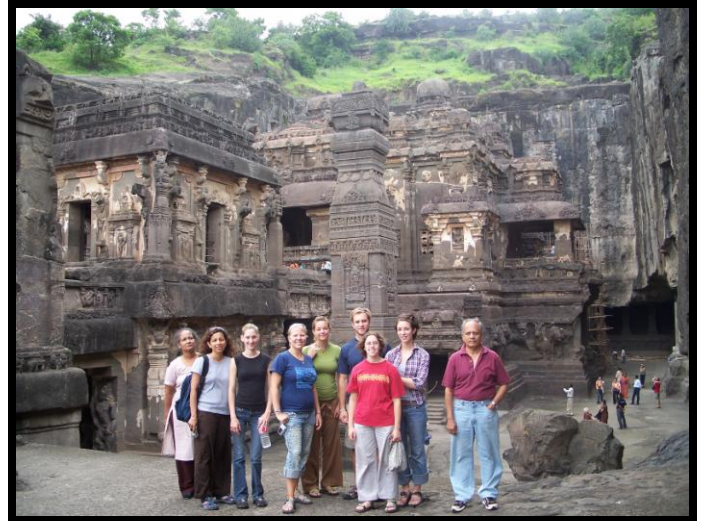


Associated Colleges of the Midwest

India Studies



Student Handbook • Fall 2009

*Beloit Carleton Coe Colorado Cornell Grinnell Knox Lake Forest
Lawrence Luther Macalester Monmouth Ripon St. Olaf*

I. Welcome and Program Overview

The ACM India Studies Student Handbook is designed to help prepare you for your semester in India and to give you an initial sense of what to expect academically and personally while you are there. It is revised each year based on comments from the previous program participants to include more current information and contains information on various logistical arrangements for your trip. It is, in effect, a reference tool that provides you (and your parents, to whom a copy will also be sent) with the information you need as you make arrangements to participate in the program. It is important that you read it carefully as preparation for the telephone orientation session and raise any questions you may have either in that orientation session, or individually with the ACM Program Associate, Heather Everst, or the Director of International Study Programs, Carol Dickerman. You should also take it with you when you travel to India, as it contains important contact and schedule information, as well as information about academic and other arrangements for the program.

Program Overview

India today is a country of contrasts: a modernizing economy in which village production continues to dominate, a vibrant democracy with an entrenched bureaucracy, a nuclear power in the place where nonviolent protest was born. The Indian economy has been described as “schizophrenic”: its modern service sector, largely urban-based, stands out against rural India, where fields are plowed with bullocks and brick kilns dot the landscape. Road traffic, proceeding at multiple speeds, incorporates these different sectors, and Mercedes and Marutis share the roads with scooters, bicycles, and even camel-drawn carts. Even the entertainment sector exhibits these disparities, with older Bollywood productions portraying rather chaste interactions between the sexes and newer films and video games more risqué in their portrayal of men and women.

The ACM program in India, located in Pune, is designed to provide students with an immersive experience of Indian culture and society today. The program begins in mid-August, with a three-week orientation, in which students begin a core course, Introduction to India; study Marathi language intensively; and draw up a plan of action for their independent study projects. The regular term begins in early September: students continue the core course and Marathi language, choose one of three electives (in political science, sociology, and environmental studies) and begin work on their independent study projects. In each of the courses classroom learning is augmented by weekly activities outside of the classroom; students are also encouraged to volunteer with local organizations. The program organizes several program-sponsored overnight excursions to sites in and around Pune, while a one-week break in October provides opportunities to travel further afield in India.

In Pune, students live with Indian host families; the families provide breakfast and dinner, as well as a packed lunch for the mid-day meal. This arrangement provides a window into Indian society that students would not otherwise have, and for many it is the highlight of their time in India. Pune itself reflects the contrasts of India as a whole. A city of 3.5 million, it is an important center for the automobile and software industries of India; it is also known as “the Oxford of India,” a reference to the presence of the prestigious University of Pune. Its climate is far more pleasant than that of muggy Mumbai, and it has attracted many foreigners over the years who have come to the ashram of Bhagwan Rajneesh.

II. Calendar

India Studies Program schedule

Weeks 1-3	Weeks 4-8	Week 9: Break	Weeks 10-16
Contemporary India		Week 9: Break	Contemporary India
Marathi language			Marathi language
Independent study project			Independent study project
Orientation	Elective course		Elective course
Stay in a hotel	Home stay with a host family		Home stay with a host family

Saturday, August 15, 2009

Sunday, August 16, 2009

Monday, August 17, 2009

Monday, September 7, 2009

Saturday, October 10 - Sunday, October 18, 2009

Friday, December 4, 2009

Saturday, December 5, 2009

Arrive in Mumbai between 10pm and 2am

Group bus from Mumbai to Pune

Orientation begins

Term begins

Break

Last day of classes

Students can leave Pune



III. Academics

The ACM India program is designed to integrate learning within the classroom with activities, field trips, and experiences outside the classroom. In each of the courses you take, the schedule has been designed to incorporate co-curricular activities that enhance what you are learning within the classroom. Similarly, the Independent Study Project (ISP), central to the academic program, is not simply a research paper, but rather an opportunity for you to explore in depth an aspect of Indian society and culture that interests you. Courses, independent work, field trips and excursions, and living arrangements are all interrelated parts of the whole, and the whole—what you will have learned by the end of the program—is greater than the sum of its parts.

You will find that your classes in Pune are a combination of the small, discussion-based learning that you are accustomed to at your home school and the more structured, lecture format that is common in higher education in India and, in fact, throughout the rest of the world. While the principal instructors for each of the courses have long experience teaching ACM students and are more likely to elicit students' ideas and thoughts in classroom discussion, the guest speakers may take a different approach to convey their knowledge. In either case, typical behavior in an Indian classroom is more formal than it is at home. Informal behavior such as writing letters, passing notes, or combing hair in class is considered by Indian professors to be highly inappropriate, and you will want to model your own classroom demeanor so as not to appear rude. On the positive side, you will find that local resources such as museums, architecture, newspapers, historical sites, and people enhance and make vivid the reading, research, and writing you will do in your courses, and more than compensate for the familiar computer and library facilities available at your home campus.

The program starts with a three-week orientation, in which students begin the Contemporary India and Marathi courses which continue throughout the semester and also develop, in consultation with the ACM Faculty Coordinator, the outline and week-by-week schedule for the Independent Study Project. The semester itself begins on September 7th, with students adding one of the three electives described below.

Program Courses

Contemporary India

Instructor: Dr. (Mr.) Shrikant Paranjpe (University of Pune)

Required course, 4 credits

This core course introduces students to contemporary India – its culture and society, the current politics, political economy, and foreign relations. The course deals mainly with current events in India, using a historical perspective as a point of reference. The course consists of structured classroom lectures and discussion, supported by an assortment of reading material. Guest lectures on topics such as Art, Architecture, Music, Yoga, and Performing Arts give students an introduction to a broad cross-section of Indian culture and society. In addition, students spend time outside of the classroom learning experientially, through a variety of field trips that complement the learning taking place in the classroom. The course begins during the three-week orientation and continues throughout the semester.

Marathi Language

Instructor: Dr. (Ms.) Sucheta Paranjpe, ACM India Studies Program Director

Required course, 6 credits

Marathi is the primary language spoken in the city of Pune, and the state of Maharashtra. With approximately twenty officially recognized languages throughout India, in additions to hundreds of local languages and dialects, it is imperative that students gain an understanding of the language native to the city in which they will be living. This

intensive class in Marathi language gives students a broad overview of the language, with a particular emphasis on oral skills, to facilitate communication with host families and people within the community. Field trips to locations such as a local vegetable market, along with guest instructors who speak only Marathi, add an experiential component to the classroom learning. The Marathi course begins during the three-week orientation, meeting two hours each day, and continues throughout the twelve-week semester, when it meets for ninety minutes each day.

The three elective courses, which meet throughout the twelve-week semester, are:

India: A Political Perspective

Instructor: Dr. Shrikant Paranjpe

Elective course, 4 credits

This course introduces students to Indian politics, with the purpose of understanding the political dynamics of this globally significant region. The focus is on political developments in India, as well as the political parties, pressure and interest groups, and the social pressures like caste and religion that tend to have an impact on Indian politics. An understanding of the dynamics of the country helps lead students to an understanding of key political issues, and the ability to apply this knowledge to current political situations. Lectures are both informative and analytical, with a wide scope for discussion. Discussion is often based upon recent news and events, along with current student experiences in India. Analysis of local and regional political developments is encouraged, to relate theoretical study to practical realities that dominate politics in everyday Indian life.

India: A Sociological Perspective

Instructor: Dr. (Ms.) Vidyut Bhagwat (Emerita Professor, University of Pune, and founder of its Department of Women's Studies)

Elective course, 4 credits

Students in this course gain an overview of the major sociological themes relevant for understanding contemporary India. The focus is on both the structural continuities and changes in ideas and institutions in India today. While learning in the classroom about institutions such as family, caste, tribe, and religion, students are made aware of the weave of historical, social, political, and economic contexts. Structures of patriarchy, caste, class, and gender are also highlighted and discussed. Students are actively engaged in applying and examining class themes to personal experiences and observations during their time in India. Throughout the course, students have the opportunity to visit various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focused on a variety of sociological issues.

India: An Environmental Perspective

Instructor: Dr. (Mr.) Sanjeev Nalavde, (Fergusson College, Pune)

Elective course, 4 credits

In this course students explore a wide range of topics concerning both physical and cultural environmental issues affecting India today. Environmental problems such as the depletion of natural resources, environmental pollution, flooding and droughts, population issues, and urbanization are key topics of discussion throughout the course. Students examine India as a hotspot of biodiversity, exploring issues in environmental management, wildlife, and conservation practices. Additionally, the relationship between people and the environment is examined from moral, ecological, religious, economic, and historical perspectives. Discussions focused on regional environmental issues help students take broader environmental themes and apply them to local issues and policies. Throughout the course, students participate in numerous trips to field and wildlife locations, as well as make visits to various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved with environmental issues.

Independent Study Project (ISP)

Faculty Coordinator: Prof. Gene Biringer (Lawrence University)

Indian Faculty Guide: TBD

Required course, 4 credits

Students have the opportunity to conduct research on a topic of their choice. The project may be done in most fields in the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and fine arts, and ACM recommends that students discuss possible topics with advisors on their home campuses prior to leaving campus the previous term. Once students arrive in Pune, the Faculty Coordinator meets with them during the orientation to help them develop the project and plan the weekly schedule of research for the ISP. When the semester begins, each student works under the supervision of an Indian faculty advisor, or “guide,” someone with expertise in the ISP topic who provides oversight and guidance throughout the term. In addition, students meet as a group each week with the Program Director, Dr. Sucheta Paranjpe, to share information about their projects and discuss common themes and issues that may emerge. At the end of the program, students present their projects.

Independent Study Project Guidelines

Schedule your Time

Be careful not to let the time get away from you. During the orientation, in consultation with the Faculty Coordinator, you set a schedule for the project which allows you adequate time to gather information, analyze your material or data, and write up the final project. It is important that you maintain this schedule, and 20% of your final grade for the ISP will be based on your ability to keep to it. (Any changes in this schedule, as well as changes in the project itself, should be discussed with and approved by Dr. Sucheta Paranjpe and the Indian faculty guide.)

Project Topics

Topics need to be based in specific research areas that relate to Pune or Maharashtra, but you have a great deal of latitude within these parameters. For example, you might think about topics involving technology and development or cultural topics involving history, literature, arts or crafts. You might develop your topic in conjunction with some of your extracurricular activities such as music, dance, philanthropic volunteering, educational interning, and art. Your final project, however, must include a theoretical and academic framework appropriate to the discipline. Sample topics from the two previous years can be found on the ACM website, at:

http://acm.edu/programs/5/india/Academics/Independent_Study_Project.html

Your topic should be as specific as possible and feasible. Think about what you might reasonably accomplish in and around Pune with the resources available. A good approach to being specific is to think of a number of questions about a certain topic and explore possible ways to answer those questions.

Politically and socially sensitive topics should be avoided. Because what is considered sensitive changes from time to time and because of cultural differences between the U.S. and India, we expect that you will be guided by the advice of the Pune staff.

Government Rules and Visa Regulations

While working on your projects, you must take extreme care in adhering to Government of India rules and regulations. For example, you should avoid active participation in rallies or demonstrations, delivering political speeches, photographing sites considered militarily sensitive, etc. Here again, the Pune staff is your best source of guidance and information.

“For me, the project opened many doors to meeting people and exploring Mumbai and Pune. It was also my main source of an academic challenge, and kept me very busy.”

“With the project, whatever one puts in is whatever one gets out of it.”

“The project was a major part of my experience, and a major part of how I found my place here.”

“The project was great because it gave us a chance to interact with the community.”

Changing Project Topics

If a student finds it necessary to change the project topic, she or he should discuss this possibility with the Dr. Sucheta Paranjpe and the Indian advisor and obtain approval from them. Each student is responsible for reporting any problems to the program staff as soon as they occur so that the program staff can respond effectively.

Project Organization:

Proposal

Project proposals should be formulated during the Orientation term in Pune and approved by the Academic Advisor and the ACM Faculty Coordinator in the Pune office.

Credits

Four semester credit hours

Length of Project Report

30-40 double spaced typed pages, plus a paragraph-long abstract or summary of the project.

Copies of the Project Report

Students must save a copy of their paper on the ACM Pune computer. ACM Pune will make three copies.

ACM Ownership

If source material or equipment is purchased with ACM financial assistance, it **will be retained by the ACM** in the program library. Students are advised to route such proposals through their guides to the ACM Program Director.

Selection of Guides

Guides for the projects are selected by the Program Director in consultation with the ACM Faculty Coordinator. Depending on the topic you have chosen, your guide may be an academic in the appropriate discipline or a professional in a particular field. A student interested in architecture, for example, might be assigned an architect as a guide. In either case, you should keep in mind the need for a greater level of formality than you may enjoy with an advisor on your home campus. In some instances, your guide may suggest additional contacts or experts who can assist in your project, some of whom may have very different views or opinions on your topic than your guide. It is to your advantage to explore these differences and use them to strengthen your project.

Research Help

The Program Director, together with the Program Administrator, assists students with arrangements for their project work, e.g. translation, field work organization, interviews, etc.

Progress Reports

Students are expected to submit to the Program Director **3** progress reports:

- At the end of the Orientation term, the progress report should consist of a proposal for the project and a week-by-week schedule for carrying it out.
- By the Friday preceding the mid-term break in October, the progress report should provide a summary of the research and project-related activities to date and discuss any expected changes in the project focus or schedule.
- The third project report, due at the end of the first week in November, should contain a preliminary analysis of the data and/or material collected for the ISP. This is a useful opportunity to review the original project outline in the context of the results of your research or work; it can also serve as an outline for the final report.

Retreat

In the first week of November, the program organizes a “retreat” in Mahabaleshvar, a hill resort which is a three-hour drive from Pune. The retreat provides an opportunity for students to discuss with faculty guides and each other the progress on their ISPs and to raise any issues or concerns.

Final Project Report

Students must submit their final project reports to the Program Director on or before December 1, 2009.

Evaluation

Guides use the following grading system to evaluate the final project reports:

A	Very Good
B+	Good
B	Satisfactory
C	Passing
D	Fair
F	Fail

While specific evaluations of ISPs will vary according to the nature of the project itself, the following criteria will be considered important in the assessment of the final evaluation.

- A strong, well thought out research topic/question supported by a detailed, well-written exposition/argument.
- A clear articulation of an academic understanding of the topic, bolstered by significant research.
- An extended discussion of the cultural significance of the topic to the Pune/Maharashtra area.
- For projects with an experiential component (which is optional), an analysis of the personal experiences according to a theoretical framework that the student has developed in consultation with his or her guide.
- Adherence to the weekly schedule drawn up at the beginning of the program or as amended in discussions with the Program Director. This will constitute 20% of the final grade.

Credit and Grades

ACM **recommends** 18 credits, as shown in the course descriptions, for your work overseas. Marathi Language is recommended at 6 credits, and the Independent Study Project, Introduction to India, and elective courses all at 4 credits each. **Before you leave home you should find out from your registrar exactly how many credits you will earn and what graduation requirements they will meet.** Different colleges have different policies about credit, and it is your responsibility to inform yourself about pass/fail options and how your India program credits will appear on your transcript. You should also discuss your plans for your independent project with your advisor and academic department, particularly if you want to use it to fulfill a requirement or serve as the basis for an honors or senior project. (More detailed information about ACM and individual college policies can be found in section XI. ACM Program Rules and Policies.)

During the first two weeks of classes in India, you will be asked to complete a grade choice form. This will inform the ACM Chicago office which courses you have chosen and whether you wish to have letter or non-letter grades recorded for any courses. Provided that you do not have any outstanding financial obligations to ACM and the program, the ACM office in Chicago will forward final grades from the program to the registrar of your college as soon as they are available.

IV. Preparing to Go and Arrival

Before you leave, give family and friends the address of the Pune office. Mail going between the U.S. and India can take 8-10 days. It is best to keep using the office address even after you have moved in with your family.

You will need to have a passport for travel to India, one which is valid for at least six months beyond the end of the program. If you do not now have a passport and are an American citizen, please review the information on the U.S. Department of State website (http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738_2.html) and apply for one immediately. If you are a citizen of another country and need to renew your passport, please contact the nearest consulate or embassy.

You will need a visa for your travel to India, and as a first step in the process, ACM will obtain for you a letter from the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) certifying that you will be enrolled in a study abroad program in India. In order for ACM to do so, you will need to fill out the Student CV Visa form sent out to you in hard copy by the ACM. Please complete this form and return it to Heather Everst at the ACM by **April 15, 2009**; it must be filled out legibly (typed or neatly printed) and accompanied by a passport-sized photograph of yourself. ACM in turn will forward the applications to AIIS in New Delhi and they will then draw up and fax the required certifying letter to the consulate for you. (The cost of AIIS providing this letter is included in your program fee.) Once the letter has been sent to the consulate, ACM will notify you by e-mail that you may apply for your student visa through Trivisa Outsourcing, which handles visa applications for the Indian consulates. Information about this process can be found on their website:

<https://indiavisa.trivisaoutsourcing.com/homepage>

In addition to your passport, you will need to fill out and provide them with the visa application form. Please allow enough time for this process, as you will need to have your passport and visa in hand by the time you leave for India in mid-August. (AIIS suggests that this be done no sooner than two months before your travel to the program, but no later than three weeks before you plan to leave.) The cost of the visa application (\$108, as of March 2009) is your responsibility, and we also recommend that you provide Trivisa with a FedEx or similar mailing form, pre-paid and addressed to you, so that the passport can be returned to you quickly and, if necessary, is trackable.

Travel Arrangements

ACM will not be holding a pre-departure orientation in Chicago this year, and thus ACM will not be committing students to a group flight to India. You should therefore make your travel arrangements as soon as possible after you accept the offer to participate in the program: keep in mind that earlier reservations are likely cheaper. You will need to arrange to fly from your home to Mumbai (Bombay) to **arrive at the Mumbai airport between 10 pm on Saturday, August 15 and 2 am on Sunday, August 16**. (Most flights from the U.S. arrive late at night.) If you arrive between those hours, you will be met at the airport by an ACM staff member (likely Dr. Sucheta Paranjpe, Program Director, and/or Mrs. Seema Gunjal, Program Administrator) and taken to the Atithi Hotel near the airport, where you will stay overnight before traveling on to Pune as a group on Sunday.

In making your travel reservations, there are a number of options available to you; you may wish to use your own local travel agent or book through the internet. Once you have made your arrangements, please complete and return to Heather Everst the ACM Travel form (the blue form in your acceptance materials); this will allow us to inform ACM Pune staff when you will arrive and allow them to meet you at the airport (provided, of course, that you arrive within the window of time above).

Communication

E-Mail

You should plan to continue using your college e-mail address and/or a personal e-mail account such as gmail while abroad. Although the program cannot provide e-mail access for students, cyber cafes are available throughout Pune at very reasonable prices and some have wireless internet. This is by far the easiest and most common form of communication for program participants.

Fax Service

Although you can have faxes sent to you at the on-site program office (and can send faxes in case of an emergency), we recommend that you plan to receive important information and documents electronically, at either your college e-mail address or a personal e-mail account (e.g., gmail).

Telephones

Do not plan to take your American cell phone with you to India since it will not work outside of North America. Instead, you should plan on purchasing an inexpensive cell phone in Pune. Past program participants have found this the most effective and cheapest way to communicate with each other and their family and friends back home. Mrs. Seema Gunjal, the Program Administrator, will assist students in purchasing a cell phone and arranging a calling plan when they first arrive in country. You can then call (or e-mail) your friends and family with your contact information in India.

While it is important that your parents or other emergency contacts know how to reach you at the program office in India (see the contact information at the end of this handbook), these phone numbers are for use in the event of an emergency only and you will be charged for the cost of any long-distance calls.

All of the families with whom students are placed will have phones in their homes, and when you first move into the house or apartment, you should inquire about their preferences for your using the phone before you do so. They may let you make local calls, but you should not plan to use their phone for long-distance calls. You can make direct long distance calls from your own cell phone or from any one of the yellow STD booths along major streets. Just dial 001 (for the U.S.) then the area code and number.

Receiving Packages and Letters

Small and inexpensive packages can be sent to you in Pune. Have your packages sent in small, padded envelopes and declared as gifts. Sending them airmail helps them get through and assures they arrive before the program ends. Don't have valuable things sent in the mail as they may be held up in Mumbai, and you might have to pay a hefty 300% duty on them in order to get them released from the Postal Appraisal Department in Mumbai. Be warned that electronics, for example, have been known to disappear in transit. Similarly, you should not plan to have medications sent to you overseas. You should either take with you a supply for the time you will be abroad or, alternatively, ask your doctor or pharmacist to see if the same drug is available in India.

Money

Students on the program in the past several years have relied on debit and ATM cards almost exclusively to obtain rupees for daily expenses. (For information on what expenses you can expect to have, please see the Cost Information Chart for the India program included with your acceptance materials.) ATM machines are readily available throughout Pune, and you should have no problem withdrawing funds in rupees from your U.S. bank account. Before you leave for the program, however, you should notify your bank that you will be abroad and confirm that your PIN will still be valid. (If you neglect to do so, you may find that your bank, fearing that your card has been stolen, will freeze your account after several withdrawals.) You will also want to check on the

transaction charges your bank may levy. While the exchange rate is typically good when using an ATM or debit card, you may find that such transaction fees discourage multiple withdrawals of small amounts.

While ATM and debit cards work well, this should not be your only means of getting money—ATM and debit cards can get lost, stolen, or eaten by cash withdrawal machines. You should also bring along some hard currency in dollars—perhaps \$100 and \$200—and a credit card. These can be useful in emergencies or if you travel outside of Pune. Visa is more widely used than other credit cards, but you should not plan to use it with the frequency that you likely do in the U.S., as most small businesses in India will not accept it.

Computers

If you have a laptop, please bring it with you. The ACM facility in Pune does not have the computer facilities such as you find on your home campuses, and thus if you have a laptop, you should bring it. Past participants have also recommended that you bring a USB flash drive, which is both small and inexpensive. Your host family may or may not have internet access in the home, but internet cafes are plentiful in Pune and can be used for e-mail, printing, and other applications.

If you bring your laptop, please keep in mind that you need to take adequate precautions to keep it from being stolen, as indeed you would at home. You will want to make sure that it is insured, likely through your [American] family's property insurance policy, as ACM does not provide insurance coverage for personal property.

Medications and Other Medical Preparation

As part of your preparation to go abroad, please carefully read the information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) about medical conditions in India and the recommended precautions for Americans traveling to South Asia. The website is:

<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinationIndia.aspx>

You should share this information with your doctor or the physician who signs your Medical History form and your parents. You will want to make sure that you have the recommended vaccinations and are aware of and take precautions against the various health risks, including malaria, in India. Please note that malaria is a risk in Pune as well as elsewhere in India, and you should speak with your physician or a travel clinic about recommended malaria prophylaxis during your time there.

If you take one or more prescriptions drugs regularly, you will want to be sure you can continue this medication while abroad. Speak with your physician about the possibility of obtaining a supply to take with you. (And please make sure to keep it in its original container, and in your carry-on luggage.) If you cannot get a supply to take with you, you will want to see if this medication can be obtained in India and to have the generic name. You should not plan to have drugs (of any kind) sent to you while abroad.

Insurance

ACM provides all ACM program participants with the MEDEX Travel Card. Among its benefits, the MEDEX Travel Card includes insurance coverage for emergency medical evacuation and repatriation of remains. For a complete list of benefits provided by the MEDEX Travel Card, please see: www.medex.com. **In addition to the MEDEX Travel Card, all ACM program participants are required to carry insurance for major medical expenses, including hospitalization and physicians' fees, during the study abroad period.**

Like all travel insurance policies, the coverage provided by MEDEX is supplemental, or *secondary*, to any other coverage that you may have. In other words, if you are covered by another insurance policy (e.g., a personal policy, a college/university policy, or a policy maintained by your parents) then that policy is your *primary* policy. Prior to departure, you should contact your primary insurance carrier concerning coverage for accidents, illnesses, hospitalization, physicians' fees, and liability cases that occur outside the U.S. In addition, all students should verify whether (and under what circumstances) the coverage will continue while they are abroad and how they can be reimbursed for medical expenses. Each student is responsible for the costs of any medical care received while participating in the program.

If you discover that your American insurance policy will not be valid abroad, you will need to purchase a supplemental policy. Your supplemental coverage should start on or before your departure date and extend through the date you return home. You must purchase your insurance plan in full before you depart for your study country. You are strongly advised to investigate the actual costs of hospitalization in your study country and obtain additional coverage as appropriate. ACM recommends also that you continue your U.S. coverage even if it will not provide full coverage while you are abroad—some U.S. carriers may consider diseases or injuries that occur while abroad pre-existing conditions and decline to cover follow-up care.

While abroad, you should have your primary and/or supplemental insurance carrier and policy information readily available.

Remember, medical insurance does not cover personal property. Insurance coverage for loss or theft of personal property may need to be purchased in addition to one's medical insurance.

Some travel international insurance providers include:

Cultural Insurance Services International: www.culturalinsurance.com

HTH Worldwide: www.hthworldwide.com

MEDEX: www.medexassist.com

Travel Guard: www.travelguard.com

Mental and Intellectual Preparation

When you first arrive in India, you will undoubtedly be struck by the many new and different sights, sounds, and smells around you. And while you can never really prepare yourself for the full experience of studying abroad, you can arrive with some knowledge of India today, its diversity, and its challenges. You'll undoubtedly find your Indian teachers, friends, and host family more knowledgeable about the U.S. than you are about India. The more you can learn in advance about India and prepare yourself for the program, the more you can learn and benefit from discussions with instructors, project guides, new Indian friends, and host family members. Your overall experience will be richer for it. At the very least, you should want to counter the stereotype of the American abroad as someone totally self-absorbed and almost willfully ignorant of what is going on around you.

Required Readings

There are two required readings before the beginning of the program. They are:

Shashi Tharoor, *India: From Midnight to Millennium and Beyond* (paperback, 2006).

Rohinton Mistry, *Family Matters* (paperback, 2003)

Both books are available on line through Amazon or can be ordered from a local bookstore. There will be discussions of both books when you first arrive, and it is important that you have read them in advance of your arrival.

Recommended Readings

Fiction (all are available in paperback):

Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*
Rohinton Mistry, *A Fine Balance*
Vikram Chandra, *Love and Longing in Bombay: Stories*
Gregory David Roberts, *Shantaram: A Novel*
Kiram Desai, *The Inheritance of Loss*
Aravind Adiga, *The White Tiger*

Non-Fiction (all available in paperback):

Edward Luce, *In Spite of the Gods: The Rise of Modern India*
Sara S. Mitter, *Dharma's Daughters*
Shashi Tharoor, *The Elephant, The Tiger, and the Cell Phone: Reflections on India in the 21st Century*

Websites

<http://www.pune.org.uk/>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>

<http://india.gov.in/default.php>

Other Sources of Information, with past participants' comments:

Movies

"Slumdog Millionaire"

"Bride and Prejudice" - a good one, and sort of a prep for Bollywood

"Salaam Bombay!" - winning and intense, a classic in India

"Lagaan" - another classic in India, nominated for an Oscar for "Best Foreign Film"

(And you can always watch "Gandhi," cliched as it is...)

Music

Anything by A.R. Rahman - He does classical stuff for some soundtracks, like for "Water," and then "hip" stuff for Bollywoods. He's also pretty much regarded as the best, at least by the Indians I talked to.

Travel Guides

The Rough Guide to India.

Lonely Planet India.

You Tube

Marathi: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GjocJsoT6Jw&feature=related>

Marathi: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6wYpD1Od1Wo&feature=related>

Traffic in Pune: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-sRVdN-zqM>

Possibly the most valuable resource you have for self-preparation is other people who have been to this area of the world before. Talking with people about their experiences can reveal a great deal about what to expect. You may want to start with your Off-Campus Studies Director or Program Advisor, alumni of the program, Asian Studies Departments, or professors of Indian or international subjects. You will find it well worth your effort, and you may be surprised how excited people will be to share their experiences with you.



Henna. Photo courtesy of Christina Nacci.



Students at the Taj Mahal. Photo courtesy of Tyler Quinn.

Suggested Packing List

Documents

- Passport/visa
- Copy of your birth certificate
- ATM card, credit card, cash
- Health insurance claim forms
- WHO card

Clothing

- T-shirts, cotton shirts, or blouses a few long-sleeve shirts, and a sweater
- Jeans (without holes) or casual pants (for both men and women)
- Bathing suit (2-piece suits are only common for women in Goa or other touristy areas)
- Shorts. For females, they should be capris, Bermudas, boy length. Short shorts will draw unwanted attention, especially in a gym.
- Outfits for clubs or nice dinners. Something in-between casual and really nice.
- Outfit for dressier occasion. Men should take a dress shirt, slacks and good shoes, and women should have at least one good dress or pants outfit. At least once during the semester you might want to dress more formally.
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Pair of shoes you won't mind getting wet such as Chaco, Teva, Merrell, or Crocs.
- Pair of shoes for showering and walking around hotels, such as flip flops.
- Rain gear, including a tough, plastic raincoat or poncho and a compact umbrella
- Hat
- Underwear and socks. Bring approximately 10 pairs of each, as you will travel and laundry is not done daily.

Personal and Miscellaneous Items

- Toiletry articles, including most U.S. brands, are readily available in Pune.
- Portable toilet paper (Charmin makes travel rolls)
- Hand sanitizer (starter supply)
- Glasses or contact lenses + extra pair and copy of your prescription. Contact lens solution is expensive, so you might want to bring a semester's supply.
- Enough prescription medicine to last your stay and copies of prescriptions (with latin names)
- Gas-X dissolvable strips or chewable Pepto-Bismol, especially handy when traveling or eating roadside food.
- Medicine kit with basic items such as Band-Aids, antibiotic cream, aspirin, antihistamine, antacids, etc.
- A bath towel and a beach towel (do not expect to use your host family's towels)
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent containing DEET
- Camera and appropriate film/memory card
- Pictures of your family, home, and college to show to your host family and friends in Pune. These items provide an excellent way for your family to get to know you better and make for good conversation.
- Travel alarm clock/watch
- Backpack for routine daily use in Pune (some students bring larger backpacks to use for travel)
- Money belt
- Guidebook
- Laptop computer
- Converter plug
- Water bottle
- Comfort candy or food

Packing Considerations

Gifts for your Host Family

It is a wonderful gesture to take a gift to your host family. Choose something representative of your college, town, or culture, but keep it within a moderate price range. Here are some general recommendations:

- T-shirts or pennants from your college or sports teams
- Calendars with scenes of your home state or town
- Specialty foods (wild rice from Minnesota, bread mix, your favorite cake/muffin mix)
- Handmade sweets from your state or region
- Small toys for children (jacks, stickers, matchbox cars, stuffed animals, magic markers)
- Picture books about the U.S. or your home region
- CDs of popular music in the U.S.
- Mugs
- Artwork from your area (small pottery, weaving, watercolors)
- Commemorative coins (such as state quarters) or stamp collections

Luggage

While packing, keep in mind that you will leave India with more than you brought, and that airline luggage restrictions can be strict. To and from Mumbai, the airline will allow you a maximum of two checked bags and one carry-on. You should also keep in mind that you will transport your luggage several times while in India and that a large suitcase with little wheels is not a good choice for crowded streets. Some students have recommended traveling with one traditional suitcase and a duffle bag or other loose floppy piece of luggage. When you pack your bags, include your name and the program address inside each bag in case it gets lost.

A word to the wise: put your essential documents, all your money, a few health care and toiletry items, prescription medication, corrective lenses and a change of clothes in your carry-on. Most lost luggage is found again, but you do not want to arrive in Pune with no clothing, no toothbrush, no Advil and a stress-induced headache. It is also a good idea to put valuables such as cameras and iPods in your carry-on luggage.

Clothing

Clothing is more complicated when you are in a new and varied culture. It's a good idea to bring a dress outfit as you will have occasion to dress up, but you won't need a tie or nylons. You may find that you are more comfortable in India wearing clothing that is more modest than you would typically wear in America. This can be a delicate balance—female students have explained that many women wear sleeveless blouses, but tank tops with spaghetti straps would be inappropriate.

Bring cool and comfortable clothes. Indian detergents and washing methods are hard on clothes; elastic will stretch and colors will fade, so don't bring anything that you would hate to see destroyed by vigorous hand washing. Good cotton and permanent press wash up nicely. Cotton clothes are cool and dry quickly. Poly-cotton blends are the best. Some students have recommended linen garments. It is also recommended to pack some warmer clothes to wear during the travel break and during the monsoon season, which can be cold and damp. Past students have asked us to emphasize that jeans are okay! Some students buy and wear Indian clothes once they get to India to make them feel less conspicuous and less like American tourists. Indian clothes are also much more practical in rural settings or while traveling. Past students, however, remark that many Indian college-age students wear western clothes. With all of this in mind, **DON'T OVER PACK**. The old adage about packing everything and then getting rid of half of it is probably good advice.

“Students should be told to bring what they are most comfortable with at home as long as it's not revealing... T-shirts and jeans are great.”

Passport Security

Do not pack your passport in your checked luggage since you will need to show it several times while in transit. Photocopy your passport (the page with the number and the place and date of issue) and carry it separately from your passport. Also bring a few extra photos and a copy of your birth certificate. In case of a lost passport, these items will be necessary, and having any of these items sent from home can cause a significant delay. You will be responsible for any expenses incurred in case of loss of your passport.

Especially while you are traveling, it would be safest to keep your passport separate from your wallet in a money belt or other concealed carrier. That way, if you should lose your wallet, you won't have lost your passport as well. This is useful advice both for traveling to India and for travel within the country. While India is a safe country, pickpockets are becoming more common with the increase in tourism, and international airports are always popular spots for thieves.

Arrival in India

You should plan to arrive at the Mumbai airport on Saturday/Sunday, August 15-16, 2009. Flights from the U.S. generally land around 10pm on one day and 2am the next. If you arrive between those hours, you will be met by the ACM Pune staff and the ACM Faculty Coordinator at the airport. For security reasons, the staff will not be able to enter the airport. You will collect your bags and go through customs, and they will meet you outside with signs. Students will stay overnight at Hotel Atithi, near the airport. The group will then be transported by a private charter bus to Pune on Sunday, August 16th. If you do not arrive in Mumbai during the specified hours, you will need to make arrangements to get to Hotel Atithi or Pune. If, for some reason, you do not or cannot arrive during these times, please notify the ACM office in Chicago or the ACM Pune staff immediately. (Please see the contact information at the back of this handbook.)

In Pune you will spend the first week of the orientation period at Hotel Raviraj close to the ACM program office. This allows you to get to know the other students on the program before everyone is dispersed throughout the city to live with his or her host family. Living in one location at the start of the program also gives you some time to acclimate to the traffic, the rickshaws, and the cultural shifts that will occur upon your arrival in India.

Getting through Customs

You may or may not be asked to declare your electronic equipment at airport customs. Cameras, laptops, iPods etc. are all things that may have to be declared. If you are carrying more than \$1000, you must declare that as well. As a general rule, ACM students simply state that they have nothing to declare. Keep in mind that airports and customs around the world are always changing their rules, so you will want to pay attention. ACM students have generally been lucky with the customs people, but there's always a chance that customs will want to look through your things.

Registration with the Police

The American Institute of Indian Studies will be handling the formality of registration with the police on behalf of ACM students. This process will require from you your passport, as well as 6 passport photos; ACM recommends that you bring these photos with you rather than have them taken when you arrive.

Registration with the American Consulate

You should register online with the American Consulate in Mumbai once you arrive in Pune.

V. Host Country Information

No country in the world is as diverse as India, and every statement about its geography, people, climate, language, religion, economy, and even political system must be qualified by its opposite. The second most populated country in the world (after China), India's populace is divided along lines of caste, religion and language. There are approximately twenty official languages, including English, and while the national census does not recognize ethnic groups or castes, recent estimates are that there are over 2,000 different ethnicities in India. In terms of religion, virtually every world religion is represented among its population, with Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists, Christians, and even a small Jewish community. It boasts modern glass office buildings in its cities; shanty housing of tin, mud, and cardboard in its slums; and some of the most beautiful architecture in the world.

The history of the sub-continent goes back to 2,500 BCE, a time when Europeans were still in caves and Egyptians only beginning to build the remarkable monuments along the Nile. Successive waves of migrants and invaders introduced new peoples, languages, religions, and political systems to India, and by the time that the British began to establish their first trading posts in the seventeenth century and, ultimately, their overall authority two hundred years later, India was composed of a series of small princely states. Britain considered India to be the "jewel in the crown" of its empire, and no other colony, for better or for worse, received the level of attention and investment, in all sectors, that India did. Conversely, no other part of its empire has had in the influence on modern British society and culture that India has exercised.

Independent since 1947, India today is at a crossroads in its development and faces important issues: While its economy has grown at an enviable pace since 1991, when many economic policies were liberalized, and its rate of population increase has declined, the benefits of this growth have been uneven and largely confined to specific sectors of its urban areas. The service sector comprises roughly half of the Indian economy, with the industrial and agricultural sectors sharing the remainder of the pie. The poor in villages in the rural areas have, by and large, not participated in this prosperity, and while some experts see village life as key to India's future, for many at the present time it is only through migration to the cities that the cycle of poverty has been broken. The Indian agricultural sector remains outside the ring of growth and success, largely based on peasant labor and smallholder production. What the Indian economy most needs, according to at least one expert, are jobs in industry for semiskilled laborers, and this, unlike in China, is not occurring. India's advantage over China, on the other hand, is the widespread use of English, a factor that has led to the establishment of many offshore call centers.

Pune, where the ACM program has been located since its establishment, demonstrates the contrasts in Indian economy and society today. A city of over three million, it is the home not only of one of India's oldest and most respected universities, the University of Pune, but also of many of its newest industries. It is second only to Bangalore in the number of high-tech firms and is home to many drug and pharmaceutical companies. The Serum Institute, for example, supplies roughly half of the supply for the vaccines the United Nations provides to children all over the world. It also offers plazas, fast food shops, and a host of smaller businesses. Pune is in Maharashtra state, the second largest city after Mumbai (formerly known as Bombay), and with its inland location and somewhat higher altitude, has a much more pleasant climate than Mumbai. The three-month rainy season may have already started when you arrive in August, and while the monsoon often turns Mumbai into a murky mess, Pune's rains are not as heavy. You can expect rain daily when you first arrive, but typically it only pours for a short period before you can go out comfortably; the rains tend to taper off around September. October is generally hot, but the heat eases by November, when the nights will grow cool and you will probably need extra blankets!

VI. Cultural Norms and Expectations

Although Indian society and individual families are becoming less conservative in mores and manners than they once were, you will find that, in comparison to U.S. society, it remains a very conservative place. While you will not be expected to get everything right and allowances will be made for you as a foreigner, common courtesy will go a long way to compensate for your lack of understanding and to ingratiate yourself with your host family and other Indians with whom you come in contact. For example, Indians generally greet each other and say goodbye with their hands held together (as if in prayer), and say, “Namaste.” You should learn to do this as well.

The ACM Pune staff is a good source of information about manners and behavior, both in the home stay and outside the home, and will be discussing these with you in the on-site orientation when you first arrive. Here are some general tips, gathered from past program participants and ACM staff, to guide you while in India:

- As a general rule you should plan to dress a bit more conservatively than you would at home. In a way that is not true in the U.S., your dress and demeanor underscore your Americanness, and this is not necessarily a good thing! Don't wear shorts in India—only German tourists wear shorts—and consider replacing your flipflops with more elegant sandals. Women may also find that small, tight tank tops are best left at home (or at least in the suitcase).
- Be sure to greet people when you enter a room or home. Rather than simply blurt out your request or question, take the time to greet others in the traditional fashion and ask how they are. You'll find that people respond more favorably to you--and that, as a result, you're more likely to have your request granted.
- Your host family will be providing breakfast, a packed mid-day meal, and dinner for you, and if you plan to be away for a meal, please let your host family know in advance.
- Similarly, if you plan to be away from home, let them know in advance where you'll be and when you plan to return. Your host family will likely feel very protective of you and unless they know that you will be away, will be very worried if you do not return (or if you're late).
- Indian men and women tend to be very circumspect publicly about their relations. Men and women, even husbands and wives, seldom, if ever, touch each other in public. Nor should you touch an adult member of your host family of the opposite sex. Greet your host family members in the morning at breakfast and when you return home after the day's classes.
- Social restrictions on relations between the sexes in India are much stricter than in the United States. When living with the host family, you must abide by their standards which will likely preclude even being alone with a member of the opposite sex. Don't offend your family or place yourself in an inappropriate situation. Although you may think you are being discreet, remember that your high profile in Pune ensures that your actions will not remain confidential.

No matter how much you prepare for your time abroad, however, there will be surprises, both good and bad. As one study abroad student said, “It doesn't matter what you expect—it won't be what you expect.” It's not unnatural to go through a period soon after you arrive when you're desperately homesick and everything Indian looks more foreign than you can bear. Often labeled as “culture shock,” these periods pass; for some, they come and go quickly, while for others, they may last longer.¹

¹ The paragraphs which follow are taken from L. Robert Kohls, *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*. Intercultural Press, 4th ed., 2001.

Culture Shock

Distinctive Features of Culture Shock

- Culture shock does not result from a specific event or series of events. Instead, culture shock comes from encountering different ways of doing, organizing, perceiving or valuing which threaten your basic, unconscious, belief that your encultured customs, assumptions, values and behaviors are right.
- Culture shock does not strike suddenly or have a single principal cause. Instead the cumulative effects build up slowly, from a series of small, difficult-to-identify events.

Sources of Culture Shock

- Being cut off from familiar cultural cues and patterns, especially the subtle, indirect ways you normally express feelings. All the nuances and shades of meaning that you instinctively understand and that make your life comprehensible are suddenly taken away.
- Living, studying or working over an extended period of time in an ambiguous situation.
- Questioning values that you had considered absolute may conflict with your moral standards.
- Continually experiencing situations in which you are expected to function with maximum skill and speed, but without adequately explained rules.

How to Counteract Culture Shock

- Find out as much as possible about your host country. One of the best antidotes to culture shock is knowing as much as possible about your environment.
- If you have not already done so, consciously look for logical reasons behind everything in the host culture which seems strange, difficult, confusing or threatening. Even if your reasoning is wrong, it will reinforce the positive attitude that logical explanations do lie behind things that you observe in the host culture. Look at every aspect of your experience from the perspective of your hosts. Find patterns and relax interrelationships; all the pieces will fit together once you discover where they go. Relax your grip on your own culture a little in the process. You cannot lose your culture, any more than you can forget how to speak English, but letting go a little bit may open up some unexpected avenues of understanding.
- Do not succumb to the temptation to disparage the host culture. Resist making jokes and comments which illustrate the “stupidity of the natives,” and do not hang around Americans who do make them. They will only reinforce your unhappiness. Every American enclave has a number of people who cannot adjust to the country and sit around waiting for more Americans to indoctrinate on the “stupidity of the natives.” Avoid these people like the plague! The sickness they are attempting to spread is far worse than any culture shock you will ever experience.
- Identify a sympathetic and understanding host national (a member of your host family, a neighbor, another student, a friendly acquaintance) and talk with that person about specific situations and your feelings about them. Talking with Americans can only be helpful to a limited extent, because your problem lies with your relationship to the host culture.
- Above all, have faith in yourself, in the essential good will of your hosts, and in the positive outcome of your experience.

Coming Home: Reentry & Reverse Culture Shock

Reentry into your home culture can be both as challenging and as frustrating as living overseas, mostly because our attitude toward going “home” is that it should be a simple matter of getting resettled, resuming your earlier routines, and reestablishing your relationships. However, research worldwide has shown that reentry has its own set of special social and psychological adjustments. The following list of ideas may help make your reentry easier for you and for those at home.

- **Prepare for the adjustment process.** The more you consider what is to come, and know about how returning home is both similar to and different from going abroad, the easier the transition will be. Anticipating is useful. As one psychologist put it, “Worrying helps.”
- **Allow yourself time.** Give yourself time to relax and reflect upon what is going on around you, how you are reacting to it, and what you might like to change. And give your family time for the same.
- **Understand that the familiar will seem different.** Just as when you arrived at your off-campus site, you will be more aware of how your home looks when you go back. You will have a heightened sense of awareness that will last just a short time. You will have changed, home will have changed, and some things will seem strange, perhaps even unsettling. Take advantage of that time by writing your perceptions on paper. Look at it later, and think about why you noticed the things you did, and how your perceptions changed because of your experience in another culture.
- **Be sensitive to those around you.** Upon returning everyone will ask about your trip, then they listen for a few minutes and tell about their new car, or about cousin John’s wedding party. After a while they do not ask at all! Much frustration in returnees stems from what is perceived as disinterest by others in their experience and lack of opportunity to express their feelings and tell their stories. Showing an interest in what others have been doing while you have been on your adventure overseas is the surest way to reestablish rapport. Being as good a listener as a talker is a key ingredient in mutual sharing. Learn to give short responses, focusing on just one or two ideas about what you did while you were off campus. Save your long discussions for a few select people who have a basis for understanding your experience.
- **Reserve judgments.** Just as you had to keep an open mind when first encountering the culture of a new foreign country, try to resist the natural impulses to make judgments about people and behaviors once back home. What works in one situation may not work in another. Pick ideas that will work well for you, and disregard those that will not. Mood swings are common at first, so try to remain flexible and keep laughing. Respond thoughtfully and slowly to avoid quick answers and impulsive reactions.
- **Beware of comparisons.** Making comparisons between cultures and nations is natural, particularly after residence abroad; however, a person must be careful not to be seen as too critical of home or too lavish in praise of things foreign. A balance of good and bad features is probably more accurate and certainly less threatening to others. The tendency to be an “instant expert” is to be avoided at all costs.
- **Remain flexible.** Keeping as many options open as possible is an essential aspect of a successful return home. Attempting to re-socialize totally into old patterns and networks can be difficult, but remaining aloof is isolating and counterproductive. Try to achieve a balance between maintaining earlier patterns and enhancing your social and intellectual life with new friends and interests.
- **Find support and move on.** There are lots of people back home who have gone through their own reentry and understand a returnee’s concerns. Keeping in touch with the friends you made abroad can be a source of comfort. You can also help yourself by thinking about the future and the next challenge or goal that you may want to achieve.

VII. Health and Safety

You will be living and studying in a larger city than that of your home college, and you'll find clear contrasts to what you have become comfortable with at home. Some of the differences, particularly with regard to safety, are due to the fact that you're in an urban setting with risks like those of other large urban areas. Other, health-related risks are endemic to tropical areas of the world, including India, and are, by and large, preventable. And keep in mind too that the two biggest risks to your health and safety while abroad are the same as in the U.S.: traffic- and alcohol-related incidents.

For information about health and safety in India as a whole, two very useful websites are those of the U.S. Department of State and the Centers for Disease Control. These can be found at:

<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinationIndia.aspx>

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1139.html (The Consular Information Sheet contains information about visa requirements, safety and crime, and road conditions, among other things, while the Background Notes are more like an almanac entry, providing a summary of Indian politics, history, the economy, and basic statistics.)

Health

In addition to the pre-departure preparations for managing your health while in India (see above under "Medications and Other Medical Preparations" in the section on "Preparing to Go and Arrival"), you need to need to take precautions to maintain your health in India. Probably the biggest risk to your health in India is from badly prepared food (e.g., undercooked) and untreated water, leading to stomach and intestinal upsets. The CDC pages on travel in India recommend not only monitoring what you drink and eat, but also using hand sanitizer.

Other health risks in India include malaria and AIDS. Malaria is present outside of Pune, for example, and particularly in the rainy season. When traveling in an area where it is present, you should take your malaria prophylaxis regularly, wear long sleeves, and use insect repellent. Be aware too that AIDS is a risk, and spread most often through unprotected heterosexual intercourse. It is incurable, but preventable, and safe sex is a must.

Pune has very good medical facilities, and if you need to see a doctor while you are on the program, ACM program staff will be able to give you the names of doctors and clinics where students have been treated in the past.

You should be aware that, in case of illness or injury involving hospitalization or a series of visits to a doctor's office, ACM reserves the right to inform the person you designated as an emergency contact. This is necessary not only to keep your parents or guardian informed, but also to let them know that you are incurring medical expenses for which they may wish to seek reimbursement.

Safety

Pune is a modern and safe city, and India a hospitable and secure country. Like any place else in the world, however, there is some crime and random violence, but most of it is preventable or avoidable with appropriate caution. You should be especially careful when you first arrive in Pune and everything is unfamiliar. You'll find traffic to be more congested and also faster than on the streets of, say, Northfield or Galesburg. The biggest difference you're likely to notice, and immediately, is that traffic is on the left rather than the right side of the road, and all your instincts as a pedestrian will need to be adjusted. You will be commuting between your home and the Pune office each day by foot, bus, or rickshaw, and you'll want to consciously train yourself to expect traffic to be

coming from the opposite direction. ACM Pune staff, as well as your host family, will talk more about getting to and from the ACM program center when you first arrive and can advise you about safety as you travel around Pune.

While participating in the India Studies program, you will be living and studying as a foreign guest in India and will be expected to conform to the standards of Indian society. Keep in mind that you are subject to all Indian laws and that your visa can be revoked for infractions deemed serious by the Indian government. As a member of the ACM-sponsored group, you are very visible in Pune. Your actions will reflect on the program and could jeopardize the position and legal status of the program. The program has been in Pune for forty years and has carefully cultivated good relations with people in India; illegal or inappropriate actions can imperil both yourself and the program. The following issues have been identified by program staff as potentially problematic.

Theft

Some ACM students have been the victims of theft. Be careful, especially while traveling on trains and buses as foreigners are an easy target. Carry your passport and money under your clothes and take the same precautions you would in an American city. If anything of value is lost or stolen, report it to the nearest police station, as well as to ACM staff. (Sometimes parents' homeowners' insurance policies can cover lost property, so it is essential that you get a police report for the insurance company.) As a precaution, keep a photocopy of your passport and visa, police registration papers, and plane ticket in a safe place; also, make a list of credit card numbers and serial numbers from any electronic equipment.

Political Involvement

Politics in India can be extremely volatile and sometimes violent. Any participation in political organizations, rallies, etc. will be in violation of your student visa and could lead to deportation as well as endangering the program's educational status. In addition, you may be placing yourself in physical danger.

Money Changing

Black market money changing is illegal and can lead to deportation.

Drugs and Alcohol

As in the United States, recreational drugs are illegal in India. The program or the U.S. consulate can do very little for you if you are caught in possession of illegal substances. Keep in mind too that excessive alcohol consumption impairs your judgment and can put you at risk; moreover, it is offensive to your host family and casts an unfavorable light on you and the ACM program.

Travel

Parts of India and the surrounding countries have been plagued by communal violence and terrorism at times, so it is essential to keep yourself informed about the current political situation and any U.S. State Department or Indian travel advisories. You should consult with the program staff about travel plans, and abide by their recommendations about places to avoid. Do not travel alone; accidents can happen, and it is vital to have someone to assist you in case of trouble. *It is absolutely prohibited to operate a motor vehicle while in India.*

Serious infractions are punishable with expulsion from the program.

VIII. Program Arrangements

The ACM program office in Pune contains office and classroom areas and is, in effect, your campus abroad. You'll find the ACM program staff very helpful and ready to answer your questions and concerns. Although the office does not have computer facilities for students' use, it houses a small library which you will likely wish to consult as you begin work on your Independent Study Project. (It also has a set of past years' student projects.)

IX. Housing Arrangements

The housing stay, with Indian host families, is integral to the ACM program. Families are important units within Indian society, and living with a host family provides an important window into India that would otherwise be missing from a student's experience abroad. For many students, it is the aspect of the ACM program that they most miss when they return home. At the same time, however, like the more academic aspects of the program, it demands a level of commitment and work (not to mention sensitivity) to make the arrangement work. The host families feel responsible for the students placed in their homes (in their "care," as many of them see it) and in return expect that students will treat them with the respect and courtesy they expect of their own sons and daughters.

No matter how much you prepare for the difference between college study on your home campus and student life in India, there will be surprises and adjustments to make. The success of your stay with an Indian family will depend upon your ability to observe and adapt to a lifestyle very different from what you are accustomed to. Past participants have emphasized that this is crucial. **Being honest with your Indian family builds trust and helps to avoid tension later.** The differences you encounter will include food, household routine, amount of privacy and personal space, and protocol. You may also hear political attitudes you've never heard at home. Sensitive areas may be some of your family members' views of feminism, poverty, and Dalit (formerly labeled 'untouchables') issues. You may need to remind yourself that you are a guest in India, and that it is **your** responsibility to make adjustments to a different way of life.

In your Indian home you should keep in mind the courtesy expected of a guest. **No matter what country you're in, it's polite to let your hosts know when you're going out and when you'll be back. Try to establish a schedule which does not disrupt your host family's routine.** Find out when you're expected to be present for meals and other family events, and find out what your household responsibilities are. In some ways, staying with an Indian family is like being back in your parents' home again. **You may have to remind yourself that you are in India to learn from your Indian family and friends, not to make them adapt to your expectations and preferences.** Being constantly alert to what is going on around you is tiring at first, especially where using a foreign language means that just speaking requires effort.

In all this, we remind you that your homestay is an important source of *experiential learning*. The experience may make you recognize preconceived notions about contemporary India. It may sensitize you to cultural differences more subtle than you had anticipated. It will most certainly challenge you to see life from someone else's point of view and to stretch your own culturally-shaped perceptions. It will not necessarily be a simple task, but you will be richly rewarded if you are open to exploring the possibilities for learning that surround you in India.

If you are encountering difficulties with your host family, please speak with the Program Director, Dr. Sucheta Paranjpe, or the Program Administrator, Ms. Seema Gunjal, about your concerns or problems. They may be able to offer provide insight into your concerns and offer suggestions for resolving matters.

"I really fell in love with my host family. I have become a part of the family - not just here in India, but also when I leave."

X. Getting Around Pune and Beyond

You have several transportation options in Pune. You can walk, take the bus, or take a rickshaw. At first glance Pune traffic can be quite frightening: Not only do people drive on the left side of the road, but also the sheer volume and variety of traffic getting from one place to another is challenging, exciting, and potentially dangerous. Past students have described traffic as “insane,” but they also have found that there is a pattern to it. Their best advice: look left, right, up and down before crossing the street.

Rickshaw

Rickshaws are virtually everywhere in Pune. They look like covered scooters and take three people. This is the most popular way for students to get around. Before taking a rickshaw in Pune, you should be sure to talk to the India Studies staff; during the orientation they will teach you ways to be safe when using the rickshaws.

Your fare is determined by a meter, and you should make sure that the driver turns the meter over. The driver will hand you a fare card which converts the fare shown on the meter into the current rates, and this will allow you to know how much the ride will cost.

Travel Break

Before you travel outside of Pune, be sure to consult with the program staff about your plans. It is always best to travel in small groups of three or four. When traveling, be sure to carry your police registration, passport, and a copy of your passport (kept separately from the real thing). Keeping up-to-date on the current political situation and any U.S. State Department or Indian travel advisories is essential. You should let your host family when you will be away, where you will be, and when you plan to return. Please share this information with the ACM Pune staff as well. You should plan your travel in such a way that you do not miss classes or come unprepared to class following a trip.

Please note that the states of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as the India-Pakistan border areas, are **off-limits** to foreigners, as stated in your visa. In addition, ACM program students are prohibited from renting or driving cars while the program is in session; failure to observe this rule can result in expulsion from the program.

Bus

For short trips, the Maharashtra State Transport operates buses to every corner of the state. Three ST stands are located in Pune:

- **Swargate** to Khadakvasla, Sinhgad Fort, Mahabaleshwar, Wai, Kolhapur.
 - **Pune Station** to Alandi, Ahmednagar, Aurangabad (Ajanta and Ellora Cave), Mahabaleshwar. Asiad buses leave every 15 minutes for Mumbai from the Pune bus station.
 - **Shivajinagar** to Karla Caves, Lonavla.
- Luxury buses also leave daily for Mumbai.

It is important to take a chain and lock when traveling by train; they can be purchased in the station for about Rs.35-50.

Train

The Lonavla local takes you to Khadki, Dapodi, Chinchwad, Kamshet, Malavali, Lonavla, and other stops. Catch it either at Pune station or at Shivajinagar station. There are several fast trains to Mumbai and Holiday special trains in the afternoon each Saturday and Sunday. Reservations for trains to and from Mumbai are available one month in advance except for the Deccan Queen which are available ten days in advance. Make your plans early and go in the morning to either Pune station, the railway office on Karve Road, or a travel agent.

For longer trips by train, it's a good idea to buy your tickets well in advance. If your train goes overnight, request a berth. You'll get either a plain or padded berth with no bedding. You can avoid the hassles of making your own arrangements by using a travel agent. Some people, however, feel this just means a different kind of hassle. Try Tradewings on M.G. Road, Pegasus Travel on F.C. Road or Prasanna Travel, also on F.C. Road.

Air

Domestic air travel is a rapidly changing industry in India. While Indian Air used to be the only government-run domestic airline, various private domestic airlines like Jet Airways and Sahara are now in service. You can go to www.jetairways.com to get a sense of prices. Ask the program staff about the costs of flights before you leave, so you can budget accordingly. If flights are booked well in advance, a lower student-rate may apply.

Your Return Date and Getting to the Airport

The earliest date you can return home from Pune is December 5, 2009. Please let ACM staff know your departure flight, as it is often possible to arrange a bus or taxi service to take students to the airport in Mumbai together. ACM Pune staff will also let you know of the various steps and formalities you will need to follow in order to leave the country.

If you stay in India after the end of the program, you are in India independently and are no longer affiliated with the India Studies Program. Of course, you will probably keep in touch with the people you have met in Pune, but be careful not to impose. ACM is not responsible for you if you run out of money, become ill, have problems with the government or police, or problems with your travel arrangements.

Extra-curricular Activities

Many students take advantage of opportunities to get involved in extracurricular activities. Music, yoga, art, and dance instruction are especially popular, and can provide a welcome change from class work. Other activities might include volunteer work with one of the many NGOs in and around Pune. The ACM Pune staff will have suggestions for you.



Rickshaw. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Weigler.

XI. ACM Program Rules and Policies

The Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM), is a consortium of 14 small liberal arts colleges in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and Colorado. ACM's programs reflect the academic standards and policies of its member colleges, and the standards and rules in the paragraphs which follow are applicable for all of ACM's off-campus study programs.

Tuition, Program Fees and Refunds

As outlined in the separate sheet on Program Payment Policies included in your acceptance materials, each ACM college has its own arrangement for setting program prices, and you should consult with the Off-Campus Study Office on your campus to confirm what those arrangements are. For all ACM participants in the program, the general policy is that ACM bills your home college for all of the program costs except the \$400 deposit and your college in turn bills you (and your parents). Non-ACM participants should speak with the study abroad offices on their home campuses about billing arrangements and discuss with the ACM Program Associate how this will be handled. Whether you are an ACM or a non-ACM student, it is also important that, if appropriate, you inform your Financial Aid office that you will be participating in this program and confirm that your financial aid will apply to program costs; you may also wish to ask if your financial aid package will change to reflect program costs, including the price of the plane ticket. (Program-specific costs are outlined in the Cost Information Sheet for India, which was included in the acceptance mailing.) In addition, we also recommend that you verify that any scholarships you are currently receiving will, as with financial aid, continue while you are participating in the program. It is also useful to be clear about how and when any financial aid and scholarship moneys will be released to you; we recommend that you make arrangements to have them paid into an American bank account or sent to your parents or legal guardians to handle on your behalf. In any case, you should NOT have them sent on to you while abroad.

Once you are admitted into the program, you will need to reserve a spot on the program by returning to ACM the Reply Form (the pink sheet in your acceptance package), along with a \$400 non-refundable deposit. This \$400 deposit allows ACM to set aside a spot for you on the program, and **it must be received within 15 days of your acceptance.**

If you withdraw from the program at any time before the program begins, you will lose the \$400 deposit and will be charged for any unrecoverable expenses already incurred on your behalf. If you leave a program once it has begun or are sent home for cause (please see the Study Abroad Contract), the program fee cannot be refunded. Tuition refunds will be calculated based on your home school's policies. And finally, please be aware that you are liable for any expenses for medical care as well as damage to hostel, hotel, or other housing during your time on the program and that ACM will bill you for such costs. Your grades and credits from the program cannot be sent on to your college's registrar until all outstanding bills are paid.

ACM Off-Campus Grading Policies

Students from non-ACM institutions should consult the home campus registrar's office for grading policies in effect on his or her own campus.

Beloit

All courses (including internships) must be taken for letter grades. Grades will be recorded on the transcript for all programs, but only domestic programs will be calculated in GPA.

Carleton

Letter grades will be included on transcript but not calculated in GPA. No more than one course per semester may be graded on a S/CR/NC basis.

Coe

Internships are S/U only. Other courses must be taken for letter grades unless a student chooses the S/U option before mid-term of the program in accordance with the S/U grading policies stated in the Coe College catalog. The letter grade is reported and the Coe College Registrar converts the letter grade to a S/U. In order to convert to an S, the grade must be a "C" or higher.

Colorado

No restrictions on grading options except that all grades recorded on the Pass track must be verified by the letter grade. Letter "G-track" grades will be calculated into the overall GPA. Grades of any "D" or "NC" will not transfer for credit.

Cornell

Letter grades will be annotated on transcripts but not calculated in GPA. Only grades of "C" or higher will be accepted. Short term courses taught by Cornell faculty are exceptions to both of the preceding statements; these courses are graded in accordance with Cornell's standard grading policy.

Grinnell

Only off-campus courses for which students earn a grade of "C" or above will transfer to Grinnell as earned credits. Grades below "C" will be posted to the transcript with the grade received and zero earned credits. No courses may be taken on a pass/fail basis, regardless of individual program policy. Grinnell students may not take "incompletes" on off-campus study regardless of the policy in effect on their program. Courses in which incompletes are taken will not be recorded on the Grinnell Transcript even if completed at a later date.

Knox

Credit is granted for only those courses receiving letter grades. Grades received for courses taken off-campus are not factored into GPA.

Lake Forest

Students may choose to receive a grade of CR (credit for C- or better), D (no plus or minus), or F (Fail) in any course they take. Students choosing this option, or changing back to regular letter grades, must give written notification to the Registrar before the end of the first two weeks of the semester. Prior approval of the student's advisor is required. Internships will be graded Credit/D/F.

Lawrence

Courses taken on a non-letter grade basis will not be credited toward a major unless the Subcommittee on Administration and the major department give special permission and may not exceed the usual limit of S/U options (1 per term for students who have earned 54 or more units; maximum of 4 on record at any one time).

Luther

All courses must be taken for letter grades. Only grades of a "C-" or above or will transfer for credit; grades will not be calculated into overall Luther GPA.

Macalester

All courses taken on approved study away programs are counted towards the student's Macalester grade point average, unless taken on the S/D/NC grading option. Students may take one course per semester on the S/D/NC

grading option.

Monmouth

All courses must be taken for letter grades.

Ripon

All courses must be taken for letter grades. Students wishing to utilize the S/U option must make those arrangements with the College Registrar prior to the program, or during the first half of the program.

St. Olaf

Grades from St. Olaf-sponsored off-campus programs are recorded on the student's official transcript, but do not count in the St. Olaf grade point average or toward the 24-graded-course requirement. See catalog for additional information.

ACM Policy on Sexual Harassment

Policy

It has been and remains the policy of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM) that sexual harassment of students and employees is prohibited. Violation of this policy may result in discipline or dismissal of students or discipline and discharge of employees. However, allegations of sexual harassment are serious and may be extremely prejudicial to the alleged offender. Accordingly, allegations not made in good faith may subject the complainant to disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment Defined

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature when (1) submitting or refusing to submit to such conduct is used as a basis for any decision affecting an individual's academic status or employment, or (2) such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Grievance Procedure

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment has recourse to informal and formal grievance procedures designed for the purpose of investigation and resolution of such allegations. Informal grievance resolution is encouraged although not required prior to initiating the formal grievance procedure.

As a preliminary matter, any student who believes that she or he has been sexually harassed should report the incident promptly to any of the following:

Director of the program in which the student is enrolled or other appropriate local staff or faculty member
Director of International Study Programs at ACM Chicago office, Carol Dickerman
Director of Chicago Programs, Sally Noble
Vice-President of ACM, John Ottenhoff

Assistance in presenting a grievance may be obtained from another employee or student. However, attorneys or other third persons may not participate in any facet of the grievance procedure unless ACM and all interested parties otherwise agree.

Informal Procedure

An informal procedure is designed to resolve sexual harassment allegations without having to invoke the formal grievance procedure. This can be initiated through contact with any of the staff named above. The goal is to resolve the problem

through discussion with the student, the alleged offender, and any other relevant persons. The student and/or staff member grievance officer may elect to terminate the informal procedure if it appears that no progress is being made in resolving the dispute and initiate a formal procedure.

Formal Procedure

1. Students who wish to lodge a formal complaint must sign and submit it in writing to any staff members named above within 120 days of the alleged harassment.
2. Thereafter, the President of ACM (or if the President is the alleged offender, the Chair of the Board of Directors) shall assign a grievance officer to investigate the complaint and report his/her findings to a grievance board comprised of the President, the investigating grievance officer, and one other grievance officer selected by the President. No employee accused of harassment may serve on the grievance board.
3. The investigation shall include interviews with the complainant, the alleged offender, who shall be informed of the allegations against him/her, and other relevant persons. The grievance board may supplement the investigating officer's investigation by itself conducting interviews and reviewing relevant evidence.
4. Within 21 days after the investigation concludes, the grievance board shall decide by majority vote whether the complaint allegations are supported by substantial credible evidence. It shall then inform the complainant and alleged offender of its decision.
5. Any disciplinary or other corrective action resulting from a violation of this policy shall be determined in accordance with ACM disciplinary procedures.

Third Party Harassment

Any student who has been sexually harassed by a third party (i.e., vendor, guest speaker, internship setting) should report the incident promptly to any grievance officer who will then investigate and attempt to resolve the problem.

Confidentiality

All complaints and investigations of sexual harassment shall be handled in a confidential manner and shall be disclosed only to persons having a legitimate need to know. Grievances and documents will be maintained separately from other student files.

Non-Retaliation

Complaints made in good faith under this policy shall not result in any adverse action against the complainant, nor shall any person who participates in good faith in an investigation be treated adversely because of such participation.

Nothing in this policy precludes an individual from pursuing any legal remedies available to him/her.

ACM Policy on Personal Abuse

Personal abuse, whether oral, written, or physical, exceeds the bounds of appropriate discourse and civil conduct. Harassment of another because of his/her race, sexual orientation, ethnic background, religion, expression of opinion, or other personal characteristics is prohibited. ACM students who engage in such behavior may be disciplined and/or dismissed from a program.

ACM Policy on Dual Relationships

A dual relationship is one in which the faculty/staff member has both a professional and a romantic or sexual relationship with a student. This includes relationships which appear to be mutually consensual. However, the inherent inequality of power between student and faculty/staff creates an unacceptable conflict of interest in a supervisory, educational or advisory context. For this reason, dual relationships between faculty/staff and students who participate in the same program should be avoided. If a relationship nonetheless develops, the faculty/staff

member is expected to remove him/herself from supervisory or advisory responsibility for that student, or face disciplinary action.

ACM Policy on Discrimination

The Associated Colleges of the Midwest does not discriminate in the operation of its educational programs, activities, or employment on the basis of sex, race, creed, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability.



Ganesh Festival. Photo courtesy of Tyler Quinn.