



Guide to Faculty-Led Programs

Education Abroad

The Guide to Faculty-Led Programs is intended to assist Program Directors and faculty who take students abroad on University of Alabama in Huntsville study abroad programs. This guide will assist in in planning and leading a program and is organized by topic to address those issues that impact the success of a program, including preparing a program proposal; recruitment; academic and logistical planning; finances; pre-departure orientation; and advanced preparation for health, safety and security. This document also details the expectations of Program Directors and faculty who are in positions of authority and responsibility on these Faculty-Led Programs.

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Sources used in the completion of this manual include faculty handbooks from the University of Alabama, Michigan State University, The University of Minnesota and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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Introduction

The Faculty-Led Program Guide is intended to assist Program Directors/Faculty who take students abroad on UAH study abroad programs. It will be helpful in planning and leading your program and is organized by topic to address those issues that impact the success of a program, including preparing a program proposal, recruitment, academic and logistical planning, finances, preparation, pre-departure orientation, and advanced planning for health, safety and security.

Thank you for choosing to commit your time and energy to providing a high-quality study abroad experience. Your leadership and preparation for the program abroad can result in a study abroad experience that is one of the most enriching and inspiring experiences of a student's life. Your efforts, commitment, and dedication make these experiences possible.

Faculty-Led Programs Abroad

Study Abroad is a transformative experience that contributes to the holistic development of a student. The goal of the Education Abroad Office (EAO) is to expand international opportunities for the UAH undergraduate community that are accessible as well as innovative. The Education Abroad Office is continually seeking faculty involvement in international programs in order to achieve this goal of making international experiences a hallmark of undergraduate education at UAH.

A faculty-led group program is a program in which the academic instruction on site is provided by UAH faculty or specially contracted host institution faculty teaching UAH courses. These programs are typically offered during the interim and summer sessions but can happen throughout the year. A program is typically short-term and can last from 2 to 8 weeks (2 summer sessions). In order to increase recruitment by minimizing scheduling conflicts, it is wise to closely follow the UAH academic calendar when determining dates for a program, so students have the option of taking summer courses at UAH while also participating in a study abroad program.

The Education Abroad Office will assist you in developing a study abroad program and helping market the program to UAH students. If you are taking over responsibility for an existing program, it is critical that you discuss the program with previous leaders. If you are new to leading a program, EAO will be an important resource for you and will assist in all elements of program planning and marketing. Faculty leaders should discuss program ideas and considerations with Education Abroad prior to submitting a formal proposal for the program.

Education Abroad and faculty work together from the very beginning of the proposal process. The Education Abroad Coordinator will meet with faculty to discuss program ideas and to review essential elements in planning for and proposing a new program. This discussion can include:

- Education Abroad proposal documents, requirements and deadlines
- Using third-party providers to make logistical arrangements (**CIS, AIFS, SAI, USAC**)
- Policies regarding salary, family members, graduate assistants, etc.
- Education Abroad responsibilities
- Faculty director's responsibilities on campus and abroad
- Creating a program budget, faculty expenses, enrollment minimum and maximum
- Student recruitment, marketing strategy and materials
- Student applications, registration and insurance
- Emergency planning and preparedness, risk management, and safety abroad
- Student Pre-departure orientation (mandatory)
- Faculty risk management training prior to departure (mandatory)
- Evaluation and assessment of courses and programs

Leading or teaching a faculty-led study abroad program is significantly different from being on the UAH campus. When accompanying students overseas, the responsibilities of the faculty member extend far beyond the classroom. It is important that study abroad program directors and faculty understand these responsibilities.

Responsibilities include, but not limited to, the following:

- Arranging all program logistics, either directly or through a third-party provider (ask Education Abroad for a list of approved providers)
- Attending required faculty Risk Management Trainings
- Communicating with students prior to program departure
- Providing and shaping course content
- Delivering course content (if applicable)
- Grading (if applicable; if teaching services are being contracted from a host institution on-site, the conversion and submission of final grades is always the responsibility of the instructor of record).
- Entering grades at UAH
- Conducting on-site orientation abroad
- Enforcing attendance policy
- Documenting and reporting all incidents regarding student behavior, health, safety, and security. This includes failure to attend scheduled events, trips or classes
- Being available to students via an emergency contact number/ cell phone **at all times**

- Working with students and host institutions to resolve any housing issues, whether host family or dormitory, etc.
- Monitoring class participation and participation on excursions and student behavior
- Assisting, to the extent necessary, with the health and safety (hospital/doctor visits) of students during the program
- Assisting students with cross-cultural adjustment
- Keeping up with receipts and expenses associated with advance funds, adhering to the program budget, and following UAH financial policies
- Communicating closely with Education Abroad concerning any matters related to student safety and well-being, behavior, or other issues that arise involving students
- Administering program evaluations and assessments
- Providing Education Abroad with a director's report at the end of the program

Policies/Guidelines for Establishing a Group Program

Program directorships and faculty participation in overseas programs are open to all tenured and tenure-track faculty, as well as instructors, as determined by departments, and contingent upon approval from the Dean of the appropriate college. If the program is to offer courses in more than one department, approval must be obtained from the appropriate departments and colleges. Signatures from all departments and colleges involved must be procured by the faculty member(s) preparing the proposal. Proposals are considered incomplete without appropriate departmental or college signatures.

All programs must have at least one faculty director as well as another individual in a supervisory role on site for the duration of the program should the faculty director become unavailable/incapacitated. This second person must have training in emergency response and risk mitigation.

This person may be:

- A second faculty member (This option tends to be the more expensive option)
- On-site program coordinator provided by contracted vendor
- Exchange partner international office employee/s

Any program involving travel that requires spending time in a country for which the U.S. State Department has issued a TRAVEL Advisory level 3 or 4 will require additional approval through the International Risk Committee. Please note EA policy mandates that all program directors and faculty teaching on programs must attend training sessions on student health and safety, budget reconciliation, and risk management. **This policy is informed and endorsed by UAH Office of Legal Counsel and Office of Risk Management.**

Courses

Courses must meet the same standards of other courses taught at UAH. Each three-hour course must demonstrate a minimum of 45 instructional contact hours in order to equal the contact hours associated with a three-credit course. On-campus instruction (prior or post travel) as well as excursions and site visits while abroad that directly relate to the course curriculum can be included in the 45 contact hours.

Program directors must consult with their department concerning the appropriate course numbers that should be used for the program.

New courses must be approved by the appropriate college curriculum committee and the University curriculum committee. Refer to your college for procedures and instructions for creating a new course. NOTE: Courses previously approved and taught on campus, but reconceptualized to include a study abroad component, do not need to go through this approval process, nor do courses with special topics credit.

If the program is to offer courses in more than one department, approval must be obtained from each department head and college. The faculty member preparing the proposal must procure signatures from all departments involved. Proposals are considered incomplete without appropriate departmental and college signatures. Proposals include an academic and budget section, and both must be reviewed and signed.

Program and/or Graduate Assistant

A program assistant cannot be housed with faculty. If the program assistant has academic responsibilities and a potential influence on grades, the program assistant cannot be housed with students. If the program assistant has only logistical and administrative functions for the program, it is acceptable for the assistant to be housed with students, though it is still preferable that the assistant have separate accommodations if this can be achieved.

Duration of Program

Keep in mind that program dates are critical for student recruitment, flight arrangements, and logistical reservations. If your program departs in the summer, program dates should not overlap with Spring Semester on campus classes and finals. While many of UAH faculty-led programs are abroad for three to four weeks and operate during the Summer I or Summer II terms, Maymester is included in the summer term and therefore an option. The Winter Interim term normally runs late December to early January and is **not an option for faculty-led programs**. Consult the UAH academic calendar for exact dates outlining Interim, Summer I and Summer II terms. When possible, it is preferable for study abroad programs to not overlap terms as this may affect student recruitment. Your proposal

must include a tentative itinerary that includes the departure date, return date, first and last day of class, travel days, excursions and site visits.

Program Enrollment

A minimum and maximum number of students must be established for each program. The minimum number of required participants is typically 8-10 students. Exceptions to the minimum are possible, but must be approved by the respective college Dean(s) and the EAO. The maximum number of students is

determined by a number of factors that may include departmental requirements and/or restrictions, lodging and transportation limitations while abroad, and the number of students that can be managed effectively abroad.

Set realistic enrollment targets when creating the budget (the recommendation is that budgets be set according to 10 participants). The result will be a more attractive program fee and a realistic budget for the program.

Please note that faculty compensation is determined by the respective Dean(s) of the colleges involved.

Excursions and High-Risk Activities

If your program involves excursions and travel arrangements within the program there are a couple of ways you can coordinate these excursions: (1) employ the services of a U.S. or in-country provider/agency, or (2) make the arrangements yourself. Do not plan any activities or excursions that involve a high degree of risk such as bungee jumping, parachuting or hang gliding, etc.. Students may approach you about participating in these activities. Do not endorse, encourage or facilitate independent student activities that involve a high degree of risk. Most insurance policies will not cover the cost for treatment involving these activities. The UAH insurance policy does not cover the cost for treatment involving such activities.

Transporting students: Neither faculty nor students are permitted to rent vehicles and transport the group in a foreign country.

Cell Phone Policy

Program directors **are required** to have a cell phone available at all times while abroad with students, and the cost of the phone and minutes should be calculated into your budget. There are many ways to obtain international cell phone service. Program Directors can (1) find your own provider through on-site contacts or internet search; (2) add international service to your personal cell phone for the times and locations while you are abroad (this tends to be an expensive option); (3) rent or purchase a cell phone upon arrival; (4) purchase a plan through a provider in advance of the program departure, or (5) purchase a SIM card for your personal phone and get a local number (can be easy

and inexpensive). Cell phone numbers should be provided to OEA prior to program departure or as soon as they are obtained in country.

Proposals and Program Approval

The Education Abroad “Study Abroad Request for Approval” form is the official document used to propose and develop new study abroad programs. Once a program has been approved, it will **not** have to seek approval every year. Only a program update, updated budget, and destination description are required. A **Study Abroad Request for Approval** **is** required if a program has not run for the past **two years** or if there have been significant changes to the program (for example, country change, etc.).

The proposal application consists of two parts: academic and budgetary.

Academic Content

- Program Details
- Rationale
- Academic Framework and Delivery
- Orientation Programming
- Health, Safety and Security
- Logistics
- Budget, Program Administration and Policies for Withdrawals and Cancellations
- Academic Endorsements

Budgetary Content

- Student costs (housing, meals, entrance fees, insurance, etc.)
- Director salary and expenses (airfare, housing, meals, entrance fees, etc.)
- Vendor proposal
- Program overhead (classrooms, bank fees, supplies, emergency fund, cell phone, tips, and other fees)

Risk Content

- Risk and Liability Form
- Proof of liability insurance of at least \$3 million (from vendor)
- Emergency Action Plan
- Health Care Facilities

Most of the above information will be provided by the vendor/provider in the program proposal by request. All proposals must go through the appropriate academic and college for approvals prior to their submission to the EAO by **November 4**. Once you have submitted your proposal to the EAO, it is reviewed by EAO. You may be contacted with questions and requests for further information or

clarification. Once your proposal has been approved, the EAO will contact you and work will begin on publicity materials, web content, and recruitment strategy.

The University of Alabama in Huntsville reserves the right to require heightened review of other international travel and to withdraw approval at any time that conditions warrant. Current UAH policy requires review and approval of travel to locations with (1) a US State Department Travel Advisory of Level 3 and/or (2) an International SOS Travel Security Risk Rating of High.

Travel is prohibited to locations with (1) a US State Department Travel Advisory of Level 4, (2) an International SOS Travel Security Risk Rating of Extreme, and/or (3) a CDC Warning Country of Level 3. For information on how to request a high risk waiver, please contact gracie.lester@uah.edu.

Basis for Course/Program Approval

The Education Abroad Office will review the proposed course and budget to assess the viability of the course. In addition, the OEA will review the proposal for risk management and liability concerns. The EAO may request changes to the itinerary or proposal before approval.

After approval is secured, the faculty may request a contract from the third party provider. The contract must be approved by the faculty director, reviewed by the EAO and UAH Legal Counsel, and signed by the provost.

Marketing of the program to students should not begin until approval is granted. A program price must be finalized before marketing of the program can begin.

Required On-site Support

All faculty-led courses and programs must either contract with a vetted third-party provider or an already established partner institute (exchange partner) with 24/7 on-site emergency and logistical support to help develop the course and manage potential emergencies on site.

For a list of pre-approved third party providers, please contact EAO.

Note: Third-party providers must hold liability insurance of at least 3 million dollars. It is preferred that vendors are US-based, so we can ensure they are subject to the same legal requirements and standards as our institution.

Timeline of Deadline and Events

Refer to Terra Dotta for the most up-to-date timeline of study abroad events and deadlines.

Marketing and Recruitment

The creation of program publicity materials and information for the website is contingent upon approval of the program proposal. **The program proposal must incorporate details necessary to produce detailed information for the website and publicity materials.** Publicity and web materials are a collaborative effort between the **Program Director** and Education Abroad.

Keys to a successful program

Below are suggestions from prior faculty leaders and administrators that identify elements that have led to rewarding and successful study abroad programs:

1. Remember that students are the target audience and they will be most concerned with issues of cost, value, uniqueness, and attractiveness of the program as it fits with their degree requirements and personal needs and interests.
2. Give great attention to detail during all aspects of program preparation and planning.
3. Communicate regularly with students through e-mail and informal gatherings prior to program departure.
4. Communicate regularly with Education Abroad and utilize the personnel, resources, and professional staff to give your program the best opportunity to succeed.

Ways to Recruit and promote your program once it is approved:

- Begin recruiting early and continue until your program is full.
- Get into classrooms and talk about your program.
- Hold information meetings.
- Use social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- Create a display you can put up in academic advising offices, outside of your office, or for use on departmental bulletin boards.
- Participate in the fall and spring **Study Abroad fairs**

- Secure a table at the Charger Union for a few hours during high traffic times (11-1). Set up a display and talk to students!
- Table or put up marketing materials in the residence halls.
- Talk to colleagues, teaching assistants, and **academic advisors**. Let them know about your program and ask them to promote it.
- Keep lists of students who are interested in your program and email them with information regarding meetings, deadlines, or interesting details. Share the list with EAO.
- Attend special events on campus, especially events sponsored by your department that will draw students. There may be opportunity for discussion about your program!
- Make sure your program is featured in any departmental/college newsletters.
- As much as possible, utilize former students to help you recruit. Prospective students are very interested in hearing another student's perspective. The testimony of past participants is one of the most effective recruitment tools you have.
- Make sure the program information on the Education Abroad website is correct.
- Know that many students do not even think about their summer plans until March, thus try to make your program known to them prior to that.

Preparing to Go Abroad

Faculty Workshops

Education Abroad conducts mandatory Risk Management and Financing training with program directors and faculty in April, prior to departure. In addition, all faculty leading or teaching on a program abroad must have up-to-date Clery training.

The workshops are mandatory for Program Directors and/or co-directors and UAH faculty teaching on programs and include the following:

Risk Management Training

- Emergency planning and preparedness
- Student Health abroad (with UAH Counseling Center)
- Student conduct and disciplining policies
- Campus Security Authority (CSA) expectations and Clery Act Reporting (with UAHPD)
- U.S. State Department travel registration
- UAH insurance coverage for students and faculty
- Evaluations
- Directors report/deadline

Financial Training (with Accounts Payable)

- Required forms
- What can be included as eligible advance cash expenditures, and reporting deadline
- Appropriate record keeping
- Final financial report
- Per diem reimbursement for meals

Required Documents Prior to Departure

Program Directors are required to furnish Education Abroad with all pertinent contact information while abroad for each faculty member and/or graduate student traveling with the program. The Program Director submits this information through Terra Dotta prior to traveling abroad with students. This information should be shared and discussed with students, parents and other faculty involved with the program. All UAH employees traveling abroad on Education Abroad programs must provide a copy of their passport, program itinerary and pertinent location information through Terra Dotta prior to departure. Education Abroad requests housing addresses to stay compliant with The Clery Act. The Clery Act requires all colleges and universities that participate in federal financial programs to keep and disclose information about crime on and near their respective campuses, even locations abroad occupied by The University of Alabama.

Pre-Departure Orientation

Education Abroad, in conjunction with other campus authorities will organize and present multiple mandatory student Pre-Departure Orientations (PDO). Students must attend one of the various PDO offerings.

Education Abroad student pre-departure topics include:

- academic credit
- required documents
- health & safety
- insurance
- safe traveler tips
- financial preparation
- safety & security abroad
- behavioral expectations
- alcohol use & illegal drugs
- health & wellness
- communicating while abroad
- social media
- Cross-Cultural Adjustment

- Returning to UAH
- Making the most of the study-abroad experience

Each program director **must** organize at least one pre-departure specific to his/her program. Faculty-led program specific pre-departures should include:

- country specific information
- daily agenda and departure information
- academic and behavioral expectations
- safety and security
- cultural norms to be aware of
- packing list
- information to leave with parents/significant others
- group dynamics, flexibility, and cooperation

Questions Regarding Medications/Immunizations

Students/parents may pose questions regarding medications, vaccines, immunizations or over-the-counter medications. Students should be referred to a qualified health professional or the information can be obtained by the student from reputable sources such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) etc.

Managing Contact with Family Members

As the Program Director, you will have parents contacting you regarding multiple aspects of your program. The student should be communicating directly with family members regarding the program. However, we are aware that students do not always give parents complete information. Reassuring parents and providing them with information is helpful and allows the parent to be an active supporter of the students and their plans to study abroad. Be careful, however, to respect FERPA restrictions whenever communicating with parents about student **academic** performance. If there are questions you are not comfortable answering, refer them to EAO.

Education Abroad should be contacted immediately regarding any critical incidents involving the student or the program while abroad. EAO will manage communication with the student's emergency contact when necessary. If a student is ill or injured, contact EAO so that we are informed in case a family member should contact our office. **Any issue involving a student should be reported to EAO immediately.** Additionally, any time a student leaves the program for any reason, UAH policy requires EAO should be informed prior to the student's departure from the program (weekend trips).

Family Members and other Accompanying Parties Program

Faculty-led programs are first and foremost academic programs created for UAH students. However, EAO recognizes that in some limited circumstances program directors may want to have family members or other accompanying parties with them for some or all of a program. An “accompanying party” is anyone, including family members, who is not affiliated with the program as a faculty member, staff, or student. Accompanying parties are permitted although EAO reserves the right to impose limits and/or conditions on the roles, activities, and presence of any accompanying party. These limits and conditions are based on concerns related to health, safety, security, and liability as determined by EAO in consultation with UAH Risk Management and University Counsel. Faculty directors must recognize that accompanying parties implicate institutional liability issues, as well as create competition for the director’s attention and can potentially adversely impact the program experience for participating students. The following policies describe the limits and/or conditions that apply to accompanying parties, including family members.

1. **Notification:** As soon as possible prior to the start of a program the director/faculty member should notify and discuss with the EA Director his/her desire to have an accompanying person on the program. The director/faculty member should submit the following information in writing (to facultyled@ua.edu):
 - a. Names of all accompanying parties;
 - b. Relationships to the director/employee;
 - c. Age, or ages, if the application applies to one or more children 19 years of age or younger;
 - d. Dates of planned visit(s);
 - e. A plan to address the supervision needs of minors, or other accompanying parties not capable of independent foreign travel;
 - f. Statement that the accompanying parties will not interfere with the director’s/faculty member’s program responsibilities, including the ability to respond to student-related emergencies.
 - g. Statement from other UAH employees/faculty traveling on the program, if any, acknowledging that they are aware of the request for an accompanying party or parties to join the program.This notice will then be shared with the department chair of the faculty so that everyone is aware of the plan set forth for the accompanying parties.

1. **Employment:** As a general rule, family members of the faculty director may not be hired to perform duties if those duties are under the general supervision/direction of the faculty director.
2. **Liability:** Family members and dependent children must sign an assumption of risk and release form to have on file with EAO. Family members and dependent children must be enrolled in the university international medical and emergency insurance coverage at their own expense.

3. **Accommodations:** Program director family members may share accommodations provided that such sharing is allowed by the housing provider. The program budget cannot cover housing expenses for family members. Under no circumstances should family members share accommodations with students (unless those family members are also enrolled in the program as UAH credit-earning students) or graduate assistants.
4. **Excursion/Travel:** Family members may participate in program excursions and field trips, but they are responsible for the planning, booking and/or registration (if necessary), and arrangement of transportation. OAE will not and cannot assist in these matters. If participating in group excursions, family members must pay for expenses separately from the group. At no time should program funds be used to pay entrance fees for family members.
5. **Group meals:** If participating in group meals, the program director must reimburse the program for any expenses incurred by family members if a separate bill cannot be obtained. Program money cannot be used to buy meals for accompanying family members.
6. **Minor children:** Minor children accompanying faculty directors must be adequately supervised at all times and have a caregiver who is not a faculty director. The presence of minor children or other family members should not disrupt or alter the study abroad program in any way.
7. **Responsibilities:** Family members are not allowed to act in a supervisory manner over the students.
8. **Insurance/Risk Management:** Family members are required to purchase the same insurance policy used by the University for the duration of the program.

Student Airfare

Program directors should include an estimated airfare in their budget, but student airfare will generally not be covered in the program fee the students pay. If working with a third party provider, it can be helpful to ask them to arrange a group flight and include it in their program proposal. Typically, group flights require a minimum of 10 tickets. Faculty airfare, however, is always included in the program budget, and OEA will facilitate the purchase of your ticket abroad. If asking students to purchase their own airfare individually, program directors should determine the flight itinerary most appropriate for their program and should provide information to enrolled students, along with contact information of an agent to book flights. OEA can provide recommendations on pre-approved airline agents.

Program directors and/or teaching faculty should plan to fly over with the students and, when possible, return with students. In the event that returning with students is not possible, program directors must assist students with travel to the airport and ensure all students are checked in and through security before their departure from the airport. Please inform the EAO in advance if you will not be returning with the students.

Students are advised to not purchase plane tickets unless the program has accepted its minimum numbers to run. Students will be responsible for purchasing their own tickets and should either use the itinerary provided by the program director or arrange to arrive at a similar time. Any student who deviates from the established itinerary must provide the program director with a detailed itinerary prior to departure. The program director will relay this information to the EAO.

Students who do not fly on the established itinerary are responsible for meeting up with the group at a pre-established date, place, and time.

Housing Policies

At no time should faculty directors or family members share accommodations with students (unless those family members are also enrolled in the program as UAH credit-earning students). Current UAH policy prohibits unmarried students of the opposite sex from sharing the same sleeping quarters. If students live in a flat/apartment with individually locked bedrooms, it is permissible for male and female students to share the apartment, but not the bedrooms. If there are accessibility issues for a specific student, refer to the UAH Disability Services.

If a student requests assistance with housing arrangements, either before or after the program dates, you can provide contact information, but do not make specific arrangements for them outside of the official program dates.

Passports

Take the time to check the validity of your passport and make sure the expiration date is not rapidly approaching. Your passport must be valid during the entire period of your travel abroad and up to 90 days beyond your scheduled return. If you need to renew your passport, please make sure to do so within the appropriate time frame. The cost for a new passport or for renewing your passport is your own expense. For the latest information on passport rates and application procedures, visit www.travel.state.gov.

Remember to make copies of all-important documents, such as your passport, visa, and airline ticket and to leave them with a family member. You are required to submit a copy of these documents to EAO prior to departure.

Visas

It is the responsibility of the Program Director and students participating in a program to inquire about visa requirements for all countries to be visited, including those before and after the study abroad program that student and faculty may visit. Consult with the consular office for the country concerned or check the visa entry requirements that can be found on the Department of State

website. Additional requirements may need to be complied with, including U.S. immigration policy and home country requirements. EAO will register all faculty and students with the Department of State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) prior to departure.

Travelers may be denied entry into, or be deported from, a country for which a required visa has not been obtained. For some countries, certain medical requirements must be met before a visa will be issued. A valid passport is required for all visa applications. Additionally, you must be able to send your passport along with the visa application to the appropriate consular office or expeditor.

Remember to include the cost of your visa (if applicable) in the faculty cost section of your budget proposal.

Visa requirements may be different for non-U.S. citizens. EAO routinely advises international students enrolling in a faculty-led summer program that they are responsible for obtaining their visa in a timely manner. If a student is unable to obtain a visa in time and has to withdraw from a program, the standard financial penalties will apply. Encourage your students to apply for their visas in a timely manner and facilitate this process as much as possible.

Website Resources

The websites below may be helpful to you as you plan and conduct your study abroad program.

- Office of Education Abroad (OEA): <https://www.uah.edu/study-abroad>
- Department of State: <http://travel.state.gov>
- Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC): <http://www.osac.org>
- Center for Disease Control: <http://www.cdc.gov>
- World Health Organization: <http://www.who.int>
- Lonely Planet: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/us>
- International SOS: <http://www.internationalsos.com/members>

Student Procedures and Policies

Students must complete and submit all components of the online student application for UAH Faculty-Led Group Programs. Students can access the application system through the EAO website (<https://www.uah.edu/study-abroad>). The student application process (pre and post acceptance) includes important information that is required by every student seeking to study abroad..

Student Application

Students must complete and submit a completed EAO application for UAH faculty-led group programs by the announced deadline. The process is online via Terra Dotta software, and the application is

linked to the program webpage. EAO will build the program webpage after the program and program budget have been approved.

The student approval process consists of a review of the student's academic performance and judicial record. *Faculty directors must grant their approval to all participants.* Program directors have discretion in the approval process, but must substantiate their reasons for rejection. Program directors will have access to Terra Dotta in order to accept the students into the course or program.

After students have been accepted into the program, faculty directors ensure all committed students register for the course.

Determination of Viability of the Program

Program viability is determined by confirmed enrollment (whether or not the minimum enrollment was met for the budget to be feasible for the program).

- In the event a minimum enrollment was not met, the program director must meet with EAO to review the program budget and determine if adjustments can be made to make the program financially viable.

Students from Other Institutions

Students from other institutions may participate in UAH-facilitated programs, but their final eligibility will be determined in consultation with the faculty directors and EAO. UAH students will have first priority for participation in an UAH program.

If a student from another institution is allowed to participate, they must complete the non-degree application and be admitted to the University as a non-degree seeking student. Additionally, they must satisfactorily complete all pre-departure activities and documents required of all students.

Dual Enrollment Students

Dual enrollment students are not allowed to participate in UAH study abroad programs.

Participation of Family Members of Students

All non-faculty participants in a short-term international travel course must:

1. Receive approval from the faculty director or instructor of the course to participate.
2. Be a registered student of University of Alabama in Huntsville, or, if not a registered student at UAH, apply for non-degree admission and register for at least one credit as an auditor of the travel course for liability reasons.
3. Register through the EAO using the Terra Dotta platform and complete all required paperwork by the established deadline.

4. Attend mandatory study abroad orientation sessions.
5. Further, all participants will:
 - a. pay all scheduled course expenses associated with the study abroad course or program at the full rate (non-UAH students will not be eligible for any discounts based on support from the College Dean or other entities). This includes the UAH study abroad application fee, pre-departure payments, insurance and risk management fee, and all required on-site expenses as delineated in the abroad course or program budget.
 - b. read and sign the document "ASSUMPTION OF RISK, INDEMNIFICATION, AND RELEASE" and be enrolled in the UAH health insurance plan.
 - c. agree to participate in all scheduled abroad activities of the course and program. Failure to do so, unless permission is granted by the instructor, may result in the participant being removed from the course or program and being sent home.

After Approval of Student Applications

After students are approved to participate in the program, they will receive instruction about next steps. EAO will collect pertinent information from students via their Terra Dotta application. Acceptance is contingent on submission of all required documents and payments. Program directors will also receive notification of approval and contact information for the student. It is recommended that program directors communicate with approved students soon after approval in order to welcome them to the program and to encourage them to ask questions. This contact can also contribute to students staying committed to the program.

Student Application Denial/Revocation of Permit

Students who are not approved to participate will be notified in writing via email.

Late Applications

Students may apply after the priority deadline, but their approval to participate will depend on the number of students already intending to participate in the program and on whether enough time exists to readjust the budget and/or the bookings for the group.

PRE-APPROVAL MATERIALS

(information collected before a student is officially accepted):

- Application Overview
- Legal Documents
- Money Matters
- Passport and Visa Information
- Consent to Disclose form
- Office of Student Conduct review

- Course Information
- UAH Scholarships & Study Abroad
- Faculty-Led: Program Selections (only if General Application)

POST-APPROVAL MATERIALS

(information collected after a student has been officially accepted):

- Faculty Led: Payment Process
- Summary of Cost and Payment information
- Faculty Led: Financial Aid
- Insurance Information
- Course Selection Form (if applicable)
- Pre-Departure Orientation attendance
- Medical Report
- Travel Itinerary
- Passport and Personal Information
- Download International SOS app
- Using Scholarships

Through Terra Dotta, faculty can review applications prior to approval and acceptance, and/or set additional eligibility requirements. Please be sure to discuss those criteria with EA prior to publishing information regarding the program.

Typically, students must have a minimum 2.5 GPA to be eligible for a faculty-led study abroad program. GPA's slightly under a 2.5 can be considered. Faculty who wish to set higher GPA requirements should inform OEA in the original program proposal prior to the publishing of any program information. Occasionally a student will apply that does not have the minimum 2.5 requirement. In those cases, the student must get permission from the OEA Director, who, after consultation with the Program Director, will determine whether or not the student is approved.

Post acceptance

Once a student has been approved a payment deposit is required to secure their spot. **All students are required to pay a program deposit in cash, check or credit and cannot use Financial Aid to make the initial deposit.**

Student Application Denial/ Revocation of Acceptance

A student application may be denied, or his/her acceptance may be revoked if the student's conduct prior to departure raises doubt as to the suitability of the student for program participation. Participation may be denied based on prior disciplinary or criminal action. The names of all UAH

students studying abroad are provided to the Office of Student Conduct. Any student on disciplinary probation can be removed from the program enrollment. Students with serious student conduct records will be handled on an individual basis with the program director and the Education Abroad director. EAO reserves the right to prevent a student from program participation on the basis of past behavioral issues.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

A cancellation of a previously approved abroad program depends on varying factors. If the program does not have enough participants, the cancellation decision will be made expeditiously in order to ensure that registrations and bookings connected to the program can be cancelled without penalty and so that students and faculty can make alternative plans. In the event of a natural disaster, epidemic outbreak, or other crisis, the University's Travel Advisory Committee will meet to determine the viability of the program.

Please consult the Payment, Cancellation, and Refund Policy for more information on further policies and guidelines.

Withdrawal Policy

Students must submit a withdrawal form with their intent to cancel. Students should include their name, CWID, study abroad program, semester, year, and reason for withdrawing. Verbal withdrawals from students, parents, or Program Directors will not be accepted. Refunds are date sensitive.

Students who withdraw prior to payments being made on behalf of a program can anticipate receiving a full refund minus a \$100 cancellation fee. However, the closer to departure, the more likely that costs will have been prepaid on a student's behalf, therefore decreasing the potential amount for refund or will owe a portion of the program cost. After the program begins, the student is responsible for the entire program fee and is not eligible for a refund.

While Abroad

Director Responsibilities While Abroad

A Program Director fulfills many roles while abroad and has responsibilities that are integral to the success of the program. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Teaching (if applicable)
- Providing and shaping course content (if applicable)
- Grading (if applicable; if teaching services are being contracted from a host institution on-site, the conversion and submission of final grades is always the responsibility of the Program Director)

- Conducting on-site orientation
- Enforcing attendance and behavioral policy
- Documenting and reporting all incidents regarding student behavior, health, safety, and security. This includes failure to attend scheduled events, trips or classes
- Being available to students via emergency contact number/ cell phone **at all times**
- Making adjustments to itineraries (as needed) and coordinating events
- Working with students and host institutions to resolve any housing issues, whether host family or dormitory, etc.
- Monitoring class participation and participation on excursions
- Assisting, to the extent necessary, with the health and safety (hospital/doctor visits) of students during the program
- Monitoring and encouraging good student behavior
- Assisting students with cross-cultural adjustment
- Keeping up with receipts and expenses associated with advance funds
- Adhering to the program budget and to UAH financial policies, including not purchasing alcohol using any UAH funds or credit cards
- Communicating closely with OEA concerning any matters related to student safety and well-being, behavior, or other issues that arise involving students
- Administering program evaluations and assessments
- Providing OEA with a director's report at the end of the program
- Submitting all paperwork associated with the financials of the program
- Staying in country past the program end date if a student is hospitalized or otherwise incapacitated

On-Site Orientation

Once you arrive on-site it is very important to conduct an orientation to familiarize students with safety and security on-site, housing rules, local transportation, the daily itinerary, behavioral and emergency protocol while abroad. Remind students they should inform you of the following: any medical issue you should be aware of in order to assist them in case of an emergency; any travel plans away from the group to include itinerary and contact information; any issues regarding housing.

Maintaining good communication between faculty and students is a key component to promoting safety while on-site. During on-site orientation the following should be covered with students:

- Becoming familiar with the use of calling cards for public phones abroad and how to place international calls.
- Provide students with your cell phone number, the emergency number of the on-site provider (if applicable), and the local telephone number for emergencies (the equivalent of "911") and be certain that they know how to place calls in-country.

- Reiterate to students that if they are traveling away from the group on a “free” weekend that they are required to inform you of their plans and required to provide you with a copy of their itinerary. Whether students purchase cell phones in advance or on-site, make sure you have their cell phone number in the event the student needs to be contacted.
- Reiterate to students that they are required to inform you about any emergency. For medical emergencies, explain how UA study abroad insurance operates so that they are familiar with how to handle a medical emergency, particularly in the case where a student needs to use the insurance when they are traveling independently of the group. The UAH study abroad insurance policy is distributed to students during pre-departure orientation.

Create an Emergency Action Plan with the whole group. While creating this plan, incorporate the following:

- Discuss potential crises that could occur in your area.
- Create a communication tree so that members can contact each other quickly.
- Designate a primary and secondary meeting place.
- Designate a person to be responsible for the group and communication should you become incapacitated.
- Give students contact information pertaining to local law enforcement, hospitals or health care providers.
- Discuss preventable accidents with students, emphasizing such things as local traffic patterns, pub and drinking culture, drug laws, unsafe swimming, and the types of things that can happen when walking down a street alone at night in a foreign city/country. It is also good to be very specific about safe and unsafe behaviors, including sexual behavior, and how to dress and behave to avoid unwanted attention.
- Communicate to students the appropriate modes of conduct and the consequences of not following those modes of conduct.
- Ask students to use common sense and caution when divulging information to strangers about themselves, the program, their itinerary, and their fellow classmates.

Managing Group Dynamics

Teaching/leading a course abroad is very different from teaching it on campus. Not only are your students learning and traveling together, but also, they are either living together or with host families and sharing an intense international experience with each other.

Faculty-led programs are unique within study abroad programs because of the strong emphasis on the group. It is common for strong bonds to be formed among participants, sometimes resulting in lifelong friendships. Working together and relying on one another can lead to positive and successful study abroad experiences. Encouraging flexibility and patience among students when encountering

or dealing with the stresses and challenges of travel can be helpful. As the Program Director, it is advisable that you help cultivate in students some basic principles of living and studying together. Respect for each other's differences is intrinsic to living and studying in a group successfully. While some differences can be observable such as a student's physical appearance, others such as social class or identity, may not be. Encourage students to be open-minded and respectful to the differences of other personalities and cultures.

Cultural Adjustment and Culture Shock

As Program Director/Faculty, one of your roles will be helping students to understand local cultural practices. You can help students cultivate their understanding by encouraging questions and personal investigation throughout the program. Not all students come with the same flexibility towards diversity and new situations, and some may be hesitant or have difficulty understanding cultural differences. For some students, participation in your program may be their first time abroad, while others may be seasoned travelers and have a greater comfort level with the differences in culture. Utilize your own understanding of the culture as well as the host institution staff to give students a greater understanding of their observations regarding differences in culture.

Be aware of possible indicators of culture shock such as: compulsive eating or lack of appetite; feelings of helplessness, irritability, and loneliness; homesickness; sleeping more than usual; feeling depressed; getting angry easily; decline in flexibility and spontaneity; stereotyping of host country/culture; increase in physical ailments or pains; inability to work effectively; boredom; or unexplainable crying. Most study abroad students will experience some form of initial culture shock; however, some might experience it after only two days in the host country, or towards the end of the program, or not at all. In addition, the indicators of culture shock can vary from individual to individual.

Encourage students to take care of their health and eat well to help them through these stages. If your students display one or more of these behaviors, it is likely they are going through the culture shock phase of cross-cultural adjustment.

Intervention

The inability to cope effectively with emotional stress poses a serious threat to students' learning ability and may affect other students on a program. As a faculty or staff member, your expression of interest and concern may be a critical factor in helping a struggling student re-establish the emotional equilibrium necessary for academic survival and success on the program.

Obviously, a student's openness to assistance and such situational factors such as length and depth of your relationship, the location of the contact, and the nature of the contact may have substantial effect on the type of interactions you can have with a student.

- Approach the student to share your concern
 - Speak privately and confidentially
 - Don't express judgment
 - Help student to problem solve
- Encourage students to take care of their health and eat well to help them through these stages

Confidentiality

Students may share directly with you whatever information they choose. Information about the student cannot be shared without the student's permission, and information about the student should almost never be shared with the entire student group. However, should a student exhibit a behavior that is suicidal or threatening to the safety of themselves or other individuals, these actions are viewed as partially releasing confidentiality restrictions to the proper channels for support.

When to make a referral:

- The problem or request for information is one you know you can't handle.
- You believe that personality differences will interfere with your ability to help.
- You know the student personally (as a friend, neighbor, friend of a friend) and think you could not be objective.
- The student acknowledges the problem but is reluctant to discuss it with you.
- After talking with the student, little progress has been made and you don't know how to proceed.
- You feel unable to assist the student, pressed for time, or at a high level of stress yourself.

Refer Onward to Professional Resources:

Some people accept a referral for professional help more easily than others. It is usually best to be frank with a student about the limits of your ability to assist them.

Our contracted medical and security risk services company (International SOS) can provide a set number of counseling services by phone with a professional. They are also able to provide in-country professional recommendations and arrange the appointment.

1. Call International SOS: +1-215-942-8478.
2. Complete an incident report with documentation of signs of distress and all communication with the student.

Contact UAH Study Abroad via email (gracie.lester@uah.edu) or phone (+1-256-872-0871) for assistance.

Health and Safety While Abroad

Health and Safety While Abroad

Safety is of primary concern to all who are involved in study abroad programs. Evidence suggests that in general, students abroad are as safe as, or safer than, they are on U.S. campuses. However, there are particular risks that may occur outside of the U.S. , and when any safety issue arises, the fact that students are far from home and in an unfamiliar culture may make the experience seem more traumatic than it would be in the U.S.

All UAH faculty leading or teaching on a UAH program abroad are required to attend meetings to prepare them for handling emergencies, risk management, and health and safety abroad. These are held multiple times each year and will be announced well before departure for the program.

EAO should be contacted immediately regarding any critical incidents involving the student or the program. EAO and/or the Dean of Students will manage communication with the students' emergency contact when necessary. If a student is ill or injured, contact EAO as soon as possible so that we are informed in case a family member should contact our office. Any issue involving a student should be reported to EAO immediately, Additionally, any time a student leaves the program for any reason, please inform the EAO prior to their departure from the program.

Practices and procedures that are in place include:

1. Daily monitoring of international events
2. Having an established Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to manage crisis events abroad and communicating this plan to students
3. Training for all faculty leaders concerning emergency response during faculty workshops
4. Program leaders are required to carry an international-capable cell phone to facilitate emergency communications
5. Insurance coverage for faculty and students that includes emergency evacuation coverage and repatriation of remains (basic coverage provided to faculty and students for the dates of the program; see explanation above)

6. OEA requires that every student and faculty member register with the US State Department travel registry (or its equivalent) prior to departure
7. On-site emergency response support through exchange partner or vendor
8. Pre-departure and on-site student orientation to discuss safety practices, preventative measures, and emergency procedures

Health Insurance for Faculty and Students

Please review the [UA System International Assistance Page](#).

UAH employees and students are covered internationally via the ACE American Insurance Company. Our UA System Policy Number is GLM N17929744.

Any family member traveling with the group is also required to enroll in this health insurance plan at their own expense.

Please review coverage details here:

[2023 Plan Benefit Brochure](#)

If you are traveling abroad before or after the scheduled dates of the abroad program, you can consider purchasing additional coverage from another insurer for these dates. Multiple options exist, and we encourage you to compare them and choose the policy that best fits your needs.

Per UA System Policy, all UAH students and staff are enrolled in the above travel health insurance and risk management for university-sanctioned travel. This is a requirement, and the requisite insurance fee of \$50/month will be applied to the travel costs of the abroad course or program. Please check with EAO for more details.

[International SOS](#)

International SOS provides medical, security, emotional, and logistical expertise to help safeguard our international travelers. So, if you lose your medication in Prague, need to see a doctor in New Delhi, get pick-pocketed in Rio, or are in a serious accident, you should immediately contact International SOS.

On behalf of the University of Alabama System, International SOS, as your medical and security assistance provider, has set up a direct billing agreement with ACE, the insurance provider. This

creates a seamless claims coordination between International SOS and ACE during medical or security cases while abroad for covered benefits.

When to use International SOS?

Before you travel outside of the US, you should prepare yourself by logging onto the International SOS website where you can sign up for health and security email alerts or review country-specific reports that will make you an informed traveler. Also, you should take a look at the information provided in the Assistance App.

- Log on to internationalsos.com/members to sign up for health and security alerts
- Call an Assistance Center for free pre-travel information (vaccinations, required medication, and travel security concerns)
- Download the free Assistance App for ease of communication while abroad
- Download your Insurance card and carry it with you when you travel

While abroad, International SOS will help locate a qualified healthcare provider, receive a prescription, or simply answer any general medical or security concern you may have, so you get quality medical care and advice.

- Free and unlimited health, safety, and security advice
- Find a local nurse, internationally-trained doctor, or security specialist near you
- Find medication or medical equipment
- Travel advice on loss of travel documents or legal assistance
- Assistance paying medical fees

In an emergency, International SOS can ensure that you or a student get immediate care whether it requires evacuating to a center of medical excellence or closely monitoring your condition with local doctors. Keep in mind that International SOS can also take care of all the details associated with the situation such as making travel arrangements for family members, so you can focus on getting better.

- Arranging medical transportation and care
- Monitoring condition and providing advice along the way
- Evacuating the group when necessary
- Contacting family, so they know you are in good hands

Contacting International SOS

You can reach out to International SOS via phone at +1-215-942-8478 or via the Assistance App if downloaded on your phone. The assistance center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

What is an Emergency?

The word “emergency” is quite broad in meaning. It can include any number of potential situations - illness, injury, crime, natural disaster, or political upheaval - and it can involve any number of individuals. The first actions taken in response to an emergency and the alacrity of the response determine whether the situation is contained or if it worsens.

The Study Abroad office defines an emergency in relation to a study abroad program as the following:

- A serious injury or illness can be defined as one requiring hospitalization of a participant or faculty member, or one that makes it impossible for the participant or faculty member to continue the program.
- A situation involving a criminal act against one or more participants in the program; an act of terrorism that poses a threat to the security of the program participants; a natural disaster; an act of war; or other event causing or threatening harm to one or more participants in the program.
- A “perceived emergency” results from events that are not immediately threatening to the health or safety of program students or staff, but which may be viewed as such by family and friends at home, or by the media. In many instances, a perceived emergency must be treated as a real emergency.

The most common “perceived” emergencies include:

- Minor theft
- Lost or stolen passport and/or credit cards
- Minor illness
- Disagreement between roommates/classmates
- Housing issues
- Flight delays
- Student behavioral issues – **mostly alcohol related!**
- Mental Health crisis/incident

Other more serious, but less common emergencies can include:

- Physical assault
- Disappearance, hostage taking, or kidnapping of a student
- Robbery
- Sexual assault or rape
- Serious illness, physical or emotional

- Threat of, or attempted, suicide
- Significant accident and/or injury
- Hospitalization for any reason or length of time
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Local political, natural, or manmade disaster/crisis in the vicinity of student accommodations or classrooms that could affect the student's safety or well being
- Arrest or questioning by the police or other security forces
- Any legal action involving a student
- Death of a student or faculty member

Emergency Procedures

EAO has developed guidelines for faculty directors to follow for incidents and emergency situations. It is the responsibility of faculty directors to complete the [Emergency Action Plan \(EAP\) worksheet](#). On this document, faculty directors provide contact information for lodging facilities, embassies and consulates, hospitals, etc. This information is distributed and discussed during the mandatory faculty policy workshop. Faculty directors must follow these guidelines and keep the Emergency Action Plan available for reference while abroad.

In an emergency, your first responsibility is to safeguard the safety and well-being of program participants. EAO is prepared to assist faculty, parents and students during times of emergency. Timely and clear communication between faculty and EAO is necessary to effectively manage the emergency at hand.

Priorities during an emergency:

- Act in the best interest of the participant
- Utilize emergency response guidelines
- Protect students' right to privacy
- Maintain communication with EAO
- Document incident to the best of your ability

Additional priorities during medical emergency:

- Call International SOS to coordinate care: 1-215-942-8478
- Seek appropriate medical care
- Stay with/check on participant

Additional priorities during a general emergency:

- Secure safe location for all
- Determine the scope of the crisis by liaising with local authorities
- Contact/respond to directions of local authorities or US Embassy as appropriate
- Communicate EAO/UAH instructions to participants

- Call International SOS for advice (as needed): 1-215-942-8478

If you believe there is a health or safety risk to your students, contact EAO to decide upon the appropriate action. In the event of a real or perceived crisis, encourage students not to panic or overreact. Students count on you to take charge and get them through the crisis, and they take their behavioral cues from you. Remain calm, keep in contact with EAO, and handle the emergency using the guidelines below. EAO is ready to help you during and after any event.

1. If an emergency occurs, your first responsibility is to safeguard program participants. You must do whatever is necessary to assure this, whether it involves obtaining prompt medical attention, contacting local police authorities, or seeking the involvement of the US embassy.
2. If you are dealing with a medical emergency, contact the insurance provider, iSOS, to assist you and help coordinate the necessary arrangements. You and your students are given insurance cards with a worldwide, 24-hour, toll-free number to call for assistance. All participants are highly encouraged to download the iSOS app (<https://www.internationalsos.com/assistance-app>). Program Directors/faculty should contact the appropriate emergency contact after the student's immediate needs have been met. Remember to also contact EA regarding the emergency. The CISI policy and procedures to be followed will be reviewed and discussed at length during the Faculty Risk Management Training.
3. In a non-medical emergency, notify the local police and then follow the procedures that may be required by local law.
4. In the event of an emergency, always contact EAO.
5. If there is an ongoing risk to students and yourself (for example, a natural disaster), have an authorized US Consular or Embassy officer advise you on a regular basis about the development of the crisis and how you and the students are to respond.
6. If there is a political or health crisis and the US State Department issues a public announcement, worldwide caution or a specific travel warning for the country of your program, EAO will contact the Program Director with the information. In the case of a travel advisory or other indicators of serious health or safety threat, EAO will review and consult with you to make a determination as to whether a program can continue and what steps need to be taken to ensure the safety of students and faculty.
7. It is highly unlikely that you would need to evacuate students from a site abroad. However, if a deteriorating situation makes this necessary, EAO will work with faculty, iSOS and the US Embassy to facilitate a safe return of students and faculty.

Student Behavioral Policies and Issues

As part of their Terra Dotta application, students are required to sign and submit the "Statement of Behavioral Responsibility" that outlines behavioral expectations for students on a UAH study abroad program. Students are expected to abide by host country laws and regulations as well as the UAH

Code of Student Conduct

(<https://www.uah.edu/dos/office-of-student-ethics-education/code-of-student-conduct>) and judicial policies. A review of the “Statement of Behavioral Responsibility” should be conducted during pre-departure and on-site orientations.

Minor Behavior Problems

Minor behavior problems may not be serious enough to warrant dismissal from the program but can have a negative effect on the overall program. **Set behavioral expectations ahead of time.** Behavior problems that are ignored or allowed to continue may affect the dynamic, morale, and interaction of the entire group and can potentially quickly escalate into a major problem. Examples of minor behavior problems include excessive tardiness or missing class or class activities, personality conflicts between group participants, and rude behavior.

A way to prevent some of these issues is to be proactive in your communication regarding behavioral expectations for the group. Strong positive encouragement and communication is integral to a positive resolution of the problem. It is recommended that you maintain a written record of your observations and discussions with a student for a minor behavioral issue. **Program Directors are required to complete an incident report** ([incident report form](#)) should the behavior of a student merit a private discussion concerning major behavioral violations. The student may take the conversation more seriously if they know the issue is being documented from beginning to end.

Documentation also provides you and OEA with a written record should the behavioral issues persist or worsen to the point where sanctions or dismissal from the program are considered. An “Incident Report” should be used for documenting and reporting issues or incidents, even minor ones.

Major Behavior Problems

The University of Alabama in Huntsville expects study abroad participants to abide by the laws, regulations, and customs of the host country, community, institution and program. There are certain behaviors that can warrant immediate dismissal from a program by a Program Director in consultation with the EA Coordinator, Dean of Students Office, and University Counsel including, but not limited to, the following:

- Conduct that violates the Code of Student Conduct
- Violation of the laws, rules and regulations, or customs of the host country, community, institution and program
- Behavior that is disruptive and detrimental to the group learning process and academic success of the program
- Conduct that damages or destroys property of another person, institution or organization.

- Behavior that gives the Program Director/Faculty and EA reasonable cause to believe that the continued presence of the student in the program constitutes a danger to the health and safety of that student, or other persons or property, or threatens the viability of the program
- Repeated offenses or severe infractions of housing rules and regulations as established by on-site facilities
- Alcohol misuse or abuse
- Physical or sexual assault
- Harassment
- Possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs
- Setting a fire, or possession of explosives
- Possession of a weapon, including BB guns and knives
- Theft
- Repeated disruptive and/or detrimental behavior for which the student has been warned in writing

Addressing Behavioral Problems

Program Directors with experience leading student groups recommend a frank discussion with students regarding behavioral expectations and consequences during pre-departure and on-site orientation sessions. Program Directors should use their best judgment and contact EA for assistance when a behavioral problem must be addressed. Dealing with behavioral problems will be discussed in depth at the Risk Management Training.

Drug Use and Alcohol Abuse and Misuse

UAH has a zero tolerance policy regarding the possession, use, manufacture, production, sale, exchange or distribution of illegal drugs by students participating in UAH study abroad programs.

The most common issue is alcohol misuse and abuse. Violation of local laws and/or UAH regulations or policies on illegal drug use and/or alcohol misuse and abuse may result in 1) immediate dismissal from the program; 2) academic withdrawal from the University for the semester in progress; and 3) disciplinary action upon return to campus.

The following provides guidelines for responsible alcohol use. This message should be reinforced during both pre-departure and on-site orientations.

Alcohol misuse is defined as any use that is harmful or potentially harmful to self or others. Alcohol abuse is the systematic misuse of alcohol.

What is alcohol misuse? Alcohol misuse is present when:

1. A student misses any scheduled event because of the effects of alcohol consumption;
2. A student shows up for a class or for any group function or activity in a state of inebriation or semi-inebriation.
3. A student becomes ill due to the effects of alcohol consumption.
4. A student is disrespectful of others sharing the same housing for reasons related to alcohol consumption.
5. A student congregates with loud, boisterous groups related to alcohol consumption.
6. A student engages in inappropriate behavior toward other individuals that is the result of alcohol consumption.
7. A student engages in destructive behavior toward property that is the result of alcohol consumption.
8. A student does not abide by the laws of the country in which he/she is staying that govern alcohol possession and consumption.
9. A student engages in behavior that causes embarrassment to the other members of the group, the faculty director(s) or the in-country host(s) as a result of alcohol consumption.

Faculty directors are required to complete an Incident Report should the behavior of a student merit a private discussion concerning behavioral violations. The incident report serves in establishing a written record of incidents and notifies the student of behavior that could potentially cause their dismissal from the program.

Students should be encouraged to use good judgment if consuming alcohol at private homes or other accommodations during non-program hours. If members of the group are abusing alcohol, students should be encouraged to discuss these issues with the faculty director. Encourage students to look out for each other and keep each other safe.

If a student becomes incapacitated due to alcohol overuse, or if a student is in need of medical attention, encourage students to contact the faculty director immediately in order to protect the health and well-being of the student concerned. The faculty director should immediately take the student to the nearest medical facility for treatment.

No UAH funds may be used to purchase alcohol. As a faculty leader, you are in a position of responsibility and you must be capable of addressing an emergency should it arise. As a result, you are strongly encouraged to use moderation that is appropriate to the host culture and its laws when consuming alcohol at group functions.

Participation in and/or accompanying students to social events that involve excessive consumption of alcohol implies that drunkenness is acceptable and sends a contradictory message to students regarding responsible drinking.

Governing laws

All members of the University community have a personal responsibility to adhere to all applicable laws, policies, and regulations concerning the use of alcohol or other drugs. These include federal and state laws (including international), city ordinances, the Code of Student Conduct, the faculty standards of conduct, and other University policy statements.

Students who violate local laws and/or UAH regulations or policies on illegal drug use and/or alcohol misuse and abuse may be faced with the following consequences: (1) immediate dismissal from the program; (2) academic withdrawal from the University for the term in progress; and (3) disciplinary action upon return to campus. Alcohol misuse is defined as any use that is harmful or potentially harmful to self or others. Alcohol abuse is the systematic misuse of alcohol.

Employees who violate [UAH's Drug Free Campus and Workplace](#) policy will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, consistent with University policy and with local (including international), state and federal law.

Recognizing signs and symptoms of alcohol abuse and misuse

Everyone occasionally has days when they exhibit behavior not normally associated with an educational or work environment nor characteristic of himself or herself. Unusual behavior during times of stress can be understood and accepted. However, when unusual behavior is displayed on a gradually increasing scale accompanied by general decline in work habits over a period of time, it indicates that an individual needs professional help. Below are some of the more common signs or symptoms of unusual behavior.

Absenteeism and Tardiness

- Arriving late and leaving early from class or scheduled program events
- Unexplained absences from class or scheduled program events
- Impaired Performance
- "Putting things off"; Irresponsibility in completing tasks
- Faulty decision making
- High performance that slowly declines over time
- Sudden, extreme gaps in performance (missing a deadline, unexpected missing of exams)

Unusual Interpersonal Interactions

- Sudden emotional outburst including anger, tears, laughter, severe mood swings
- Overreactions to criticism
- Blaming others for poor performance
- Making inappropriate statements; rambling or incoherent speech
- Isolation from others or increasing social withdrawal
- Disinterest in teamwork

Declining Physical Appearance (sudden or gradual)

- Poor personal hygiene (e.g., body odor or dirty hair, nails, and skin)
- Less interest in dress and appearance (or a noticeable)
- Glazed or red eyes
- Poor coordination, staggering; tremors, poor eye-hand coordination
- Deterioration of oral hygiene

OTHER SIGNS

- Legal problems, such as arrest for being under the influence (DUI)
- Financial concerns, such as unusual spending patterns

NOTE: The most common student disciplinary issue that arises on a study abroad program stems from alcohol misuse and abuse. Therefore, it is particularly important that the faculty leader and others representing the program set a good example regarding alcohol consumption as well as adhere to the expectations outlined below.

Expectations of Program Representatives (Directors, Faculty, and Staff)

- Program representatives should not provide alcohol to or purchase alcohol for students participating in their study abroad program.
- When choosing facilities to provide meal services for students, representatives should seek to avoid facilities that allow unlimited self-service of alcoholic beverages included in the price for meals. In addition, to the extent possible, representatives should clarify to the facility and the students that pre-paid meals do not include alcohol.
- If students are individually purchasing alcohol at a group function in the presence of program representatives, it is the responsibility of the representative to monitor responsible alcohol consumption and discourage excessive consumption of alcohol.
- Program Representatives (you) are in a position of authority and responsibility and must be capable of addressing an emergency should it arise.

The following provides guidelines for responsible alcohol use. This message should be reinforced during both pre-departure and on-site orientations: (1) Students should be encouraged to use good judgment if legally consuming alcohol at private homes or other accommodations during non-program hours; (2) If members of the group are abusing alcohol, students should be encouraged to discuss these issues with the program director; (3) Encourage students to look out for each other and keep each other safe.

If a student becomes incapacitated due to alcohol overuse, or if a student is in need of medical attention, encourage students to contact the Program Director or faculty immediately in order to protect the health and well-being of the student concerned. The Program Director should immediately take the student to the nearest medical facility for treatment. As a program leader, you are in a position of responsibility and you must be capable of addressing an emergency should it arise. As a result, you are strongly encouraged to use moderation when consuming alcohol at group functions. Participation in and/or accompanying students to social events that involve excessive consumption of alcohol implies that drunkenness is acceptable and sends an inappropriate message to students regarding responsible drinking.

Dismissals and Withdrawals

If a student has committed a violation that requires immediate dismissal from the program, contact **OEA** immediately to review the case and determine the course of action to be taken.

Occasionally, a student arrives at a program and decides they want to return home. Try to determine whether or not there is an issue or concern that led the student to want to go home and if a solution exists to correct the issue. If there is no solution contact EA for guidance. A student who voluntarily withdraws from a program once abroad is normally not eligible for a refund. Refunds will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Harassment Policy

Harassment will not be tolerated.

Important Contact Numbers

International SOS: +1-215-942-8478

Study Abroad Office: +1-256-824-5802 (8:00-5:00 CST)

UAH Office of Risk Management: +1 256 824 6875

Dean of Students: +256-824-5599 (8:00-5:00 CST)

US Department of State Hotline for American Travelers: +1-202-647-5225

Overseas Citizen Services: +1-202-501-4444

Responsibilities/Procedures at End of Program

- Students are sent a program evaluation form via email. Faculty should stress to students the importance of completing a program evaluation. Student insights are critical for program evaluation and improvements for future years.
- Program directors must ensure that students have vacated housing by announced time and date.
- Program directors, if applicable, should meet with host institution coordinators to make tentative plans for the following year and discuss any issues that occurred during the program.
- Faculty are to submit grades via Banner. Faculty are notified both prior to departure and while abroad of grade submission deadlines and procedures. Students are given letter grades for each course.
- Disputes regarding grades should follow established UAH protocol for resolution.
- If course registration errors occur, contact **OEA** immediately. **OEA** will coordinate with the Office of the Registrar to make the needed correction.
- Program directors are responsible for completing and submitting expense reports with the necessary and appropriate receipts.
- Complete program evaluation and debrief meeting for **OEA**.

Returning Home

Once you have returned to the U.S. you will have many tasks to wrap up the program, as listed above. It is also a time for review and reflection regarding the program and to identify what components can be improved, need revision, or worked well for your program. The Directors report you submit at the end of the program can assist you with your review and enables OEA to work with you and make the necessary improvements for future years.

It is also a good time to identify students who could recruit and promote for your program in the future. Seek out students who have good public speaking skills and a desire to share their experiences studying abroad. Ask students for any photos or other media that would be helpful for future recruitment and encourage them to submit those photos and videos to the EA photo and video contests.

Finally, take time to reflect upon how the experience of living and learning with students abroad has influenced you, your classroom, and your interactions with students. Do not be surprised if some of those students communicate with you for years to come! You have led some of these students on a “life changing” journey.