

Useful Resources after Arriving

Culture Shock

Culture is, “the sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another.” When you arrive to America, even if it isn’t the first time you’ve been to the country, what you perceive may not be like what you are accustomed to in your home country. Even little struggles of adjustment can be considered culture shock, such as the time of meals in the US, the way people dress, or how people talk to one another. If you find yourself struggling, please do not hesitate to reach out to your ISS coordinator or the counseling center

Culture shock is not permanent. It’s a normal process of adapting to the new culture you’re a part of. Recognizing the differences between your home culture and the US culture is the first step of adjusting to life here. Common feelings can include, but are not limited to, anxiety, confusion, and anger. By taking time to talk to people from the US who can explain common behaviors, language, and customs can help you realize the meaning behind the US culture. Having a connection with other international students is also a way of coping culture shock, as well as home sickness (~Link: to the homesickness page), so that everyone can compare their experiences both in their home country as well as what they’ve seen thus far in the United States. The best way to adjust to culture shock is to dive right in! Get involved with activities that the ISS department hosts, that Susquehanna hosts, and that different groups on campus host!

Home Sickness

Missing home is normal.

Whether an international student or not, people get homesick no matter what the distance from home to Susquehanna (or abroad) is! Realize you are also not the only one going through home sickness, and Susquehanna is equipped with many tools to help you get through your home sickness and find comfort in the campus at large.

In order to combat your home sickness, here are some ways to help:

- Look at your time at SU as an exciting new experience: seeing this as a positive, transformative experience will help you to see the good in being at SU. You will meet many new friends, international and from the US, make a plethora of memories, and find that SU will become one of your “homes” by the end.
- Stay in touch with your family constantly: by calling home once a week, talking to you parents or guardians, siblings, and/or pets, you will be reminded of what you’re missing and know you’re not missing out by being at SU.
- Developing a routine: It’s good to have some main events you typically go to during the week, but don’t get stuck in the same schedule. Forming a routine will help you know that there is something to look forward to on one specific day and time and remind you to get excited for that one meal, meeting or club!

- Get out of your comfort zone: It's not every day that you get a chance to study in the United States. Join that club you didn't think of joining. Attend that concert you don't know if you'll like. Travel to that city you thought would always be a dream to visit. And make friends with the people you had no idea you would have something in common with.
- Plan time to be home sick: Know that you won't spend four months or a year not missing home. You will absolutely find days that you just want to be in your own house. This is an extremely common feeling for collegiate men and women, take charge of those feelings so that you can work through them and better enjoy your time abroad afterwards.

If you find yourself at a point of being overwhelmed and unable to adjust to being in the United States or at Susquehanna, do not hesitate to reach out to your ISS Coordinator or the counseling center.