

Photo Tips

- Get all relevant participants in the shot, if possible. Examples: students who are working on the project, significant professors, etc.
- When taking group shots, try to avoid lining everyone up. Better to stagger the group in some way. Example: Have someone in the foreground sitting on or leaning against the edge or a desk or table. Or arrange people on a set of stairs if available.
- Make sure the background is relevant to the trip, project or event you wish to portray. Example: If the picture is meant to depict a summer research project or internship, try to have the photo taken in the lab where the research was done, or at the organization where you worked. A photo of your visit to a conference should include some evidence of that in the background—a poster, banner, etc., that reflects the nature of the meeting or the place.
- Try to get both posed (“Stand there. Look at the camera. Smile.”) and candid pictures (people in action). And don’t be afraid to try several different angles. (Back of the room, the corner, from the side; closer up, farther away. Getting up on something and shooting down can also work when taking photos of people.)
- For candid shots that capture events in the moment as they are happening, look for scenes that are critical for telling the story of what is going on. Think: What 4-or 5 photos can I take to tell most of the whole story?
- If the picture is meant to reflect your experience in a study abroad program, try to get into the background a significant landmark, distinctive architecture, or a street scene or activity that visually reflects the locale.
- Hold your camera steady, to avoid blurry shots. Bracing your arms against your body can help with this.
- If people are featured in the picture, make sure that they are in sharp focus.
- Avoid having your subject’s back to the sun. If the only way to get the picture is to have backs against the sun, then use the on-camera flash to light the subjects. It’s not always a perfect solution, but it can help.
- For a basic headshot (of you or someone else), choose a light-colored background. Avoid busy, cluttered backgrounds that will distract from the subject’s face. To avoid taking a picture that looks like a mug shot or something that belongs on a photo i.d., have the subject stand at an angle while turning their head to face the camera.
- Try to make sure the lighting is relatively uniform on individuals’ faces. Shady areas are good for even lighting, but be careful because point-and-shoots and phone cameras sometimes have a hard time setting the proper exposure if you’re in the shade and what’s outside the shade is super sunny.
- On a point and shoot camera, set your image quality and image resolution to maximum or highest quality. Low-resolution photos cannot be reproduced in print publications. Note that shooting at higher quality will eat up memory so you may need an additional, back-

up memory card. Also note that the price of memory cards has come way down, making it affordable to have a few.

- Smartphones, such as the iPhone 4S, are set at 8 megapixels, which is a high enough quality for print reproduction.
- When shooting photos of people with the iPhone, look at the screen and tap the body or face with your finger to focus the image on them (usually easier to focus on the body). You will also, in theory, set the picture's exposure so that the person who is the subject will also be properly exposed. If you need to trick the camera into making the picture a little brighter (because smartphones typically don't have manual controls), you can tap to focus on a region of the image (in roughly the same plane as your subject) that is a bit dark. This usually works.