When to Plan: A Timeline

6 Months Before You Go
- Try to get a general sense of what you hope to accomplish abroad and what parameters are most important to you i.e. area of the world, language proficiency, rural vs. urban.
- Look for opportunities you are interested in, read up on them and narrow your choices down to a reasonable list. Contact each opportunity, and if necessary, send them a resume. Ask them questions.
- Obtain an application for your top choice and submit it. Remember to always have a plan B. If there is no cost associated, it may be beneficial to apply to multiple programs.
- Ensure that credits are transferable (if necessary) to Temple and contact the Dean of Global Health for forms and approval.
- Learn about where you are going. Use travel books to research the healthcare, culture, politics, and attractions of the country you are visiting. A list of useful links is contained in this packet.
- After estimating the total cost of your program, make plans for how you will fund your trip. The sooner you start the better. A list of funding resources is contained in this packet, and it may also be helpful to discuss funding opportunities with the Dean of Global Health.
- Get an up to date US Passport and any visas required for entry into foreign country.

3 Months Before You Go
- Book your flight: shop around, and consider well known foreign airlines in addition to US carriers. If your flight is expensive, it may be worth your while to consider purchasing insurance on your ticket and spending a little more to ensure that you can change travel dates if necessary. It’s much better to spend an extra $50 up front than buy a new ticket for $1500.
- Send in deposit to your program if necessary.
- Visit a travel doctor and obtain any vaccinations/medications you will need: Travel doctors are not usually covered by your health insurance, but the Temple Student Health Office offers this service. Doing the research yourself on the CDC’s website (on links page), and going to the appointment knowledgeable about what you need will help. Sometimes you can obtain vaccinations and medications you need at your county health department for a reduced cost. They may also offer a student or humanitarian discount if relevant.

1 Month Before You Go
- Contact Temple risk management office for an international medical insurance card.
  Phone number: (215) 204-8523
- Purchase medical supplies you wish to donate and obtain prescription medical supplies from hospitals/doctors’ office. See List on Medicines/Supplies page.
- Make multiple copies of your passport, visa, driver’s license, itinerary, immunization records, and keep them in a separate luggage bags from the originals.
- Contact your program to ascertain who will be picking you up at the airport and reconfirm your flight times with them.
- 1. Complete Your Pre-Travel Information Form; 2. Complete Your Pre-Travel Authorization Form & Obtain The Dean of Global Health’s Signature; Submit Both Forms To Administration

While There
- 1. Present Your Expectations & Validation Form To The International Site Coordinator In The Beginning Of The Elective. Once The Elective Is Complete, This Sheet Must Be Signed By The Coordinator & Returned To Us For Your Experience To Count For Credit (We Recommend You Keep It With You).
- 3. The Coordinator Must Complete A One45 Evaluation For You To Receive Credit.

After You Return
- 1. You Will Need To Complete An Evaluation Of The Experience For The Website.
- 2. You Will Need To Get The Dean Of Global Health’s Signature On Your Completion Form For Credit.
What to Ask a Program you are Interested in:

- (1st year) Do you accept preclinical medical students who have completed 1 year of study?
- What activities/responsibilities would I get to observe or do, specifically?
- Do I need to speak/write any language other than English, and if so to what degree of competency?
- Please provide me with a run-down of costs and what they include.
- Timeline wise, what are the deadlines for applying, when I’ll know if I’m accepted, and if accepted, when I need to let you know that I am coming?
- Religious organization question: What is the role religious beliefs play in your organization? Do you prefer that students share those beliefs or require that they participate in any religious activities?
- What accommodations do you provide or, where do students of your program live and eat?
- What additional things should I bring money to cover: transportation, food, exit taxes?
- Is your program well structured or is it more flexible and I organize my own schedule?
- (4th year) Can you transfer credit to an American medical school, how will I be graded?
- How safe is it? What safety precautions should I take while there?
- What contact will I have with the United States: phone, internet, fax?
- Will I have access to educational resources like textbooks or through the internet?
- Could you give me the contact information of someone from the United States who has attended your program in the past?
- Are you a tax exempt 501(K) nonprofit organization?

Asking all of these questions in your initial communication may overwhelm an organization whose staff may already have many demands on their time. Pick a few questions that are most important to you i.e. deal breakers. You can always send another email to ask more questions, but also be conscious that it takes someone’s time to write a response.

As you begin to receive responses from different organizations, stay organized. An excel spreadsheet is an easy way to keep track of everything. In addition to tracking communication and responses in the document, also keep track of what each program had to say about those “deal breakers” and any other relevant information. It will be helpful to have all your information in one place when it comes time to make a decision.
How to Write a Resume for Global Health Applications

(Sample Resume on Next Page)
Once you have your prospective options narrowed down to less than ten, you will want to write a one-page resume to send to each organization. While most Temple Certified programs will not require this, it is highly advisable that you send a resume to non-affiliated organizations or ones Temple students/faculty have never attended. This is a means of initiating contact with the organization and letting them know you are interested. Introduce yourself as a Temple Medical student and share your background in global health/service. Include what specifically you hope to get out of the experience; why are you going? Also say when you intend to go and what skills (both medical and personal) you bring to the table. Assess the skills you have gained or will have gained by the time you travel abroad.

Conclude the resume with some questions. This part is important because it helps you to narrow down your remaining choices and confirms that the organization still exists/is currently functional. You would be surprised to know how many outdated organization websites there are out there.
Sample Abroad Resume

Hello,

My name is__________, and I am interested in volunteering abroad in the (summer/other date) of (year). I found your site by a web search and am very interested and excited about your healthcare program in (country).

A little about me:

-I am a (1st/4th) year medical student at Temple University School of Medicine in Philadelphia

-I am a member of my school’s international health organization

-I am currently taking an elective course in international healthcare

-I have studied and visited abroad many times before, including ________________

What I hope to get out of your program:

I understand that as a preclinical medical student my ‘hands-on’ experience may be limited. I am aware of liability issues for you and also risk to potential patients. I am happy to help however I am needed and more than satisfied to, if necessary, take an observational role: shadow physicians, ask questions, learn, and perform non-clinical remedial tasks to help out. I have a deep interest in international healthcare, and spent last summer reading numerous books on international healthcare delivery, strategy, and standards of care. I also participated in a year-long global health elective which included lectures on global health issues and skill sessions. I share this only to demonstrate my interest in the field (though I would be happy to discuss it further if asked). At the completion of my first year of medical school I will be proficient in taking histories and basic physical exam. I am also competent in techniques of suturing, taking blood, fingerstick, blood pressure, and basic vitals. I am/am not comfortable with “roughing it” i.e. no electricity, running water, and eating local foods. I also am/am not comfortable going to foreign countries with people who are initially perfect strangers.

This is an area of medicine I am very interested in and one that I feel may be an important part of my future career as a physician. I hope to learn a great deal through this experience and I look forward to further discussing this opportunity with you.

Before I officially apply to your program, I have a few questions. (see the list of suggested questions linked from the website)

Thank you for taking the time to read my email and answer me back

Sincerely,

Name

Email Address
Personal Packing List

Documents
☐ Passport* (plus copy)
☐ Visa* (plus copy)
☐ Immunization card* (plus copy)
☐ Air ticket* (plus copy)
☐ International SOS card* (plus copy)
☐ Medical insurance card*
☐ Trip cancellation insurance*
☐ International calling card*
☐ Driver’s license*
☐ ATM/credit cards*
☐ Cash*
☐ Copy of medical school diploma
☐ Copy of medical license
☐ CV/Résumé
☐ ‘ Resident in good standing’ letter
☐ Hospital ID badge
☐ Terms of Reference (TOR)
☐ Rotation Supervisor Evaluation Form
☐ Envelope for evaluation form
☐ Business cards
☐ Extra passport photos
☐ Address/contact list* (see below)

Address/contact list*
☐ Field contact
☐ Arrival/airport contacts
☐ Local US embassy
☐ Family, friends, neighbor
☐ Director of Global Health Education
☐ Lost ATM/credit card reporting
☐ International SOS
☐ Insurance Info
☐ Local airline office
☐ Your travel agent

Gear
☐ Money belt*
☐ Day pack
☐ Alarm clock
☐ Headlamp/flashlight
☐ Mosquito net
☐ Sunglasses
☐ Sleep sack
Gear Cont.
□ Rain protection
□ Duct tape
□ Swiss Army knife (no carry-on)
□ Sewing kit
□ Ear plugs*
□ Pocket tissues (toilet paper)
□ Luggage locks (for hotel, not flight)
□ Quick-dry travel towel
□ Flip-flops
□ Bandana/scarf
□ Travel clothesline
□ Laundry detergent
□ Sink stopper
□ Ziploc bags
□ Water purifier or tablets
□ Phrasebook
□ Travel guide
□ Stethoscope
□ White coat
□ Pocket medical references

Electronics
□ Laptop and power cord*
□ Electrical adapters/converter
□ Modem/phone adapters
□ Surge protector
□ Flash drive*
□ SecurID tag*
□ Skype headset
□ Extra laptop battery
□ Unlocked cell phone and charger*
□ iPod and charger*
□ PDA and charger*
□ Blank CD-ROMs
□ Camera*
□ Memory cards for camera
□ Other cables and adapters
□ Handheld calculator
□ Extra batteries
Personal Packing List Continued

First Aid Kit
☐ Sunscreen
☐ Mosquito repellant
☐ Antimalarial
☐ Post-Exposure Prophylaxis
☐ Purell
☐ Cipro
☐ Immodium
☐ Laxative
☐ Tylenol/Motrin
☐ Sudafed
☐ Antihistamine
☐ Albuterol inhaler
☐ Prednisone
☐ Fluconazole
☐ Bacitracin
☐ Dramamine
☐ Compazine
☐ Vitamins
☐ OCPs/Plan B
☐ Condoms
☐ Band-aids
☐ Moleskin
☐ Alcohol wipes
☐ Cloth tape
☐ Steri-Strips
☐ Safety pins
☐ Tweezers
☐ Spare eyeglasses/contacts
☐ Sutures and needle driver
☐ Nitrile gloves

Toiletries
☐ Toothbrush/paste
☐ Dental floss
☐ Shampoo/soap
☐ Comb/brush
☐ Razor/shaving cream
☐ Deodorant
☐ Contact lens kit
☐ Eyeglasses
☐ Sunscreen
☐ Makeup
☐ Mirror
Toiletries continued

Lotions/creams
☐ Lipbalm
☐ Tampons
☐ Facecloth
☐ Prescription medicine*

Extras
☐ Notebook/journal/pens
☐ Photos from home
☐ Gum/candy/PowerBars
☐ Crystal Light (for iodine tablets)
☐ Magazines/novels
☐ Playing cards/games
☐ ‘Temple’ pens/small gifts
☐ Textbooks/equipment donations
List of Medicines/Supplies

Whether you are volunteering at a clinic or rotating through a major hospital in a developing country donated supplies are always appreciated. If you will be in a more developed country, this may be less relevant to you. Regardless of where you will be, you can always ask what donations might be helpful with the qualification that you cannot promise to get anything. You are allowed two pieces of checked luggage. Generally students pack personal items in one bag and use the other to carry medical supplies.

“Dollar stores” and pharmacies are great places to buy OTC medical supplies, and you can generally buy a large amount at minimal cost. Medications obtainable only by prescription must be procured through your local hospitals and doctor offices. Approach them and explain what you are doing and for whom the medications are for. If the organization you are traveling with is a nonprofit then you can make the hospital’s or doctor’s gift tax deductible.

Make sure all medical supplies are packed in checked baggage, not carryon. Below is a list of the classic medications that are needed almost universally. You can also use the CDC’s website to learn about common illnesses in the country you are visiting and work to obtain drugs that specifically treat those ailments. Note however that there are some drugs you should not accept because they are either illegal in the foreign country or very difficult to transport. These are listed below as well.

Medications/Supplies to Bring:
1. Acetaminophen for kids (liquid) and adults(pills)
2. Ibuprofen
3. Aspirin 81mg for heart patients
4. Cough medicine for kids and adults
5. Antibiotics for ear, sinus, and lung infections
6. Worm and parasite meds for kids and adults.
7. Albuterol for kids and adults
8. Insulin (no needles)
9. Hypertension medications
10. Creams for anti fungal, hydrocortisone and triple antibiotic creams
11. Creams for sore muscles and spasms
12. Lice medications or shampoo
13. Vitamins for kids and adults and nursing mothers
14. Rubbing alcohol
15. Hydrogen peroxide
16. Bandages
17. Ace wraps
18. Suture kits
19. Lidocaine (no needles)
20. IV fluids (no needles)
21. Blood pressure cuffs, thermometers
22. Gloves
23. Antibacterial soap and hand sanitizer

Drugs/Supplies NOT to Bring:
1. Needles: you need a permit and will experience delays at both airports
2. Any controlled substances that are not prescribed for you: includes narcotic pain killers
3. Some drugs are illegal in the foreign country you are traveling to, use the CDC’s website to identify them

*Note: all of these supplies are illegal to take back into the United States as well
Where to Find Funding

International travel can be expensive! Finances are one of the largest reasons students ultimately decide not to participate in a global health opportunity, so the earlier you start planning for the expense, the better. That said, it is very doable with proper planning! Many students are able to travel using money they have set aside or saved from student loans, but this takes a great deal of planning and forethought. Temple University School of Medicine currently offers no specific funding resource for students doing global health work, but we are working to change that. For the time being, they do encourage student fundraising and have created several resources to help make this easier for students.

In addition to Temple’s resources listed below, we have also included information about other sources of funding. Those listed first have actually been used by Temple medical students abroad, though most are previously untapped.

When choosing an abroad organization or institution, you may want to consider whether they have tax-exempt nonprofit (501K) status. If they do, save your receipts and you will be able to write most or all of your expenses off on your taxes. Talk to the IRS about how to handle this. If your organization is not tax exempt, you will have to pay a substantial amount of money out of pocket.

Funding Links

MAP International Medical Fellowship
http://www.map.org/site/PageServer?JServSessionIdr009=jbozvijdn9.app1b&pagename=what_medical_fellowship

American Medical Woman’s Association
http://www.amwa-doc.org/index.cfm?objectid=2D566B40-D567-0B25-5DF8045954CA8480

Child Family Health International
http://scholarships.goabroad.com/listingsp3.cfm/listing/611

Christian Medical and Dental Association
http://www.cmda.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Westra_Missions_Scholarship

Sara’s Wish Scholarship Fund
http://www.saraswish.org/international_travel.htm

The American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene
http://www.astmh.org/funding/kean.pdf

Mayan Medical Aid (you have to go on this trip to get it)
http://www.mayanmedicalaid.org/scholarship1.htm

GHEC’s Carole M. Davis Scholarship (first become a member of GHEC, it’s free)
http://www.globalhealth-ec.org/GHEC/Resources/CaroleDavis.htm

NIH list of grants http://www.fic.nih.gov/funding/travdic06.htm
Useful Links

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Find out which vaccinations to get before you go and learn relevant health risks.

US Department of State
a. Travel, passport, and visa information
   http://travel.state.gov/
b. Learn which countries the United States government recommend or enforces you not to go to and reasons why. These are the dangerous countries.
   http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html
c. Get country specific information on safety and requirements
   http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html]
d. Obtain travel insurance and travel medical insurance from either your own health insurance provider or from one of the many companies located at the bottom of this page

World Health Organization
Get a country specific profile less detailed than the CDC but useful for knowing what steps are being taken to improve the health of a country
http://www.who.int/countries/en/

CIA World Factbook
This one is a must read to obtain a comprehensive country profile. Also a great way to decide which country to find opportunities abroad in.

The World Bank
The lender to the world, find out what the bank is doing in the country you will visit.

UNICEF
Learn what the United Nations is doing for the country you are traveling to.
http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/index.html

Other Websites of Interest
http://www.globalhealth-ec.org/default.htm
http://www.faimer.org/
http://www.temple.edu/studyabroad/globaltemple/conference.html
http://www.ifmsa-usa.org/