LIFE IN THE U.S.

Adjusting to American Culture

Family Feud
WHO ARE WE?

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- International Student Services Specialist

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- Associate Director for Student Services

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- International Peer Mentors aka Sherry’s Minions
AGENDA

Culture shock
Odd things Americans do
American cultural norms
Other odd American-isms
Family Feud
WHAT IS CULTURE?

Values
Beliefs
Customs
Attitudes
Notions of time
Religion
Hierarchy
Meanings
Knowledge

Language
Roles
Spatial relations
Concepts of the universe
“mental blueprint”
Behavior
Perceptions
CULTURE IS A LENS

Our culture is a lens that we look through to understand the world and the behavior of others.

Learning about other cultures helps you switch lenses.
BUT FIRST...

You may experience CULTURE SHOCK

What IS culture shock?????
STAGES OF CULTURE SHOCK

Culture Stress Curve

- Fun: Honeymoon
- Flight: Avoidance
- Fight: Anger (different and bad)
- Fit: Creativity (different but open to transaction/interaction)
  - Understanding (different but reasonable)
  - Tolerance (different but O.K.)
  - Mockery (Difference but funny or stupid)

Level of Satisfaction

Length of Time in Host/Home Culture

Lisa Espinelli Chin/David Pollock. Interaction
OVERCOMING CULTURE SHOCK
WHAT CAN YOU DO??

Be patient
Recognize the symptoms
Join organizations based on your interests
Introduce yourself to other international students
Make American friends and practice English
Exercise
MOST IMPORTANTLY...

Consider this an opportunity for personal growth

What are some of the ways you think you will grow as a person? How will you be transformed?
TOP 10 ODD THINGS AMERICANS DO THAT MAY SHOCK YOU...

...and why we do it.
AMERICANS SAY “HOW ARE YOU?” AND THEN WALK AWAY.
THEY GET ANNOYED IF YOU ARE LATE.
PEOPLE YOU DON’T KNOW SMILE AT YOU ON THE STREET.
STRANGERS TELL YOU VERY PERSONAL INFORMATION.
BUT THEY DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT THEIR MONEY.
SAY “NO” IF WE DON’T WANT TO DO SOMETHING
STAND FAR AWAY WHEN TALKING
DON’T ASK FRIENDS FOR FAVORS
THEY EAT EVERYWHERE.
THEY CALL EVERYONE BY THEIR FIRST NAME.
THEY SHAKE HANDS VERY HARD.
MANNERS

Always educate yourself on the manners of the local people. This is what happens if you don’t!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3dRosLUi9c
HOW TO BEHAVE WHEN YOU ARE....
IN PUBLIC

Respect personal space
Stand in line
Don’t spit
Hold the door for the person behind you
Be aware of smoking restrictions
Be aware of body odor or too much cologne
Watch the locals to see what they are doing
GOING TO A FRIEND’S HOUSE

Don’t go empty-handed
- Ask what you can bring
- Wine or a dish to share

Be there within 10 minutes of invitation time (parties are different)

Don’t bring friend with you without permission

Expect informality depending on the family

Don’t overstay your welcome
AT A RESTAURANT

Be prepared to pay for yourself
Treat the server with respect
Make sure to tip 15-20%
Eat quietly
No burping
You may take home leftovers
Normally dress casually, but ask when in doubt
IN CLASS

Dress casual

Talk with the professor

Participate and ask questions

Eat a light snack if allowed

Keep your laptop/phone/other electronics in your bag unless allowed

Do not talk to other students when the teacher is talking

Stay awake

BE ON TIME
WHAT ARE OTHER ODD THINGS ABOUT AMERICA?
FOOD PORTIONS ARE GENERALLY VERY LARGE BY COMPARISON
OUR MEASUREMENT SYSTEM MAKES NO SENSE

**United States**

**The Rest of the World**

VIA 9GAG.COM
WHEN SHOULD I TIP IN THE U.S.?
## U.S. Tipping Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Suggested Tip Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bartender</td>
<td>$1 to $5 per round of drinks, depending on drinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellhops</td>
<td>$1 to $5 per bag, depending on hotel level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Concierge</td>
<td>$5 or more if they perform a service for you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Doorman</td>
<td>$1–$2 if he helps you get a cab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Maid</td>
<td>$1–$3 a day (either daily or at end of stay, in cash)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Room-service Waiter</td>
<td>$1 to $2 per delivery, even if service charge added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porter at Airport or Train Station</td>
<td>$1 per bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skycap at Airport</td>
<td>$1 to $3 per bag checked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
<td>1.5%–20%, but round up the fare to the next dollar amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Guide</td>
<td>10% of the cost of the tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valet Parking Attendant</td>
<td>$1–$2, but only when you get your car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiter</td>
<td>1.5%–20%, with 20% being the norm at high-end restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restroom Attendants</td>
<td>$1 or small change in more expensive restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coat-Check Personnel</td>
<td>$1–$2 per item checked unless there is a fee, then nothing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTIONS???