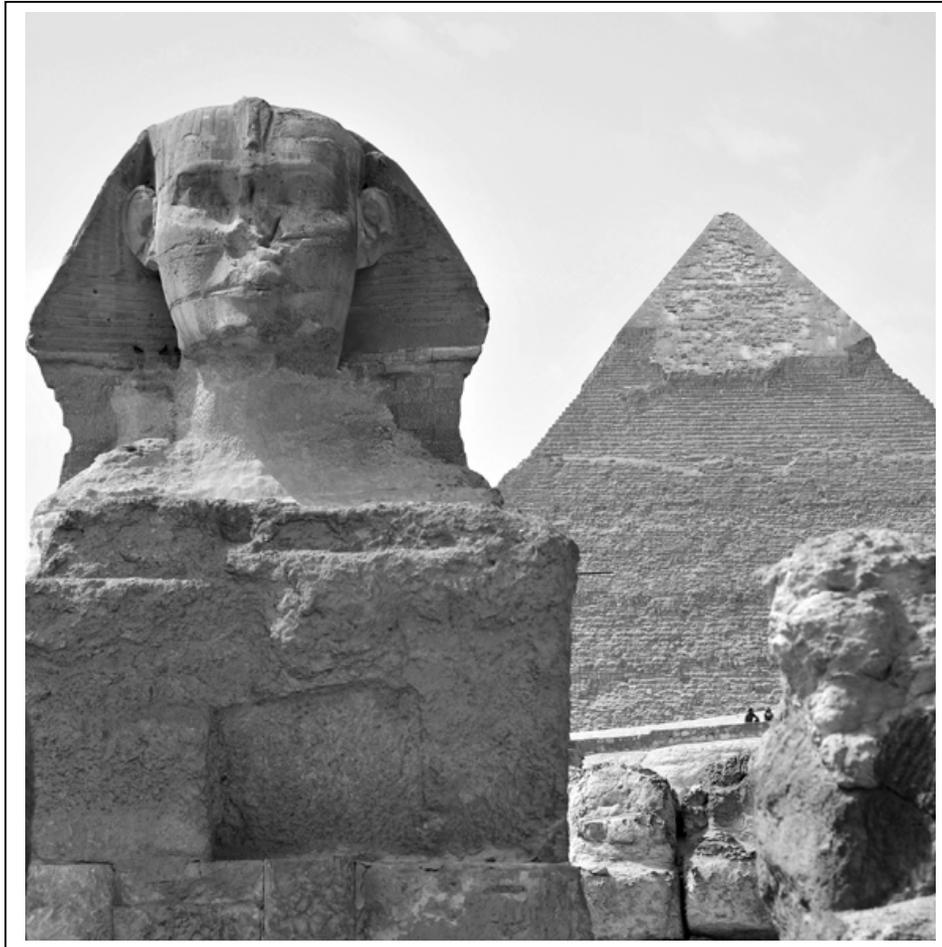


Study Abroad Egypt—2012
Student Handbook



for

ANAR 145s: Egypt of the Pharaohs
A UCSD Summer Session and Department of
Anthropology Study Abroad Course

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Welcome to ANAR 145s: Egypt of the Pharaohs! This rather ungainly title describes a UCSD Anthropology program offered during Summer Session 2012. The course consists of a 16-day trip to Egypt, during which we will visit 46 archaeological sites and four museums highlighting the ancient Egyptian and Nubian civilizations.

The goals of the course are:

1. To teach students about the history, art, and architecture of ancient Egypt within their actual context;
2. To provide an experiential approach to learning that is not possible in the classroom;
3. To act as a field complement to ANAR 144 (*Pharaohs, Mummies, & Pyramids*)
4. To introduce students to Egyptian, Nubian, and Islamic culture by interacting with living people;
5. To provide a short, highly intensive course within the structure of UCSD Summer School that does not interfere with the Summer employment needs of students; and
6. To provide an Education Abroad experience that is open to students who have program needs that require their presence on campus during the school year.

What you are now reading is a Student Handbook designed to answer some of your questions about the course, what we will be doing, where we will be going, how you should get to Egypt, what you should bring, and what my expectations will be as a professor.

Course Outline

ANAR145s is a Study Abroad course that will be held in Egypt from 8 until 23 September, 2012. During this time, you will learn about the history, art, and architecture of ancient Egypt and Nubia by visiting cities, pyramids, tombs, and temples built by Egyptians. We also will tour museums that house important collections of art and other artifacts. If you have already taken ANAR 144: *Pharaohs, Mummies, and Pyramids*, this travel course will greatly help you in understanding and contextualizing the lectures you have already heard. Ancient Egypt will come alive for you in a way that is impossible within the classroom. If you have not taken ANAR 144: Don't panic! By the end of this course, you should learn the fundamentals of the history of ancient Egypt and develop a strong appreciation for the accomplishments of the Egyptian culture.

A Trip Itinerary has been provided to you in a separate handout and is also available through the Department of Anthropology website. The itinerary mentions the sites and museums that we will visit each day. In this section of the Student Handbook,

I discuss such things as our typical daily schedule, the book(s) you should bring and read, and my expectations from you as students.

Daily Schedule: Room, Board, and Activities

Accommodations. While in Egypt, we will *mostly* sleep in hotels. These are included in your course fees. Not all the hotels will be fancy places (but some are!), but none are dirty flea-bags. According to the Egyptian Board of Tourism, most will be four-star hotels. You can expect private bathrooms with running hot/cold water, fresh sheets, and generally well-kept and clean rooms. All rooms will have air conditioning. Some hotels will have televisions (remember: Egyptian t.v. is in Arabic!), and a few will have swimming pools. Special note should be made of the accommodations for two nights in and around Bahariya Oasis. One night will be spent at an ecolodge, which might be a bit rustic. Another night we will camp out Bedouin style in the White Desert. This is a real adventure and a great highlight of the trip! You curl up inside our open “tent,” or you can go out in the desert to sleep. Finally, we will spend one night on a sleeper train. You will generally share a bedroom with another student, unless you have already paid extra for a single. You will be given the names and contact telephone numbers of the hotels shortly before the trip begins. You should bring a copy of this list with you (and have it on your person at all times) and should also leave a copy with your parents, in case there is an emergency at home and they need to contact you. Remember, though, that some hotel workers speak only limited English.

Typically we will wake up rather early. Most days will begin for us by 6 AM in order to avoid the mid-day heat. You will get used to me saying “Time to get in the bus!” at an hour when many of us would rather be sleeping. An important note: since this is a course rather than a packaged tour offered by a company, you will be responsible for getting your bags to and from the bus on the days we move cities. Please don’t expect me or our Tour Director to do it for you.

Our day of visiting sites will end when they close, typically at 6 PM. Some evenings, we may visit museums that are open until 8 or 9 PM. For the most part, we will make day trips based out of just three cities: Cairo, Luxor, and Aswan. On these occasions, you may leave your “night pack” (clothes, most toiletries, etc.) in the hotel. If you are concerned about safety issues, please talk to me or the chauffeur.

Transportation. During the day, we will drive from archaeological site to archaeological site in a hired “Greyhound-style” bus. The bus we will be driving will be clean, new, and well-kept. It will have an air conditioner and will seat up to 40 students. Some of the sites we will visit will also involve either a ferry or sailboat ride, and one day we will be riding camels in order to get to a site. Finally, in the desert we will drive in four-wheel Toyotas.

Archaeological Sites and Museums. Entrance to all archaeological sites and museums is provided as part of your course fee. You are *required* to purchase an International Student I.D. in order to get half price admissions. I will contact you to make sure you have this before you begin your trip.

Some museums and most sites allow camera use without a flash. Cameras are generally not permitted for taking pictures inside tombs. Sometimes, this prohibition is mandated by the government, other times it is merely a way for guards to ask for *baksheesh* (see the section of that name). Ask if you have any questions whether or not

you can take pictures. Some sites or museums may charge extra if you wish to shoot video. Keep in mind that if you will have to pay any of these special fees yourself.

On the way to each site, I will present a general background lecture consisting of information that you should know. Some of the sites are only poorly understood (i.e., archaeological work has been limited to consolidation or reconstruction rather than scientific research, or very little has been published to date), and these formal lectures will be short. My style is very different from that of a professional guide. If I do not know something, I will tell you.

We will tour each site as a loose group. Sometimes you may wish to go off with other students. This is acceptable, but I will ask you to stay within earshot. One reason is that I will talk about various features, buildings, and works of art that we will see; I do not want you to miss anything important. The size of our group is such that we often will be having conversations about what we see, rather than a more formal guided tour. I promise that I will not rush you by something interesting so that we finish quickly.

Perhaps the most important aspect about the course is this informal setting. You are encouraged—even required!—to ask questions and to participate in discussions about what we see. I very much doubt that you will have another chance as an undergraduate student to engage in so much one-to-one interaction with a professor. One of the goals of the course is to give you this sort of attention as a student.

Food and Beverages. Included in your course fees are breakfasts and lunches, as well as about eight dinners. Most often we will have sit down meals in restaurants, but from time to time we will have picnics or box lunches in the bus. It is your responsibility to make sure you have water with you at all times. Buy it at the hotel, at a store, or at a restaurant and please keep some with you! We will also provide water during the day.

Most sites and restaurants will also have bathrooms, although their quality will vary dramatically. Be prepared and bring your own paper.

You should bring enough pocket money with you at all times to buy snacks and drinks as you wish. You will be asked to purchase your beverages at meal times; some people seem to drink a lot more expensive beverages than others, and it is unfair to split the cost evenly.

A word about alcohol—Egypt is a nation where 90% of people are Muslim. It can be difficult to find alcohol outside of very touristy areas. Cairo itself has only one non-hotel bar left, and it serves only beer. If you must drink, please make sure that you maintain civil behavior at all times. Drunkenness during the course hours of the day will not be tolerated. Please remember this is a university course and not a party. Remember, as well, that most Egyptians find drunken behavior particularly offensive, much more so than do Americans. I have never had this problem with a class, and I do not expect to.

We will share several dinners that are included as part of your course fees. The first night we will have a Welcome Dinner. The last night we will have a Farewell Dinner on the train and also a Final Examine (do not worry, you'll enjoy it!). During many of the other nights of the course, you will be free to eat wherever you choose. In part, this is to give each of you a chance to experience Egypt as you wish. It also is a chance to give each of us a little “down time” when we are not forced to be together in a big group. It will also allow some of us to save a little money by eating in inexpensive restaurants. Finally some of us may have dietary needs or requirements that are not easily met during the day. If you have to have your KFC (a favorite in Egypt!), pizza, or

tofu burger, this is the time to do so. You will need to bring enough money with you, therefore, to pay for about nine dinners. Please see the section on Money for more details.

A final word about food: If you have special dietary needs or requirements, it may be difficult to meet them. In particular, if you keep strictly Kosher or are a Vegan or have certain life-threatening food allergies, you may have to bring your own food. It may be impossible to meet these requirements any other way. Please keep this mind when packing.

Other Activities. In addition to visiting archaeological sites and museums, we will have several other activities during the course. The purpose of these activities is for you to see more of the Egyptian countryside, as well as meet people from different ethnic groups within Egypt. Among these are a camel ride outside of Aswan, visits to Islamic Cairo and the Khan el Khalilli bazaar, dinner and camping with Bedouins in the White Desert, two felucca sailboat rides on the Nile, and a dinner in a Nubian village. If you would prefer to opt out of some of these activities, you may. Please let me know long enough ahead of time so that we can make other plans for you.

Grades and Expectations

This is a study abroad course, not a formal lecture-hall course. Moreover, simply by enrolling, each of you has expressed an interest that is far beyond that which is typical for an on-campus course. My expectations of you as a Study Abroad student are therefore quite different from my expectations of classroom students, and the final grades I assign reflect this difference in expectations.

I ask that you participate in discussions, ask questions, and talk. You will be assigned a textbook (see below), which I will ask you to read. There also will be an oral Final Exam delivered personally to you on the final night of the course. You should not fear this experience, but think about it as a way to recapture the things you have seen and experienced during the course. Your final grade will be based on our conversations, your questions, and on this final exam.

Textbook and Other Books to Bring

There is one required textbook for this course. You should order it through whatever vendor you like. I have chosen it because it is easy to read, inexpensive, and extremely compact. Please buy it and read it before we go, and then re-read it during the course. The textbook is:

Bard, Kathryn
2008 An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt. Blackwell,
Malden,
Mass.

You also may wish to purchase a general guidebook to Egypt. I like the **Lonely Planet** and **Rough Guide** best. You will find either of these really helpful in Cairo or Luxor when you are hungry! Some people may want to bring a compact **Arabic Phrase Book**.

Do not forget to bring a notebook and pen! You also may wish to keep a diary, journal, or photo log.

Planning for the Trip: Documents, Money, Climate, and What to Bring

Passports, Visas, and International Student I.D. Cards

All students are required to have passports. You cannot travel to Egypt without one. If you are a U.S. citizen and do not have a passport, go to a major U.S. Post Office, bring your birth certificate (the original, not a photocopy), and fill out and mail the required forms. Be prepared to enclose payment, and make sure that you apply far enough ahead of time to get the passport back from the U.S. Passport Office. You should start this process now!

U.S. citizens require a visa to visit Egypt. At the time of writing this handbook, visas are bought for \$15 at the airport in Cairo. That is, they are purchased just before you go through immigration. *If you are not a U.S. citizen, you should check with the Egyptian consulate to find out if you require a visa. Please get your visas before the trip begins!* Mexican citizens, like Americans, can get their visas at the airport in Cairo.

Some of you may carry a passport with an Israeli visa or stamp. This is fine with Egyptian authorities, but you will have trouble getting into most other Arab nations.

You are required to buy an International Student I.D. card. This will greatly lower the costs of entering most of the sites we will visit. If you don't have one, you'll be asked to pay as you go. I will instruct you about how to get an ISID card after the class list has been finalized.

Money

The Egyptian currency is the Egyptian Pound (£E). Currently (November 2011), there are about 6.0 £E to the U.S. dollar. You cannot use U.S. dollars in Egypt, and exchanging money can be a pain. *Try to exchange most of your currency at the airport, before you go through customs.* There is a bank kiosk, sort of tucked away to the left near the bathrooms and the Duty Free Shop. It is after you go through immigration, but before you leave the secured zone. Just ask for the bathrooms.

You should bring enough money for dinners, snacks, and souvenirs for your trip. You will find that US \$200 (changed at the airport) will almost certainly pay for all the meals that are not included as well as incidentals. The best way to bring money is to divide it between a relatively small amount of U.S. cash (no more than about \$200 U.S.), a bank ATM card, and—if you want—travelers' checks. Go for American Express or Citibank.

Credit Cards. Visa and Mastercard are also accepted in most city shops and fancier restaurants. If you plan on using a credit card, you should call your company ahead of time and notify them of your dates of travel. If not, the card may be automatically rejected when you try to use it.

The Big Question: How Much Should I Bring? The amount of money (cash, ATM cards, credit cards) you bring is up to you. Here are some tips that might help you plan.

Food. First, remember that you will be paying for about eight or nine dinners. If you want to “do the trip on the cheap,” I would set aside about \$10 for each night or a total of \$90. This should be sufficient to buy you a fairly large supper and beverage. If you are a big eater, bring twice as much. Keep in mind that food is cheap but alcohol is not. A full meal might cost the same as a beer or a glass of wine (which will be hard to find, outside of large fancy hotels). Also bring a sufficient amount of money for daily snacks and soda pop. I would guess that \$3/day is sufficient.

Souvenirs. Egypt has been manufacturing all sorts of tchotchkes and knick-knacks since the Old Kingdom. The important thing to do is to shop wisely. Do not spend your wad on the first plaster pyramid you see. You must, absolutely must haggle, particularly if you are buying from a vendor in a market or on the street. In this context, haggling is expected. If you pay more than 30% of the original asking price, you are probably paying too much.

You should be able to buy something you like at a price that you are willing to spend. Typically, when you are discussing something that costs 100 £E or more, you will be asked to sit down and have a drink of tea or *karkaday* (Rosa de Jamaica). When someone is sent scurrying for your beverage, then you know bargaining has begun in earnest. If you do not have at least 20 minutes, don't start in on this process. You won't be able to leave until it is concluded. And, if you have drunken any tea or *karkaday*, it will be very hard to leave without making a purchase. If you are just looking, say “*La, shokran*” very firmly, and tap your heart with your fist.

Souvenir buying is really a personal matter. You may be the sort who prefers to take pictures and buy a couple of postcards. As a very general estimate, I would say that unless you are buying jewelry, \$100 should probably be enough.

Telephone Calls. Calling home is a real pain. You can do it from your cell phone, but you will be charged a lot. You might want to call home once, but do not do it more than that. Text messaging can also be really expensive, depending on your plan. You should probably look into your plan before deciding to bring your phone.

Internet Cafes. These are very common and dirt cheap. Typically they cost about \$2 per hour. You should try to find one of these as soon as you get to Cairo, and send your parents a quick message. Don't spend hundreds of dollars on phone calls!

Gratuity for the Travel Director. A final cost that ask you to consider is a tip for Eric, the travel agent who has made all the arrangements and who will be traveling with us in Egypt. Eric is a professional (he went to NYU) who lives in Cairo. After me, you will be talking as much with Eric as with any one else on this trip. He will be your interpreter, guide, and “big brother” if you need something. I strongly urge you to save \$50 (about \$3/day) for Eric as a tip. This is not mandatory, but I do ask you to consider it and please set it aside. He will certainly more than earn it from each of us!

Geography and Climate of Egypt

Egypt is a country of great extremes, from mountains, to the wet and humid Nile Delta, to the Great Sand Sea and the Gilf Kebir—perhaps the driest place on earth.

Temperatures can drop surprisingly low in the desert at night, and will be very hot during the day.

In the Cairo region, where we begin our journey, you can expect average daily temperatures to be in the 80s. At the hottest point of the day, temperatures could easily be in the 90s, and the air will be somewhat humid. Think Chicago (but not New Orleans or Houston) in the summer, and you will have a sense of the weather to expect in Cairo.

As we go south away from the Delta and the Mediterranean, temperatures will increase dramatically and the air will become much drier. In Aswan and Abu Simbel (the place furthest south that we will visit), expect the *average* daily temperature to be about 106 degrees F. At noon, temperatures could easily reach 120 degrees. Think Phoenix or Death Valley on the hottest day of the year, and you won't be far off. The sun will be very bright, especially outside of Cairo (which is often hazy) and there is very little shade.

Planning for the Trip, Part I—What to Wear

Given the temperatures, most young, western travelers want to wear as few clothes as possible. But Egypt is uniformly a conservative country, and there are very strong social taboos against exposing skin. These rules hold for both Muslims and Coptic Christians. Many basic rules hold for both women *and* men. If you want to be treated with respect and not be stared at or yelled at, you should dress respectfully. Most importantly, *you* should respect the cultural rules of the country you are visiting. For all these reasons, some care must be in picking the clothes you bring to Egypt.

Basic Rules of Dress. Please read this section carefully. Here are some general do's and don'ts. *Remember: they apply equally to men and women!*

(1) Your legs, down to the ankles, should be covered at all times. Wear long-legged pants or ankle-length skirts.

(2) You should wear long-sleeve shirts or tops. Your shoulders and elbows should be covered, as should your chest up to the throat. This means no tee-shirts, halter tops, spaghetti-strapped tops, etc.

(3) No exposed cleavage, midriff, muffin tops, belly buttons, Joe-the-Plumber-butt, etc.

(4) Do not wear tight, form-fitting clothes. Wear clothes that obscure your shape.

(5) Excessive makeup is frowned upon.

(6) *None* of these rules apply at hotel pools and in a few other private contexts. It will be hot, and feel free to bring whatever bathing suit you want. Bikinis, briefs, or whatever else you wear on the beach in San Diego are all perfectly fine. Around the pools at our hotels, you will see plenty of Speedos!

Head Scarves. You will notice that virtually all Egyptian women wear a head scarf, even most Coptic christian women. Unless head scarves are part of your own heritage, you should *not* feel obligated to cover your head or your hair. Nonetheless, there may be certain situations when you will feel more comfortable covering your hair. You may attract less attention, you may feel more comfortable while visiting mosques, and—most importantly—you will keep the sand and grit off your face and out of your mouth and hair. You will see plenty of men wearing scarves for this purpose, including me!

For all these reasons, I suggest that you bring a light-weight scarf or buy one in Egypt for occasional use and as a souvenir. Most of you will want to buy one in the first few days.

A word especially for women: you certainly *do not* need to cover your face! Qur'anic law allows all women to expose their hands, face, and feet in public. Ultra-orthodox Muslims who cover their face and wear gloves do so for cultural reasons that are as much related to property as they are to propriety. Egyptian feminists since the days of the great Hoda Shaarawi have been fighting against the former while supporting the latter.

Clothes to Bring. The following clothing suggestions are based on what *I think* will meet your needs:

- (1) Light weight, loose-fitting, and durable long pants (two or three pairs; you will be miserable in jeans, leave them at home!);
- (2) Light weight long-sleeve, button-down shirts (four or five);
- (3) Sneakers, light-weight hiking boots, or some other cool and comfortable but closed-toed shoes that protect your ankles. Canvas hightops or suede chukkas are perfect!;
- (4) A pair of flip-flops, sandals, or the like for relaxing;
- (5) A hat, cap, or scarf you can wear to protect you from sun and sand;
- (6) Sun glasses;
- (7) Something fairly nice or dressy (long skirt and blouse for women, nicer pants and shirt for men) for evenings in the city;
- (8) A sweater or sweatshirt in case it is cold at night;
- (9) A pair of shorts and abbreviated top for informal relaxing around the pool or in the hotel;
- (10) A bathing suit for pools and swimming in the Nile!

Some of you may wish to go out in the evenings, and you should be aware that many places have dress codes, particularly for men. Keep in mind that with the exception of the Red Sea resorts, Egypt is not known for its party scene.

A Tip on Packing. Please *limit your bags to two*: a regular sized backpack, duffle bag, or suitcase for access in the evenings/nights/mornings, and a daypack or handbag for the day. Just two bags, please!

Laundry. We will find time to do laundry once during the course. It will probably be in Luxor. If you want to be a real pro traveller, bring less clothes and some Woolite. You can wash your ginchers and socks in your hotel room.

Planning for the Trip, Part II—What Else to Bring

You should bring the course textbook, one or two other suggested books (see above) a camera, and all personal items and medications you need. Also, do not forget a notebook and a pen! Here is a list of things that are suggested:

- (1) All medications you require on a daily basis;
- (2) Personal toiletries and hygienic items;
- (3) Camera and lots of digital cards, as well as spare batteries;

- (4) Notebook and pen;
- (5) YOUR PASSPORT, which should be with you at all times!;
- (6) Sunscreen (important!);
- (7) A Nalgene bottle or small canteen;
- (8) Textbook and one or two other books (see above);
- (9) A map;
- (10) Sufficient money for small purchases (see above);
- (11) A personal music device for chillin. Just sayin.;
- (12) A roll of toilet paper to share;
- (13) A bottle of Pepto Bismol or the equivalent;
- (14) THIS HANDBOOK;
- (15) The list of hotels and contact numbers (to be distributed later).

Most of these items should go in your “Day Pack,” which will be available throughout the day. Some of your medications, toiletries, and hygienic items—as well as money or credit cards well stashed—can go in your “Night Bag,” which will be in the hotel during the day.

What Not to Bring: Drugs

Please understand that if the bus is searched and someone has illegal substances, we *all* will go to jail. The bus will be confiscated by the government, and expenses will be enormous. You have been asked to sign a liability waiver that includes, in part, a statement that you agree to keep to the standards of a Drug Free Workplace. The only things worse than a Central American or Turkish jail is an Egyptian one. Another bad place is a U.S. Federal Penitentiary, where you could land if caught by U.S. Customs.

Please respect the laws of Egypt and the U.S.A., and understand that by engaging in illegal activities, you will be putting all of us in jeopardy.

Getting to Egypt

The course officially begins at the welcome dinner on the evening of 8 September. We will meet you at the airport before this, and take you to the hotel where you will definitely want to sleep off the jet lag! The course officially ends on 23 September with a drop off at the Cairo airport. If you fly to Cairo a day or two early I may be able to arrange for you to be picked up at the airport and taken to our hotel. *Please read below: you really might want to do this.* If you choose to leave Egypt later than 23 September, you will be left on your own sometime during the afternoon of the 23rd. My suggestion is that you purchase:

- (1) A round trip ticket to Cairo, Egypt, that arrives before 6:00 PM on 8 September, 2011.
- (2) From the East Coast, this means leaving *no later* than the afternoon of September 7.

(3) From the West Coast, this will mean leaving *super early* on the morning of 7 September or—more likely—starting your trip on the night of 6 September with a red-eye flight.

(4) If you need to transfer in JFK, make sure you leave yourself THREE hours in the airport. JFK is as bad as Heathrow or Benito Juarez in Mexico City. Maybe worse. Don't miss a connection because it takes two hours to get your luggage at JFK.

(5) Flights are always changing. Most direct flights to Cairo leave from JFK in the evening, arriving in Cairo around in the afternoon.

(6) Otherwise, you will change flights somewhere in Europe: Frankfurt, London, Amsterdam, Madrid, Rome, and Athens are all places where you might have to change flights. If you do this, make sure you will be at that airport for at least two hours before your connection. You might want to spend the night in one of these places. *Many of these flights get to Cairo at night, too late for the Welcome Dinner.*

In order to ensure that we meet you at the airport in Cairo, please make sure that you both e-mail me and send me a letter by U.S. postage with your entire flight plans (all legs and all flights, not just your arrival times! Please include times, departure and arrival cities, and flight numbers). We need your entire itinerary to track you down in case you are not on your flight. This is critically important!

I have never missed a student at an airport. But if, for some reason, you do not find us at the airport in Cairo, *please wait for us!* We will not forget you. I will supply you with Eric's cell phone number before we leave for Egypt. You should call him if we are not at the airport. If you are unable to make a connecting flight and are stuck somewhere, you also should call Eric on his cell phone.

Health

If you are suffering from any chronic health problems or have special needs for accommodation (including dietary requirements or preferences), you should have already made these clear in the application and health form. The University of California will *not* provide any special accommodation on this trip (again, including dietary needs). The combination of walking, hot sun, and a busy schedule will take its toll on you by the end of the course. For this reason, you should be aware of your health situation and take steps to maintain your health during the two weeks of the course.

Do What Your Doctor Says!

To paraphrase Dr. M^cCoy: I am an archaeologist, not a medical doctor. You should consult your doctor and do whatever s/he says about immunizations and other preventative measures.

Hepatitis A is always a concern everywhere in the world, and it would not be a bad idea to be inoculated. You should always have a tetanus booster on a regular basis.

Beyond these common diseases, there is little else you can prepare for. But do whatever your doctor says.

Health & Travel Insurance

You must have health insurance to participate on this trip. You must provide evidence of such insurance before participation, so be sure to bring your documentation along. It is important to be able to pay for any medical treatment in advance, because most insurance policies are on a claim-back basis. I recommend that you have a credit card you can use to draw on funds if necessary. You should also find out if your insurance company has a toll-free hotline number in case of severe emergencies, and keep this with your insurance documents.

Free travel insurance is available through the UCSD Travel website. This is mandatory for any UCSD-affiliated person traveling abroad. All you need to do is logon and printout a card. I will give you more details about this before we leave.

I strongly advise that you purchase Emergency Evacuation and Repatriation Insurance. This will cost about \$50 U.S., and may already be included in your health plan. Contact your provider to find out.

What is Evacuation/Repatriation Insurance? If you have a severe injury or accident, you may wish to return to the U.S. for treatment. Evacuation insurance will pay for you to return on a special chartered medical jet. If you do not have this kind of insurance, it could cost up to \$50,000 to bring you back for treatment. Repatriation Insurance pays to have your mortal remains brought back in case of death. It will not help you, but could save your family many thousands of dollars.

I believe it is extremely foolish to travel in a developing nation without this sort of insurance. Please understand that UCSD will not pay for you to get back to the U.S. if you are involved in an accident.

Frequent Concerns, Questions, and Potential Annoyances

Baksheesh

It is sad, but for many travelers to Egypt, the only word in Arabic they learn is *baksheesh*. The word may be applied to anything from simple begging, to a tip for an unnecessary nuisance, to a small tip for a service you may or may not want, to a tip for the bending of rules (which may or may not be official, and were probably made simply as an excuse for collecting *baksheesh*), to a major and illegal bribe (please avoid all such situations!).

For the western traveler, the constant demand for money can be extremely vexing. If you have even just 10 minutes of peace on the Corniche in Luxor, you will be quite lucky. Please keep three things in mind. First, for a Muslim, giving alms and goods to the needy is a natural act. *Baksheesh*, therefore, can be related to the fundamental Islamic Pillar of almsgiving. Much *baksheesh* is viewed as an obligation by those who have even the smallest amount of money to give. Second, Egypt is at the same time a very wealthy and extremely poor country. Government salaries are derisory. Even private sector salaries are often paid many months late. *Baksheesh* is a necessary way to keep most

lower and many middle class people afloat from day-to-day. The policeman, the teacher, the soldier, and especially government bureaucrats rely on *baksheesh*, although some are clearly avaricious. *Baksheesh* is a necessary part of the economy, and without it, Egypt would collapse. Third, you should always be polite even when you are refusing to pay. Quickly and firmly say “*La shokran*” (no thank you) and smile. You may need to say this a dozen times in Luxor (in a single encounter), but once or twice will suffice in Aswan or the less touristy parts of Cairo that we visit. Many people will watch how you react, and if you are polite and firm you will win their respect.

One of the most important things to remember is that you should let Eric or me handle *baksheesh*. No doubt, when we are visiting almost every site, we will accrue several people (guards, policemen, soldiers, children, and just curious people) who will want *baksheesh*. If you are at the back of the group away from Eric and me, it will surely happen. *No matter how insistent they are, do not pay them.* Point to Eric or me, and let us take care of it.

Touts

Touts are individuals who are looking for customers for some service or other. They will come along side of you, and—in Cairo—they will very often pretend that they met you somewhere. They will try to get you to go to a store, a restaurant, cross the Nile on a ferry, stay at a hotel, buy a papyrus, a bottle of whiskey, or something along those lines. They may pretend they “know a good, cheap place.” If you follow them, even to a legitimate business, you will be charged extra by the business owner for the tout’s “services.” A meal that costs 20 £E might end up costing you 40 £E. A papyrus that costs 50 £E may cost 100 £E.

You should try to shake off—politely and firmly—any touts. Do not engage in a conversation with them. The trick is recognizing them before you are too involved.

Being Jewish in Egypt

If you are Jewish, you should not let this fact prevent you from going to and enjoying Egypt. Egypt has been a home for Jews for at least 2,800 years, and perhaps for much longer than that. In contrast, Muslims have lived in Egypt for about half that length of time. Nonetheless, since the 1950s, the period of Egyptian nationalism, and the wars with Israel, most Jews have left. There are only a few hundred in Egypt, and they are typically very old.

If you are Jewish, there are several things of which you should be aware. First and foremost, rest assured that you are not in danger because of your identity. Many thousands of Jews visit Egypt every year. You will always be a guest in Egypt, but if you advertise your heritage, you might be considered by some as an unwanted guest.

Second, most—probably the vast majority—of Egyptians harbor negative feelings towards Israelis and Jews. For most, the distinction carries little meaning. It is important to understand this. If you pickup an English-language newspaper, you will read editorials and see political cartoons that for you might be as offensive as the Danish cartoons of the Prophet are for many Muslims. If, as an American, you talk to an Egyptian, the chances are that sooner or later the topic of Israel and Judaism will come up. Be prepared for what you hear. My suggestion—whether you are Jewish or not—is that you quickly and

firmly change the subject. Just say that you do not wish to talk about politics. If your interlocutor insists, just leave.

Third, no one need know about your heritage. Your surname will not signal your identity the way it can in Europe or North America. Unless you wear a kippah and tallis, no one will know you are Jewish. Your identity, of course, is nothing to be ashamed of. But you do not need to fear that it will be exposed somehow if you choose to not to advertise it.

Egyptians are a proud people. Like other Arabs and Africans alike, a part of their pride is based in a strong sense of hospitality. Remember above all else that you will be a guest in Egypt, and will certainly be treated as such.

Personal Safety

The chances are, Egypt will be the safest place you have ever visited. There is very, very little serious crime in Egypt. Even petty crime—pickpockets in the market or subway, for example—are rare compared to big U.S. cities. Most violent crimes are between married people and are personal in nature.

Why is this? First, there are strong cultural reasons that crime rates are so low. Criminals create enormous shame for their families, and family is the center of Egyptian social life. A criminal risks the very real chance of losing his family and therefore of having no social network. Second, no one wants to go to an Egyptian prison. They are a strong deterrent. Third, Egypt is, for better or for worse, a police state. The government buys peace and stability by employing a huge number of men in the military and police. Wherever we go, there will be many, many people earning a government salary by keeping the peace and making sure that tourism—an important source of lifeblood for Egypt—is completely safe.

There have been times when Egypt was not so safe. The period after the murder of Anwar Sadat (1981) was one such time, as were the years 1992 to 1997. At that time, Egypt was rocked by Islamic extremism that gradually changed into a war between the state and drug lords. Ayman al-Zawahiri, who later joined Al Qaeda, was one character responsible for this violence. Since 1997, Egypt has had a Nonviolence Initiative that has quelled virtually all such activity. Just like in New York, Egyptian public opinion is overwhelmingly antiterrorist because many people suffered through bad times. And just like New York City quickly became safe to visit after 9/11, so too did Egypt. It is and has been safe now for more than a dozen years.

I repeat: Egypt will probably be the safest place you have ever visited. One of the most enjoyable aspects of visiting Egypt is that you do not have to worry about crime and personal safety. It is safe to walk the streets of Cairo, Luxor, and Aswan at night. The biggest danger is being hit by a car with no lights!

Female Circumcision or Genital Mutilation

You have doubtlessly heard about this cultural practice, which is particularly prevalent throughout all countries in northeastern Africa. It is now illegal in Egypt, but—depending on what studies you read—between 80 and 95% of all women have been subject to it. Despite this law, it is still the general practice rather than the exception, and likely will be so for many years to come.

Many foreign travelers in Egypt want to talk to Egyptian women about the practice. Perhaps you do, too. Please keep in mind that it is highly likely that the women you talk to have probably been subject to it, and that they have or will subject their own daughters to it.

It is also important to keep other things in mind. First, it is *not* a practice with its origins in Islam. Most Muslims outside of Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Mali, and Senegal do *not* practice female genital circumcision/mutilation. Second, it is *not* a general Arab practice (although some groups on the Arabian peninsula, in Jordan, in Iraq, and possibly in Turkey practice it in secret). Third, Egyptian Muslims and Coptic Christians commonly practice it, as once did Egyptian and Ethiopian Jews. Therefore, female genital circumcision/mutilation is a Nilotic and East African practice that is not related to race, religion, or ethnicity. Don't think of it as related to these cultural identities.

Common Health Problems to Watch out for

Dehydration. You will be traveling in a very safe and controlled environment. Your greatest health worry should be hydration. It is important to drink above normal quantities of fluids. I recommend that each student drink at least two liters of water per day beyond normal beverages at meals. Dehydration can be caused by a number of factors: too much sun, too much exercise, too much alcohol, too much heat, and a stomach bug. It is quite possible to get a stomach bug in Egypt, but much less likely than in Latin America. If you are dehydrated—for whatever reason—and you do not drink lots of water, your condition may get much worse quickly.

If you are suffering from dehydration, Eric and I will monitor your intake of fluids. We probably will give you rehydration fluids (such as Pedialyte) to drink. You may not want to do so, but it is important to drink enough water. Nothing will spoil your trip faster than dehydration. If you require further medication, such as antibiotics for a bad stomach, we will see that you get it. Please note that it is important that you do not resist our suggestions for rehydrating or getting quick medical treatment. If your condition deteriorates to point where you are no longer able to participate, you will be asked to return home alone.

How to Avoid *Turista* (Travellers' Stomach Bug). Again, compared to Mexico or Central America, food hygiene in Egypt is pretty good. But travelers anywhere in the world often get stomach bugs. When I have been traveling for a long time, I frequently get sick when I *return* to the U.S.! Often, it is simply a matter of your system getting accustomed to the local micro-flora and -fauna.

Here are a few tips on how to avoid a stomach bug:

First, do not drink water from the tap. Most water in Egypt is fine, but why risk it? Drink water from coolers, bottled water, and water provided by hotels in pitchers. This is purified and probably safer than the water you drink out of the tap at home.

Second, avoid "street meat," unless you are willing to take the risks. Food sold by street vendors can be delicious, but hygiene is generally not good. The food may have been outside without refrigeration for many hours. Moreover, the vendors may harbor germs on their hands. Finally, some beverages are served in vessels that may only get a cursory rinse between customers. If you must eat street food, try breads, nuts and the like, but avoid meats, raw vegetables, and skinless fruits.

Third, make sure you wash your hands and face frequently, particularly before eating. Soap kills an awful lot, even if you are washing with tap water. Most of the germs you ingest come from your hands, not from your food.

Fourth, you may consider brushing your teeth with purified water rather than tap water. I do not do this, but my gut is somewhat accustomed to bugs.

Fifth, be careful with raw fruits and vegetables. Fresh produce is one of the joys of Egypt, but uncooked items can carry bacteria. Specifically, think about whether or not the item has absorbed a lot of water (like lettuce or berries) or is not protected by a thick skin or rind (again, like berries). Virtually all restaurants will have their own sources of clean fruits and vegetables, but cheaper street vendors and stalls might not.

How to Get over *Turista*. The best medicine is prevention. The next best is avoiding alcohol, drinking a lot of clean water, and getting a good night's rest. Your third defense is good old **Pepto Bismol**. Liquid works much better than the pills. This is a harmless natural product that is much better for you in the long run than antibiotics. You can drink a whole bottle a day, and you will have no long- or short-term ill effects. People often hate Pepto because of the taste. But it is really good for getting rid of both the symptoms and the cause of *turista*. And remember—stay hydrated! Everyone should bring a bottle of Pepto and should use it freely.

The next step is Imodium or Lomotil. These will quickly and effectively relieve your symptoms (particularly bad cramps) but do little to kill the bug. Your final line of defense is antibiotics. If you have a fever—often a sign of acute food poisoning—we will almost certainly insist that you take antibiotics. Food poisoning is rotten, and generally hits you within four to six hours of the meal in which you ingested the bug. It should pass in 24-48 hours, but will leave you shaky and quite weak, and relapses are possible. Antibiotics will greatly increase the rate of healing. If you need a doctor or medic, we will take you to one.

Sunburn. Perhaps the most common problem will be sunburn. Make sure you have sunscreen and that you use it! Also, you may wish to wear a hat outdoors.

Heat Rash. People with poor circulation may develop heat rash on their legs, particularly just above the ankle. Mild heat rash is expressed by small, itchy blisters. You probably will think you have bug bites. More serious cases will look like bad bruises with very tender red and running sores. Try to keep your feet elevated, and do not scratch!

Other Cultural & Practical Considerations. Please wear closed-toe shoes at all times when we are visiting sites. It is easy to stub your toe in the ruins.

Don't wander off into the desert or grass behind or near a site. There are cobras. There are land mines. Neither one bodes well for the traveler.

It is considered very rude to kiss or even to touch a person of the opposite sex in public. Try to avoid this, even if you are just joking around with a member of our group.

If you are a southpaw like me, remember that the left hand is generally reserved for dirty things involving shoes, garbage, and especially bottoms. Don't use it to put food in your mouth. Don't dip it in a communal food bowl. It's ok to hold bread and tear it with your left hand. But then transfer your bread to your right hand before eating. Don't accept or give things to people with your left hand.

Some people are sensitive about being photographed. Ask if you want to take a picture.

We may enter private houses. Take your shoes off at the door. Make sure to take your shoes off before entering a mosque. If you're female, you might be asked to cover your hair.

As in any place, women need to be more careful than men. But Egypt is quite safe. Nonetheless, you should expect a certain amount of ogling and—if you dress immodestly—some verbal chastisement from men or women. What you will probably *not* encounter is drunk, sexually aggressive men, unless, of course, you hang out with tourists. Nonetheless, it is wise to know the cultural rules, and here are a few well-tested guidelines. Women traveling alone may experience problems, and it is always wise to travel with a friend and if possible with a male companion. This is probably the best way to avoid an unfriendly or aggressive encounter. It is, however, always best to be conservative and respectful in your behavior. Idle chat with strange men is often taken as a sign of your interest in them and should be avoided. If you are harassed, it is useful to avoid speaking and simply walk away and ignore the person concerned. In most situations, the presence of other women is the safest retreat. I am sorry to say that in some big cities, such as Luxor, the groping of foreign women does occur. This is very, very unpleasant, and you should not stand for it. If you are touched in public or otherwise need help, yell. The person who is annoying you will be deeply shamed and leave you alone. Phrases to consider are “Aram!” (evil, forbidden), and “Sibnee le wadi!” (Don't touch me!). If you yell this loudly, the chances women in earshot will come swinging a handbag.

Above All, Enjoy Egypt! Despite these small caveats, you should not let fear ruin your experience of Egypt. Egypt is safe. Egyptians are a friendly people, and fiercely proud of their friendliness and hospitality. You will certainly find that Egyptians are *much* more welcoming of foreigners than their American counterparts. Many people enjoy being hosts and sharing their country with guests—an attitude that is fairly uncommon in the U.S. When you return to the U.S. and pass an Egyptian, Arab, or African in the street, you should ask yourself why we do not treat them with the same sense of courtesy and hospitality that you will experience in Egypt.