Pre-Trip Orientation Checklist

Objective:

To identify and discuss any potential issues prior to domestic travel in order to establish realistic expectations and a smooth transition to the field environment for all involved with the trip. For international and University requirements go to global.umich.edu.

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" hours

Pre-departure errands

* University deadlines and communications
* Personal financial arrangements (taxes, bill pay, notification of travel, etc.)
* Recommended academic preparation

Money

* Source (university credit line, personal credit line, cash, traveler's checks, etc.)
* Identification of ATM and banking availability
* Credit card use/availability
* Payment/per diem for hired staff

Passport and visa requirements (for international students)

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

* Departures from U.S. law (e.g., gun permits, alcohol purchases.)
* Means of reporting emergencies
* Documentation restrictions (e.g., Will researchers need to have permits/identification at all times?)
* Driving rules and requirements

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