Study Abroad Pre-Departure Checklist
Global Education, 12-189
http://gecd.mit.edu/goabroad

____ Passport: Make sure you have a valid passport. Your passport should not expire less than 90 days of your return to the U.S. Always keep your passport in a document pouch/money belt, along with other documents/money, when traveling.

____ Student visa: Apply for a student visa, if necessary. Consult your host institution or program provider if you have questions specific to the visa requirements of your program.

____ Housing: If you live in an MIT dormitory, cancel your housing using the online cancellation form, and complete a housing request form for the semester that you will return. Visit http://web.mit.edu/housing/undergrad/cancellation.html and http://web.mit.edu/housing/undergrad/application.html respectively.

____ Financial aid: If you receive financial aid, meet with your financial aid counselor to discuss the adjusted budget for your time abroad and make arrangements regarding your financial aid transfer. Remember that the Financial Aid Office will not post your financial aid proceeds until your host institution verifies your enrollment for the period that you are away. For more information, see http://web.mit.edu/sfs/financial_aid/study_abroad.html.

____ Health insurance: Investigate options for comprehensive health insurance for your time abroad, and ask your local host institution or provider program if you will be covered by an in-country health insurance plan (and what is/is not covered by this plan). Be sure you understand the specific coverage and reimbursement policies of the health insurance plan(s) you elect.

____ Physical examination: Have a physical exam at least four weeks before departure and if appropriate, have a dental exam as well. It is a good idea to discuss with your doctor any concerns as they relate to your health abroad, including plans for taking medical prescriptions overseas if needed.

____ MIT Travel Clinic: It is also recommended that you make an appointment at the MIT Travel Clinic for medical advice in countries you will visit, including travel immunizations. Call the Travel Clinic at 617-253-4488 to make an appointment, or visit http://medweb.mit.edu/directory/services/travel_clinic.html

____ International SOS: Collect your International SOS card from the Global Education Office and register online at www.internalsos.com/Private/MIT. Bring your health insurance card and your International SOS card with you abroad. The MIT membership number is 11BSGC000066.

____ Emergency contacts: Log onto MIT Horizons to enter your travel and emergency contact information at https://mit-horizons.symplicity.com. When you have identified your emergency contact person(s) overseas, you can update your Horizons profile.
___ Copies of documents: Take copies of your passport, visa (if applicable) and the health insurance card you will be using abroad with you and keep in a safe place, separated from your original documents.

___ Risk Acknowledgment: Complete and return the Risk Acknowledgement Form to the Global Education, 12-189. Review the following websites prior to departure:
(1) MIT’s Emergency website- http://web.mit.edu/emergency
(2) MIT Travel Risk Policy- http://web.mit.edu/emergency/travel_policy.html
(3) U.S. Department of State (including travel warnings)- http://travel.state.gov
(5) U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention- http://www.cdc.gov

___ International students: If you are an international student, talk with the staff of the International Students Office to see if you have completed all of the necessary steps for planning to study abroad, such as your student visa, re-entry, etc.

___ Credit cards: Check to see what the policies are for using credit cards in the country/countries you are planning to visit. If you will use a credit card abroad, make sure to inform your credit card company of your plans to be abroad prior to departure.

___ Banking and Currency: Find out what fees your bank and banks abroad charge for transactions and plan to take several forms of funds with you (i.e. credit cards, travelers checks, cash, etc). Consult currency conversion websites for currency exchange information before and while traveling: http://www.oanda.com/

___ Other cards to carry: Consider getting a frequent flyer card with the airline you are traveling with (free) and an International Student ID Card (ISIC) for student discounts ($22/year) at https://www.myisic.com/MyISIC. Carry your International SOS card along with your health insurance and credit cards.

___ Research: Research your study abroad destination and any other places abroad where you plan to travel during your time away and read up on current social, political and economic issues of your host country as well as your own.

___ Communication while abroad: Discuss with your family how and how often you will stay in touch with them while abroad. Give your parents/guardians copies of your passport as well and share information such as your flight itinerary and the local in-country contact and phone number(s). Consider setting up a Skype account, http://www.skype.com

___ Packing advice: Pack clothes for layering, guide book(s), language dictionary (if applicable), battery powered alarm clock, backpack with lock, camera, rain coat, and small gifts for a host family, advisor, etc.

___ U.S. Embassy registration: Once you arrive, register with the U.S. Embassy at https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui

___ Housing: Make sure you have secured housing and know where to go upon arrival.