This is a sample orientation for the MSID Senegal program. Participating students will attend an in-person orientation or be sent an electronic orientation. In-person orientation dates are posted online once arranged.
Pre-Departure Preparation

• Program Paperwork
• Power of Attorney
• Academic Planning
• Financial Planning
  – Financial Aid preview meeting
  – Review program fees
• Registration
• Cancellation Policy
Passport & Visa Information

• Passport required
  – Passport information at: travel.state.gov
  – Allow 4-6 weeks
  – Must be valid for 6 months after your return date

• Visa required for this program
  – Visa information at: https://umabroad.umn.edu/programs/africa/msid-senegal/applyvisa
  – Begin the visa application process 60 days prior to departure
Billing & Financial Aid

- Students are billed through their UMN student account
- Billing follows UMN dates & deadlines
  - Onestop onestop.umn.edu
- Students must submit a SACE (Study Abroad Cost Estimate) in order to access & modify their financial aid package
- A Financial Aid Preview meeting is strongly encouraged
Flight Information & Arrival

• Coordinated group flights
  – Village Travel
    www.villageinc.com
  – Approval required to book a different flight
  – Book a round-trip ticket
• Email itinerary to Learning Abroad Center
• Book in advance!
• MSID Senegal staff will meet you at the airport
• Arriving early/staying late
Cultural Preparation

What is culture?

“Culture is defined as the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group.” -- CARLA UMN
Cross-Cultural Adjustment

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT CURVE

LEVEL OF COMFORT & SATISFACTION

Everything is new, exciting & different
Surface adjustment
Adaptation & assimilation

Frustration/annoyance with everyday differences
Confronting deeper cultural/personal issues

native culture
foreign culture
native culture

TIME & PLACE

Source: University of Cincinnati
Signs of Culture Shock

- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Being hostile/complaining all the time about the host country
- Irritability, sadness, depression
- Withdrawing from friends, other people and/or activities
- Frequent frustration; being angered easily
- Self doubts; sense of failure
- Acute homesickness; calling home much more often than usual
Coping Strategies

• Realize that what you’re going through is normal – give yourself time & space to adjust
• Keep in touch with family & friends back home
• Get involved in the local community (sports, clubs, activities you enjoy)
• Talk to someone (others in your group, onsite staff, counselor)
• Take care of yourself (eat well, sleep, exercise)
• Have fun & relax!
Dakar, Senegal

- Dakar, capital of Senegal
- Western most point of Africa
- 1 million + inhabitants
- Crossroads of Sub-Saharan African and Muslims cultures with colonial French influences
- Influential commercial cultural and intellectual hub in west Africa
Orientation

• 2-night accommodations are arranged at a Dakar hotel
• 3-5 day orientation
  – Overview of Dakar with city tour
  – Political & historical overview of Senegal
  – Academic, health, & safety orientation
• Meet host families on day 3
• Flexibility is key!
MSID Senegal Office & Classrooms

• Based at the West African Research Center
• Computer lab
• Classroom space and outdoor cafeteria
• Library onsite
• Wireless internet throughout the center
WARC Office
Onsite Staff

• Dr. Ousmane Sène
  – On-site Director since 1995
  – Professor (former Department Chair), Department of English, Cheik Anta Diop University
  – Ph.D. in literature from the École Normale Supérieure de St. Cloud and the Université Paris III-Sorbonne

• Waly Faye
  – Program Coordinator since 2007
  – Masters in Developmental Project Management

• Awa Fall and Marie Guèye
  – Program Assistants
Foster an understanding of the global context through classroom and experiential learning

Cultivate awareness and appreciation for development issues through engagement with diverse communities

Translate insights gained into thoughtful and respectful long-term perspectives on concepts of social justice and sustainable development

Strengthen communication skills through acquisition of local languages and cultural awareness

Gain cross-cultural competencies through extended engagement at a local grassroots organization
Semester Program Overview

- **Orientation**: Up to 1 Week
- **Classes**: 7 Weeks
- **Internship or Research**: 6 Weeks
- **Final Seminar**: 1 Week
Semester Coursework

- International Development: Critical Perspectives on Theory & Practice (4 credits)
  - 25-30 hours in topic-specific tracks for International Development Course
  - 10 hours of research methodology for all students
  - International Development Tracks
    - Arts & Cultural Studies; Education & Literacy; Entrepreneurship & Alternative Economies; Public Health; Social Service; Sustainability & the Environment

- Country Analysis (4 credits)
- Wolof or French language (4 credits)
- Community Engagement in the Global South (4 credits)
- Global Identity: Connecting Your International Experience with Your Future (1 credit)
  - Optional and optional
Academic Year Coursework

- Fall Semester Courses
- Spring Semester
  - Courses (16 credits)
    - Advanced International Development Internship
    - Directed Research
    - Topics: Case Studies in International Development
    - Applied Field Methods
- Detailed dates are online: [https://umabroad.umn.edu/programs/africa/msid-senegal/dates](https://umabroad.umn.edu/programs/africa/msid-senegal/dates)
Optional Language Pre-session

- August or Winter Break
- 3½ weeks
- Homestays
- Select from the following 4-credit courses:
  - SNGL 1004 – Intermediate French II
  - SNGL 3015 – Advanced French I
  - SNGL 3016 – Advanced French II
  - SNGL 3201 – Advanced French through Current Events
Internships & Research

• Placements related to development tracks
• Agencies are grassroots, community-based organizations
• Designed to serve both agency’s and student’s goals
• Students receive visit from MSID faculty member
• 25 hours / week minimum
• Placement process begins with Academic Planning Form
MSID Internship Strategies

- Identify 3-4 areas of interest
- Be flexible
- Be realistic
- Be proactive once placed
- Be patient
- Clarify expectations, as needed
Health-related Internships

• It is unethical to provide direct medical care
• Rule of thumb: "If you can't do it here, you shouldn't do it there."
• Complete the “Global Ambassadors for Patient Safety” (GAPS) module in your confirmation checklist
MSID Research Project

• Research methodology coursework
• Agency placement
• Join an on-going research project
• Supervision and guidance provided by Program Director
• IRB considerations
• International UROP
  – https://umabroad.umn.edu/students/finances/scholarships/urop-scholarship
MSID Housing

- 2 homestays: one in Dakar during classroom phase and a rural homestay during internships as needed
  - Breakfast and dinner provided
- Middle class and upper middle class families
- Gift considerations
- No overnight guests
Living with Your Host Family

- Keep an open mind and have realistic expectations
- Remember that you are guest in their home and be respectful
- Greet your family when you come home and say goodbye when you leave
- Clean up after yourself
- Always let your family know when you will be out late, out of town or not home for dinner
- Respect their space but really make an effort to spend time with them
- Be mindful of electricity and water use
Staying Healthy in Senegal

- Health Information Form
- Visit the Center for Disease Control for vaccination recommendations
- Pack enough prescription medications for the entire semester
  - Insurance letter available from the Learning Abroad Center
- Food and drink precautions
- CISI Insurance
- Health care facilities can be limited in rural areas
- What to do if you get sick
Tropical Diseases

- Visit a travel clinic
- Malaria is a concern in Senegal
- Purchase enough malaria prophylaxis for the entirety of the program
  - Monitor your reaction to the medication
- Dengue can be a concern so bring bug spray with DEET
- Refer to the Program Handbook for more details
Staying Safe in Senegal

• Adopt a more cautious attitude
• Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings
• Leave valuables at home and carry belongings with caution
• Maintain a low profile
• Go out in groups and meet in public places
• Take a cab; don’t walk home alone at night
• Consult with the staff
• Gender & relationships
Travel

- Students travel guidelines
- Hosting family and friends
- Consult with on-site staff for travel recommendations
- Independent Travel Form
- No travel to Travel Warning countries
- Balancing travel with other program responsibilities
Packing

• Pack light!
• Check the Program Handbook for clothing recommendations
  – Culturally appropriate clothing
• Be considerate of local norms
• Pack enough prescription medications for entire the program
• Adapters and converters
• Photocopy important documents
• Carry-on items
  – Medications, passport, & other important documents
Food & Drink

• Drink only bottled water
• Be careful eating street market food, especially meat seafood, and unpeeled fruit
• Caution regarding strict vegetarian or vegan diets
• It’s rude to refuse food given to you by your host family so please be open to trying new things
Money

• National currency is the West African Franc or CFA
  – www.oanda.com (for exchange rates)

• Cost of Participation
  – https://umabroad.umn.edu/programs/africa/msid-senegal/fees

• Cash vs. Credit/Debit Cards

• ATMs
  – Notify your bank that you’ll be abroad and find out the foreign transactions fees

• Have access to quick cash or a credit card for medical emergencies

• Keep money in a safe place
Communication

- Mailing address in Senegal
- Cell phones with local Senegalese phone numbers are required for all students on the program
- Wi-Fi is available at WARC and internet cafes can be found throughout the city
- Remember internet is much slower than in the US
Travel Resources

• LAC travel resources
  – http://www.umabroad.umn.edu/students/travel/

• Lonely Planet
• Reverse culture shock
• Perceived lack of interest by friends and family
• Disconnect with family and friends
• Depression
• Missing host culture
• Judging the U.S.
• Reevaluating values
Upon Your Return

- Share your photos and stories, do a student profile, serve as a past participant on study abroad website
- Learn how to market your experience abroad to employers and graduate schools
- Stay in contact with the people you met while abroad
- Take an internationally focused course on campus or join an international club
- Study abroad again or consider working, interning, volunteering, or teaching English
- Visit the Learning Abroad Center website for more ideas
Bon voyage! Ba beneen!
Learning Abroad Center
612.626.9000
http://umabroad.umn.edu/

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