Checklist for Cultural Studies Students Going Abroad on Fellowship

This document is intended to assist CST students who are preparing to go abroad for research purposes and who have fellowship support. This checklist includes critical items that must be completed before leaving the United States, as well as helpful suggestions from students who have received fellowships to conduct research abroad.

1. **Enroll**

   **You must be enrolled as a student even if you are not taking classes.** It is very important that you register (via SISWeb) for credits as soon as enrollment opens. By registering for classes, you make yourself known as a student, initiate the process of billing, financial aid, and funds disbursement.

   Steps required for enrollment of ABD students:

   1) Email the Cultural Studies program administrator and request a CRN for 299D specific to your dissertation advisor (unique CRNs for 299D are tied to specific instructors).
   2) Once you have the CRN, log in to SISWeb, select the term, and register for 299D. By entering the CRN, you are automatically enrolled in 1 unit. You now need to manually select “12” units.
   3) Submit and verify on SISWeb that you are registered for 12 credit hours of 299D.

2. **In Absentia Registration Form**

   Fill out the in absentia registration form to reduce your student fees. You are eligible for the fee reduction if you are a full-time, regularly enrolled and registered student who has advanced to candidacy and has an academic need to conduct research or study outside of California for a period of up to one academic year. This form is very important because Graduate Studies needs this in order to pay you if you received a fellowship.

   This form can be downloaded from the Office of Graduate Studies website (http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/forms/GS308_InAbsentiaRegistration.pdf). It requires signatures: from your graduate advisor, dissertation chair, and (if you are an international student) a signature from the Services for International Student and Scholars. You submit this form to Graduate Studies, where it will be signed by the Dean of Graduate Studies if approved. The Dean will email you the signed form once it is approved. **You need to file this paperwork before you leave**, and it is recommended that you file as soon as you know which quarter you are leaving.

   It is important to note that filing the in absentia registration form does not enroll you in classes; you still need to enroll via SisWeb (see step 1 above).
3. GSHIP

When you register for classes, you are automatically enrolled/charged for the Graduate Student Health Insurance Program (GSHIP). **If you are travelling outside of the United States, GSHIP may not cover your medical insurance needs.**

You should check with your fellowship organization to see if they pay for health insurance - they may cover GSHIP, or they may provide funds for other private insurance. Likewise, Graduate Studies may pay for your GSHIP fees while abroad. Either way you need to verify who is going to pay for your health insurance.

If no one will cover your insurance fees, you might consider de-enrolling in GSHIP and getting private insurance in the country you are visiting. Check for the deadline if you want to opt-out of GSHIP coverage.

4. IRB

If you are working with human subjects, most fellowships require an approved IRB protocol. **Complete your IRB paperwork early**, as decisions can sometimes take up to 6 months or more. It is recommended that you file your IRB paperwork when you are applying for fellowships, or - at the latest - the moment you learn that you will receive a fellowship.

Visit the UC Davis Office of Research for more information on the IRB process: [http://research.ucdavis.edu/c/cs/hrp](http://research.ucdavis.edu/c/cs/hrp)

5. Accessing and Using Fellowship Funds

Typically, when students are completing research abroad, they are not actively employed by UCD and are considered affiliated non-employee travelers. This status limits the methods by which students can access their fellowship funds. **Please contact the Hart Hall Interdisciplinary Programs Business Office as soon as possible after learning that you will be traveling abroad to make disbursement arrangements and complete any required paperwork.**

**Direct Deposit**

Domestic Students: Fellowship funds can be disbursed through BANNER and direct deposited to your U.S. bank account. Before traveling, confirm that you have direct deposit activated for financial aid disbursements. If you will not have access to your U.S. bank at your research site, work with the program coordinator and HIP Business Office to select another disbursement method.
International Students: Fellowship funds disbursed through BANNER are routed through the UC Davis payroll system. **You will need to complete payroll paperwork before you leave.** Since your fellowship will be disbursed through payroll, be aware that taxes may be taken out of your award. Actual amounts, if any, will be determined by your GLACIER forms. Since you will have an appointment in the payroll system, you can request direct deposit to your U.S. bank account. If you will not have access to your U.S. bank at your research site, work with the program coordinator and HIP Business Office to select another disbursement method.

**Travel Cash Advances**

Cash advances can be drawn from your fellowship funds for travel-related expenses. Please work with the program coordinator and HIP Business Office to determine the best disbursement schedule. Although taxes are not taken out at the time of disbursement, you may be liable for taxes on your fellowship funds. Please consult a tax professional for advice.

Accessing funds issued through a cash advance can be tricky since **non-employee travelers are ineligible for direct deposit.** Accounting issues travel cash advances via two methods: check or international bank wire.

**International Wire:** The campus travel accounting office will only wire funds to international banks. If you will have an international bank account at your research site, and would like to have your funds wired to your account, please contact the HIP Business Office with your wire request.

**Check:** Although advances can be issued via check, campus Accounting is unable to mail it to your international research site. Prior to leaving, you will need to identify an individual who you authorize to pick-up checks on your behalf. Accounting and the Hart Business Office will need a signed and dated letter authorizing the release of your check to the individual(s) you have identified. This letter must be received and approved before you leave. It is up to you to make arrangements with this person for how to access your check—either mail to your location or deposit into your bank account.

Unlike direct deposits, advance payments need to be reconciled in MyTravel by submitting original itemized receipts for all travel expenses for which fellowship funds were used. If you are traveling to a location where receipts are not common, please contact the HIP Business Office for assistance. For research trips longer than one quarter, Accounting will approve advances on a quarterly basis with the condition that the previous advance is reconciled prior to the next disbursement. It is important to **coordinate your disbursement schedule and reconciliation schedule with the HIP Business Office before you leave Davis.**

Even if you are not required to submit a report to Accounting, it is a good idea to keep your receipts for post-award financial reporting to the sponsor. While traveling, make sure you are only using your funds for allowable expenses—alcohol and entertainment should not be charged to your travel advance funds.
THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

A) Be savvy about taxes.
   ● It is your responsibility to figure out whether or not your fellowship/grant monies are taxable. You are responsible for reporting fellowship earnings to the IRS.
   ● Read fellowship fine print regarding how money is taxed when it is spent outside of the U.S. Check with the granting agency to determine whether or not you need to pay taxes.
   ● In most cases, you can determine whether you receive your fellowship money in a lump sum or in payments. If this changes how/where you spend the money, then it might impact how you pay taxes.

B) Get your VISA issues in order.
   ● If you are a non-U.S. international student, then you need to be aware of VISA issues required for travel to other countries. Check with your country’s embassy to determine what is required.
   ● Check-in with Services for International Studies and Scholars before you start making travel arrangements. SISS will need to review and approve your travel request AND update your SEVIS record so that you maintain a valid visa status.

C) Appoint someone in the U.S. to handle legal matters.
   ● Make sure a friend knows how to check your mail, or cash a check, or do other important tasks related to your specific life circumstances. It’s always good to get your affairs in order and designate someone in the U.S. as a legal proxy before leaving the country.