentee ballots in person or by mail from their local election offices. Procedures vary by state but are usually

quite simple if you have already registered to vote.

*** Tip: Notarize your ballot**

FPCA forms used to register or obtain a ballot must be notarized. If you believe you have been wrongfully denied the right to vote, you may write to the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Washington, DC 20530.

If you have not arranged this before leaving home, you may use the provisions of the Overseas Voting Rights Act of 1975 that requires states to establish a means for citizens residing overseas to apply for voter registration. Some states permit you to use an FPCA (Federal Post Card Application) to register. Others use an SF76 that serves as both an application for registration and as an absentee ballot. You can get a list of states' voting requirements from a U.S. Embassy or consular office.

If you are a citizen of another country, consult the authorities governing elections in your own country for similar instructions before you leave.

INCOME TAX

Most U.S. citizens and residents must file U.S. income tax returns even if their earned income is exempt from taxes. State requirements vary; call or write to the appropriate state office. Internal Revenue Service income tax information and forms are available at U.S. Embassies and Consulates. Since tax laws change from year to year, direct any questions to the U.S. Consulate. Non-U.S. citizens should contact the appropriate authorities in their own countries for taxation information.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In case of an emergency, parents or family can reach you by calling CIEE. The CIEE home office is in touch with our Bahia office, so call CIEE in an emergency.

Contact information for the CIEE home office will be included in an email Final Mailing sent about a month before departure to both you and the emergency contact designated in your application materials.

Participants say...

I don't feel I have changed much, but I have learned to accept different ideas and opinions. I have also learned to be more patient.

I am definitely coming back to Brazil to research and enjoy all of the wonderful things I haven't yet experienced here.

Part IV: Policies and Procedures

Please click on the following link to view CIEE's Policies and Procedures:

<http://ciee.org/study/terms.aspx>.

This website includes:

General Policies

- Admissions
- Late Arrival and Early Departure Exceptions
- Drug and Alcohol Violations
- Alcohol Policy
- Dismissal from the Program

Academic Policies

- Student Academic Orientation
- Course Loads, Credits, Equivalencies and Grades
- Academic Records
- Attendance
- Pass/Fail and Audit
- Drop/Add Period
- Incompletes
- Withdrawal from a Course
- Academic Honesty
- Appeals

Program Fees and Payment Policies

- Confirmation of Participation
- Payment of CIEE Program Fees
- Due Dates, Late Fees and Interest
- Exclusion from Participation
- Late Fees and Interest
- Withdrawal and Deferral Policy
- Program Cancellation

Please make sure to review this website. Your signature on the "Program Participant Contract" indicates that you have read and agree to comply with all of the policies provided to you on that website.

A NOTE FROM CIEE

Credits and Grades

Most students who choose to go abroad for a term or a year report that the experience is one of the most powerful and enjoyable parts of their undergraduate education. We hope that when you return home, you will have had an equally memorable experience.

Many students report that study abroad is also challenging, and that coming to terms with the challenges is one of the things that make it so powerful and memorable. Some students, however, report that the challenges of dealing with another country's academic culture are sometimes more frustrating than enjoyable.

The academic programs that CIEE provides are to varying degrees integrated into another culture's academic framework, and are often governed by rules that are unfamiliar to U.S. students. At CIEE we want you to experience the challenges of adapting to a new culture, of accepting different teaching styles, and embracing forms of learning that may be different from what you are used to.

But we are sure you will agree that problems associated with your credits and your grades should be avoided—that these should not turn out to be "opportunities for growth." We want to help you avoid these problems, and with some careful planning and attention to detail, you can:

1. Managing Your Registration.

You are probably going to sign up for five classes during your session overseas. Although it's surprising, one problem faced by some students when they return home is that the Course Registration Record we have for them doesn't match what the student actually took. You can avoid this. Read on.

Make it your responsibility to keep your Course Registration Record accurate and up to date.

Students select a preliminary course schedule, either in the U.S. before going abroad or after arrival at the Center. The courses selected constitute your Preliminary Registration, which will be sent to your home or sending school. There will be an opportunity to change courses during the first days of the regular semester (the "drop-add" period). Once this add-drop period ends, all courses for which you are registered will remain final, and will be permanently listed on your Course Registration Record. These will be the courses that will appear on the credit and grades report that we will send to your home or sending school after the session ends (called the "CIEE Academic Record").

Although CIEE staff, both in the U.S. and at your site, will make every effort to ensure that your Course Registration Record is accurate, we cannot do this unless you correctly follow all the formal procedures for making changes. **You must fill out a form to drop or add a course.** It is not sufficient to tell your professor, the CIEE Resident Director, or another staff person that you are changing courses—you must complete all required paperwork or the change is not official. In some cases you will also be required to obtain permission from your home institution.

To sum up, **make it your responsibility** to ensure that your Course Registration Record is

accurate. If at any time you are not sure, ask to see a copy of it.

There's a difference between DROPPING a course and WITHDRAWING from one.

As noted above, once the drop-add period is over, all the courses for which you are registered will remain permanently on your record. However, if you realize, *after the end of the drop-add period but before the middle of the session*, that special circumstances will prevent you from completing a course successfully, it may be possible to "Withdraw" from the course. Please also be aware that it is not possible to add a course after the add-drop period. If you do withdraw from a course, it will remain on your CIEE Academic Record with a "W" grade. Permission to withdraw from a course is not automatically granted just because a student is not doing well; it is only granted when there are circumstances that the Resident Director believes *prevented* a student from doing well, and *only before the program's withdrawal deadline*. There is also required paperwork to complete if you are withdrawing from a course.

After the withdrawal deadline, all courses that remain on your Course Registration Record will be posted on your CIEE Academic Record with a letter grade. If you stop going to a course, fail to take the final examination, or fail to turn in required coursework, you will receive an F.

2. Getting Good Grades.

The time to think about your grades is at the beginning of each course, not at the end.

Make sure you understand the basis on which the professor will be assessing your work. Practices vary from country to country. Often a single final paper or examination will be the most important (perhaps the only) opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned and/or achieved in the course. In some courses, the basis for grades may have been explained during orientation or during the registration process. An explanation may appear on the course syllabus, and/or the professor may announce grading policies. In some cases, you may not be sure how the professor will be calculating the grade. In this case as well, **make it your responsibility to be sure you understand the basis for grading in each course**. If you're not sure, ask the professor or the Resident Director.

How am I doing?

Although grading differs from country to country, there are general guidelines that we can offer.

In the U.S., a student usually forms an idea of how he/she is doing as the semester progresses based on a self-appraisal of participation in class and a general sense of what the professor cares about. In most overseas situations, it is much more difficult, and often not possible at all, for a student to determine this. Although we ask our teachers to give students ongoing feedback, their own academic cultures are often very different in this regard, and many teachers do not always offer feedback in a way that enables a student to form a reliable opinion of his/her progress. We strongly recommend that you ask your professor how you are doing, perhaps two weeks after the semester has started and again two or three times during the session. Don't wait until mid-term time to do this.

"Demanding" doesn't mean the same thing in most overseas academic cultures.

U.S. students are accustomed to forming an idea of how demanding a teacher is based on the pressure that is applied on a day-to-day basis. In the U.S., if a professor repeatedly challenges students to show they have read and understood the assignments, and then chastises those who can't answer, students will conclude that this is a demanding teacher. This doesn't always happen overseas. "*Demanding*" in an overseas context may mean simply that the grades awarded at the end of the course are lower than those awarded by other professors.

Because of these differences, you need to take stock of your situation early and often. If the regular clues are not present, you should ask, "How am I doing?" If there isn't yet any basis for the professor to answer that question, you should ask, "What is important in this class? What should I be doing in order to succeed?" Make it your responsibility to actively seek confirmation of how well you are doing in each course.

All the CIEE staff, both in the U.S. and at your program site, want you to have an enjoyable and successful session overseas. We are committed to offering top-quality assistance to help you understand the host culture and its constraints. Please do not hesitate to contact any staff member if we can advise you on how best to manage your overseas experience.

Have a great year, learn all that you can about your temporary home, and try to bring back an excellent and accurate academic record.

CONCLUSION: THE CHALLENGE IS UP TO YOU

Your stay abroad may be one of the most vital and rewarding times of your life. Don't worry about what you are going to miss at school by going overseas. You will learn so much abroad! The people you meet and the situations you experience may be invaluable in the years to come.

We hope you will arrive prepared to adjust to a way of living that is different from your own; to a way of thinking that may be, in some cases, more traditional, more conventional, and more conservative than your own. You will also most likely encounter new and different views about the U.S. and its people. Take the opportunity to learn from these and to clarify misconceptions about the U.S. when you can.

Remember that each person you meet will see you as a representative of the United States. If you can accept differences cheerfully and with an open mind rather than attempting to alter the environment around you, you can contribute to a positive relationship between the country and the United States.

CIEE wishes you every success during the coming months.

Participants say...

Overall my experience abroad is something that I would not trade for anything. Being abroad gave me the opportunity to push myself beyond my comfort zone thus increasing my abilities to deal with more confidence. My only advice to those coming abroad is to constantly push yourself. Venture out on your own and don't let your fears deprive you of the opportunity to try something new.

Part V: Additional Resources

RECOMMENDED READING

We urge you to read several of these publications to expand your knowledge of Brazil and ease your adjustment to Brazilian culture. Many of these books can be purchased at your local bookstore or may be available for reference at your campus study abroad office or local library.

Books on Brazil

The starred books provide excellent, general historical and cultural backgrounds about Brazil and are the most up to date.

- Alvarez, Sonia. Engendering Democracy in Brazil: Women's Movements in Transition Politics. Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Burns, E. Bradford. A History of Brazil. Columbia University Press, 1980.
- Chacel, Julian M., Pamela S. Falk, and David Fleischer, eds. Brazil's Economic and Political Future. Westview Press, 1988.
- Degler, Carl N. Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States. Macmillan Press, 1971.
- Evans, Peter. Dependent Development: The Alliance of Multinational, State, and Local Capital in Brazil. Princeton University Press, 1979.
- Freyre, Gilberto. The Mansions and the Shanties; The Masters and the Slaves. Knopf Press.
- Furtado, Celso. The Economic Growth of Brazil. The University of California Press, 1963.
- Graham, Lawrence S. and Wilson, Robert H., eds. The Political Economy of Brazil: Public Policies in an Era of Transition. University of Texas Press, 1990.
- Hemming, John. Red Gold: The Conquest of the Brazilian Indians. And The Defeat of the Brazilian Indians. Harvard University Press, 1978, 1987.
- Koike, Dale April. Language and Social Relationship in Brazilian Portuguese: The Pragmatics of Politeness. University of Texas Press: 1992.
- Page, Joseph A. The Brazilians. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1995.
- Shoumatoff, Alex. The World is Burning. Little Brown, 1990. (An account of the Chico Mendes story). Author has also written several other interesting books on the Amazon.
- Skidmore, Thomas E. Politics in Brazil, 1930-1964: An Experiment in Democracy. Oxford University Press, 1967; The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil: 1964-85, Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Summ, Harvey G., ed. Brazilian Mosaic: Portraits of a Diverse People and Culture. Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1995.
- Selected fiction by Jorge Armado and Paulo Freire
- Robb, Peter, A Death in Brazil: A Book of Omissions. John MacRae Books, 2004. Book about the fall of Fernando Collor, the rise of Lula intertwined with many histories from northeast.

Books On Cultural Adaptation

Adaptation to a new culture can be difficult. The following reading list contains publications that deal specifically with issues of culture shock and the difficulties associated with living overseas. Many of these books can be purchased at your local bookstore or may be available for reference at your campus study abroad office or local library.

- Citron, James. Short-Term Study Abroad: Integration, Third Culture Formation and Reentry, NAFSA: Association for International Educators, 1996.
- Kepets, Dawn. Back in the USA: Reflecting on Your Study Abroad Experience, NAFSA: Association for International Educators, 1999.
- Kohls, Robert. Survival Kit for Overseas Living: For Americans Planning to Live and Work Abroad, Intercultural Press, 2001.
- Storti, Craig. The Art of Crossing Cultures (Second Edition), Intercultural Press, 2001.
- Storti, Craig. The Art of Coming Home, Intercultural Press, 2001.
- Wolfgang, Aaron. Everybody's Guide to People Watching, Intercultural Press, 1995.

WEBSITES

For those students with access to the Internet, we also encourage you to look at the many sites on student travel as well as on Brazil, Salvador da Bahia and São Paulo including the following:

www.ciee.org - CIEE web site. If you haven't already, take a look and find out about other CIEE activities around the world.

<http://www.studentuniverse.com/> - Geared towards students traveling abroad, all CIEE students also receive a discount on airfare!

<http://travel.state.gov> - The U.S. State Department Bureau of Consular Affairs home page providing Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings, U.S. Passport Information and Application Procedures, U.S. Consulate and Embassy Addresses Abroad, and U.S. Customs Information.

www.oanda.com - Current exchange rates.

www.cdc.gov - U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Provides updated information on required immunization and regional health advisories for travelers.

www.folha.com.br - Practice or become familiar with the Portuguese language

www.ucsal.br - The official website of the Universidade Católica do Salvador.

www.miusa.org - Website of Mobility International USA. Very helpful resources and support for students with disabilities who want to study overseas.

www.lonelyplanet.com/dest/sam/bra.htm - On-line travel guide to Brazil from the very respected Lonely Planet series of travel guides.

SUGGESTED PACKING CHECKLIST

You'll want to pack what best reflects your own life style and taste, but CIEE created a list of possible items to bring with you to Brazil:

Important Documents

- Airline ticket (save the return ticket if it's a round-trip ticket)
- CIEE Student Handbook and final email
- Credit card/phone card
- Home Advisor's address, fax, email
- Passport/Photocopy of passport (keep separate from passport), and your Pedido de Visto. We recommend scanning and saving by email for easy access.
- Traveler's checks/List of traveler's check numbers (keep separate)

Clothing - Suggested

- Bras (4)
- Coat
- Flip-flops or sandals
- Pajamas/nightgown (2)
- Pants (4-5, some lightweight)
- Robe
- Shirts, blouses, dress shirts (10)
- Shoes (2-3 pair including a dress pair and a pair of sturdy, comfortable walking shoes)
- Shorts (2-3)
- Skirts or dresses, (2) for dressy occasions in Brazil
- Slip, (if necessary)
- Sneakers
- Socks (5-6)
- Sportscoat/blazer (optional)
- Sweaters/sweatshirts (2-3)
- Swimsuit
- Ties, belts (1-2)
- Underwear (one week's worth)

General – Optional

- Address book, including email
- Adhesive tape
- Backpack/Overnight bag for traveling
- Batteries
- Birth control/condoms
- Bottle/can opener
- Camera/film/Blank CDs to burn digital pictures/flash drive
- Contact lens solution
- Flashlight
- Portuguese grammar book
- Gifts/Photos from home
- Glasses or contact lenses, extra pair, prescription

- Guidebook
- Gynecological supplies
- Hair dryer
- Journal
- Medication you are taking and a **copy of the prescriptions**
- Medicine kit, small: antacid/anti-diarrhea medicine/aspirin/band-aids/cold medicine
- Money belt or pouch
- Nail scissors
- Pocket Portuguese -English dictionary
- Raincoat
- Reading material: books, magazines
- Recipes
- Sewing kit
- Soap and soap dish
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses, good pair
- Toiletries: brush, comb, deodorants, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.
- Towels (1 beach, 1-2 bath) - Towels and linens are provided by the homestay family
- Travel alarm clock
- Umbrella
- Washcloth, towel or beach towel for traveling
- MP3 player
- Laptop (optional) with electrical adapter and security/theft recovery software - if you plan to take a laptop, be sure you have the appropriate electrical adapter. Additionally, we recommend that any students taking a laptop consider installing security/theft recovery software. One example of this software is Computrace LoJack for laptops, made by Absolute Software.
- Battery operated CO (carbon monoxide) detector

Packing light is always worth it