Safety Handbook for UCEAP Egypt Students

This document will be shared with your parents and is posted online.

The UCEAP program in Egypt will give you a top educational experience that cannot be matched. UCEAP and AUC will do their best to provide you with information about health and safety issues and act as resources for students. UCEAP and AUC expect students to practice safe behavior while enjoying Egypt. As a UCEAP student, your primary responsibility is to prepare yourself before your travel, and to research and be aware of the risks involved in your planned trips. Be aware of your surroundings, make responsible decisions, and ask for help when necessary.

Living and studying in another country may require you to change lifestyle preferences and habits in respect of local cultural expectations and to minimize security risks.

Choices in dress, living arrangements, transportation, entertainment, and companionship may have a direct impact on how the local community views and treats you. Living and traveling in an unfamiliar environment and having a limited understanding of local language and culture are some of the factors that can put you at risk anywhere in the world.

In addition to this document, all UCEAP Egypt students are required to read the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad and the Egypt Program Guide. Both guides contain valuable information about the program, health and safety, student insurance, and UCEAP policies. Both guides are available online through the UCEAP website, ‘Participants’ portal.


Egypt Program Guide: http://eap.ucop.edu/guides/egypt/1314/Pages/egypt.aspx

Emergency Contact Information

⇒ Carry local contact information with you at all times
⇒ Store information in your cell phone
⇒ Keep a hard copy in your wallet

How to call Cairo from the U.S. (approximate time difference: add 9-10 hours to Pacific Time)
Dial:
The international access code: 011, country code: 20, city code: 2 and the local telephone number
How to call the U.S. from Cairo:
   Dial:
   The international access code: 00, country code: 1, the U.S. city code, and the local telephone number

UCEAP Egypt Study Center Director in Cairo
UCSB Professor Nancy Gallagher
c/o AUC Faculty Apartment, in Zamalek
12A Marashli, Apt 24, Floor 12

Calling Professor Gallagher from the U.S.
Apartment landline: (011-20-2) 2-735-6511
Cell phone: (011-20-1) 01-935-0830

Calling Professor Gallagher’s within Cairo
Apartment landline: 02-2735-6511
Cell phone: 010-1935-0830

Email address: ngallagher@aucegypt.edu OR gallagher@history.ucsb.edu

Program Assistant in Cairo email address: Nancy Shawky: nancy_g@aucegypt.edu

UCEAP in California
1+ 805-893-4762 (24/7 emergency line)

UCEAP Program-specific contacts
Regional Director, Melody Knutson
mknutson@eap.ucop.edu
Tel. 1 + 805-893-4756

Program Specialist, Michelle Bobro
mbobro@eap.ucop.edu
Tel. 1 + 805-893-3246
AUC Emergency Contacts

The AUC International Student Affairs Office (ISA) is trained to deal with any student or family related emergency. ISA has a 24/7 emergency hotline number. The number is 010.006.6907.

Upon arrival, new international students receive these emergency numbers and other important telephone numbers on the Emergency Card. If you do not find the emergency service needed listed on the card, call the hotline.

General Mokhtar Shalaby
Senior Director
Security Department
AUC
mob: 0127 000 1561
office: 2615 2213   NC
office: 2797 5790   DT
office: 2797 5170   DT
Email: m_shalaby@aucegypt.edu

Mrs. Amal Saleh, Director of International Student Affairs
24/7 emergency telephone line for international students
Calling within Cairo: 0-10-0066907
Email: amsalah@aucegypt.edu


To register for AUC Emergency Communication system, visit http://myinfo.aucegypt.edu/
Communication Requirements While in Egypt

Provide UCEAP, and your families in the U.S., with updated local contact details immediately upon arrival. University of California must have a reliable way of contacting you while on UCEAP.

UCEAP regulations require you to be responsive to all UCEAP-related communication. You will be required to respond to the Study Center Director’s and/or UCEAP Systemwide Office welfare check-in messages.

Cell phone

Purchase a cellular phone either in Egypt within the first week of arrival or in the U.S. before departure (make sure it will work in Egypt). You can easily purchase a cell phone on campus or in Zamalek. It is also very easy to get a SIM card in Egypt. Vodafone and Mobinil offer deals on basic phones that most of our students purchase for about LE 150 ($25). There is a Vodafone stand on campus and several Vodafone and Mobinil outlets in Zamalek.

Keep cell phones charged, turned on and with you at all times to allow UCEAP officials and/or family to reach you in the event of an emergency. UCEAP and AUC officials will use students’ cell phone numbers to broadcast text messages with instructions during emergencies. Should an emergency arise, UCEAP officials will need to contact you to provide appropriate instruction.

Access to Internet

Get access to the internet immediately. Check your AUC and UCEAP email accounts. AUC and UCEAP distribute security alerts and other important announcements by email in addition to SMS messages.

AUC has Wi-Fi in the dormitories and on campus. AUC buses also have Wi-Fi. If you do not have internet access, you can purchase a USB Internet flash drive at Vodafone or Mobinil.

Updating local contact information

Log on to your MyEAP account to enter your local contact information (see below).

1. Logon to your MyEAP account, choose ‘contact information’ and complete the section ‘Address Abroad While Participating in EAP’ (See below). Also, contact Professor Nancy Gallagher and give her your cell phone and landline numbers.

2. Have a communication plan in place with your family in the U.S. If the phone lines and cell phones are clogged, many times text messages can still get through and Internet connections may work. If you anticipate that the media will cover a local situation, communicate with your family in the U.S. to minimize anxiety.
Introduction

Everything about living in Egypt is fluid currently. Although many Egyptians are not especially worried overall, some keep cans of food stocked and extra cash at home in case banks close again or protests/strike stop supplies or deliveries.

Required Post-Arrival Orientations

You will receive more country-specific safety information upon arrival.

AUC

You are required to attend the AUC orientation, which the Office of International Student Affairs (ISA) holds at the beginning of each semester.

During orientation, AUC officials discuss everything from dress code to avoiding street harassment and to dealing with it if it happens.

AUC officials also distribute an emergency card to carry in your wallets at all times to make sure you have access to AUC key emergency phone numbers.

The orientation will give you a sense of the political and social conditions in Egypt. AUC’s Cairo trips/tours orient students to the streets and neighborhoods of interest in Cairo.

UCEAP

All students are required to attend the official UCEAP on-site orientation with Study Center Director Professor Nancy Gallagher.

Housing

UCEAP students are required to stay in AUC dorms in Zamalek or New Cairo.
SAFETY AND SECURITY
AUC’s emergency management team, chaired by the Vice President for Planning and Administration, oversees and directs AUC emergency operations in the event of a natural disaster or time of heightened security or international event that requires the speedy flow of communication to international student body. All students and parents are encouraged to access the AUC Emergency News web page (http://www.aucegypt.edu/newsatauc/Pages/EmergencyNews.aspx) to be informed of the latest news about how AUC is managing the emergency.

UCEAP strongly encourages you, and expects you, to report safety concerns or incidents to the UC Study Center Director.

We rely on you to exercise personal responsibility and demonstrate both an awareness of the world around you and a willingness to adjust your behavior to enhance your personal safety and well-being. The best way to deal with threats to your personal security is to avoid them in the first place.

AUC’s trained security team works in close cooperation with the Egyptian government to safeguard the campus and residences. All entrances are monitored and secured. Access is controlled via ID checks, metal detectors and bag searches.

Student Responsibilities
The University of California Education Abroad Program has established policies and procedures to help you minimize your risk exposure and help you enhance your personal safety. However, your own conduct is the central factor in promoting your individual safety and well-being. In addition to reading all AUC and UCEAP program-related information and following policies and procedures, you are responsible for the following:

1. Staying safe and secure during UCEAP is a partnership with UCEAP and it requires you to take personal responsibility for observing culturally appropriate behavior, exercising sound judgment and abiding by UCEAP policies and procedures.
2. Understand that you are responsible 24/7 for exercising good judgment to protect your health, safety and well-being. Essential behaviors include being aware of your surroundings, understanding how your conduct and actions may be perceived, and being sensitive to the impact that your behavior could have on your personal safety.
3. You must have internet access and a working cell phone.
4. You are required to have a cell phone and report the number, landline number, and email address to the UCEAP Study Center Director and AUC. Failure to acquire a cell phone and report the number to the Study Center Director will result in disciplinary action.
5. AUC and UCEAP require you to regularly check your email accounts. AUC and UCEAP circulate security alerts and other important announcements by email in addition to SMS messages.
6. Upon arrival get access to the internet. AUC has Wi-Fi in the dormitories and on campus. AUC buses also have Wi-Fi. If you do not have internet access, you can purchase a USB Internet flash drive at Vodafone or Mobinil.

Risk Management Strategies for Students
There are some strategies you can practice anywhere in the world to minimize your risks. Personal safety starts with awareness.
• Be alert to potential dangers and risks to your wellbeing and aware of what is going on in your immediate environment. The choices you make about behavior, attire, travel, personal property, relationships, etc., can directly influence your exposure to risk.

• Follow your instincts. If a situation is uncomfortable, remove yourself from the situation.

• Carry official ID and a charged cell phone with you at all times.

• Follow safety advice carefully. In spite of all your efforts to reduce your exposure to risks, you could become the survivor of a crime or critical event. Report any incident to Professor Gallagher.

• Carry a list of emergency contacts with you at all times.

• Respond promptly to all AUC, and UCEAP in Cairo and in California, official communication.

**Political Situation**

Political uncertainty will remain the norm. Sporadic unrest will continue. Despite the volatility and uncertainty, Egypt continues to make steps towards liberalization.

AUC’s location on the outskirts of Cairo offers a degree of protection from violence in the unlikely event of a political upheaval.

**Advice**

- Exercise caution during your travels around Cairo, specifically near Tahrir Square.
- Maintain a low profile.
- Avoid large gatherings.
- Do not participate in demonstrations.
- Pay close attention to your personal security at all times.

**Demonstrations**

There are frequent demonstrations centering on Tahrir Square, usually on Fridays. Demonstrations may turn violent very quickly and students should stay away from them. Follow the news on the television and radio closely and stay away from large gatherings of people (especially Tahrir Square and the Israeli Embassy, Giza).

Sectarian violence has increased and students should check with AUC authorities before attending religious gatherings.

**Advice**

- Stay away from all demonstrations and limit exposure to protest venues. These include prominent intersections, government buildings, police stations, and religious sites.
- If violence erupts or is imminent, leave the area. If this is not feasible or safe, seek shelter in large buildings such as hotels, churches, museums, or shops. Wait until the crowds have dissipated before going back outside. Contact the Study Center Director or AUC authorities by cell phone, explain your whereabouts, and ask for instructions on what to do.
- Follow all advice or instructions from the local security authorities, AUC Security, and the UCEAP Study Center Director.
- Stay in contact with the UCEAP Study Center Director.
Respond to welfare check-in messages on a timely manner. Failure to do so can lead to UCEAP disciplinary action.

**Terrorism**

The overall terrorism threat in Egypt is moderate. The threat of attacks in the Sinai Peninsula, however, is high. Security is tight throughout the country, especially in resort areas. A heavy security presence is apparent throughout the country. U.S. citizens do not appear to have been targeted in any attacks in the Sinai or elsewhere. As some of these attacks have occurred during local holiday weekends, Egyptian security forces step up their presence at these times. Take extra caution at these and all times and respect any advice or instruction from the local security authorities. Remain alert to your surroundings at all times.

**Crime**

In many areas, the crime rate is low but is increasing due to a lack of full police deployment on the streets. While incidents of violence are rare, purse-snatching, pick-pocketing and petty theft occur.

**Advice**

- Do not leave valuables such as cash, jewelry, and electronic items unsecured in your room or unattended in public places.
- Remain aware of your surroundings and be cautious going anywhere with a stranger alone.
- Do not walk around with earphones or texting, even while in a taxi cabs. There are hazards associated with walking while texting, talking on cell phones, or listening to mobile devices. Thieves target people walking with headphones on, both during the day and at night.
- Alcohol and drugs can lead to being less alert, less in control and less aware of the environment. If you are going to drink, know your limit. Remember that drinks served in bars overseas are often stronger than those in the U.S.
- Pay close attention to your personal security at all times.

**Travel within Egypt and the Region**

Tourist areas throughout Egypt are potential targets for terrorists and other extremists. Avoid travel in the region at this time because the security situation remains extremely fluid.

Signout through MyEAP any time you will be away from Cairo. Report your whereabouts to your family and the UCEAP Study Center Director. Keep UCEAP officials and family informed of any changes to your travel plans and any delays.

Follow the UCEAP Student Travel Policy.
(http://www.eap.ucop.edu/Documents/guidebooks/1314/UGSA_policies.pdf)

**Advice**

- Do not travel to the Sinai Peninsula.
- Always check the security situation of the location to which you are traveling.
o Treat all border areas with extreme caution. At this time, travel to Libya, Yemen, Bahrain and Syria is not recommended due to heavy regime crackdowns, violence, and military operations. UCEAP policy does not allow travel to Gaza or the West Bank whether or not borders are open.

o Pay close attention to your personal security at all times.

**LOCAL LAWS AND CUSTOMS**

Local laws reflect the fact that Egypt is predominantly an Islamic country. Respect local traditions, customs, laws and religion at all times. Be aware of your actions to ensure that they do not offend other cultures or religious beliefs.

**Dress**

Egypt is a conservative society; dress modestly. Dress in a manner that is not offensive to local cultural norms. Women's clothes should cover their upper legs and arms. Men should cover their chests. Shorts are generally frowned upon except in resorts. Generally, comfortable, loose fitting clothes are best for men and women. Women should plan on wearing a scarf over their hair when visiting mosques and conservative neighborhoods.

**Advice**

- Use common sense: Pants are preferred to shorts, and long-sleeved shirts (and t-shirts) are preferred to tank tops.
- You will be given some cultural information regarding etiquette, suggested dress code, safety advice, and other information during AUC’s required orientation.

**Drinking**

Drinking in the street and anywhere other than a licensed restaurant or bar is not allowed and can lead to arrest.

**Advice**

- If you choose to drink, do so moderately.
- Pay close attention to your personal security at all times.

**Sexual Harassment**

Unescorted women are vulnerable to sexual harassment and verbal abuse. This is usually only an annoyance; actual sexual assaults are extremely rare. Some Egyptian men routinely follow western women. The Egyptian Center for Women’s Rights in 2008 showed that 83 percent of all women surveyed had experienced some form of sexual harassment, including stalking by telephone, being followed in the streets and even groping.

**Advice**

- Do not participate in demonstrations as the chance of being sexually assaulted is high.
- If you are followed enter a hotel or store until the harasser leaves.
If you are touched or threatened by harassers, yell and seek help immediately. Verbal harassment is generally best ignored, but if a harasser will not leave, screaming and creating a scene will generally frighten him away.

Strangers who approach you and try to make conversation are best ignored; politely trying to extricate yourself from the situation usually only encourages more harassment.

Group travel is the best way to avoid uncomfortable confrontations.

Avoid direct eye contact with Egyptian men.

Sit next to a woman or alone on public transport.

Be conservative in dress and behavior.

**FIRE SAFETY**

All public areas and rooms at AUC’s New Cairo are fitted with smoke detectors and alarms. Fire hoses and extinguishers are well placed and easily accessible. Fire exits are well marked and clean. Fire evacuation drills take place. All buildings are equipped with automatic sprinkler systems.

All public areas and rooms at the AUC Zamalek dorms are fitted with smoke detectors and alarms. Fire extinguishers and hoses are well placed and easily accessible. Fire exits are well marked. The building is equipped with emergency sprinkler systems. Fire evacuation drills are not practiced.

- **Advice**

Buy and install a smoke detector.

Read about fire safety and prevention in the [UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad](http://www.eap.ucop.edu/Documents/guidebooks/1314/UGSA_safety.pdf).

**UCEAP General Contingency Plans**

UCEAP makes reasonable efforts to provide a safe environment abroad and to counsel students on potential risks and necessary precautions. You and your family also play a role in minimizing potential dangers, and UCEAP expects you to participate actively in minimizing your risks while abroad.

When a worldwide event occurs, UCEAP follows its own standard protocols. We will activate the UCEAP contingency plan protocols, which will remain fluid and flexible depending on the situation. Emergencies can result from natural hazards such as earthquakes, epidemics, fires, droughts, and floods or from any number of man-made threats – food or water shortages, environmental and technological disasters, acute financial/economic distress, civil unrest, and armed conflict. Contingency planning helps UCEAP ensure that response is coordinated, expeditious and efficient.

UCEAP contingency planning follows a multi-level response. The foundations of this emergency response are the local Cairo Study Center plan, the AUC emergency response, and your cooperation during an emergency.
Your situational awareness will allow you to recognize, or anticipate a potential threat at an early stage and take measures to avoid it. It is important to know how to react/behave during a security incident and that UCEAP has contingency plans in place, which include an evacuation should the security situation in Egypt and surrounding area deteriorate. Decisions made during a crisis will vary depending on the nature of the event. See more information below.

**Safe Evacuation Plan**

Depending on the situation in Cairo and/or the region, UCEAP will restrict student movement (shelter in place) on a temporary basis and students will be required to report welfare to the Study Center Director on a pre-determined basis. Depending on the threat to the program, students may be relocated to a pre-agreed safe haven. At any time, as a precaution, if the situation becomes serious, all students will be relocated or safely evacuated to minimize exposure.

**UCEAP reserves the right to terminate and/or suspend the Program at any time it deems the safety or welfare of students is at risk.**

Key for a secure stay is your responsibility in your wellbeing. You are required to respond to the Study Center Director’s welfare check-in messages, instructions, calls, and messages.

There are times in which it is obvious that the University of California must consider getting students and faculty out of a country (e.g., serious terrorist threat, insurrection, civil disorder, natural event, or other serious hazard to your safety). Occasionally, there are other signs of hazard, such a gradual, almost imperceptible decline in services, shortages in goods or services, restriction of flights, decreased internal security, etc. UCEAP monitors local conditions around the clock and continuously reassesses signs of deterioration.

The University of California security provider (iJET Intelligent Risk Systems) and UCEAP officials will make a determination after considering the fundamental factors in conducting a safe and efficient evacuation of students and faculty from a destabilized environment abroad. Factors include UCEAP’s contingency plan, continuous and comprehensive analysis of potential security threats, and timely decision-making concerning the situation and possible evacuation. If UCEAP orders an evacuation anywhere in the world, depending on the local situation, students will be assembled at a secure location and then moved to the embarkation point on a schedule calculated to minimize any security exposure. UCEAP insurance will cover an ordered evacuation. If you refuse, fail to cooperate (including following directions) or otherwise decline to participate in a required security evacuation, or any part of a security evacuation, no further benefits will be payable under the UCEAP student insurance, ‘Security Evacuation Expense Benefit’. This means that if you stay behind, and change your mind later, the expense to evacuate you will be your responsibility.

**In the Unlikely Event of an Evacuation**

Evacuation events, by their nature, are extremely chaotic, confusing, and highly stressful. When there is sufficient warning of civil disorder or threats to security, the evacuation will be staged, hopefully via commercial aircraft (to be determined for each location). When there is no warning of civil disorder and immediate evacuation becomes necessary, all students will be evacuated by the safest and most expeditious method available.
Once the decision is made, in consultation with the Study Center Director and the University of California Office of Risk Services and its security and insurance providers, it is UCEAP’s responsibility to communicate this decision to the Study Center Director, parents, and the students. Given the hectic, confusing, and oftentimes quick pace of events around an evacuation, it is very difficult to establish continuous communications with all students. Students, Study Center Director, and UCEAP Systemwide officials have a shared responsibility for distributing time sensitive messages regarding an emergency evacuation.

PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS

Why prepare?
Wherever you live, an emergency or crisis can strike without warning. Planning and preparation can greatly reduce the impact an emergency can have. Throughout the world, people have plans and prepare for natural disasters and other emergencies.

What you can do
- Become actively involved in preparedness (planning and mitigation).
- Provide emergency contact information to those who will need it.
- Take personal responsibility for your own safety and wellbeing.
- Prepare now for a sudden emergency.
- Have a plan - know what to do before, during, and after an emergency.
- Avoid passing on unsubstantiated information and rumors.

Basic personal protective measures
Steps you can take to help prepare for any emergency.
- Be sure that the UCEAP Study Center Director has your correct local address, residence phone number, cell phone number, and emergency notification information. If you expect to stay somewhere other than your residence in an emergency, be sure the Director knows how to reach you. Update your local contact information on MyEAP for use by UCEAP officials.
- Develop a personal emergency plan with your family/roommate.
- Make sure you have adequate supplies (granola bars, pre-cooked cans, water).
- Have sufficient cash in hand.
- Check the batteries in your portable radios, smoke detectors, cell phones and flashlights and keep extra batteries on hand, or purchase a crank-type, self-powered radio and flashlights.

If Demonstrations Occur
Should a riot or other civil disturbance develop in the community, or on or near the AUC campus, or the residences, AUC’s and UCEAP’s officials will make every effort to minimize its impact. They will collect factual information regarding the severity of the problem, continue to monitor the situation as events unfold, and inform UCEAP constituents as soon as factual information is available.

Steps that you must follow:
Avoid all areas of disturbance.
Avoid provoking or obstructing the demonstrators.
If caught in a demonstration, if it is safe to do so, leave the vicinity of where the disturbance is occurring. Seek a safe shelter. Do not participate in any demonstrations; do not stand around demonstrations to be an observer as you can be arrested.
If you are instructed to evacuate your location, and it is safe to do so, secure your belongings and keep your cell phone charged and powered on, as notification will be sent through text messages.
Stand by for periodic updates.
If AUC and/or UCEAP officials direct you to shelter-in-place, comply quickly and calmly with instructions. Remain indoors. Although rarely called for, shelter-in-place events can occur. When they do happen, they are temporary. The goal is to protect you. Understand a shelter-in-place order is not given lightly. Your responsible cooperation will make the incident go as smoothly as possible.
Keep your cell phones charged and powered-on. Keep listening to the radio or the television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate. UCEAP officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk and you are expected to comply quickly and calmly.

As a UCEAP student, you can, and are expected to adapt a safe lifestyle. You are responsible for...

- attending the required AUC and UCEAP onsite orientations
- following UCEAP and AUC officials’ instructions
- responding to welfare/safety check-in messages
- being a responsible and informed traveler and UCEAP participant
- observing UCEAP, AUC and local country laws and policies
- knowing the risks of your travel destinations and how to prevent problems
- reading all UCEAP and AUC materials
- being familiar with destination health and safety information on travel.state.gov, www.cdc.gov
- providing your local contact information to, and sharing travel itineraries with UCEAP and your family
- signing out every time you leave Cairo and notifying the UCEAP Study Center Director of all independent travels and your travel dates and contact information before you start traveling
- reporting concerns, crimes against you, etc., to AUC and the UCEAP Study Center Director immediately

U.S. Embassy Resources
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/USEmbassyCairo
American Citizens Services - Website: http://egypt.usembassy.gov/consular/travpubl.html

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