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The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy,* disability, age, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the University’s student-related nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the campus Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action office.

*Pregnancy includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth.
YOUR UCEAP NETWORK

EAP Online
Bookmark your Participants program page; it contains vital resources and requirements you need to know before you go abroad, including the Predeparture Checklist, UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad, Program Calendar, EAP Student Budgets and Payment Vouchers, and policies.

Local EAP Support

Campus EAP Office
The Campus EAP Office coordinates recruitment, student selection, orientation, and academic advising, and serves as your primary contact during the application process.

UCEAP Systemwide Office
The UCEAP Systemwide Office establishes and operates programs and coordinates EAP administration for all UC campuses from its headquarters in Goleta, California. You will work closely with the following Systemwide Office staff:

- **Program Advisors** communicate program information, both academic and operational, to students and campuses, and coordinate and provide academic and administrative support in all aspects of your participation.

- **Operations Specialists** coordinate the logistics of the program. Document requirements, visa application instructions, health and safety precautions, placement and acceptance by the host institution, arrival and on-site orientation, and housing arrangements are examples of program details the Operations Specialists coordinate.

- **Academic Specialists** advise on academic policies; review and record courses taken abroad for UC credit; process student registrations, petitions, and grades; and document and maintain students’ academic records.

- **Student Finance Accountants** assist primarily with EAP statements, program fee collection, and financial aid disbursements (in conjunction with your campus Financial Aid Office).

Contact Information

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UCEAP Systemwide Office
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Goleta, CA 93117-5823
Phone: (805) 893-4762; Fax: (805) 893-2583
Study Center Abroad

EAP Ghana is administered by a University of Ghana professor who serves as EAP Liaison Officer. Staff will advise you on academic matters, assist with housing, and provide information on cultural activities.

Professor Rose Walls, Resident Director
Sharon Okantey, EAP Program Coordinator
University of California Study Center
University of Ghana, PO Box 3
Legon, Ghana, West Africa

Phone (calling from the U.S.): (011-233-30) 2500-147
Phone (calling from Ghana): 030-2500-147
E-mail: uceapgha@africaonline.com.gh
Cell Phone: 011-233-20-817-4466 if calling from USA

Phone Number Codes
U.S. international code ................. 011
dial this to call from the U.S.
Ghana country code ................... 233
Legon city code ....................... 030

Approximate Time Difference
Add 8 hours
**Academic Information**

**Program Calendar**

The academic year normally runs from mid-August through late May. Each semester is 16 weeks, with 13 weeks of lecture, one week of review, and two weeks of exams. Your plans must be flexible, however, since disruptions in the calendar are common.

Learning to cope with delays, substitute classes, and other departures from normal academic calendars and processes is important for a positive experience. Exercise patience and ingenuity in adapting to the changes and making the most of the experience. In case of disruption or strikes at the university, EAP will attempt to organize substitute classes and other activities designed to keep your academic progress on track.

**Academic Culture**

Only about 10 percent of the country’s students attend one of Ghana’s six public universities. Since most professional jobs require a college degree, enrollment in the university is crucial to professional advancement. Ghanaian students take their university studies very seriously.

You have obtained a place in the university that might have gone to a local student; therefore, take your classes seriously and act responsibly so as not to be viewed as misusing the educational opportunity and the university’s scarce resources.

Although they are about the same age as UC students, Ghanaian university students come from a more traditional society and have attended boarding schools for their secondary education; therefore, they are generally more conservative and respectful of authority. Despite their genuine friendliness and interest in Americans, Ghanaians may be reserved when it comes to making new friends outside their established circles.

In secondary school, Ghanaian students specialize in science, agricultural science, arts and humanities, or business; they take a less varied but more intense curriculum than the average American student, and are consequently well grounded in their majors by the time they reach the university.

**Flexibility, Independence, and Motivation**

You are expected to show courtesy and respect when interacting with faculty, administrators, classmates, and student helpers. Your behavior should reflect positively on UC and EAP.

Be prepared for the challenges of life in a developing country and demonstrate respect for the Ghanaian people. It helps to be flexible, culturally open, and ready for the varying conditions of a far less affluent and comfortable environment than that found in California.
Be motivated and willing to pursue your studies with independence; be flexible in your academic plans and open to unique opportunities that may arise.

The oral communication characteristic of Ghanaian society applies to the university and classroom. There is less concern with providing consistent, explicit written announcements and more reliance on person-to-person communication. Cultivate relations with your Ghanaian classmates and keep in touch with other international students and the Study Center for current information.

Instructors and Courses
The universities in Ghana are more British than American in structure and method. Instructors generally are called lecturers. You will need to listen carefully to lecturers who have accents and occasionally cope with poor-quality sound systems. Most instructors provide a course outline and a bibliography during the first two weeks of the class, but not beforehand.

There is a schedule of classes, but you will have to go to each department to register for your courses. There are generally three types of courses: 1) lectures, 2) seminars, and 3) studio courses in the arts and performance. Lecture courses are large and rather different from UC lecture courses in their objectives. Students attend lectures primarily to take notes and listen, not to discuss the subject matter, although some lecturers allow time for questions or pose questions to the students. Some lectures are complemented by a separate tutorial in which you will have more opportunity for questions and discussion with Ghanaian students. Seminar courses allow for more discussion and debate.

You are responsible for obtaining reading materials for your classes. Books are expensive and difficult to obtain and libraries do not have the resources necessary to support all course work; therefore, lecturers frequently cannot assign readings to be done ahead of time and discussed in class. In large classes, the instructor may give the readings to a class leader who makes them available for photocopying. Though not all readings are discussed in class, you will be expected to read most of the items on the bibliography and cite them on your exams. Be prepared to invest time and effort into searching out resources and opportunities to enhance your academic experience.

Most lecturers are interested in helping international students. If there is no time to answer questions after class, you can visit faculty members during their office hours for further discussion. Faculty members usually are available during office hours or by appointment; sometimes a lecturer may be obligated to other commitments, in which case understand that this is a necessity of life in Ghana and be gracious about rescheduling an appointment. Be especially cooperative and respectful if you are working with an independent study project advisor (see Independent Study in this chapter).

Keep all syllabi, bibliographies, papers, tests (if returned by the instructor), and other course information for use upon return to your UC campus.
**Program Description**

As an EAP student you have non-degree status and are allowed to select any course appropriate to your academic study plan with the approval of the EAP Liaison Officer, although some courses may be limited to students who are majoring in that subject.

The curriculum is organized into faculties, colleges, and schools of agriculture and consumer services, arts, business, modern languages, law, performing arts, science, social studies, and health sciences (including medical and dental schools). Additional academic units include agricultural research stations; institutes for adult education, African studies, statistical and economic research, and population studies; research centers in a variety of sciences; an International Centre for African Music and Dance; and a Centre for Gender Studies.

Course work is recommended in African studies, agriculture, anthropology, archaeology, development studies, dramatic arts, geography, history, linguistics, political science, religious studies, and sociology. Some departments require fieldwork. Outstanding field research is conducted by the departments of sociology and archaeology and in the field sciences. With the exception of biology, be careful about taking laboratory science courses as laboratory equipment is not always available. Also, courses in business administration tend to be very crowded.

**Required:**

- Attendance at all orientation activities
- Minimum of 24 UC quarter units each term, approximately six courses. Most courses are 4 UC quarter units (3 U. of Ghana credits); some are 3 units and a few are more than 4.
- Ghana Society and Culture course during first three weeks of the program (3 UC quarter units). Counts toward 24 unit minimum.
- MyEAP Study List registration
- Special Study Project form if you do a research project or internship

**Registration Process**

Academic activity is more compartmentalized than in the U.S. because University of Ghana students do not take courses outside their majors. As an international student, however, you may take courses in a variety of disciplines. The university publishes a list of courses and a student handbook that lists all department courses, but the time tables (schedules) are not posted until shortly before classes begin. You must register for courses with each individual University of Ghana department and through MyEAP. Odd-numbered courses are offered in the fall semester and even-numbered courses are offered in the spring semester. Be prepared to deal with conflicting class schedules.

**Library Facilities**

You are urged to bring current books in the field in which you plan to study. Library facilities at the University of Ghana are considered relatively good by African standards but limited by U.S. standards. The Balme Library, the main library, has multiple copies of a limited number of textbooks, reading rooms for study, and a catalog organized differently from UC libraries. Many of the materials are dated, in poor condition, and rather disorganized. The library is crowded by many students trying to access few materials; access to materials is further limited because books have been stolen, defaced, or misplaced.
“EAP STUDENTS SAY...

The Special Study Project was the best part of my academic experience. It allowed me to go out into the field and interview women in politics.”

Many academic departments have their own reading rooms with basic texts for the courses taught by the department. There is also a collection of books at the EAP Study Center. It may also be possible for you to use the library of the African Studies Institute, which has a good collection of books on Africa.

Books

The university bookstore is the best source of textbooks and supplies, although sometimes books are difficult to obtain. Take reference books in your field as well as key articles. Consider leaving books with the EAP Study Center or the University of Ghana library after the program. Such donations are always welcome and they benefit future students.

Independent Study

Independent study, called an EAP Special Study Project, can enrich your experience in Ghana with fieldwork, research, or an internship. You may design a project on a topic related to West Africa, especially Ghana, which may include research or internship activities.

Special Study Projects are under the general direction of the EAP Liaison Officer and the supervision of a local faculty member or other qualified professional on site. They are normally worth 4 UC quarter units although units vary depending on the type and amount of work involved, and they are graded with a letter grade (the P/NP option is not permitted).

Prior to Departure:

- Research possible study topics or internships and consult appropriate UC campus faculty members for advice. It may be possible to develop a project related to the research interests of a UC faculty member or to your long-term research or honors work at your UC campus.
- Take a research methods course. If this is not possible, ask your academic advisor to recommend an introductory research methods text in your field of interest and take the text with you to Ghana.
- Write a preliminary proposal. Instructions for completing and submitting the proposal are in the EAP Predeparture Checklist.
- Establish a second topic in case the first one does not work out.
- Refer to your Campus EAP Office or library for instructions for using the California Digital Library.

On Site in Ghana:

Complete a Special Study Project form and a formal research proposal or plan of study in consultation with the EAP Liaison Officer and the host university faculty member or other designated supervisor. At this time, you will refine your topic or possibly shift it to better fit the resources available or the cultural-political environment in Ghana. Remember to be respectful and professional in your relations with your supervisors.

The proposal requires:

- Title
- Explanation of the topic, including the objective of the study
- Methodology to be used
- Expected result (including the type of work to be submitted for a grade)
- Outline of the steps to implement the project
- List of sources to be consulted (bibliography, archives, exhibit, performances, interviewees, etc., as appropriate to the topic)
Community service and volunteer opportunities, which may be developed into a Special Study Project, are available at many local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and schools; the University Hospital; the National Theatre; the Family and Development Programme; the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and the World Health Organization (WHO). There are a number of institutes or projects on the University of Ghana campus that might offer opportunities for research or internships. The Study Center will provide information after arrival on service opportunities and NGOs.

**Exams and Grading**

To make the most of your courses and academic experience, independently invest time and effort to expand your study beyond the classroom. Some lecturers emphasize memorization of facts over critical analysis and expect students to reproduce the lecture material on exams. Others expect more independent work from students and expect them to give evidence of having mastered the readings listed in the bibliographies. There is sometimes a midterm exam and always a final comprehensive exam, which is usually in essay format, lasts about three hours, and counts for as much as 70 to 100 percent of the final grade. Because of the difficulty of final exams, it is recommended that you study for exams in groups, especially with Ghanaian students who are familiar with the required command of readings and know what to anticipate as possible exam topics. In addition to the final exam, many classes have continuous assessment (attendance, quizzes, assignments, papers, and class presentations) during the term.

Past EAP participants who felt that a course was so easy that they did not need to attend lectures or take the class seriously were later surprised by the difficulty of the final exam.

Local students take all their courses in the same year or level (200, 300, or 400), and the exam schedule is based on class levels. If you take courses from different levels, you may have conflicts in your final exam schedule. If you have a schedule conflict, promptly ask the EAP Liaison Officer for advice on how to make arrangements to resolve the conflict.

In the Ghanaian university, the importance of course grades is not immediately apparent because Ghanaian students focus on comprehensive exam results that come later in their university studies or on the grades that are officially recorded at the end of the year; nevertheless, Ghanaian students are quite competitive.

It is difficult to determine when grades will be available. Fall grades can come in anytime between early January and late March. Spring grades can come in anytime between early June and late September.

For more detailed information about grades, see the Academic Information chapter of the **UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad**.
**EAP STUDENTS SAY...**

Ghana will always have a place in my heart. She is teaching me how to give, how to live, and how to be.

I've become a more mature, more understanding, and more patient person because of my experiences in Ghana.

Traveling around Ghana and West Africa was worth every second of discomfort I experienced.

---

**EXTENDING EAP PARTICIPATION**

**Plan Ahead to Extend**

Extending your EAP participation is possible. If you are considering an extension, submit a Departmental and College Pre-Approval to Extend (DPA) form prior to departure. Submitting the approved DPA does not obligate you to extend nor guarantee approval, but the completed DPA will expedite the process if you decide to extend.

Once abroad, make an appointment with the Study Center. The Liaison Officer or Study Center Program Coordinator will submit to UCEAP a Request for Final Approval (RFA) form. UCEAP must receive the request by the deadline indicated on the form. If you do not submit an approved DPA before departure, submit a Petition to Extend form. The Petition to Extend requires campus and department approval and can take up to eight weeks to process.

Extension approval is based on a number of factors including program criteria, academic and behavioral performance, the support of your UC campus department, and available space.

Once your extension has been approved, notification will be sent to your UC campus registrar, Financial Aid Office, and Campus EAP Office. For information about the steps you need to take in regards to finances, see the Extension of Participation chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*. 
CULTURAL AWARENESS

Educate Yourself

Get acquainted with your new host city, country, and culture before you leave the U.S. Travel guides and travel-related websites, such as Lonely Planet, are excellent resources. The Rough Guide also publishes a travel guide on West Africa.

Keep up with current events by reading articles in newspapers, magazines, and journals. The periodical Ghana News, which can be accessed online via the World News Network, is recommended.

You will also need to understand the local culture and history. These sources should help you prepare before departure.

Recommended Books

Achebe, Chinua

Aidoo, Ama Ata

Angelou, Maya

Armah, Ayi Kwei

Gocking, Roger S.

Gyekye, Kwame

Kuada, John E. and Yao Chachah

Opoku, Kofi Asare

Utley, Ian

Additional Resources

There are many excellent travel books available in the U.S. about Ghana and its surrounding areas. Take at least one travel guide about Ghana and Africa with you as travel guides are not readily available in Ghana.

Past students have found the following guides to be particularly useful: Lonely Planet’s Africa on a Shoestring and West Africa; the Bradt Travel Guide to Ghana, and the Rough Guide to West Africa.

“EAP STUDENTS SAY...

Definitely read about Ghana before you go.

Be aware of the history of colonialism and try to understand what is going on around you.

The cultural and social things cannot really be understood prior to departure. Come with an open mind (rather than expectations). It’s the best formula for social learning.”
“EAP STUDENTS SAY...”

White people get constant attention. People assume they’re rich, which makes the bargaining process hard.
The time passes both quickly and slowly. Although Ghana is nice, you may feel homesick at times.

“The Akan Language”
The following lists some everyday Ghanaian words in the Akan language:

- Come: Bra
- Go: Ko
- Sit down: Tena ase
- Drink: Nom
- Eat: Didi
- Food: Aduane
- Stone: Obo
- Fire: Ogya
- Water: Nsu
- Moon: Osram
- Sun: Owia
- Father: Agya
- Mother: Ena
- Foreigner: Obruni
- Man: Obarima
- Woman: Oba
- African: Obibini

“Social Conduct”
As a UCEAP student, you will need to adapt to conditions that may be considerably different than what you have ever experienced and modify some lifestyle behaviors. Even the most basic behaviors—talking, eating, and sleeping—may be different in the context of your host country. If you can successfully adapt, you will gain a deep understanding of Ghanaian culture, new and potentially lifelong friendships, and a different approach to things you currently take for granted (e.g., running water). Regardless of your ethnic background or economic status in the U.S., you will stand out in Ghana as “American.” It will take some time to understand the implications of words and body language in any new culture. Pay attention to the information provided during EAP orientations (both in California and in Ghana) and take advantage of the knowledge and experience of Study Center staff as they advise you about appropriate behavior.

Some students find the pace of life much slower, and for some this is extremely difficult. It is especially difficult if you have a more rigid view of time and are trying to meet deadlines that you believe are important while everyone around you seems to be on a different schedule. It is common for appointments to be delayed and for Ghanaians to arrive to meetings late. Anticipate tardiness—it is not a sign of rudeness and should never be raised as an issue or Ghanaians will take offense. Put simply by the EAP Liaison Officer, “There are clocks and there is time. In Ghana, we go by time.”

Relying on unpredictable transport instead of coming and going when you want to, showing up for a meeting “on time” and realizing that there is no set time, and discovering that you really are responsible for the outcome of your experience, can be overwhelming.

Modern Ghanaian society is a mixture of traditional and Western customs. Ghanaians consider family values, respect for seniority, and the significance of proper social behavior to be very important. Conformity to social norms is expected.

To transition culturally and adapt to life in Ghana, you may need to make some temporary but essential compromises with who you are as an American and as a person. For example, female students may not be able to exercise the independence available to them in the United States, political discussions should be minimized, and you may want to consider keeping to yourself some of your personal beliefs. You must be ready to develop techniques and personal strategies for coping.
Many Ghanaians think that all Americans are rich because of how Americans are portrayed in the media and because of America’s influence worldwide.

The hardest part of adjusting is dealing with those people who obviously just want something from you. I ran into some problems with Christian fanaticism and the male chauvinistic attitude. However, I knew I would go through an adjustment period.

Stay academically motivated and focused, and regard yourself less as a tourist and more as a serious student. Although Ghanaians are generally accepting of cultural errors made by foreigners, do not display behavior that could be perceived as rude, disrespectful, or arrogant by locals, especially toward older persons. Cultural sensitivity should always be strictly observed while traveling anywhere.

Interpersonal Communications
Ghana is a society that relies on oral communication rather than communicating in writing. The Study Center and other local entities will often rely on information to get to you by word of mouth. You are expected to actively listen, ask questions, and remain in regular contact with the Study Center and your peers for information. In addition, information can be sporadic and unpredictable, coming on short notice. This is largely a cultural phenomenon. Approach this difference with patience and flexibility.

In general, Ghanaians tend to dislike, and avoid, confrontation and will use laughter to diffuse serious or tense situations. As a consequence, EAP students have felt Ghanaians can be disrespectful by laughing and lightheartedly commenting during awkward moments. Understand this behavior is in no way meant to disrespect or insult others; it is a cultural coping mechanism.

Greetings are particularly important in Ghanaian culture. It is customary to shake hands when you meet or leave people. Ghanaians are extremely polite and typically greet everyone they meet or speak to on the phone. Failing to greet someone is impolite. Use your right hand for greeting, waving, exchanging money, drinking, shaking hands, and if possible, eating. Ghanaians make some allowances for left-handedness, but trying to use your right hand shows respect. Ghanaians do not eat with their left hand, as this is generally considered unclean. It is important that you always greet people, even if you are in a hurry; not greeting people appropriately is viewed as extremely offensive.

In conversation, people often stand close to one another. Ghanaians will regularly ask for a student’s phone number and address very early in a conversation, even if they have never met before. The majority will be harmless but you should expect to be called regularly if you share your phone number. Do not give your dorm address.

Attire
Ghanaians are meticulous about their attire. Ghanaian students dress more formally on campus. Cleanliness is a sign of respect, and clothes should be relatively conservative. You will have to hand wash all of your clothes or pay someone to wash them for you. Expect that this will be hard on your clothes.

Ghanaians dress more conservatively than American students. UC students tend to dress more casually at formal occasions. Many EAP students have commented that they felt underdressed at times.

Take lightweight clothing that can be hand washed and drip-dried. Most wash will be dry cleaned or laundered by hand. You should take lightweight trousers and a jacket for nights during cooler weather. Clothes that cover more skin are also good barriers against the sun and mosquito bites.
EAP STUDENTS SAY...

Wearing dirty clothes to class is a sign of disrespect to fellow students and lecturers. Cool cotton dresses, jeans, and shirts are good. Shorts and T-shirts are acceptable.

Pay attention to how Ghanaian males and females interact. Follow their guidelines for social norms.

Women on EAP often find that they have to fight the impression many Ghanaian men have that American women are ‘easy.’

Pack 1–2 days worth of clothes in your carry-on luggage. If your luggage is delayed, you will have some clothes until you are able to retrieve your luggage. EAP students have had such problems in the past.

- Skirts and shorts typically are knee-length or longer; covering the thighs is highly recommended.
- Do not show your midriff, unless at the beach.
- Sandals are acceptable shoes to wear, though flip-flops are regarded as shower shoes.
- In the presence of a chief, queen mothers, or elder, remove headwear. This includes earphones.

Personal hygiene and a neat appearance are very important. Also, Ghana is humid; take small handkerchiefs to use for sweat. Sweating freely is considered offensive and low class.

Relationships

African-American Students

African-American students sometimes go to Ghana with expectations of being more easily or rapidly accepted into African culture. In reality, Ghanaians see all Americans, regardless of their skin color, as foreigners who are unfamiliar with African culture or mores. A book that treats this subject sensitively is Maya Angelou’s memoir, All God’s Children Need Traveling Shoes.

Male-Female Interactions

Past male students have commented that interaction with local women is not easy. Ghanaian women are more reserved than American women. Do not take this as a sign of disinterest or aloofness.

Lonely Planet’s Healthy Travel—Africa provides some insight on social expectations and queues between men and women in African society. It is important for males to be aware of what fellow female EAP students will experience; the attention they receive is greater than what males will experience.

Female Students and Harassment

Be careful about dating. Avoid inviting men to your room as some men might view this as an invitation for sex. American women are accustomed to the concept of platonic friendship with males, which does not necessarily translate in Ghanaian culture. Going out with or talking with a man may have a different meaning in Ghana than you may intend.

Be prepared for attention from local males. “Bring me to America” and “marry me” are common requests, mostly from men off campus. It is common for female students in Ghana to receive marriage proposals. It may be difficult in the beginning to distinguish sexual harassment from routine attention. If harassment becomes unbearable, notify the Study Center.
EAP STUDENTS SAY...

The culture shock is huge, but the only way to get over it is by immersing yourself in it. Everyone goes through it, so talk about it with your friends and get through it together.

There are steps you can take to minimize harassment:

- Integrate into the community
- Make friends with local women
- Learn from local women about self-protection
- Dress and behave according to local customs
- Stay in control and keep your senses; stay sober and alert
- Have a buddy system and travel in groups
- Follow your intuition if something “doesn’t feel right” and immediately remove yourself from the situation

It is understandable that harassment can escalate if you feel angry and exasperated because of the harassment. Confrontations only elicit further attention, thus it is best to respond as follows:

- Ignore the harassment
- Pretend confusion or lack of understanding
- Move away from the situation

Sexual Orientation

Ghana is very conservative, and there is little understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender relationships. Homosexuality in Ghana is illegal. Although there is a small gay community, there is no “scene” and a large portion of Ghanaian society does not accept that such activity exists.

It is common for Ghanaian men and women to hold hands or walk arm-in-arm with friends of the same gender, but this is a sign of friendship and not of sexual orientation. Being sensible about revealing one’s sexual orientation is advisable. Being “out” can invite harassment and physical attack. Avoid open demonstrations of your preference. At the same time, there is no pressure to disclose your sexual orientation.
ARRIVAL & ORIENTATION

Travel Documents
After arrival you will be required to give your passport to the Ghana Immigration Service for resident permit processing. During this time, which can last anywhere from two to six weeks, you may not leave Ghana. The Study Center and the host university conduct the required three-week orientation and help facilitate the resident permit process. You can read more about this local government requirement on the Ghana Immigration Service website.

Visa Requirement
All nationalities require a visitor’s visa to study in Ghana. A visa is an endorsement issued by Ghana authorities before your departure. The visitor's visa grants you permission to enter and reside in Ghana.

A multiple-entry visa is also available if you are considering travel to another country. You do not need a host university acceptance letter to apply for a visitor’s visa at the Ghanaian embassy.

Certificate of Yellow Fever Immunization
The government in Ghana requires yellow fever vaccination before arrival. Upon arrival, you may need to present a valid international certificate of yellow fever vaccination or you will not be allowed to stay in the country. You should be immunized at the time you complete your EAP Health Clearance on your UC campus.

U.S. Department of State Registration
UCEAP strongly recommends that you sign up for the U.S. Department of State’s free Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (formerly known as “Travel Registration” or “Registration with Embassies”) to receive the latest travel updates and information.

Photocopies
Make photocopies of all important documents, including the identification page of your passport, vaccination certificates, travelers check receipts, airline tickets, your student ID and birth certificate, etc., and leave a set of copies at home with a parent or guardian. Spending a few moments copying documents now can save time if something is lost or stolen.
“EAP STUDENTS SAY . . .

If you can’t afford to lose it, don’t take it!

Petty theft is common in Ghana, so don’t take anything you don’t want to lose.

Take fun things like photos. A favorite African pastime is to visit people and look at pictures.

Mosquito repellent is crucial!

Take a pair of good walking shoes.

You can buy beautiful and inexpensive clothing in Ghana. Most people buy material and take it to a tailor to have a dress or shirt made. This is a fun and inexpensive way to fit into Ghanaian culture, so don’t pack too much.

Packing Tips

EAP students have found that they could buy most of the things they need in Ghana. They note that the mosquito nets sold at the pharmacy across the street from the University of Ghana campus are less expensive than they would be in the U.S.

When packing be aware that in Ghana it is illegal to wear any military clothing or sportswear with a camouflage design.

**Essential**

- Antimalarial medication (see the Health chapter in this guide)
- Mosquito repellent with high DEET level (30 percent recommended)
- Fiber supplement and multivitamins
- Anti-itch cream/hydrocortisone
- Anti-cold/fever medicine
- Anti-rash/fungal cream
- Treatment for upset stomach and diarrhea (e.g., Pepto-Bismol or Imodium)
- Electric plug adapters and transformer (see Electrical Appliances in this chapter)
- Small luggage locks
- Twin-size bed linens (two sets) and a pillow
- Quick-dry microfiber towels
- Antibacterial hand sanitizer
- USB flash drives (pen drives) for document backup
- Sunscreen
- Two nice outfits for formal occasions and outings
- Lightweight, easy-to-care-for clothing that can be hand washed and drip-dried (cotton is best)
- Lightweight rain gear
- Sturdy, comfortable shoes with straps (e.g., Birkenstocks)
- A good LCD self-powered flashlight

**Optional**

- Laptop with lock (computer viruses are a problem in Africa; make sure you have the latest antivirus software)
- Money belt
- Padlock for dorm room closet (padlocks are also available in any Ghanaian market including the on-campus “Bush Canteen”)
- Conversion chart to the metric system
- Earplugs (the dorms can be noisy)
- Favorite cosmetics or toiletries
- Favorite paperback books
- Lightweight American gifts for new friends, especially if you are invited to a Ghanaian home (suggestions: Frisbees; T-shirts with city, state, or campus logos; UC pens or pencils; decals; baseball caps; or California postcards, posters, or scenic calendars)
- Swimsuit or beachwear
- Favorite cooking spices and recipes
- White T-shirts and black pants for the practical dance course
Climate
Ghana lies entirely within the tropics. The average temperature is between 21°C (70°F) and 32°C (90°F) and humidity can be quite high. There are two seasons: a wet season (April to November) and a dry one (December to March). Severe torrential rain falls during the annual wet season. This causes floods in low-lying areas, and riverbanks burst easily. The sewage system in Accra and surrounding regions is inadequate even during periods of normal precipitation. During the floods, the system is severely over-burdened.

To protect yourself during hot weather:
- Protect against sun and heat by wearing sunscreen and a hat, and staying hydrated. Watch for mild to moderate signs of dehydration: Dry, sticky mouth; sleepiness or tiredness; thirst; headache; clammy skin; dizziness or lightheadedness; constipation, etc. Watch for heat stroke signs: hot or flushed dry skin, rapid heart rate, confusion or loss of consciousness.
- Wear sunglasses with 100% UV protection.

Photography
It is illegal to take pictures of military sites, government buildings (including post offices), and airports in Ghana. You cannot photograph military personnel, police, or anyone in uniform. Tourists have had cameras confiscated.

Electrical Appliances
Voltage is 240V (U.S. is 110 volts). Transformer and adapter plugs are needed to use appliances from home. Both round and flat three-pronged plugs are commonly used. You can purchase irons, blow dryers, and electric razors in the U.S. or abroad with built-in adapters for all currents.
Travel and Arrival

EAP Group Flight
UCEAP arranges for group travel to Accra. Due to the travel time between California and Ghana, most students are extremely tired and disoriented when they arrive. The airport in Accra is confusing and full of people offering their services.

If you are on the group flight, the Study Center will pick you up at the airport, help you navigate through customs and immigration, and transport you and your luggage to the campus for initial orientation. This is a great benefit to the EAP Ghana program.

You will make reservations directly with the travel agency (Travel Cuts) by using the Student Group Flight Information and Reservation form provided in the Predeparture Checklist, and pay Travel Cuts directly. Even if you are on financial aid you must purchase your own airplane ticket. The Financial Aid Office will not do it for you.

Failure to attend the on-site orientation is cause for dismissal from the program (UCEAP Student Agreement, Section 10). More detailed arrival information and directions to the check-in point are provided before departure.

The program dates can change due to unforeseen circumstances, and you are responsible for any fees associated with tickets. EAP is not responsible for any unrecoverable transportation charges you may incur for travel arrangements.

When you arrive, enter the arrival area and walk toward the immigration desk marked “Other Travelers” and wait in line behind the red line until it is your turn. Before going through immigration and customs, you will need to complete an arrival card. The card must be legible and in CAPS with contact information for the University of Ghana. The form should be distributed in-flight. If you do not get the form before arrival, make sure you get one before going through immigration and customs. Forms are available on the left as you enter the customs hall.

If you choose not to arrive on the official arrival date, you may not be met at the airport. EAP strongly recommends that you take the group flight.

Financial Aid Students
Your financial aid package is based on the EAP Student Budget for the program. The estimated round-trip airfare is based on the cost of the EAP-arranged group flight to Ghana. If your independent travel costs are greater than the airfare estimate in the EAP Student Budget, notify your financial aid counselors. Neither EAP nor the Financial Aid Office can guarantee that the additional cost will be funded by financial aid.
Your attendance at all orientation sessions is mandatory (EAP Student Agreement, Section 10).

**Orientation**

Before departure, view the first hour of Disc 1 of the May 2008 Ghana Orientation DVD at the Campus EAP Office. If you have time, take advantage of the information on the remainder of the DVDs.

After arrival in Legon (Accra), you will attend a three-week required academic session for which you earn 3 UC quarter units and a grade. The course is called Ghana Society and Culture. The session includes lectures by University of Ghana faculty members, field study trips, and basic Twi lessons. Topics include culture and religion, arts and crafts, music and dance, education and traditional governance, politics, and gender. You will keep a journal and have assignments based on the study trip to Cape Coast, lectures, and other activities.

In addition to the academic session, you will attend a mandatory orientation provided by the EAP Study Center that covers:

- Information on travel, health, safety, money matters, markets, food, and practical living tips
- Visits to historic sites
- Music and dance lessons
- Participation in a traditional festival
- An introduction to your local student guide, who will be with you throughout orientation
- Academic information, including available courses and host institution and MyEAP Study List Registration

After the orientation in Ghana and throughout the program, it is vital that you attend all meetings called by the Study Center, respond promptly to messages, and maintain contact with the EAP Liaison Officer and Study Center staff.
Local Transportation

The University of Ghana is located in the Legon district of northern Accra about 11 miles from Accra.

Public transportation—including buses, taxis, and trains—is available in Ghana. The preferred method of transportation is taxi.

Tro-Tros

A tro-tro is a general term for any public transportation vehicle other than a bus or taxi that is designed to carry many people. These minivans provide a vital public service transporting up to 20 passengers around the city and countryside. Tro-tros are typically old, 12-passenger VW vans. Similar to shared taxis, tro-tros will run along fixed routes, have fixed fares, and will rarely run with less than capacity. There is little to no preventive maintenance performed on any vehicle in Ghana; tro-tros and vehicles tend to be in poor condition. Driving standards are also poor. As a result, tro-tros are regularly involved in serious accidents. Tro-tro accidents regularly result in loss of life to all occupants. You must use common sense before boarding a vehicle. If in doubt, wait for the next vehicle.

Use extreme caution when crossing the street as taxi and tro-tro drivers often speed and drive recklessly. Bicycles are not recommended due to theft and safety concerns. A few students use bicycles on campus but rarely go into Accra on them.

Buses

Vanef STC government-run buses are considered among the best in West Africa, and are probably the safest and fastest way to travel long distances. STC operates between Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, Tamale, Cape Coast, and other main cities. These buses have two classes: 1) express (with air-conditioning), which are quicker and considerably more comfortable, and 2) ordinary.

Vanef STC Phone: 233-21-221-912

Taxis

Taxis are widely available and fairly inexpensive but are not well maintained. It is best if you charter taxis and do not share them with strangers. Dropping, or fixed-price taxis, are more expensive but preferable to shared taxis. Most taxis do not have meters, but a taxi ride anywhere in the city should not cost more than GHS 9 (roughly USD 6.25). Prices are negotiable. Always agree on a fare before getting into the vehicle. Ask the Study Center for a list of recommended taxis, which are approved to enter the university compound. Do not use unregistered taxis at any time. There are sufficient registered taxis in Accra to transport all passengers without the need to use unregistered vehicles. Female students are strongly discouraged from traveling alone in taxis picked up at the roadside at night.
It is important that you carefully read all of the information available in the **UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad** and discuss it with the person who will assist you with your finances while you are abroad.

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**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**Understanding Your Finances**

Understanding your finances before, during, and after EAP is crucial to having a successful time abroad. The following list outlines just a few of the many things you will need to know before departure.

Detailed information on the following topics can be found in the **Money Matters** chapter of the **UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad**:

- Contact information for finance questions
- How to estimate the cost of your program
- Budget instructions and information
- How to and who can make payments to EAP
- EAP student account information
- Banking before and after arrival
- Fees and penalties
- Loan information
- How financial aid works while on EAP (how do I get my financial aid from my home campus and how are my fees paid)
- Various forms (e.g., direct deposit, etc.)

**MyEAP Student Account**

Your MyEAP Student Account is similar to your home campus Financial account. It will be available as soon as you are selected for your program in MyEAP. The fees that you owe UCEAP are posted to your account, and you can make payments through this account using e-checks or credit cards (MasterCard or Discover). Fees will be applied after your program predeparture withdrawal date, which is listed in MyEAP.

**EAP Student Budget**

Carefully review your **UCEAP Student Budget**.

Your UCEAP Student Budget lists the fees you will pay to UCEAP and an estimate of the personal expenses you will need to plan for. It does not include the cost of recreational travel or personal entertainment. The fees due to UCEAP will be posted to your MyEAP Student Account after your program predeparture withdrawal date. Program fees are subject to change. View your EAP Student Budget frequently.

**Instructions**

- **Download** and **print** your EAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers.
- Note the deadlines on the Payment Vouchers.
- Give the EAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers to the person responsible for paying your EAP bills. Sign them up for Third Party Authorization so they can make payments online.

For further information see the **Money Matters** chapter of the **UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad** and the Money Matters tab of your Participants Portal. If you are on financial aid, see also the **EAP Financial Information** web page.
“EAP STUDENTS SAY...

The easiest money to change is large bills ($50s and $100s). There is a much better rate for larger bills than smaller ones.

”

Handling Money Abroad

- The official currency unit in Ghana is the cedi (abbreviated GHC).
- Be cautious about carrying and displaying money and expensive personal items. Use ATMs with caution.

The majority of EAP students use their ATM card from a home account in the U.S. to access money in Ghana. ATM cards must have the Visa logo. Make sure your PIN does not exceed four characters. Withdrawals from your U.S. bank account can take time to post, so be careful not to overdraw.

Cashing travelers checks can be time consuming. Once abroad, you can change money into cedis on campus, at one of the many Forex Bureaus in Accra, or at the airport. Currency exchange is also available at most banks. The exchange rate is about 25 percent better for cash than it is for travelers checks.

Conduct foreign currency transactions only through registered banks and licensed foreign exchange bureaus. Currency transactions with private citizens are illegal.

Do not have checks sent to you in Ghana. Checks can take up to six weeks to clear.

You can open a bank account at Barclays Bank or the Standard Bank on campus and then receive additional money through wire transfers into the account. This will allow you to access money from ATMs, which can be found on campus in Accra and throughout other big cities. Bank of America is associated with Barclays Bank, so if you have an account with Bank of America you will not be charged an international fee for withdrawals and wire transfers.

Western Union can be used to transfer funds to Ghana, although past students say the charges and conversion rates are high.

Credit Cards

UCEAP and the U.S. Embassy in Ghana strongly advise against the use of credit cards in Ghana or anywhere else in Africa. Credit card fraud is a major problem in Ghana. It is more common to use cash rather than credit cards. Returnees report that Visa is the best credit card to use, and that MasterCard and American Express are seldom accepted throughout Ghana. Refrain from using a credit card unless absolutely necessary.
Communications Abroad

Local and International Calls

Time difference: add 8 hours

All EAP students obtain cell phones in Ghana, which allow local calls free of charge. Basic Nokia cell phones cost about $50. A prepaid card is needed to make outgoing calls. You can take a cell phone to Ghana that operates on the GSM network and purchase a SIM card locally; however, the fee for decoding the U.S. cell phone is more expensive than buying a new phone in Ghana.

Voiceover Internet Protocol (VoIP), the technology for transmitting voice conversations via the Internet, is popular with students who take a laptop abroad. Social networking software such as Skype is commonly used to make free or low-cost calls over the Internet. Most EAP students take laptops to Ghana and use the wireless Internet in the Study Center to Skype with family in the U.S.

Computer Access and Use

E-mail

There are private facilities on the University of Ghana campus where you can set up an account for a monthly cost. There are Internet cafés on campus and in town that are located very near the residence halls. The Office of International Programs also has free Internet access.

Be sure to keep MyEAP updated with any new contact information (cell phone and e-mail address), as this is EAP’s primary means of contacting you.

Computers

The Study Center recommends that you take a laptop as wireless Internet is available in the Study Center. You must equip your laptop with the latest anti-virus software; computer viruses are common in Africa. The Study Center also has computers that you can use during office hours. Free wireless Internet is available at the American Corner on campus. In 2010 the U.S. embassy opened the American Corner, equipped with new computers, books, periodicals, and other media.

Ghana uses a different electric current than what is used in the U.S. and electricity can be sporadic, so you will need both an adapter and a surge protector. You may also consider purchasing a portable modem in Accra, as some students have found that flash drives were destroyed by viruses.

Internet access may be much slower and sometimes unreliable. Adjust your expectations.

Postal and Courier Services

Shipping often results in more expense and trouble than anticipated. Take a good look at what you plan to ship and decide if the items are really necessary and worth the effort and expense. Do not ship prescription medications, computers/laptops, or cameras, especially if new (the items may be subject to expensive duty). It may be less expensive to pay the airline an excess baggage fee than to pay customs duty for shipping goods abroad.
You must be present when shipped luggage arrives abroad. The Study Center will not collect luggage shipped in advance, and staff will not pick up luggage that must be claimed at a customs office or dock. You may not send luggage to an in-transit location.

The postal system in Ghana is typically slow and sometimes unreliable. Provide the following mailing address to friends and relatives who will send you packages in Ghana:

For courier packages:

[Student’s Name]  
UCEAP  
KAB Jones-Quartey Building  
(right wing)  
Beneath the IPO  
Room 4  
University of Ghana  
Legon, Ghana  

Phone: 233-21500147

For regular mailing (letters, postcards):

P.O. Box LG356  
University of Ghana  
Legon, Ghana

Do not use the Study Center name or the director’s name in the address. Packages are charged a tax and service fee, which differs depending on the size and contents of the package. There is a higher tax if the package contains food such as cookies and candies.

Retrieving Packages at the Post Office

EAP returnees have complained that it can be costly to retrieve packages at the post office. Packages mailed from abroad via regular mail (i.e., not a private courier) are kept at the Ghana post office. Students are sent a package slip to pick up their packages personally. The Study Center advises that you go to the post office with your student ID card, be courteous with the officers, and use the bargaining Twi you will learn during orientation and you will have your tax reduced. Ghanaians must also go through this process when receiving packages from abroad; it is a part of the bureaucracy that comes along with living and studying in Ghana.

Packages sent through a private courier service are delivered at the Study Center.
HOUSING AND MEALS

Where Will I Live?

You will live on campus in a residence hall. You will be asked to choose one before departure. EAP students choose from Volta Hall (an all-women’s dorm), Legon Hall (a coed dorm) and the International Student Hostel (ISH). If you need to change the hall to which you have been assigned, contact Study Center staff after arrival. Off-campus housing is not permitted.

Rooms are doubles and shared with an EAP, international, or local Ghanaian student. The dorm will provide you with a bed, chair, writing table, and armoire. Bring your own twin-size bed sheets, towels, and pillows. You can buy sheets in Ghana, but the Study Center recommends bringing them from home because you will need them immediately. Basic communal kitchens are provided on each floor. Perchers generally live in each kitchen precluding much use (excluding ISH). The majority of rooms have a thick wooden door with a Chubb Lock. Rooms also have bars and mosquito nets over the windows.

The cost for dorm space is included in the EAP fees. You are responsible for the cost of meals. Past students have complained that housing and tuition costs for Ghanaian students are less than those charged to international students. The Ghanaian government subsidizes the housing and tuition costs for the Ghanaian students. This is similar to UC policy of charging different fees for in-state and out-of-state students.

Be prepared for the challenges of life in a developing country and be flexible, culturally open, and ready for the conditions of a less affluent environment. EAP students report that you get used to these conditions with time. For instance, some shower stalls have no curtains, and running water and electricity are sporadic. This includes the sanitation system (e.g., toilets). Be prepared for bucket showers and times when the water or electricity are not available. All residence halls are equipped with poly tanks that are used to store water. If there is a shortage of water, students can go down to the poly tank with a bucket and secure some water. Inexpensive laundry facilities are available, but most students hand wash their own clothes.

Dorm Safety

The University of Ghana and UC have regulations to help ensure your safety. You may find them more restrictive than regulations at UC. This is in no way an attempt to inhibit your social life. Show respect for the university and those who are looking out for you by adhering to the regulations.

There is a midnight curfew for visitors and the halls are locked at that time. You are not permitted to have overnight guests of the opposite sex.

Keep your doors and windows locked at all times even if you step out for just a short time; for example, to use the washroom. Theft has occurred in EAP student’s rooms when doors and windows were unlocked, even if just for a minute.

“EAP STUDENTS SAY...”

Aside from the frequent water and electricity shortages, the housing was great.

Personal space and private property are pretty nonexistent. Dormitories can be loud.

Be prepared to be shocked. Ghana is not for the weak. Expect to grow up a lot and learn about the world and other people.

People often enter your room without knocking. If you want to be alone, lock your door.

Even though we had no running water four to six days a week, electricity failed sometimes, and sanitation was poor, we lived lavishly in comparison to most of the country. But you get used to it and, after a while, you rarely notice how different it is. Going home will be shocking and feel very luxurious.
EAP STUDENTS SAY...

Power and water will be an issue, no matter which dorm you live in. But if you signed up to go to Africa, you should be aware that there are going to be major differences in lifestyle.

Be open to other things besides your own way of living and interacting. Be culturally sensitive. You are the foreigner, and some things are done differently in Ghana.

Don’t feel that you have to be different because you’re foreign. Try your best to blend in, learning customs and appropriate behavior, and you’ll learn much more about Ghanaian life.

Remember that you chose to go to Ghana. Never expect things to change for you, just accept situations as they are and learn from them.

Dorm Life

Residence hall life is very important to the Ghanaian students. UC students often arrive in Ghana with little notion of the history of residential college life and are slow to integrate into related activities. You may have lived mostly off campus at home, and may not be used to dorm life. It is important for you to adapt to residence hall culture if you are to make the most of your Ghana experience.

You may be housed in a residence hall that is based on the British model. This means that the residence hall is not only a place to sleep but a place to live. Volta and Legon Halls very much follow this tradition. In addition to formal dining halls, there are smaller eateries, the equivalent of pubs, small shops, Internet cafés, senior (students) commons rooms, and staff (faculty) commons rooms. The halls have their own athletic teams that regularly compete against other halls, and generally see themselves as important units of campus life. The campus is buzzing with activity every evening and on weekends that is, in part, driven by residence hall relationships.

The differences in dorm life between UC and universities in Ghana will take adjustment. Particularly unusual is the different schedules Ghanaian students keep, going to sleep early and rising early. UC students initially complain about the early morning “noise” of megaphone or microphone amplified preaching coming from their main quads/yards. Ghana is a very devout nation, with all manner of fundamentalist churches and a very high percentage of demonstrative Christian students. The interface between Americans and locals can lead to misunderstanding and even hostility. You must understand the importance of tolerance and realize that you are in another country. Rather than expect local people to change their behavior, you need to make the adaptations. Remember that you are studying abroad to experience another culture—not to impart your values and culture.
**Food and Meals**

Ghanaian textures and tastes are quite different. Be prepared for what will seem like sparse conditions for obtaining, preserving, and cooking food. Take some of your favorite spices from home.

Typical meals consist of red meat, chicken, rice, plantains, and cassava, a starchy root that is usually mashed. Many of the green vegetable dishes are mixed with small pieces of meat, and special vegetarian options of this kind are rarely possible. Leafy vegetables are not readily available and usually are not washed in purified water.

You can eat in the dorm commons or at restaurants or the Bush Canteen on campus. A short walking distance from the International Students Hostel is the Manciples campus grocery store. There are foreign restaurants and import supermarkets in Osu near Danquah Circle and Cantonments Road.

Meals on campus cost about $2–$5, depending on your taste. A reasonably good meal in a Western-style restaurant starts at about $12. Popular kebabs are about 50 cents each.

Food sharing is quite common. People may invite you to eat their food right from their plates (with your hands). Never refuse food, even if it looks unappetizing. Visitors are always offered a glass of water and sometimes some cream crackers. Offer the same when people visit you.

Bottled water is inexpensive and plentiful. Purified (filtered) water is called “pure water” and is available everywhere in sachets. “Ice water” is ordinary tap water tied up in plastic bags. Drink bottled water for the first month or so and slowly ease into drinking the tap water on campus. Once you are used to the tap water on campus, iodine tablets and boiling the water are not required. When you are off campus or traveling without bottled water, take the necessary precautions and prepare your water.

**Vegetarian Options**

Maintaining a healthy diet while in Ghana is a challenge, and if you are a vegetarian you will find it particularly difficult. Nearly every Ghanaian dish is served with meat or fish. When ordering food, specifically ask that your meal be prepared without meat. In Ghana, “fish” is not considered a meat, so when inquiring about a vegetarian dish, you will need to ask specifically if it contains meat or fish.

In recent years, many new vegetarian restaurants, markets, and eateries have opened, giving vegetarians more choices. In particular, the Shoprite Mall (Tettey Quarshi Roundabout) has a limited South African selection. The vegetable market at the “37” bus station is also a regular shopping point for vegetarians.
Common Dishes in Ghana

Banku: Side dish of fermented corn dough

Cassava: Brown root, smaller than a yam (its thick skin must be removed)

Cocoyam: Small round and brown root the size of a potato

Corn dough: Used in the preparation of banku and kenkey

Fufu: Made with mashed cassava and plantain or mashed yam, pounded with a fufu stick until it becomes a rather large glutinous mass (served with groundnut, palm nut, or garden egg soup)

Garden eggs: Vegetable like an eggplant, but about the size of a lemon and yellow or white when ripe

Gari: Shredded dry cassava (eaten like cereal with sugar and milk, or soaked and then eaten with sauce)

Ground-nut soup: Mixture of peanut butter and tomato soup, contains chicken or meat and served with yam, rice, plantain, fufu, kenkey, or bread rolls

Kelewele: Fried plantain chips seasoned with ginger and hot pepper (eaten as a snack, like peanuts)

Kenkey: Boiled fermented corn dough wrapped in dried corn leaves and served with sauce or fried fish and pepper sauce

Kontomire: Spinach cooked in sauce with palm oil (served with banku, kenkey, gari, yam, plantain, or rice)

Palm-nut soup: Small red fruits from a type of palm tree are boiled, pounded and strained, and cooked into a thick soup

Paw paw: Papaya

Plantain: Looks like a large banana, but is starchier and requires cooking (good when extremely ripe, sliced thin, and fried in oil—often sold grilled on the streets)

Toogbei: Fried doughnut holes

Yam: Two kinds are available—the pona yam, very large, light brown root, usually smooth outside, is best for boiling; and the butter yam, which is slightly darker than the pona variety and rough on the outside
Extracurricular Activities

Get Involved

When you decide to participate in EAP Ghana, you expect it to be challenging. That is why you participate; to challenge yourself, to learn, and to grow.

Participating in extracurricular cultural and social activities while on EAP is an excellent way to meet people, improve your language skills, and integrate more fully into the community.

Opportunities are not limited to those mentioned in this guide. This section discusses just a few of the many activities past students have enjoyed.

Join sports, musical, theater, or arts groups; volunteer at local organizations, attend lectures and receptions held in academic and community circles, and get the most out of your time abroad! Sports such as soccer, basketball, boxing, and cricket are popular with Ghanaian students. One EAP student joined the track and field team at UG and was able to travel around Ghana and compete.

Various institutions sponsor Ghanaian, North American, or European cultural activities. The Arts Council on High Street presents displays of African dancing and art. The American Cultural Center on African Liberation Circle and the British Council show British films. The Goethe Institute on Ring Road shows German films, most of which are subtitled in English. It also presents concerts, art exhibitions, and lectures. The Alliance Française has a library and theater club, and sponsors exhibitions, film shows, and concerts. Outside Accra there are often durbars, which are local festivities with colorful parades, dancing, and drumming. There is also the Du Bois Memorial Centre for Pan-African Culture, which has a gallery and research library.

Working Abroad

Contact the Ghanaian embassy or consulate for information about working abroad. Notify the EAP Study Center of any work or volunteer arrangements and the details.

Peer Guides and Local Friends

The Study Center will direct you to information on cultural and social events, and will arrange a few activities and excursions during the year.

Local Ghanaian students (peer guides) will also be available through the Study Center to provide you with advice, especially during the orientation. Once the semester begins, the peer guides will be occupied with their own academic life and will not be “on call.” Be aware that peer guides may decline your offers to socialize during the semester because they are not only busy with their studies, but they often cannot afford to socialize at bars and restaurants.

EAP students often become fond of the peer guides, but it is important to keep in mind proper etiquette to maintain positive relationships with new local friends. For example, UC students have a reputation for being somewhat demanding of the peer guides. The peer guides will provide helpful advice and guidance, but they also expect you to listen and treat them with respect.
Health

You must accept responsibility for your own health. Proper precautions will significantly reduce your risk of serious illness or injury.

In addition to the following sections, read the Health and Safety chapters of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.

Physical Health

Visit the CDC Travelers’ Health website for health information. Learn about the health risks related to your trip by going to the Destination page and choosing the country or countries you will be visiting. Even if you are healthy, you need to be prepared.

If there is any change in your health—physically or mentally—after you submit your health clearance to UCEAP, you must immediately notify the Program Specialist. Failure to disclose new illnesses, injuries, allergies, or pregnancy can endanger your health and may risk your participation in the program.

In addition to a required online UCEAP Travel Health Education Certification course, you will receive extensive health-related orientation materials which you are responsible for reading before departure. Share all information with your parents.

Tips:

- Know beforehand the signs and symptoms of illness, especially if you are susceptible to bacterial, fungal, or viral infections that healthy immune systems usually conquer.
- Healthy behaviors, such as being careful about food and water, protecting against insect and mosquito bites, and washing hands frequently with soap and water are important ways of preventing many common travel illnesses. Do not eat undercooked food and/or food from street vendors. Do not drink unpasteurized dairy products.
- To prevent serious parasitic infections, avoid swimming, wading, or rafting in bodies of fresh water, such as lakes, ponds, canals, streams, or rivers.
- Avoid handling all animals. The rabies virus is prevalent throughout Africa, and your chances of being exposed to the virus through an animal bite are not remote. If you are bitten or scratched, immediately wash the affected area with soap and water and seek medical attention.
- Stay hydrated! Ghana is humid.
- Running water may not always be available so take some alcohol-based sanitizer that does not require rinsing. For greatest germicidal efficacy, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends a concentration range of 60–95 percent ethanol or isopropanol in sanitizers.
- Plan to take care of your health by taking a small personal medical kit containing cold remedies, cough drops, cough medicine, throat lozenges, antibacterial gel, and medication for diarrhea, nausea, and upset stomach. Take enough to get you through the first few weeks until you can find what you need in Accra.
Food and Water Safety
Diarrhea is the most common illness in travelers. Contaminated food and water pose the greatest risk.

- Be very careful about the kind of water you consume. Avoid drinking sachet water. Drink only known brands of bottled water. Local water supplies are limited and contaminated with raw sewage, pesticides, and industrial waste. Even brushing your teeth or rinsing your contact lenses with tap water can be a source of contamination. Beverages containing ice can be another source.

- Avoid unpasteurized dairy products, including cream, ice cream, yogurt, or whipped cream. Cheese, unless cured, is best avoided.

- Eat only thoroughly cooked foods served hot. Avoid pork and salads. Vegetables should be well cooked and served hot. Peel fruits with intact skins before consumption. Avoid raw and undercooked eggs, and dishes prepared with raw eggs (steak tartar, mayonnaise, and dressings). Avoid cold buffets, custards, and any frozen desserts.

- Avoid buying food from street vendors. Be careful about places where food may have been sitting out for a long period, such as buffets.

Medical Facilities
Medical facilities are adequate in Accra and limited elsewhere. Most doctors and hospitals will expect payment in cash, regardless of UCEAP insurance.

If you feel sick or have a medical emergency, immediately seek medical attention and contact the Study Center as quickly as possible. The Study Center will direct you to the appropriate clinic, provide information about medical insurance claim forms, and help if arrangements need to be made with professors due to extended absence from class. The Study Center recommends the Nyaho Clinic, a modern private clinic used by foreign officials and major international agencies.

You may also use the University Hospital (Korle-Bu). Korle-Bu has a convenient on-campus pharmacy near the Guest Center that is open 24 hours. Pharmacy staff members are helpful for consulting about basic needs. The Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital is the primary health care facility in Ghana. It is the only tertiary hospital in the southern part of Ghana and it is also a teaching hospital affiliated with the medical school of the University of Ghana. The hospital is large and extremely busy and chaotic compared to Western hospitals.

Ambulance service is unavailable in Ghana. In an emergency, call either the Study Center staff or hire a taxi.

Local medical care is adequate for routine illnesses such as dehydration or malaria. Local physicians and medical professionals are knowledgeable and equipped to diagnose and treat conditions that are common in Ghana.

Americans are accustomed to telling their doctors what they think and what remedy they would like. This is not the case in Ghana. You should approach the local medical authorities with respect and not with a patronizing or demanding attitude, and carefully follow their instructions.
Medical Assistance Services
Your UCEAP Insurance Plan benefits include travel and medical assistance services through Europ Assistance (EA), with a dedicated University of California phone line and professional and experienced staff. They are open 24/7 and can monitor your medical condition to make sure you receive proper care and can help you find an appropriate medical facility anywhere in the world. Call collect: (202) 828-5896 or e-mail OPS@europassistance-usa.com. You may need your UCEAP insurance policy number (Master Policy #ADD N04834823). You can find more information in your online UCEAP Insurance Plan brochure.

The U.S. Embassy in Accra also provides a list of local medical resources on their website.

Prescription Medication
Take a supply of any required medications to last the duration of your stay. Pack prescription medications in your carry-on luggage and store them in the original, labeled containers. Upon arrival, customs officials may ask for a copy of the prescription or letter from a physician on letterhead with a detailed explanation including the purpose, generic name of the medication, and prescribed dosage.

Anti-Malarial Medication
The UCEAP insurance policy will cover prescribed anti-malarial medication. Order the anti-malaria prophylaxis within 14 days before the official start of the program and complete a claim form. Submit the claim form and a receipt for reimbursement. Make copies of all documentation.

Refer to the Medication and Supplies section of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad for more information.

UCEAP Insurance Plan
The UCEAP Insurance Plan is provided by the University Of California. It includes medical and security evacuation, repatriation, and other benefits.

You must pay for medical services at the time they are rendered and later submit the proper claim forms and documentation to the address indicated on the form. If the Study Center pays a medical bill on your behalf, you will be expected to fill out a promissory note. Attach all original receipts to the insurance claim form.
Health Risks
The required online UCEAP Travel Health Certification course provides
predeparture health-related advice about specific precautions and
recommended vaccinations. You are responsible for reading all health and
UCEAP-related materials.

Malaria
Malaria is endemic in Ghana with perennial transmission afflicting people of
all ages throughout the country. Malaria is a common, serious, and sometimes
fatal tropical disease. (Non-UC study abroad students have died in Ghana from
malaria in the past.) The highest rates of transmission occur in low-lying rural
areas during, and just after, the rainy season. Despite rumors to the contrary,
people do not become immune to malaria after having had the disease. There is
no cure or vaccination for malaria.

You are required to take a malaria prophylaxis for the duration of your
participation on EAP. Infection is spread by the night-time—dusk to dawn—
biting female Anopheles mosquito. There is a high risk for malaria infection
year-round.

The prescribed antimalarial prophylactic regimen does not provide 100
percent protection. You can get malaria even while taking medication, but the
symptoms will be milder.

To significantly reduce the risk of getting malaria, use preventive strategies in
addition to taking the prescribed medication:

• Stay indoors, limit outdoor activities, close all doors and windows, and
guard against bites between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most
active, especially during the wet season.
• Sleep under an insecticide (permethrin) impregnated bed net, if possible,
even when indoors.
• Wear clothing that covers arms and legs, and use an insect repellent
containing DEET (at least 30 percent concentration) on exposed skin when
outdoors, especially between dusk and dawn.
• Take antimalarial drugs as prescribed.

Symptoms of malaria include fever and flu-like illness, including shaking chills,
headache, muscle aches, and tiredness. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea may
also occur. Malaria may cause anemia and jaundice (yellow coloring of the skin
and eyes) because of the loss of red blood cells. Malaria symptoms will occur
at least 7 to 9 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Fever in the first
week of travel in a malaria-risk area is unlikely to be malaria; however, you must
see a doctor right away if you develop a fever at any time during your trip.

Discuss antimalarial medication details with a health professional when you get
your UCEAP Health Clearance and after the online UCEAP travel health course
for Ghana. For more information on malaria, refer to the Travel Medicine and
MD Travel Health websites.

Note about Antimalarial Drugs
You should purchase your antimalarial drugs before travel. Drugs purchased
abroad may not be manufactured according to United States standards and may
not be effective. They also may be dangerous, containing counterfeit medications
or contaminants, or be combinations of drugs that are unsafe to use.
According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), chloroquine is not an effective antimalarial drug in Ghana and should not be taken to prevent malaria in this region. Halofantrine (marketed as Halfan) is also widely used overseas to treat malaria. The CDC recommends that you do not use halofantrine because of serious heart-related side effects, including death.

Avoid using antimalarial drugs that are not recommended unless you have been diagnosed with life-threatening malaria and no other options are immediately available.

Clothing
Clothing provides a physical barrier to biting insects, provided it is sufficiently thick or tightly woven. Clothing protection is dramatically increased when the fabric is sprayed with permethrin. Far more than a repellent, permethrin is an insecticide (chemically related to the naturally occurring insecticide pyrethrum) that can be applied to clothing (as well as mosquito nets, tents, and gear). Insects are killed on contact with the treated fabric. Permethrin bonds tightly to the fabric and is effective for two weeks after spraying the fabric, and up to four months on stored clothes.

Skin Repellents
The most effective skin repellents contain DEET (at least 30 percent) and are essential to insect bite prevention. They should be applied every four to twelve hours, depending on the formulation, insect activity, and environmental conditions. Do not spray DEET directly on your face. DEET can be applied to either exposed skin or clothing. Do not apply DEET to skin that is covered by clothes or to synthetic fabrics (such as rayon) or plastics, because it can damage these products.

Repellents containing lemon eucalyptus (Repel Lemon Eucalyptus, Mosi-Guard) are an alternative to DEET, but as natural repellents, they are usually not as effective as DEET in repelling mosquitoes. Using both permethrin-treated clothing and a topical DEET repellent to exposed skin is known as the DoD (Department of Defense) system, and gives nearly 100 percent protection if the skin repellent contains at least 30 percent DEET.

Mosquito Nets
If you are not staying in a well-screened or air-conditioned room, spray your living and sleeping quarters in the evening with a pyrethroid-containing insecticide for flying insects. This will eliminate any insects that have entered the room during the day. You may also want to take the additional precaution of sleeping under a mosquito net. The net should extend to the floor or be tucked under the mattress to better prevent access by insects. Nets treated with permethrin are significantly more effective in preventing mosquito bites than untreated nets.

Gastro-Intestinal Infections
Gastro-intestinal infections are the most common illnesses affecting travelers and can occur in any country you are visiting. Proper food handling, drinking purified water, and maintaining good personal hygiene are key to prevention.

The source of illness is the ingestion of contaminated food or water, person-to-person transmission, or recreational exposure to water bodies. The infective agents can be bacteria, viruses, protozoa or toxins found in food. Good personal hygiene practices (including frequent and thorough hand washing), proper food handling, and water purification are the most effective methods to prevent infection.
Do not swim or wade in fresh water (except in well chlorinated swimming pools) to avoid infection with schistosomiasis.

Parasites
Schistosomiasis (transmitted by snails living in fresh water such as lakes, rivers, streams and ponds) risk is present in the whole country, including urban areas. Food-transmitted intestinal parasitic infections can be prevented by washing salads and vegetables or thoroughly cooking food to destroy infective eggs. Avoid raw or undercooked food that may be contaminated.

Prevent soil-transmitted infections by avoiding skin contact with the soil (e.g., do not walk barefoot or touch soil with bare hands).

Giardiasis
Giardiasis is a worldwide intestinal parasitic infection. Symptoms include chronic diarrhea, bloating, low-grade fever, nausea, and headaches. It is caused through the ingestion of contaminated food and water.

Immunocompromised Students
Students with immune suppression due to any medical condition, drug, or treatment have an increased risk of illness, especially malaria. For such students, prevention of malaria by avoiding mosquito bites and using chemoprophylaxis is particularly important. Discuss with your doctor whether your condition, medications, and treatments constitute contraindications to or decrease the effectiveness of any of the disease-prevention measures recommended for your stay in Ghana.

Emotional/Psychological Health
Mental health facilities are virtually nonexistent or quite limited throughout Africa, and Ghana is no exception. Patients are treated in medical wards or transferred to the Accra Psychiatric Hospital. Wards are crowded and often lack basic resources.

Many students in Ghana experience significant culture shock as they have not traveled to a culture so different from their own. Do not be surprised to think “this is harder than I expected.” In general, Americans are largely uninformed about the conditions of daily life in Africa so expect the unexpected and be sensitive to preconceptions or unrealistic expectations. Ask for insight from locals and acknowledge that this is a valuable learning experience.

Culture Shock
Culture shock comes directly from an initial lack of understanding of—and an inability to fit into—your new culture. Normal feelings encountered as a reaction to culture shock may include helplessness, hopelessness, loneliness, homesickness, slight depression, irritability, and boredom. Ghana is different from the U.S., and culture shock will hit you one way or another. It can be stressful to realize that what you expected is not the same as the reality that greets you when you arrive. Culture shock and homesick feelings are normal. Expect to feel that, perhaps, for the first time in your life, everything around you is completely new, strange, and unfamiliar—and you are not going back to California in a week. The difference between what you expect and what you actually experience may determine the level of distress that you feel.

It is easy to become worn down from physical and mental stress due to the vastly different environment. Whenever your usual coping mechanisms are not working for you or you find yourself making coping choices that are not in your best interest, realize that you may need more support, and seek help.
EAP STUDENTS SAY...
Never invite a stranger to your room or give your room number to a stranger. Don’t visit a man’s room by yourself unless you know him very well.

SAFETY

Adopt a Lifestyle that Reduces Risk
You are safest when your neighbors, friends, and EAP staff look out for you. At the same time, you are expected to take responsibility for your safety and well-being. Living and traveling in an unfamiliar environment, a limited understanding of the local language and culture, and the Ghanaian perception that you are a wealthy American are some of the factors that can put your safety at risk.

Crime is a moderate concern in Ghana. Armed banditry is a concern in rural areas, while petty crimes are an issue in urban areas where travelers are targeted due to perceived wealth.

Unfortunately, violent crime is reported to be on the rise. Several Americans have been the victims of theft at gunpoint. Incidents of armed robbery have even been reported on campus, though muggings, purse and mobile phone snatching, various types of scams, and pick-pocketing are the most common forms of crime confronting students in Ghana. To reduce vulnerability, limit your display of jewelry and handle your cash discreetly. Do not take valuable items to Ghana. Given the risk of petty theft or armed robbery, a money belt that is worn under clothing is a good investment.

American travelers have reported theft in crowded market areas, beaches and parks, and at tourist attractions. There have also been instances of armed robberies in some of the University of Ghana dormitories. Although armed robberies have taken place, no EAP student has been physically harmed in these events. EAP and the University of Ghana have taken decisive measures to improve student safety in the residence halls. Know how to get help in an emergency. Compliance is the best way to mitigate the threat of violence; individuals resisting armed robbers face a high risk of injury.

Crime Prevention
While significantly improved over previous years, security is still an issue on campus and in the city. The best deterrents against crime are personal situational awareness and common sense. You should take prudent measures to protect your own well-being, just as you would on a UC campus. You will need to be mature, independent, and aware at all times—capable of continually assessing your surroundings, of being aware of who is near you, and heeding all signs, even instincts, that alert you to possible danger.

Be practical and follow basic precautions:

- Keep your dorm door and windows locked at all times, whether you are in your room or not. Almost all incidents of theft on campus appear to have been opportunistic in nature, and locked doors and windows would have prevented loss. Criminal persons of concern on site appear to be aware of the rooms that international students are staying in, and will target these rooms specifically.
- Never allow strangers to enter the premises. Do not invite strangers or questionable acquaintances to your dorm, and do not automatically open your door to unexpected (unscheduled) visits by service people (laundry, maintenance, etc.) who may claim to be affiliated with the university.
- It is important for you to stay in close touch with the Study Center and attend all meetings organized by Study Center staff.
Avoid walking alone in unlit or isolated areas at night, or even during the day. Stay in well-lit areas.

Be careful and selective with whom you associate.

Meet friends in public places or dorm common rooms.

Always travel in pairs or groups, especially when going out at night. During orientation, you will learn how to travel around the city, and where not to travel, especially at night.

Limit alcohol consumption.

Do not develop a false sense of security after being in Ghana for a while.

Jog or run in pairs during the day, and only in well-populated areas.

Do not count money in public; use a money belt under your garments.

Never board an occupied taxi. Do not allow a second driver or passenger to enter. If this occurs, exit the taxi immediately. Passengers can be used as decoys to rob you.

Change your lock if you are robbed.

Avoid the services of errand boys, who can monitor information and provide it to accomplices.

Do not allow hawkers (people coming to your dorm room to sell items) in your room.

The U.S. Department of State pamphlets A Safe Trip Abroad and Tips for Travelers to Sub-Saharan Africa provide useful information on protecting personal security while traveling abroad and on travel in the region in general. Both are available on the Students Abroad website.

If you are a victim of any type of robbery, alert the Study Center immediately. Your safety is of primary concern to UCEAP, and direct communication will help staff respond quickly.

Security Measures

Campus Security initially handles all incidents on site, but will pass incidents to the police when necessary. All students experience varying degrees of unwanted attention and harassment. Although most students complete their program without personal safety problems, petty thefts and burglaries are not uncommon. UCEAP has established procedures and policies designed to help you reduce risks and enhance your safety and security.

As you are a foreigner and considered “rich,” your dorm room may be more prone to break-ins than those of your neighbors. Normal precautions such as keeping your belongings out of plain sight may reduce this risk. Crime at the village or town level is much less frequent, but risks increase in proportion to population size. In urban areas, you must be especially security conscious.

During the on-site orientation, a University of Ghana security representative gives hard facts and advice on keeping safe. You are advised as to where it is most safe to walk on campus and where it is not, and where and when you should move around with a group. They discuss areas best not traversed alone at night, and how to respond if you are mugged (e.g., not to resist and avoid looking attackers in the eyes). Procedures for being safe in the residence halls and tips on traveling at night in Accra are reviewed. Emergency phone numbers are distributed on a printed sheet and you are encouraged to enter them in your cell phone.
EAP STUDENTS SAY...

Women must be careful about friendliness with African men. Even a smile can be misconstrued. Don’t be paranoid, just be careful.

Security measures at the University of Ghana campus and dorms include the following:

- Undercover guard protection and security
- Monitoring of vehicular traffic in and around the university
- A night shuttle bus available from 7 p.m. to midnight for intracampus travel
- Security walls surrounding the dorm
- Hall exterior doors are locked at midnight and opened only at 1 a.m., 2 a.m., and 4:30 a.m. to accommodate late-returning residents
- Issuing keys to student rooms—DO NOT allow anyone to borrow your key

UCEAP expects that these actions decrease the number of robberies on the Legon campus. Unfortunately, it is impossible to guarantee complete safety anywhere in the world, so being informed and vigilant should always remain important to you wherever you are.

University of Ghana Access Control and Perimeter Security

There are six official entry and exit points to the campus. However, there is limited control of entry to the campus, mainly due to insufficient security staff. Vehicles that are allowed to the site are issued a vehicle pass (student, staff, vendor, taxi, tro-tro, and bus). Vehicles not displaying a sticker are supposed to be issued a 15-minute permit. At 10 p.m. each day, campus security closes all but one gate access point to the campus. Security officers man the open access point. There is a limited perimeter fence around the campus and there are many open areas along the perimeter where the local population can easily access. There are many dark spots, including between dormitories, around the campus with limited or no security lighting. If you must go out at night, do not go out alone.

Theft and Fraud

Credit Card Fraud

While major U.S. and international credit cards are accepted across the country, credit card fraud is prevalent throughout most of Africa, especially in Ghana. If you must use a credit card, use it in reputable restaurants. Be present during the transaction process, and retain and destroy all receipts and carbons. The best practice to mitigate the risk of credit card fraud is to make all purchases in cash.

Stolen Passport

Report the loss or theft abroad of your U.S. passport immediately to local police and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. Provide the embassy with a photocopy of your passport to expedite the replacement process.

Sexual Violence

There is a threat of sexual violence on the campus primarily against female students. The majority of non-U.S. students will be interested in friendship alone, but criminal elements may use the friendship pretense to gain greater access to the student. Local students may also perceive genuine attempts at friendship to be a “come-on.” Be aware of the differences in the dynamics of male-female friendship in Ghanaian culture.
Traffic and Road Safety
Traffic congestion and erratic standards of driving, combined with extremely poor quality of local vehicles and almost total lack of preventive maintenance increases the risk of being involved in a serious traffic accident. Road conditions are significantly different from those in the U.S. The safety of public transportation and urban road conditions and maintenance is generally fair. Primary roads are generally paved and well maintained. However, rural roads outside the major cities are in poor condition. In addition, the availability of roadside assistance is scarce.

The road from Accra to the central region tourist area continues to be the site of many accidents. Travel in darkness, particularly outside the major cities, is extremely hazardous due to poor street lighting and the unpredictable behavior of pedestrians, bicyclists, and farm animals. Aggressive drivers, poorly maintained vehicles, and overloaded vehicles pose serious threats to road safety.

The safety standards of the small private buses that service many of Ghana’s roads are uncertain. Roads are bumpy and traffic is stop-and-go. You should consider this when making travel arrangements.

Travelers are routinely stopped at police checkpoints throughout Ghana. Foreign nationals are expected to carry documentation of their status, such as a passport and visa.

California students are initially unaccustomed to the aggressive driving style of Ghanaians. This includes a lot of traffic on campus. No one yields to pedestrians, and cars, trucks, motorcyclists, and bicyclists often drive very close to pedestrians on the street. Some streets do not have sidewalks, necessitating walking on the side of the road. Vehicles also tend to travel at high speeds, making it difficult to safely brake, and this adds to the potential hazards of the traffic. You should be aware of this and err on the side of caution when crossing or walking along streets. Also, many Ghanaian streets have open and deep drainage canals running alongside them. All of these factors, in addition to unmarked construction/repair areas, can cause serious injuries to pedestrians.

Fires
Incidents of electrical fires are high due to the poor quality of electric wiring, lack of adequate fire prevention practices, and lack of general maintenance. Fire hazards and inadequate building designs for evacuation planning are also a potential problem in student accommodation blocks. Many fire departments lack the proper equipment, particularly personal protective equipment, to manage fires. The Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS) urges the public to observe fire safety precautions to minimize fires. When visiting markets be aware of exit routes in case of a fire.
Alcohol and Drugs

Drugs, including marijuana, are illegal and socially unacceptable in Ghana. You are subject to local laws and UCEAP policy on drugs.

Never become involved with drugs of any kind. Marijuana use amongst UC students is a problem in Ghana that neither UCEAP nor the University of Ghana will tolerate. Ghana has severe laws regarding possession, use, and trafficking of illegal drugs. Punishment can include long jail sentences and heavy fines. For example, possession of small amounts of marijuana can lead to a prison sentence in excess of five years and heavy fines, usually after a lengthy and expensive legal process. Anyone found in possession of illegal drugs on university property will be severely dealt with and suspended from the host university and EAP.

At UC you may socialize in a way that is very different from how Ghanaians socialize. Getting drunk, smoking, and being loud in public are not common social behaviors at the University of Ghana.

The legal drinking age in Ghana is 18. Alcohol is served in most restaurants on campus, but is not allowed in dorm rooms. Religion also influences Ghanaian attitudes towards drinking, even socially. Many Ghanaian women do not drink alcohol.

Penalties for breaking the law can be more severe than in the United States for similar offenses. Persons violating Ghana's laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested, or imprisoned. Neither UC nor the U.S. embassy can mediate.

Ghanaian Law Enforcement

There is a level of corruption in the Ghanaian police force. Remain calm if stopped. Interactions with local police can lead to cultural misunderstandings. Do not argue with security forces. Whenever possible, contact the Study Center to report crimes or other kinds of contact with law enforcement personnel.
Emergency Contacts

What Constitutes an Emergency?
Emergencies are circumstances out of the ordinary, unplanned, or unexpected, which threaten the health, safety, and well-being of you and/or your fellow students. The following are considered true emergencies:

- Any situation that places a student or students at risk, including illness or harm, or other traumatic incidents that require immediate response
- A student who has been arrested
- Civil unrest or a natural disaster in the host country

In an Emergency
Contact local emergency services first and then contact the following:

If you are in the U.S.
- During office hours (8 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific Time): Contact the Operations Specialist at the EAP Systemwide Office
- After office hours: Call the 24-hour emergency phone number at (805) 893-4762

If you are abroad
Carry the local emergency contact information at all times:

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<td>Police</td>
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U.S. Embassy in Accra
U.S. Citizen Services
No. 19 Fifth Link Road, Cantonments, Accra

Phone: (233) 30-2741-000
Fax: (233) 30-2741-389
After-Hours Emergency: (233) 30-2741-775
E-mail: acsaccra@state.gov
Web: ghana.usembassy.gov

American Citizen Services is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday.

If you have a health or safety emergency and do not have access to local or Study Center emergency contact information, call the EAP 24-hour emergency phone number.