

Traveling the World with SCI - 2015



Mission: Our goal with this project is to replicate the art of travel as best we can, and have fun doing it. Traveling takes money, imagination, and planning; and a willingness to “wing it” At the same time, you’ve got to remember “don’t be stupid” and that safety is always key. In groups of one to three, you will plan a three to five week journey - anywhere in the world. Included in the project will be planning of transportation and sleeping arrangements, daily

itineraries, and a developed knowledge of where it is that you are headed. You’ll have to budget your money. Plus, we will throw a little language learning in for good measure. Remember, the more you know going in, the better time you will have...

Do your homework in getting to know your destination so that your imagination draws you in, and enriches the experience.

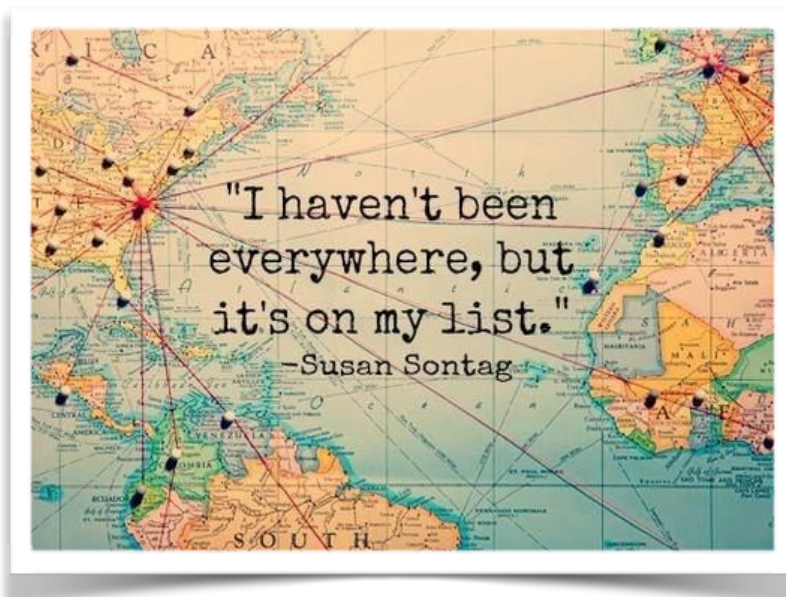
Make sure along the way to use your contacts that you’ve gained with friends and family to cut your costs and enrich your travels. Don’t ever be bashful about asking friends or “friends of friends” if you can stop by and stay a day or two. The worst that can happen is that they say “No” and then you move on. The best that can happen? Who knows? it hasn’t happened yet?”

Written requirements for this assignment will come in first person journal format using the travel journal sight mytripjournal.com - While you may plan and travel in groups - and talk about your travel partners in your personal journals, everybody submits their own work.

Meanwhile Mr. Wood will provide periodic presentations on issues ranging from “Searching for Airfares”, to “Purchasing a Backpack”, to the importance of “Wearing a money belt”, and learning how to say “Please” “Thank you” and “Where is the Train Station?” in every language possible.

With that in mind - lets get going...

and remember this is a new assignment, so your input to create the guidelines as we go, is encouraged...and will have an impact on how those guidelines develop. It’s cold, its grey, its February in Muskegon, MI...let’s have some fun! And see the world!



Written work - Journaling

All written assignments for this project will come in the form of journaling. We will journal in the first person...both in preparation for and in actual travel. Sometimes I will give you a topic - it might be a presentation or a travel article. I might send you to a youtube sight to learn about the Eurail or problems with malaria in West Mali. We will certainly take a look at kayak.com. Then you will be required to relate what you learned in a subsequent journal.

When you are out on the road - you'll create. Once in awhile I'll throw a topic into the mix for you to write on. However, for the most part... as you lay out your trip and travel in your online journal...you and your imagination will take over.

For now, lets make all journal entries - 10 points. You can post and share with me. I will keep an ongoing record of your entries for your grade. Be creative...keep it up to date...and your grade will take care of itself.

Websites to get to know

Granted, you may have your own links that take you better places than I, but I only know what I know...and because of that, and my experiences, I'd like you to get familiar with the following sights...

- **My Trip Journal** - mytripjournal.com

Go there. Sign up. Move around the sight. Get familiar with it. We will use this site as our journal base. This is not a location I've used before, so I'm getting familiar with it as are you...whatever you can teach me - will be appreciated. After moving around the site, it should provide us a solid base from which to work.

- **Lonely Planet** - lonelyplanet.com

This is a great source to start from when checking out any country. Originally a guidebook series, LP has crafted a solid online presence. We will roam the Lonely Planet sight together...I think you'll find it a really good place to learn about everything from Health and Safety, to food, lodging, and "Cool things to do." Lets use Lonely Planet as our base of operations. FYI - As a I guide book I prefer Rough Guides.

- **Kayak** - kayak.com

It's the best website that I know of to book a plane ticket. Kayak compares them all and then gives you the price. For booking it will send you to the actual site of the airline to get the ticket. While almost all airlines run through kayak, be aware that a

couple of big ones - United Airlines, US Airways, and American use an alternate site orbitz.com - so before pulling the trigger, you might drop by there as well.



- **TripAdvisor** - tripadvisor.com

Trip Advisor is what I use when traveling in order to evaluate and book inexpensive, but quality hotels. I also leave my

own written evaluations on the website. It works great, especially in third world countries, where prices are low. We'll take a look and move our way around trip advisor. You don't have to use it...but it is a pretty good option.

- **Center for Disease Control** - <http://www.cdc.gov>

I always check the cdc for traveler's health. While most destinations that you will choose for this tour, all of the first world, it is safe to drink the water and eat the food, and free of tropical disease. Even so, I still go to the cdc first. And if you are traveling anywhere off of the beaten path into the third world, definitely check in. Then get to the local Health Department and get your shots up to date. Be fully vaccinated!

- **Passport** - <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english.html/>

Whether or not you will need a passport for this trip...all of us need to check out how to get one. And really, just go and get one. You never ever know when you'll need it.

- **STA - Start the Adventure (Student Travel)** - statravel.com

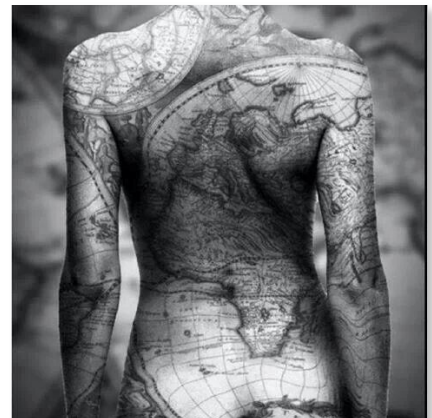
...is a great sight for young people. It provides info and useful discount student travel cards for kids under 26. You can learn about travel insurance and train passes. Get familiar with it...its extremely useful.



Syllabus

- **Planning your Trip**

Where exactly do you want to go? That is everything, isn't it. I mean the world is a big place, all sorts of adventures await...and will be shaped in large measure by where you set your focus. Do your homework - and figure out exactly what your plans are. Talk to your travel partner and see what his needs are as well. Work together and set a general itinerary. While your real travel plans will always be affected by availability of the "big two" - time and money - here we have a little freedom to stretch our wings. Still, let's be realistic when setting up your general itinerary. And remember you can't see it all in one run... often it is better to relax and let a place seep deep into your bones before moving on; so don't forget to slow down and smell roses. Always, even in this assignment, keep money and time in mind. And remember travel can be exhausting; sometimes it's nice just to slow down and rest. Plan off days... coffee and conversation at a local cafe. Maybe a glass of wine if you are of age or a hookah lounge. When in Rome...



- **When - Pick A Season**

Pick a time of the year that you want to travel; decide on how much time you intend to spend. This may be influenced by many things, most important being "when can I get the time off from work or school." Secondly, you might want to think about "on season" and "off season." High season for travel is usually summer - plane fare is more expensive. Hotels are more crowded. Generally, it costs more to go during high season. But there's a reason for that...weather is better and there's more cool things to do. Finally, don't forget the latitudes - If you are traveling the Southern Hemisphere seasons are reversed. And the nearer to the equator, the less all of this latitude matters - things stay pretty constant. Keep that in mind.



- **Where - General itinerary**

After you figure out where you generally want to travel to and when you want to go - put together a working Itinerary. It's always important that as you plan this itinerary is in front of you. I find that having a written plan helps to shape a successful trip. That doesn't mean you can't adjust...for sure, do so. "Spur of the moment" stuff is often the best. But remember if you stay for an extra day or two in Barcelona or Venice you may have to cut Lisbon out of the trip. At the end of the day, you've got a flight in and a flight out - after that your plans can be fluid. Particularly with a Eurail pass at your disposal. I've also discovered through experience that when you stay two or three days in a single place, sleeping at the same hotel, or eating at the same small restaurant is nice. You can kind of become a regular. And that feels good.

Whatever the case, always start with a plan. Note what town you'll be sleeping in each night. And then change as you alter your itinerary.

- **Sleep - Specifics - Lodging**

Good sleep cannot be overestimated. Doesn't mean you need to spend a lot of money; in fact usually expensive hotels are boring and cold. You are going to be on the move. You're going to get tired. You'll want a place where you can recharge your batteries; someplace safe and clean. Check and see if breakfast comes with the package. That can be a great experience, especially when you're sitting down at the dinner table with the family. Whether you land in a hostel or a hotel or on somebody's couch - you gotta have a decent place to sleep. And you are best to plan these things out in advance. If you do not have to pay a deposit on the room then work out your reservations well in advance; quality hostels and cool and quirky hotels fill up quickly. You don't want to get stuck paying way too much or staying at a place that doubles as a house of ill-repute (if you know what i mean). And don't get shut out; sleeping on the train station floor is

not advisable. Just remember that when and if you are not going to show, after a reservation, to contact the place, so they can fill the bed. And so you aren't charged.

Trip Advisor, Lonely Planet, and other online sights are great for finding affordable and decent sleeping arrangements. So do your homework well. Plus, its very cool when you read up on hotels and you find one that you like, to anticipate going there...its very cool



• Background Info - and "Gutentag"

This is why you are going, so read well. First of all I would always read up on the history and the politics and the current events of the county to which you are headed. People all over the world take pride in their nation. They will talk about their country and about the USA; those conversations can be really eye opening and passionate...but it helps if you know what you are talking about. So do your homework. Also, despite what you've been told, foreigners really like Americans. They just don't care so much for our government. So at least you'll have that in common

Lonely Planet does a really nice job of bringing you up to date. It covers history and current events. And before I travel, I start bookmarking local web news from the country that I'm interested in. Doing these things will surely enrich your conversations.

Finally, learn some words. Take a little notebook and write 'em down. "Please", "Thank you", "Hello", "Good-bye", and anything else that you deem necessary. Work on 'em on the road, on the train, with natives. It's fun. It's important that you try. And no matter how bad you are at your pronunciations people will so appreciate the effort. If there is one thing that I would recommend to any American traveler it would be work on those basics and use them whenever you can. It is your duty as a citizen of the world.

• Cool Stuff to Do

What do yo want to see? What do you want to do? Where do you want to go? This is where you really do your digging. Go on Lonely Planet - find some websites - and choose things that you need to see. If it is a church or a painting or a festival or just a cool old city square in Munich with a big fat cuckoo clock; it doesn't matter what draws you - its personal. But again you need to do your homework.

Say that you are going to Venice or Paris or a little village in Scotland; after you've done your research write down the things that you want to do there. If you plan three days, then you'll have more time than a one night stop. I suggest that you list your choices in order of preference. Sometimes guidebooks will have "The Top Ten" of a city or the

“Best of.” Take the advice or figure it out on your own. But there should be specific sites that you are looking for when you hit town.

Now that doesn't mean that you don't adjust. Ask everybody that you meet, wherever you go, what they would suggest. Share travel stories. Talk to your hotel and hostel and family stay hosts. They know their hometown better than you. And don't worry about straying off the itinerary.

And finally, hanging out - doing nothing at a sidewalk cafe or in a park is sometime your very best bet. You never ever ever know who you will meet. So keep your eyes and ears open - come with a plan - and be ready to toss it all overboard on a moments notice.



And on to our Assignment...

OK, this part is going to be the most fluid. As I see the assignment now, the best way to do it, is for me to provide you journal topics to get you moving. I'll also give you a weekly outline of daily topics. Meanwhile, you and your travel partner will be working through your plans. I'll use Google Classroom, with links to the blog and youtube and a daily or semi daily topic to get you moving. In addition I will do presentations on viable topics...

You will use mytripjournal.com as your vehicle for homework assignments.

Maybe one day - as you plan - I'll take fifteen minutes and explain kayak.com. My journal topic for you will be "What about Kayak?" - you can post for that day on our travel journal website about how to work the web for flights. On another day I'll bring in my backpack and fill 'er up and show you what I take when I am out on the road. Maybe "Backpacks" would be a journal title. Of course we'll have to figure out the length of such things - although it looks as though 32,000 characters is your trip journal max - we'll have to see what that actually translates to in words. I have no idea.

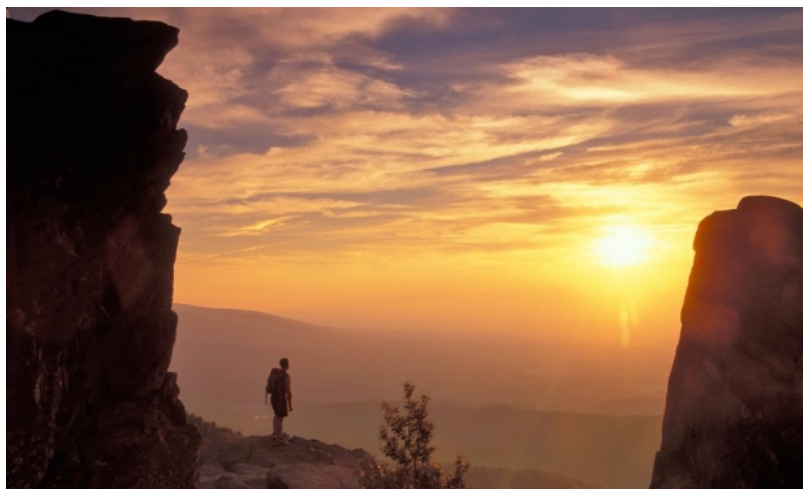
Earlier I mentioned that journal entries might be 10 points per entry. Maybe once in awhile if the issue was significant I could call it a double journal entry. That might count twenty points. I know that there is a way for you to share your journal with people - so you can share it with me. I'll keep track of your grade - maybe on your online grade book or in Google Classroom. I won't comment directly on your journal. But I'll grade it. We can figure out a way for me to provide feedback.

Once your date comes up for the trip itself - and I guess we'll plan for anything from June 6, 2015 onward, I think you can probably carry the dates out into the future - then you use the journal site as your base. You create the events of the day...always a place to sleep and a city or a village that you are visiting. As for a particular list of events - we can choose how many times you need to do that - once we get a feel for things. In fact I think a lot of this might be on the fly...

and that's OK. That's how you travel.

So...with this syllabus as our guide we will move confidently into "Traveling the World with SCI."

and remember....



"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

Mark Twain