

Thinking about your goals and expectations before you leave will help make your study abroad experience more meaningful. Students often are consumed with the immediate needs: flight, passport, packing, courses, or forms that sometimes why you're even studying abroad gets lost. Like many things, what you get out of your study abroad experience will depend greatly on what you put into it. Its important to take some time to think about what you hope to achieve and areas you hope to grow in while abroad whether personally, professionally, or academically.



Take some time to think about the following questions. Begin a travel journal to write down a few goals, or answers to these questions, and then refer back to them while you're abroad; record your experiences and document accomplishments. Another outlet could be a blog or a smartphone journal app.

- Why are you going abroad? *Examples to help get you started...*
 - Advancement in future job or profession
 - Learn about your family heritage
 - Become more open-minded
 - Develop a greater appreciation for diversity
 - Experience the challenge of living and studying overseas
 - Pressure from friends, or parents, teachers
 - Need for a change
 - Expand your own horizons, have an adventure
 - Experience an exotic or new place
 - Study another language and culture
 - Desire to get away from something in your personal or college life
 - Other: _____
- What do you hope to learn about your host country? How are you going to accomplish this?
- What do you hope to learn about yourself?
- How does this experience help your future career plans?
- Do you plan to learn/study another language? How do you plan to improve your language fluency?
- Why is this experience important to you?
- What challenges do you think you'll face? How do you deal with stress, ambiguity, and change?
- What changes do you think you'll see in yourself?
- How do you see yourself being an ambassador of Gonzaga University? Of the United States?
- What does it mean to "immerse" oneself in a new culture?
- The Gonzaga University mission includes the following statement. How do you hope to carry out this mission?

The Gonzaga experience fosters a mature commitment to dignity of the human person, social justice, diversity, intercultural competence, global engagement, solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and care for the planet. Grateful to God, the Gonzaga community carries out this mission with responsible stewardship of our physical, financial, and human resources.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<http://www.transitionsabroad.com/>

[Popular journaling applications](#)

[Let's Play 50 Questions](#) from Kohls, L. Robert (1984). *Survival kit for overseas living*
[Maximizing Study Abroad](#)