ALCOHOL

American students have the unfortunate reputation of drinking too much: there is no equivalent in many countries of parties where the only real purpose is for students to get drunk. To quote a former study abroad participant:

“Let’s face it. Americans have a reputation for not being able to handle their alcohol. Maybe you are too young to drink legally at home, or not used to drinking, but if you are seen to be drunk it will be blamed on your being an American and nothing else.”

In the majority of cases students who get into trouble (accidents, sexual assaults, damage to property, etc.) do so because of alcohol. Remember that you may be in societies where drinking while socializing is the norm and that you will be out of your usual environment, so when you drink, do so in moderation.

DRUGS

DO NOT TAKE ANY ILLEGAL DRUGS!!! NEVER, NEVER travel with contraband drugs. The University of Puget Sound can assume NO responsibility for any student apprehended for drugs. Remember that once you leave the United States, you are not covered by US laws and constitutional rights. You are subject to the laws of the host country, and the laws concerning drugs are much more severe in Latin America, Asia, and Europe than in the US. If you are arrested on a drug charge, the US Consular Officer CANNOT:

- demand your immediate release or get you out of jail or the country!
- represent you at trial or give legal counsel
- pay legal fees and/ or fines with US Government funds

IT CAN MEAN:

- Interrogation and delays before trial, including mistreatment and solitary confinement for up to one year under very primitive conditions
- Lengthy trials conducted in a foreign language, with delays and postponements
  Two years to life in prison some places, including hard labor and heavy fines, if found guilty of possessing even small amounts of marijuana or cocaine for personal use
- The death penalty in a growing number of countries (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Turkey, Thailand)
- Bail is not granted in many countries when drugs are involved
- The burden of proof in many countries is on the accused to prove his/ her innocence
- In some countries, evidence obtained illegally by local authorities may be admissible in court
- Few countries offer drug offenders jury trials or even require the prisoner's presence at his/ her trial
- Many countries have mandatory prison sentences of seven years or more without parole for drug violations.

(Reprinted in part from “Travel Warning on Drugs Abroad”, Department of State Publication, Bureau of Consular Affairs, revised February 2000).

Any student caught with illegal drugs will be subject to immediate dismissal from the study abroad program. We hope that all students will recognize that our concern is for the welfare of the individual, as well as for the program’s continuation, and will conscientiously abide by this policy.