Not all journals are private and not all are kept in paper and pencil. The Internet has revolutionized journaling and created the blog, short for “web log.” Blogs are easily updatable web pages where you can keep a running journal. Usually, a blog will have some personal information as well as a description of the themes the person will be most likely writing about. Most blogs are free and you can update them from anywhere. In this course, you’ll be writing your own blog, so tell your family and friends about it!

# Assignment:

1. *Global Issues*. Being prepared for study abroad requires having a global outlook. Begin reading and thinking about the role of the U.S. in the world and impressions of the U.S. held in other countries. Think about the effect globalization has had on different countries or regions of the world. Prior to departure, upload 3-5 carefully written posts to your blog on the theme of “global issues.” Consider the following topics:

* Common stereotypes of U.S. Americans
* Positive and negative viewpoints of globalization
* Global issues and events
* Global warming
* Multinational organizations and the allocation of resources

1. *Expanding Worldview*. We each have different cultural perspectives that shape our worldview but as we encounter other cultures, our worldviews change and expand. What are the limitations of your worldview? While abroad, upload 2-3 carefully written posts to your blog on the general theme of “expanding my worldview.” Include one or two related photos taken while abroad. Consider the following topics:

* Global injustice and disparities
* Multiple interpretations of global issues and events
* Global consequences of local behaviors
* Anti-American sentiment
* Differing ways of living and being in the world (lifestyle, consumption, etc.)

1. *Global Citizenship*. Are you a global citizen? What does being a global citizen really mean? Reflecting on your experiences abroad, think about what it means to be a global citizen. After returning home, upload 2-3 carefully written posts to your blog on the general theme of “what it means to be a global citizen.” Consider the following topics:

* Thinking globally, acting locally
* Social responsibility
* Global interconnectedness and personal responsibility
* Advancement of global awareness and civic engagement
* Global competence

# Additional Requirement:

Throughout the course, you are encouraged not only to share your blog with others, but to also read the blogs of other students in the class. As you read the reflections that others have gathered, post your responses or commentary. Do so respectfully and in the spirit of open and constructive dialogue. You are required to upload at least three responses on each of the three broad themes. This dialogue should align with the Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE Rubric Openness Capstone (Association of American Colleges & Universities):

* To suspend judgment in valuing interactions with culturally different others.

# A Blogger’s Code of Ethics:

You should recognize that you are publishing words publicly and therefore have certain obligations to your readers and to the people and places you write about. CyberJournalist.net has created a model *Blogger’s Code of Ethics*. You are strongly encouraged to read over these ethics. For now, remember always to be honest and fair in gathering, reporting, and interpreting information, treat sources and subjects as human beings deserving of respect, and be accountable for what your post.

# Helpful Websites:

There are numerous Internet sites which can host your blog free of charge. Be sure to let the course professor and other students know where to find your blog. Check out one of these sites:

* Blogger [www.blogger.com/start]
* Blog Abroad [www.studyabroad.com/blog-abroad/]

# Helpful Reading:

* Wagner, K. & Magistrale, T. (2000). *Writing across culture: An introduction to study abroad and the writing process.* Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers.

# Evaluation:

Your blog will be assessed on the depth of insight into the three themes and the level of self-reflection demonstrated in the entries. The assignment will count for 30% of your overall course grade. Your comments on the blogs of other students will factor into the course participation grade.

# Source:

A. Ogden & M. Reinig, 2009

Curiosity:

* To ask complex questions about other cultures.
* To seek out and articulate answers to these questions that reflect multiple cultural perspectives.

Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks:

* To demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.

# Links to Activity Instructions:

* [Blog Abroad instructions on the UK Education Abroad Faculty Toolkit](https://www.uky.edu/toolkit/node/15)

# Related Tools:

*Similar tools:*

* [International Maymester Reflection Journal](https://hubicl.org/toolbox/tools/342/objectives)
* [International Study Abroad Internship Reflection Handout](https://hubicl.org/toolbox/tools/344/objectives)
* [Journaling Across Cultures](https://hubicl.org/toolbox/tools/556/objectives)
* [Lost in Translation](https://hubicl.org/toolbox/tools/557/objectives)
* [My Experience in Pictures](https://hubicl.org/toolbox/tools/559/objectives)

*Related assessment tools:*

* [Critical Reflection Rubric](https://hubicl.org/toolbox/tools/275/objectives)