

## **KROC PhD STUDENTS: Guidelines for staying safe and well in the field**

1. Have a check-in group of people you trust who can provide support and feedback during your travels. This might consist of other doing fieldwork abroad, as well as those remaining at home. If possible, meet with your group before leaving. Try to check-in by email or other means of communication at least once a week. Let them know any concerns or troubling experiences, and also celebrate the good stuff.
2. Before leaving the country, register your trip with the Office of International Studies in the Main Building (though this is not mandatory for graduate students). You should also consult the Health Center for medical travel kits and the Office of Risk Management in Grace Hall for information on supplemental health insurance and travel assistance.
3. Let your adviser, DDS/DGS, doctoral program manager and Director know where you are. Let them know if you change residences, travel internally, leave the country, etc. The graduate program manager will keep a spreadsheet with local contact information (addresses, phone numbers, emails) for all students who are travelling abroad. Please update this information as it changes.
4. Please send scanned copies of your passport and visa to the doctoral program manager. These will be kept in a Box folder to which only the DDS, Kroc Director and program manager have access.
5. In addition to your check-in group, please contact your adviser, the Kroc DDS, and the Kroc Director as soon as possible if you have significant concerns or bad experiences, particularly those involving your physical safety. Keep them posted with any significant new developments.
6. Register with the local US embassy or consulate.
7. If possible, have an affiliation with a local academic or research institution and build ties with local researchers.
8. Establish a local “safe space” (preferably with friends) to go to if your home or neighborhood becomes dangerous. Keep your ties active with these friends and supporters.
9. Locate a really good local clinic, hospital, or other source of medical care, and verify your eligibility for coverage (via local public health care access or your insurance plan). Keep this information (and a copy of your insurance info) with you at all times.
10. Take time off from research for some soul-nourishing activity – at least once a week, preferably once a day. Exercise, meditate, write in your journal, listen to music, read

novels, do creative activity (art, poetry, etc.), engage in spiritual practice, hang out with friends, play sports, go dancing, take walks, go to the park or beach, whatever relaxes you and makes you happy.

11. Eat well, sleep well, hydrate, go moderate on alcohol. Rigorously maintain your self-maintenance routine. Let your check-in group know if you find yourself slipping on any of these.
12. Aside from acute stressful episodes, recognize the signs of longer term emotional burnout. This can happen much more slowly, but can result in acute emotional or even personality changes, in addition to physical symptoms. Be aware of what constitutes healthy and unhealthy behavior for yourself, and discuss any changes or warning signs with your friends and check-in group.
13. If a situation feels dangerous, then extract yourself from the situation. Don't let ego, bravado, guilt, timidity, or a need to prove yourself override your perceptions and instincts. Stay attentive to shifting relations in your community or even within an unfolding situation. If you feel you should leave, then leave.
14. Enlist local friends and allies who can alert you to dangerous situations and warn you if previously safe locales are becoming risky.
15. Don't hide major problematic episodes from parents or loved ones – this encourages magical thinking, denial strategies and unnecessary risk-taking.
16. Get the support you need when you come back from the field. "Reverse culture shock" is something many students experience after the intensity of fieldwork and/or archival immersion. Have debriefing meetings with your advisor(s) and as well as with your support group.
17. Participate in a "Returning from fieldwork" meeting with fellow Kroc students and supporting faculty early in the fall semester.
18. Don't be afraid to ask for additional support. Many students benefit from help in dealing with research-related stress, depression and trauma via therapy and counseling. Kroc should develop a Counseling Resource List with the names of practitioners (and centers) that accept ND student insurance.