



NYU | ACCRA

Pre-Departure Orientation Spring 2017

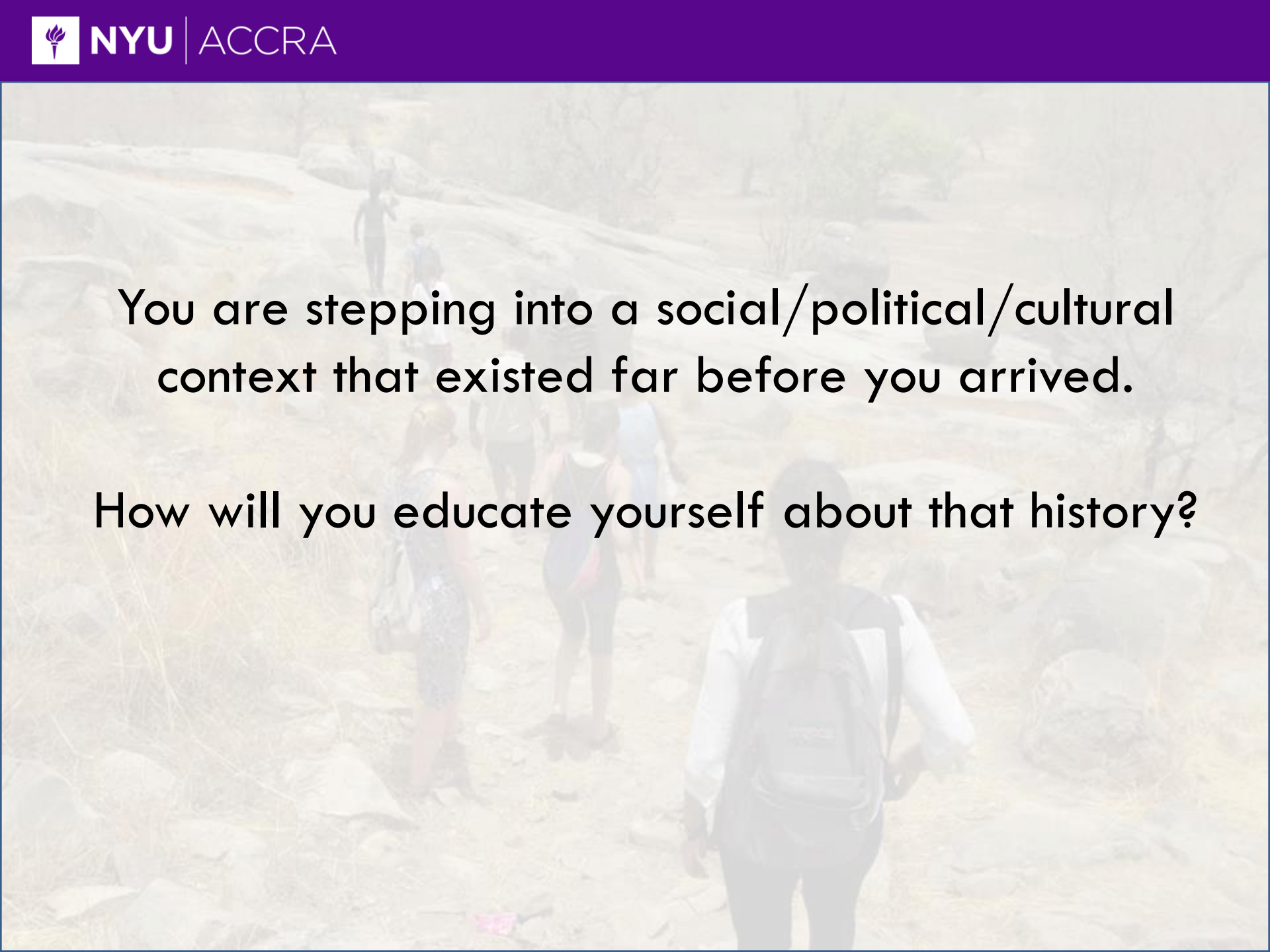
▶ Jessica Levin, Site Representative NYU Accra

GOALS

CONSIDER: How will my identities impact my study away experience?

REFLECT: What do I want my cultural engagement look like?

KNOW: These are my resources, and these are my responsibilities.

A faded background image showing a group of people, including a person with a backpack in the foreground, walking along a rocky, dirt path in a natural, hilly environment.

You are stepping into a social/political/cultural context that existed far before you arrived.

How will you educate yourself about that history?

General Cultural Concepts

Once called the Gold Coast, Ghana was the first Sub-Saharan colony to gain its independence March 6, 1957.

Greetings are very important

Religion plays a significant role in the society.

Sense of time and personal space may be different.

Conservative society (e.g., dress code, formality with elders)

Communal society

Weddings and funerals very important.

LGBTQ community is socially and culturally not accepted, but there is a community that exists.




This short video is a good starting point to learn about general values and norms in Accra. Click on the image or visit our “Preparing to Live in a Different City” section on our website. Remember this is *just a starting point*- you will gain a more nuanced view in Accra!

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie:

The danger of a single story

TEDGlobal 2009 · 18:49 · Filmed Jul 2009

 44 subtitle languages 

 [View interactive transcript](#)



Part of our job in studying away is learning about the place we are going, and making sure not to assign a single story to any person or place.

The other part of our job is to consider our own story: what has shaped your views of the world?

The Cultural Iceberg image helps us visualize our own culture: what do we see on the surface, and what can't we see so easily? Before you go to Accra, it is important to think about your own values and beliefs, where they come from, and how they have molded you. This will influence how you connect to a new city (as you may already know!).

By exploring our cultural iceberg, we can understand our own positions, but also be open to knowing that others are coming from their own perspective. Keep these things in mind as you explore Accra, Ghana and other exciting places!

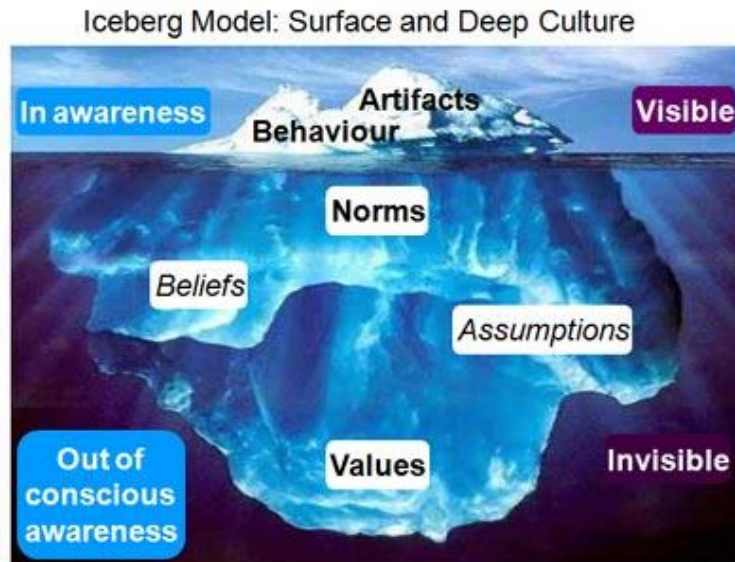


Image courtesy of www.diploweb.com

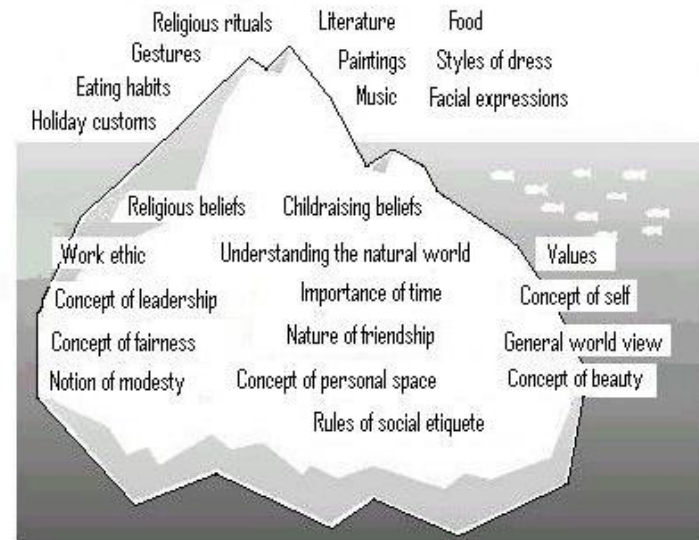


Image courtesy of [OneWorld Now!](http://OneWorldNow.com)

Missed these?

Email global-peer-mentors@nyu.edu
to have a conversation!

Preparing to Study Away

Identity Conversation Series

The Office of Global Programs and partners across campus are hosting a series of identity-based dialogues and workshops to explore questions students have about studying away.

Religion and Spiritual Life Panel

Tuesday, November 15th
6:00pm to 7:30pm
Jurow Hall, Silver Center

Gender and Dating Norms Panel

Wednesday, November 16th
6:00pm to 7:30pm
383 Lafayette, Room C06

Students of Color Panel

Thursday, November 17th
6:00pm to 7:30pm
Jurow Hall, Silver Center

Panel on LGBTQ Life Abroad

Monday, November 21st
6:00pm to 7:30pm
383 Lafayette, Room C06

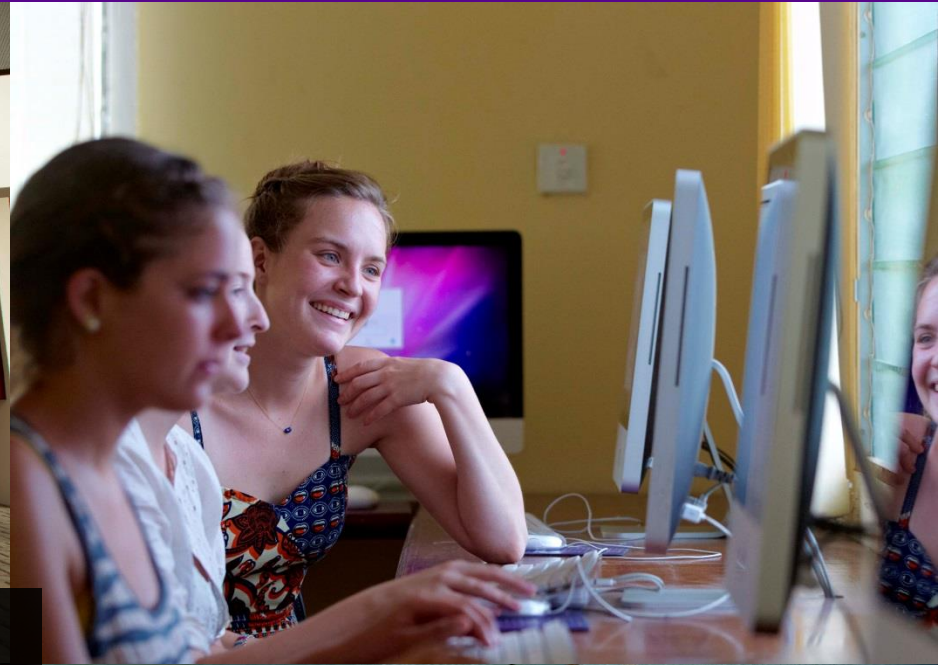
RSVP and join the conversation!

Co-sponsoring Offices: Center for Multicultural Education and Programming | Office of Global Spiritual Life | Opportunity Programs | LGBTQ Center

Please contact global-peer-mentors@nyu.edu to be put in touch with former study away students if you are unable to attend.



NYU
GLOBAL
PROGRAMS



What is NYU Accra?

- Courses are taught in NYU's own academic facilities by locally hired faculty.
- Classroom learning is supplemented by field trips, excursions, internships and community service
- Housing provided and mandatory
- A full-time staff provides high quality student support services



Who is NYU Accra?



Akosua Anyidoho
Director



Marian Ansa-Otu
Program Manager,
Student Services



Nicholas N.A. Okai
Assistant Director
Academic Programs



Patricia Twum
Assistant Director,
Finance & Administration



Victor Yeboah
Community Service &
Internship Coordinator



Chris Amissah
Asst. Facilities
Manager/Library
Assistant



James Buer Abanam
Assistant Finance Officer



Gifty Affreh
Community Resource
Assistant (CRA)



Delali Kudu
NYU Accra Nurse

How are classes in Accra?

Must register for 12-18 credits

NYU courses taught by local faculty

Global Orientations: History, People and Cultures of Ghana is a mandatory program designed to help you learn more about the local culture and context, Ghana and Africa's relationship with the West, and basic communication skills in a local language.

[University of Ghana, Legon](#): based on Oxbridge model, the country's flagship public university



Internships and Community Service

Immerse yourself in the life of the city

Make new contacts and learn from locals

Improve your local language skills

Volunteer events every semester



Student Life Activities

Programming with CRAs

Cultural Events

Workshops

NYU-sponsored trips



Exploring the City and Country

- NYU Excursions:

- Cape Coast, Elmina & Kakum National Park
- Tamale - Northern Region
- Rural homestay, Volta Region
- Aburi Botanical Gardens

- Local attractions:

- **Ada** – Coastal town; overnight beach stay [tro-tro, bus]
- **Kokrobite** – Scenic beach [tro-tro]
- **Tema** – Travel to see the ports. [tro-tro, bus]
- **Takoradi** - Scenic beaches rarely found by tourists [tro-tro or bus]
- **Jamestown**

- Spring Break:

- Togo & Benin, Tanzania or South Africa, even Europe!
- Do not make weekend travel plans until you have arrived
- You cannot miss class to travel!

- **Before travel, notify staff and fill out NYU Traveler**

- **Cannot miss class to travel!**



Kakum National Park



Rural Homestay



Elmina Slave Castle



So when do I need to be there?

January 22

Arrival at Kotoka International
Airport in Accra

January 23-29

Mandatory Orientation

January 30

Classes Begin

March 18-26

Spring Break

May 15-18

Final Exams

May 20

Student Departure

Which vaccinations and medications do I need before arrival?

Required:

- Yellow Fever (Ghanaian law)
- Typhoid
- Meningitis
- Anti-malaria medication: must start before arrival; consult medical provider to choose medication.

Suggested:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Tetanus-Diphtheria
- Measles
- Polio
- Rabies

Regular, prescribed medication:

- Original container, generic name, copies of prescription and doctor's note

Consultations available at NYU Allergy,
Immunology & Travel Medicine (212) 443-1188

Where exactly do I arrive?

Kotoka International Airport

- Follow all immigration procedures closely and carefully. Do not pack or bring any illegal items.
- NYU shuttles available from airport to residence on arrival day: NYU Accra staff will meet you outside of customs!
- Community Resource Assistants (CRAs) will give room assignments and distribute keys on-site during arrival.
- It may be several hours before you are able to contact your family via phone or email. Tell them what to expect!



Orientation and First Week in Accra



Mandatory Orientation will include all topics pertinent to everyday life in Ghana:

Intensive Twi Class

Workshops in Academic Affairs

Workshops in Residence/Student Life and living in Accra (accessing money, obtaining a cell phone, etc.)

Community Service and Internships Session

Security and Personal Safety Session

Tours of Accra and Legon (learning how to use public transportation)

Start Global Orientations: History, People and Cultures of Ghana

Welcome Reception for all students and staff

Where will I live?

CHURCH CRESCENT

Doubles, triples or quads (7-9 per house)

Private bathrooms for each room

Non-smoking facilities

Common spaces: kitchen and laundry room

Provided kitchen utensils, linens, blankets, and pillows

Bring towels!

Hot water

Air conditioning

Living room with TV/DVD player

Phone for local calls

Internet

24 hour security

Individual safes in rooms

Guests: only immediate family



What's the guest policy?

- Tourist Visas are required for entry, as well as Yellow Fever vaccination.
- No overnight guests are allowed in the dorms except immediate family, that is parents and siblings can stay in the dorm provided roommate(s) agree and sign a form to that effect.
- Contact nyu.in.ghana@nyu.edu for hotel advice.
- Spring break may be a good time for visits.
- You cannot miss class because you have family or friends in town, so plan accordingly!



What should I pack?

Pack as light as you can! You are going to need space for souvenirs and gifts.

•Suggested items

- Book bag for weekend trips and groceries
 - Use as a carry on with extra clothes, medication and important documents in case checked luggage arrives late
- Adapters (to change the shape of the plug)
- Any medication you need **for entire trip** (and copies of the prescription written in the generic term, along with doctor's note confirming four-month prescription)
- Toiletries you love – the brands are different abroad and some things can be expensive

•Leave at home

- Linens
- Kitchen utensils
- Electronics like electric razors, toothbrushes, hairdryers. They will blow the fuse!

•Contact your airline before you pack to find out luggage restrictions.



How is the food in Accra?

Dinner Meal Plan:

Sunshine Café

International cuisine

Sandwiches and large, delicious salads.

Buka

Traditional Ghanaian, Nigerian and West African food

More options:

Didipa: Traditional Ghanaian food

Melting Moments: Salads, smoothies, sandwiches. The closest thing to a “cafe.”

Food stalls: Egg sandwiches--a way of life in Ghana--fresh pineapple, mangos, roasted nuts and plantains



How will I get around?

Walk!

When you get home, you will miss the scenery, so get it while you can! Just have water with you as temperatures can get very high during the day.

Tro-tros

- Cheapest public transportation
- Around Accra or to places nearby
- Can be confusing and can easily get lost
 - NYU Accra does not recommend Tro-tros as a means of transportation for students, but if you have to use them, it should never be at night or for long distance travel.

Taxis

- Generally affordable fares, but not for all places in Ghana or Accra.
- Bargain for the price BEFORE you get in.



Buses

- Sometimes unreliable; occasionally air-conditioned!
- Inexpensive.
- Available for long distance travel.

Know Before You Go: Essential Twi Phrases

- Official language: English
- 46 different languages spoken in Ghana
- Twi most prevalent

Akwaaba! (ahk-WAH-bah)

Mepa wo kyɛw (meh-pah-CHOW)

Ma da se [pa]! (me-DAH-se [pah])

ɛte sɛn? (eh-te-SEN)

ɛyɛ (eh-YEH)

Na wo nso e? (na WO-nso-eh)

Yebehyia! (yeh-beh-SHYA)

Obroni (oh-BREW-nee)

Obibini (oh-bee-BEE-nee)

Ah-hey? (ah-HEY)

Te-so! (teh-SO)

Wodadame! (wo-dah-DAH-me)

Welcome!

Please

Thank you [very much]

How are you?

I'm good

And you?

See you later!

White person/stranger

African

How much is this?

Reduce the price!

You are lying to me!



Being Financially Strategic

- How much money you will have?
- Consider ALL of your expenses: airfare, food, toiletries, medicine, trips, etc.
- **Bring a Visa debit card!** Mastercard and American Express are not accepted widely/ at all. We recommend you take money out of ATMs. There is one located right next to the academic center. Inform your bank and credit card companies that you will be in Ghana. Do not bring Traveler's Checks.

Estimated Costs:

Textbooks : \$200

Local travel : \$150-200

Groceries : \$500

Weekend away : \$130 (\$30 for travel, \$50 for food, \$50 for lodging)

Average Break : \$550* (\$60 for travel, \$160 for food, \$180 for lodging, \$150 for miscellaneous expenses like visas) *More expensive if traveling outside of Ghana and neighboring countries

One night out : \$50 (\$15 for travel, \$35 for drinks or dinner)

Misc : \$400.

How will I stay in touch with people?

Set-up Skype/Google Hangout account (& one for your family!)

Be prepared that wireless will be slower.

Wireless is fastest in the Academic center.

Obtain a local cell phone:

Pay as you go - Refill minutes can be purchased nearly everywhere and cheaply. You scratch off the code and send the refill as a text.

Unlock your smart phone before you leave and purchase new SIM card on site for a few cedis.

Create a communication plan:

Are you going to talk daily, weekly, or say see you next semester?

Remember time differences! Ghana is on GMT.

- Individual safes in rooms
- NYU's center and dorms are monitored by security guards 24/7
- There is ALWAYS an NYU staff member on duty in case of emergencies
 - The equivalent to 911 in Ghana is 191
 - Public Safety-001-212 998-2222
- **Basic safety tips:**
 - Don't invite strangers into the residence.
 - Keep guests in your company.
 - Always lock your doors and safes. Store away valuables!
 - Use computers in Academic Center
 - **Don't leave your street smarts at home!**

Safety and Security



Taking care of your health and medical needs

GeoBlue: international health coverage plan for ALL students

- No advance out-of-pocket payment for students to see a doctor or counselor
- Credentialed, western trained, English-speaking health professionals
- NYU Accra staff available to schedule appointments and provide transportation
- DO NOT cancel domestic health insurance
- On-site nurse
- Crisis Response available



Students with special needs, academic or otherwise, must contact the **Moses Center** prior to departure; resources and services may differ abroad www.nyu.edu/osl/csd. If you are registered at your home campus, you need to register again for Accra!

MOSES CENTER

The Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities provides services for students with:

- Hearing and visual impairments
- Learning disabilities
- Mobility impairments
- Chronic illnesses
- Psychological impairments

Location

726 Broadway, 2nd Floor
Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

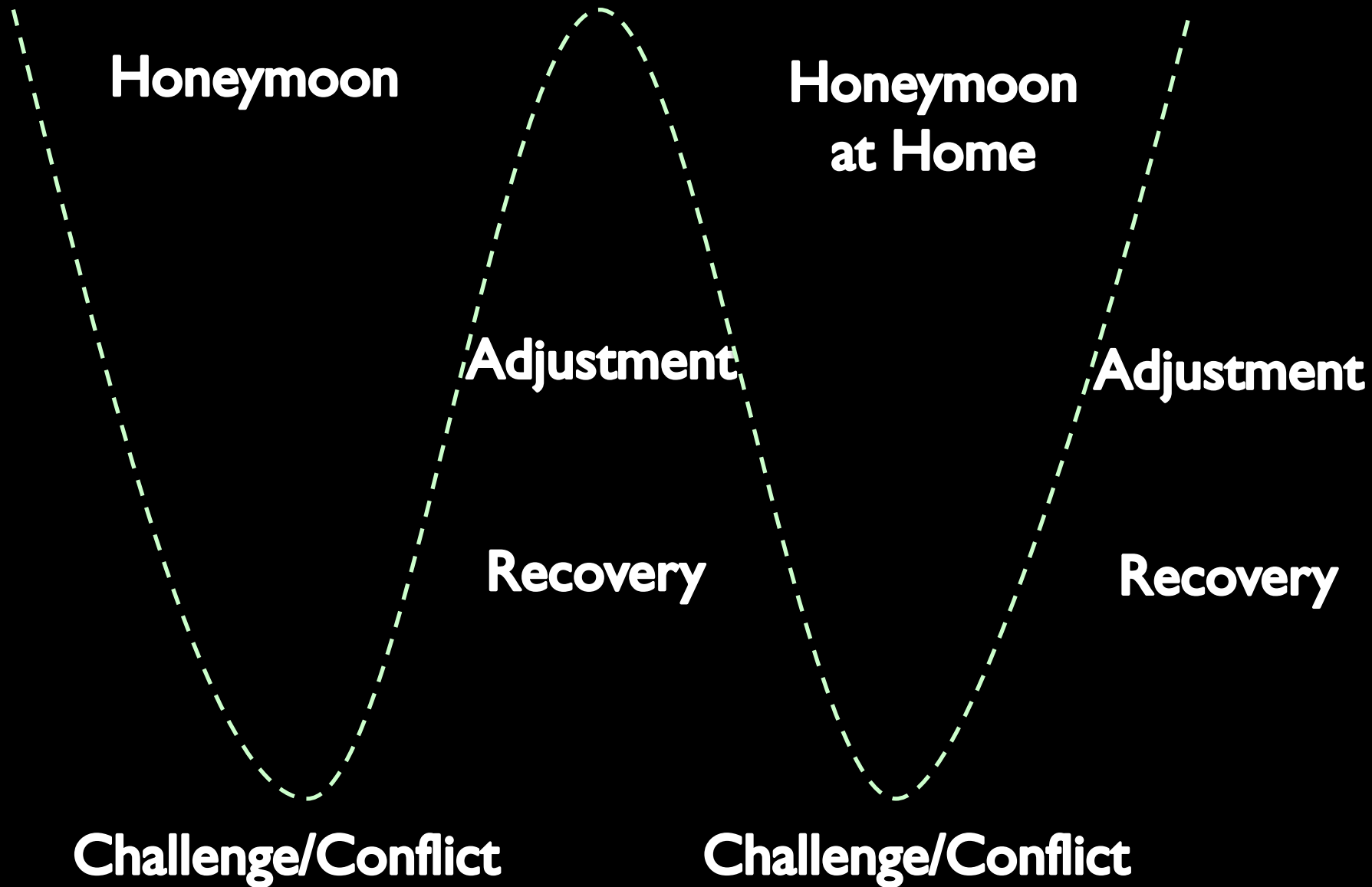
Contact

www.nyu.edu/csd
(212) 998 - 4980

Register

- Students must register prior to classes in order to arrange appropriate accommodations
- Students must initiate this process and present documentation





Understanding the W Curve

The curve on the previous slide is from http://internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/cultural_adjustment.

Adapting to a new environment takes time and the pace of transition varies from person to person. The typical pattern of cultural adjustment often consists of distinct phases: Honeymoon, Challenge/Conflict, Recovery, and Adjustment. This is illustrated by the “W” curve (and notice it continues after you return). This is not a one-size-fits-all model, but a way for you to be aware that it’s okay to have ups and downs during study away.

The Honeymoon Phase:

Excitement, optimism and wonder you may be experiencing now and right when you arrive. While differences are observed, students are more likely to focus on the positive aspects of the new environment.

Challenges and Conflicts:

This what is often termed as “culture shock,” which we may understand as anxiety and feelings (of surprise, disorientation, confusion, etc.) when people have to operate within an entirely different cultural or social environment. You may experience this because you have trouble understanding the new culture and how it relates to your culture and social identities. Culture shock does not necessarily occur suddenly, but may gradually begin to affect a person's moods over time. Having a strong level of self-awareness can help ease culture shock.

The Recovery & Adjustment Phases:

Recovering from culture shock is handled differently by everyone—we each have our unique circumstances, background, strengths and weaknesses that need to be taken into consideration. With time and patience, we can experience positive effects of cultural adjustment, like increasing self-confidence, improved self-motivation and cultural sensitivity. As you gradually begin to feel more comfortable in and adjusting to the new environment, you will feel more like expanding your social networks and exploring new ideas. You will feel increasingly flexible and objective about your experience, learning to accept and perhaps practice parts of the new culture, while holding onto your own cultural traditions.

Your Community in Accra

Support your peers when they're in need

Develop relationships with people different than yourself

Take responsibility to **educate yourself** and do your OWN research

Expand your knowledge and awareness of both domestic and global social issues

Learn what it means to have privilege based on your social identities and social location

Be sincere in your efforts and operate with integrity; **recognize your impact**, not just your intentions; lean into discomfort

Educate others, including speaking out against oppressive language and behavior

Would you like to discuss any of these goals?

- **CONSIDER:** How will my identities impact my study away experience?
- **REFLECT:** What do I want my cultural engagement look like?
- **KNOW:** These are my resources, and these are my responsibilities.

Reach out to me at jessica.levin@nyu.edu

OR

Reach out to former Accra students at global-peer-mentors@nyu.edu

Visa Questions? Ogs.outbound@nyu.edu



Overview

Know & plan for your medical needs – Mental, Physical, & Insurance

Plan for banking/financial needs – take exchange rates into account.

Make copies of everything!

Research, read & check NYU Accra Fall 2016 Admitted Student Blog for updates!

Be proactive, patient, and Enjoy Your Experience Abroad!

Good luck and nante yiye!

