Date: 9/9/2015

**Travel Writing in Croatia
Orientation Manual**

Developed to create a guide for students taking Travel Writing during Maymester, this information sheet hopefully will answer some of your questions. The information provided was accurate according to the date stamped above. Sources include the U.S. Department of State and the Office of International Education at the University of Georgia.

**Arrival and Departure**

Plan your travel to arrive and depart from Zagreb, Croatia (ZAG) (Zagreb International Airport) located 10 km (6.2 miles) from Zagreb Central Station. Arrival day is no later than Sunday, May 15, 2016. The last day of class is Saturday, June 3. You may depart anytime after 10 a.m. that day. There are no direct, non-stop flights from Atlanta to Zagreb. The most direct, lowest cost, coach fares are on Delta, Book early.

Please provide Program Director, Leara Rhodes ldrhodes@uga.edu, with your air travel itinerary no later than April 5, 2016.

To take the airport bus from the airport, locate the bus parked outside the main arrival terminal. The trip takes about 30 minutes and delivers you to the main bus station. There is a tram connection to the city center from the bus station of take a taxi to the hotel. After 8 pm, the buses leave shortly after arrival of scheduled flights. Price for a one-way ticket on the bus is 35 kuna.

Taxi: During the opening hours of the airport there are taxis waiting outside the arrival terminal. The price for a trip to the city center is around 150-200 Kuna depending on your final destination in Zagreb, remember to agree upon price before taking the trip.

Hotel: Westin Zagreb Hotel, Izidora Kranjavoga 1, Zabreb 10000, Croatia. The telephone number including country code is (385)(1) 489 2000. See the facilities at [www.hotelwestinzagreb.com](http://www.hotelwestinzagreb.com).

**Regulations and Laws**

You are required to abide by the regulations set forth by the program director, University of Georgia, and the laws of Croatia. Misconduct can jeopardize your welfare and the welfare of other participants in the program. Neither the University of Georgia nor the United States government or any of its agencies will be able to protect you should you engage in any illegal activities. If you commit an illegal or criminal act (such as possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs, theft, assault, or battery), you will be subject to Croatian laws, not the laws of the
United States. Remember, you will be under Croatian jurisdiction, not U.S. jurisdiction.

Any student found in possession of illicit drugs will be dismissed immediately from the program with no refund. A pattern of alcohol abuse that results in disruptive behavior is also grounds for dismissal without a refund.

Local laws and customs
Croatia is a well-developed parliamentary democracy and became a member of the European Union (EU) on July 1, 2013. Facilities for tourism are available throughout the country, and the Adriatic coast is a popular tourist destination. We recommend that you carry your passport (or, if a resident your Croatian ID card) at all times. They are the only officially recognized form of identification in Croatia.

Keep a photocopy of the biographical details page in a safe place, including details of your next of kin. If your passport is lost or stolen you should report it to the police and get a police report. You need to do this before applying for an Emergency Travel Document. Drug related offences are punished with fines and jail sentences.

Entry Documents
A valid passport is needed to enter Croatia. When you are travelling to Croatia with a U.S. Passport, a Tourist Visa is Not required for a stay of up to 90 days. Non-US Passport travelers must have a tourist visa. These can be obtained through www.traveldocs.com.

Copy your passport and leave one in the U.S. with family, provide one copy to the program director, and carry a copy with you. The program director will register the group with the U.S. Embassy before leaving the United States. All foreign citizens must register with the local police within 24 hours of arrival and inform them of any change in their address. If you are staying in a hotel or in accommodations rented through an accommodation company, the hotelier or accommodation company will register you automatically. Failure to register is a misdemeanor offense; some U.S. citizens have been fined for failing to register.

Electrical current
Voltage in Zagreb is 220-240 Volts (U.S. are 110-120 volts. Primary socket type is Europlug and Schuko. For electronics you will need plug adapter and a voltage converter. Check electronics for accepted voltage and bring converter and adapter.

Preparing for the class
Course information: JOUR 5990. Introduction to Travel Journalism, 3 credit hours Syllabus at http://grady.uga.edu/croatia. Purchase and bring with you the travel book.
The class will use a variety of publishing platforms: narrative writing for print, photography, video, web site construction, and audio. The platform you adopt will need certain technology. Bring what you need. Also, check to see if loss of damage to the equipment is covered by property insurance.

Bring at least one reporter's notebook.

**Safety information**

Crime levels are low and violent crime is rare. Some tourists have been the victims of overcharging in so-called ‘Gentlemen’s Clubs’, sometimes amounting to thousands of Euros. Victims can be threatened with violence if they refuse to pay.

Take care in busy tourist areas, where pickpockets are known to operate. Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Don’t leave valuables unattended, particularly on the beach. Use a hotel safe if possible.

Report all incidents of crime to the local police station and get a police report.

Although hostilities in all parts of the country ended in 1995, de-mining of areas along former confrontation lines is not complete. We estimate that de-mining operations will continue until at least 2018. Mine-affected areas are well-marked with Croatian-language warning signs using the international symbol for mines—a skull and crossbones inside a red, upside-down triangle. Be cautious in former conflict areas, including Eastern Slavonia, Brodsko-Posavska County, Karlovac County, areas around Zadar, and in more remote areas of the Plitvice Lakes National Park, and stay on known safe roads and areas. Mine-clearance work may lead to the closure of roads in former conflict areas. For more information about mine-affected areas and de-mining operations in Croatia, please visit the [Croatian Mine Action Center's website](http://www.mineaction.org).

While civil disorder is rare in Croatia, there are occasional strikes, protests and other public demonstrations. As all demonstrations can potentially turn confrontational or even violent, U.S. citizens are urged to avoid these events whenever possible, and to exercise caution when in the vicinity of any such gathering.

**VICTIMS OF CRIME:** If you or someone you know becomes the victim of a crime abroad, you should contact the local police and the U.S. Embassy. We can:
- Replace a stolen passport.
- Help you find appropriate medical care if you are the victim of violent crimes such as assault or rape.
- Put you in contact with the appropriate police authorities, and if you want us to, contact family members or friends.
- Help you understand the local criminal justice process and direct
you to local attorneys, although it is important to remember that local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting the crime.

The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Croatia is 112.

If you are hiking in the mountains seek expert advice from local guides, however tame the mountain might seem to you. The weather in the Croatian mountains can change quickly, even in summer and temperatures can get very low overnight. There have been reports of hikers getting lost in the mountains when they have gone out alone and left marked paths. If you get into trouble, call the emergency number 112 and the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service will help you as best they can.

Rail travel
Take care to guard valuables, especially at night.

Sea travel
There is zero tolerance on alcohol consumption if you are in charge of a yacht or boat. The penalties for being caught drunk in charge of a boat are heavy. Yacht/boat skippers have been arrested for entering a non-designated entry port without informing the authorities. If you are sailing to Croatia enter only at a designated port/harbor. If this is not possible, contact the local harbormaster or the police before entering. The Croatian Government requires all skippers to have an International Certificate of Competence (ICC).

U.S. Embassy Zagreb
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10010 Zagreb, Croatia
Telephone +(385) (1) 661-2200
Emergency After-Hours Telephone +(385) (1) 661-2400
Fax +(385) (1) 665-8933
Email ZagrebACS@state.gov
U.S. Embassy Zagreb

For the latest security information, Americans traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs’ web site at http://travel.state.gov where the current Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts, as well as the Worldwide Caution, can be found.

For general information about appropriate measures travelers can take to protect themselves in an overseas environment, see the Department of State’s pamphlet, A Safe Trip Abroad.

Clothing
Pack light. Label your luggage inside and out. Identify with some distinguishing mark. Zagreb’s temperatures during May are in the low to middle 70s (F) for the high and the upper 40s and middle 50s for the low.

Dress like a young, professional journalist, than a tourist. Suggested clothing would be shirts and blouses, pants or skirts, jackets or sweaters.

Uneven streets and sidewalks require sturdy shoes. Laundry services are available at the hotel, but are expensive. Best to bring clothes that can be washed and hung. There is a nearby wash-and-fold shop.

Money
The currency is the Croatian Kuna—exchanged at a rate of about 6.69 Croatian Kuna per U.S. dollar. Credit cards are widely accepted and ATMS are widely available.

How much money should you bring with you? Breakfast and daily transit passes are included in the program fee. Other likely expenses: lunch, dinner, and optional excursions.

Health
Make an appointment with the UGA Travel Clinic as soon as possible and no later than three months before departure. It is recommended that you visit your personal physician and your dentist before you travel.

To maintain your health, there are several preventive measures to follow: Wash hands often with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand cleaner. Bring prescription medications required for your normal health regime for the entire duration of travel. Keep these in the original container, with a label supplied by the pharmacy. Notify your pharmacist that yo will require a month's supply of all prescription medications. This may require your insurance company to approve a vacation over-ride for your pharmacy.

Consider brining a spare pair of eyeglasses or contact lenses with you. Bring enough contact solution to last for the duration of the trip. You may also want to bring the prescription for your corrective lenses as there are vendors who can make replacement eyeglasses should that need arise.
You must have routine vaccinations as required by the University of Georgia. Pack a “health maintenance” kit of analgesics, small bandages and ointment, medicine for diarrhea (either immodium or lomotil) and a pocket sized packet of tissues because toilet paper is not always available in public restrooms.
If you feel ill, tell the Program Director or Program Assistant, who will facilitate getting you medical care.

Telecommunications and connectivity
Internet is available free in the hotel lobby and our classroom. You will be provided a local mobile phone used to keep track of one another. The phone, served by Vodafone, is pay-as-you-go. An initial cache of 20 minutes will be loaded on your phone. You can top up at the Vodafone shop. For local use, use pay telephones, widely available. Making international calls from land lines or U.S. based mobile phones is expensive (about U.S. $2 per minute). An inexpensive and popular alternative is to use the Internet (Skype, for example) to make international calls. You may want to bring your own headset if you plan to use this option for staying in touch with home.

**Contact information:**

**Contact information in Croatia to follow.**