



Brandeis University

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COEXISTENCE

PREPARATION FOR THE PRACTICUM AND LIVING ABROAD

Excerpt from the COEX Practicum Guidebook

Students may want to invest time in the library and online before they depart for their practicums. They can refer to the [Research Guides](#) page of the Brandeis Library website for COEX research resources. Reading as much background material as possible on their focus area will result in a better paper and make them a more valuable member of the team at their host organization.

Students may also want to research local customs, habits, and etiquette, and reach out to alumni and others who could provide helpful insight to living and working in their practicum location. Making the most of your practicum may require some preparatory work on your part. Here are some suggestions and resources to consider.

1. Research the practicum destination

Students may want to research the practicum destination to gain an understanding of local history, politics, culture, traditions, professional etiquette, climate, transportation options, and safety concerns. Here are some suggested resources:

General and local country resources

- [Commiseco Global: Country Guides to Culture, Customs and Etiquette](#)
- [BBC country profiles](#)
- [InterNations Country & City Guides](#)
- [Peace Corps Countries](#) webpage
- Local online newspapers and radio stations
- [Local alumni](#) (connect via LinkedIn)
- Expat community in practicum location
- Online travel guides (e.g., Moon Travel Guides, Rough Guides, Lonely Planet)

Transportation

- The [World Health Organization](#) provides information on road safety, including country profiles and statistics, reports, and standards.
- The [Association for Safe International Road Travel](#) (ASIRT) provides information on how to minimize road risks, including local transportation options, road conditions, and road travel tips.

Practical information

- Local emergency numbers (police, ambulance, and fire): [911 Abroad](#)
- Time zones, holidays, and weather: [The Time Now](#)
- Currency converter: [OANDA](#)

Resources for LGBTQ practicum students



Brandeis University

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COEXISTENCE

As students prepare for their practicum, they may want to research the culturally based ideas and definitions of gender and sexual identity in their practicum location and to become familiar with the laws that may affect them. Here are some resources that may be beneficial to their preparation.

- [International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association](#)
- [LGBTI Travel Information](#), US Department of State—Bureau of Consular Affairs
- [OutRight Action International](#)

Diversity, ethnicity, and race

The [Diversity, Ethnicity, and Race Abroad](#) webpage of Brandeis' Office of Study Abroad provides information and resources for students of color from historically under-represented ethnic or racial backgrounds who are traveling abroad. Some students may find being outside of the American context a welcome relief, while others may experience challenges from general perceptions of racial and cultural groups in the host community. It may be beneficial to learn about the environment you will be entering. Students may want to reference the resources offered on the Diversity, Ethnicity, and Race Abroad webpage.

Disability and accessibility

Students with disabilities may want to review the types of accommodations that are provided in the host community, as well as the way the community understands disabilities. The [Students with Disabilities](#) webpage of the Brandeis Office of Study Abroad provides information and resources that may help students with disabilities to prepare for their practicum.

Students may want to reference [Mobility International USA](#), which provides a library of resources and information on inclusive practices and disability advocacy.

2. Be proactive about health and wellness

Maintain health insurance

Students are required to maintain their [Brandeis health insurance policy](#) or other health insurance coverage that meets the standards set forth by the university, regardless of their practicum location.

Identify quality health care options prior to departure

The quality and quality of medical care varies within the US and abroad. Students should consider how they would access health care should a medical problem or emergency arise while they are completing their practicum. They may want to research health clinics and hospitals in the area in which their practicum organization is located and determine which medical facilities would provide the best quality care. For a list of resources that will help identify health care providers and facilities around the world, please visit the [Centers for Disease Control's Obtaining Health Care Abroad](#) webpage.



Brandeis University

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COEXISTENCE

Medicines

If students plan to take prescription or over-the-counter medication with them, they should research whether it is legal to bring the medication into their practicum country, and, if the medication is legal, if there is a limit on the quantity of medication that can enter the country. Certain packaging restrictions may also apply. Students may refer to the websites of their home embassies for their practicum countries for information on permitted medications.

If traveling outbound from the US, students may want to review the [Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\)](#) rules for traveling with medications.

Additional guidance on this issue can be found in The New York Times article [How to Make Sure You Travel with Medication Legally](#) and TripSavvy's [Tips for Traveling with Prescription Drugs](#).

Vaccinations (if applicable for international practicums)

To determine if any vaccinations are recommended for travel to the locale of the host organization, students may want to consult the following websites: [Massachusetts General Hospital: Heading Home Healthy](#) or [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Pack a Health Kit

Students may want to consider packing a few items to help them manage ailments and illnesses. Please refer to the CDC's [Pack Smart](#) webpage for suggestions on what may be useful to have during their practicum.

Health-Related Resources

- The CDC's webpage [Your Survival Guide to Safe and Healthy Travel](#) provides valuable information and resources to help students to be "proactive, prepared, and protected" during their travels.
- [World Health Organization](#) directs and coordinates international health within the United Nations' system. The WHO website includes country-specific information related to health and general information related to various health topics.
- [US Department of State—Country Information](#) provides information about the availability and quality of medical care within specific countries.
- iHope remote counseling services: see [Appendix D](#) in Practicum Guidebook



Brandeis University

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COEXISTENCE

3. Apply for visas and/or permits

Internships can be subject to specific visa requirements and it is important to understand the requirements at the start of your planning.

Students are responsible for obtaining required visas, permits, and other documentation, with guidance from the host organization. The host organization must provide any documentation needed to confirm their role. Some host organizations require students to provide proof of enrollment at Brandeis University. See the [Office of the University Registrar](#) page of the Brandeis website for instructions on how to obtain a proof of enrollment letter. Contact Janie Marsan (jmarsan@brandeis.edu) at Heller's Office of Student Records and Enrollment with any questions.

Curriculum Practical Training for international students

International students on an F-1 visa who are doing practicums in the US or with a US organization cannot begin the practicum until they have met all International Student and Scholars Office (ISSO) requirements, including an approved [CPT form](#). Students should review the visa guidelines on the [Employment/Academic Internships](#) page of the ISSO website and reference the [CPT Application Check List](#). Contact Bonnie Ryle (bryle@brandeis.edu) with any questions related to F-1 visa requirements.

4. Prepare finances and travel documents

Students may want to **contact their financial institutions** to notify them of their travel plans. This will help to ensure that they have continued access to their accounts. If possible, they should have a back-up credit card and/or emergency cash in case they have any banking issues or lose their credit or debit card.

It's also a good idea for students to **prepare their PIN** before traveling abroad. Many international ATMs only support four-digit PINs. Students should ensure that their PINs do not begin with a zero, and they should know their PIN by the numbers, as some foreign ATMs do not have letters on the keypads.

As a precaution, students should also make **copies of their important documents**, including two copies of their passport, credit cards, and other travel documents. It's recommended that they leave one copy with a family member or trusted friend and bring the other copy with them.

5. Be prepared for the unexpected

Identify local emergency numbers

Students should identify the local emergency numbers (police, ambulance, and fire) for their practicum destination. Students may reference [911 Abroad](#) to determine this information.

Contacting COEX

Students may reach out to the program coordinator at any time. She can also be reached at slamorey@brandeis.edu



Brandeis University

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COEXISTENCE

Register with home embassy

Students may want to register with their home embassies upon arrival in their practicum countries to receive updates about local safety conditions. US students may want to sign up for the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#), a free service that provides US citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad with information about safety conditions in their destination country.

Enroll in the CHUBB Travel Assistance Portal

Students may want to sign up for CHUBB Travel Assistance Portal (this service is offered through the emergency medical and travel insurance policy)

6. Notify Program Coordinator of Placement

Once a placement is secured students must notify the COEX program coordinator so that they can be registered in the field practicum course (HS218) as full-time students through the Heller School's Office of Student Records and Enrollment. The practicum course counts for 12 credits each semester and is graded as credit (CR) or no credit (NC). Students will be charged a continuation fee- this fee varies from year to year. Students can request the exact amount from Student Financial Services (sfs@brandeis.edu)



Brandeis University

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND COEXISTENCE

Emergency medical and travel insurance

Brandeis University is contracted with [CHUBB Travel Assistance Program](#) and Europ Assistance to provide assistance to students doing international practicums or internships. In addition to the coverage provided by the student's health insurance, CHUBB and Europ Assistance provide the following benefits (adapted from the Insurance and Travel Assistance Coverage webpage of the Brandeis Office of Study Abroad):

- Medical Assistance: referral to a doctor or medical specialist; medical monitoring while hospitalized; emergency medical evacuation to proper medical facilities (100% of covered expenses); and repatriation of remains (100% of covered expenses).
- Personal Assistance: pre-trip medical referral information; emergency medication; embassy and consular information; lost document assistance; emergency cash advances; emergency referrals to legal assistance.
- Travel Assistance: emergency travel arrangements
- Security Assistance: crisis hotline; on-the-ground security assistance; access to secure, web-based system for tracking global threats and health- or location-based risk intelligence; security evacuation due to political causes (\$100,000 maximum); security evacuation due to natural disasters (services only – this service is billable).

The Brandeis policy and details for activating emergency services can be found by clicking [here](#) and in [Appendix F](#).

Students should sign up to access [CHUBB's Travel Assistance Services Portal](#), which provides information and tools to support travelers before and during their international trips. The site contains real-time destination-based health, security, travel-related information including:

- Country and city risk ratings and profiles
- Health, medical, safety, and security reports per locale
- Mitigation tips and consulate contacts
- Information on business conduct, transportation, holidays, and currency exchange rates
- News and real-time security alerts
- General travel tips

To receive proof of coverage (card) of CHUBB emergency travel and medical insurance, students should send the following information to the COEX program coordinator.

- Name
- Birth date
- Practicum country
- Countries other than practicum destination that student will travel to
- Travel dates

Although CHUBB offers emergency travel, medical and security services, it is NOT health insurance. Brandeis requires all practicum students to maintain health insurance coverage that meets the standards set forth by the university