

Pre-Trip Orientation Checklist

A discussion with new researchers regarding logistics and potential issues prior to travel is essential to establish realistic expectations and a smooth transition to the field environment.

[ ]  Logistics and itinerary

[ ]  Accommodations and transportation

[ ]  Clothing, gear, and other materials that should be packed

• Items that should not be packed

• Items are available or unavailable for purchase for the duration of the trip

[ ]  Field location conditions

[ ]  Field site rules and expectations of conduct during travel

[ ]  Rules for “off-duty” hours

[ ]  Pre-departure errands

• University deadlines (TAR, class registration, etc.)

• Personal financial arrangements (taxes, bill pay, etc.)

• Recommended academic preparation

[ ]  Money

• Source (university credit line, personal credit line, cash, traveler's checks, etc.)

• ATM and currency exchange availability

• Credit card use/availability

• Handling payment for hired staff

[ ]  Passport and visa requirements

[ ]  How to avoid and manage potential travel mishaps (cancelled flight, missing bags, etc.)

[ ]  Situations that may contribute to culture shock

[ ]  Major cultural customs

• Nonverbal behavior (eye contact, gestures, touching, personal space, etc.)

• Dress

• Concerns regarding gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and disabilities

• Food/drink rituals

• Taboo subjects/behavior

• Tactics to avoid cultural misunderstandings

[ ]  Local laws

• Major departures from U.S. law (e.g., In Saudi Arabia it is illegal to drink or possess alcohol.)

• Means of reporting emergencies

• Documentation restrictions (e.g., Will researchers need to have passports at all times?)

• Driving rules and requirements

[ ]  If foreign language is a concern, common phrases researchers should know