

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Study Abroad Management Requirements

Study Abroad Programs is a division of the Office of International Initiatives at Georgia State. Our mission in Study Abroad Programs is to enable diverse students to participate in safe, inclusive, high-quality, international academic experiences that contribute to their success as students and global citizens. Equally important, we support faculty as they create and lead these programs and serve as a resource to the university community on international education.

Study Abroad Programs uses the [Standards of Good Practice of the Forum on Education Abroad](#), a leading resource in the field of International Education, as a guideline when creating, monitoring and evaluating Georgia State University study abroad programs.

Georgia State University recognizes that issues of program management and crisis prevention for study abroad programs are complex. Therefore, the guidelines below are tailored to the unique demands of study abroad.

Program Management and Participation

I. Program Director Eligibility: Each Georgia State University faculty-led study abroad program must have at least one Program Director. Program Directors must be regular faculty able to exercise a high degree of discretion and responsibility on behalf of the institution while also leading an academically challenging study abroad program. A study abroad Program Director must be a member of the University faculty as listed below and qualified to be the instructor of record for courses they will teach abroad.

Leading a study abroad program involves making important decisions on behalf of the institution including participant safety, crisis management and institutional risk. Program Directors should be well-versed in the location of the study abroad program, either through past experiences living, working or studying there or because of a GSU-funded site visit. Program Directors should travel abroad with the students who are participating in the program and stay in program accommodations with the students for the duration of the study abroad program.

- *Eligible Program Directors:* Full-time, benefit-eligible faculty.
- *Ineligible Program Directors:* Public Service Professional, Research Scientist, Research Associate, Research Engineer, Research Technologist, graduate students, part-time faculty,

part-time instructors, adjunct faculty, and faculty or staff with temporary or visiting positions.

2. Program Director Responsibilities:

- Complete and submit the Study Abroad Proposal or Renewal documents each year by the deadline.
- Coordinate program logistics (housing, meals, transportation) or work with a provider to do so.
- Arrange and manage program academics (syllabus, textbooks, international/domestic partners, guest lecturers, etc.).
- Actively promote the program to meet enrollment targets with assistance from Study Abroad Programs.
- Review applications and select participants in Study Abroad Online Application Portal.
- Facilitate study abroad course creation and ensure participants register in the appropriate course(s).
- Ensure course syllabi for study abroad program are updated with course and program information including goals, expectations, learning outcomes, itinerary information, and contact information.
- Complete mandatory Annual Program Director Training workshops each year.
- Review the Study Abroad Financial Procedures document and complete a budget meeting approximately 90 days before departure with OII business management team.
- Inform the Study Abroad department of any students dropping from the program prior to departure date.
- Ensure students are aware of any visa requirements to enter the country.
- Facilitate a program-specific pre-departure orientation for students.
- Review student health clearance forms in online application portal before departure.
- Provide an on-site orientation for students upon arrival in host location.
- Manage and adhere to the approved budget.
- Follow GSU and USG financial guidelines and procedures for study abroad.
- Use program resources equitably for all students.
- Respond to student crises, including emergency situations, student misconduct, and behavioral/personal problems.
- Remain on-call 24/7 for emergency response procedures
- Submit their travel expense statements within 30 days of return date.

3. Eligible Assistants to the Program Director: Additional OII or College staff willing and able to assist the Program Director may be added to a study abroad program roster. All assistants must be employees of GSU. Additional program staffing needs will be evaluated and determined by the Program Director and the Director of Study Abroad Programs. Only SAP-approved official program staff may accompany the group. Staff expenses and time away from the office must be discussed and approved by staff member's supervisor. Graduate Assistants can be assistants to the Program Director and their travel expenses can be covered by the study abroad

program budget. However, their GA stipend may not be included in the study abroad program budget.

4. **New Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs:** A *New Program Approval Form* must be completed by the Program Director(s) and approved by the Program Director(s), Chair, Dean or Dean's designee, the Director of SAP, Associate Provost for International Initiatives and the Provost. Program Directors must meet with the Director of SAP before a new program will be approved. *New Program Approval Forms* must be submitted to the Study Abroad Programs Office by the deadline. The Director of SAP has the authority to withhold approval for any proposed program.

5. **Renewed Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs:** Programs that qualify as "renewals" are those that have been approved as a new program three years ago or less except for cancellation due to low enrollment or travel warning. Additionally, renewals may not have any changes to the country destination, program director, program courses or significant changes to their program format since the last time they were approved. Programs qualifying as "renewals" must complete a *Study Abroad Program Renewal Form*. The *Study Abroad Program Renewal Form* must be signed by the Program Director(s), Chair, Dean or Dean's Designee, the Director of SAP, and Associate Provost for International Initiatives. All *Study Abroad Program Renewal Forms* must be submitted to Study Abroad Programs by the deadline. For substantial changes to an existing program (change in Program Director, program locations, program terms, etc.), a new Study Abroad Program Approval Form needs to be completed. The SAP Director has the authority to withhold approval for any proposed renewal program.

6. **Site Visits:** Site Visits are encouraged for Program Directors for new programs. Exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Director of Study Abroad Programs. The SAP office has limited funding available for site visits each year. SAP site visit reimbursements may be awarded to future Program Directors upon submission of the *Study Abroad Application for Site Visit Funding*. Academic departments may also have funding for site visits upon request from the faculty.

7. **Eligible Participants:** Any student participating in a GSU faculty-led program must be enrolled in the course(s) offered on the study abroad program. All GSU students studying abroad must be degree-seeking students. 62+ students can participate in study abroad programs and must register for the course for the course and pay the study abroad program fee. Dual enrollment students at GSU can study abroad. Transient students can study abroad on GSU faculty-led programs if the program allows it and the students follow GSU's transient student process. All travelers must be a participant in the program.

8. Terms and Conditions of Student Participation:

- Students who participate in any study abroad program must be in Good Academic Standing at Georgia State University. GSU defines Good Academic Standing as a cumulative 2.0 GPA for Undergraduate students and 3.0 GPA for Graduate students.
- Students who are not in Good Academic Standing will not be permitted to study abroad as a student of Georgia State University. Certain study abroad programs may require a higher GPA or specific prerequisite courses before acceptance into the program. Robinson College of Business requires a 2.5 GPA for upper-level courses.
- Students must not be on academic probation, suspension, or exclusion.
- Students must have an institutional (Georgia State University) GPA by the time they begin their study abroad experience. First-year students are eligible to study abroad during Maymester/Summer following their first completed Spring semester. Transfer students and Perimeter College students must complete at least one semester at Georgia State before they can study abroad to establish an institutional GPA. Students who do not yet have an institutional GPA at Georgia State can be conditionally accepted into a study abroad program, knowing that their that Study Abroad Programs Advisor will check their institutional GPA at the end of their first semester at GSU.
- International students at Georgia State who hold F-1 visas must contact the International Student & Scholar Services at (404) 413-2070 or iss@gsu.edu, to discuss possible implications of study abroad for their immigration status.
- At time of application, Study Abroad Programs will also check that students are in good conduct standing with GSU.
- To participate in study abroad, students must complete all the required steps and documents as outlined in their online application portal for their study abroad program.
- The terms and conditions of participation are embedded in the online Study Abroad Application.

9. Application Process: Students apply to the program and are reviewed by a Study Abroad Advisor to ensure that GSU eligibility requirements are met (good academic standing)

- i. If so, student is put into Awaiting PD Review and is reviewed by the program Director.
- ii. Upon Review, Program Director Accepts or does not accept the student into the program.
- iii. If offered acceptance, students Commit within two weeks of being offered acceptance.
- iv. Committed students are considered viable participants and will be held to the GSU Faculty-Led Withdrawal Policy and charged the program fee on charge day according to GSU's GSU Faculty-led Study Abroad Withdrawal Procedure for Committed Students [GSU's Faculty-Led Study Abroad Withdrawal Procedure](#).

- v. If not offered acceptance, students are moved into Not Accepted and automatically notified.
- vi. Accepted students that never commit to the program will be administratively withdrawn once the list of participants is finalized by the Program Director and Study Abroad Advisor.
- vii. SAP does not recommend using waitlist without talking to your Study Abroad Advisor.

10. Study Abroad Programs and Office of International Initiatives Support: One of the functions of the Study Abroad Programs and the Office of International Initiatives office is to support Program Directors. Below are some of the ways in which we provide support:

- Work with Program Directors to create safe, inclusive, academically sound, and fiscally responsible programs.
- Provide guidance regarding best practices for global education programming.
- Assist the Program Director with budget management.
- Manage all required documents in the Study Abroad Application Portal.
- Promote study abroad across campus in a variety of ways, including social media, SAP newsletter, study abroad virtual and in-person programming, annual Study Abroad Fair and regular Study Abroad Advising.
- Review applications and prepare them for review by the Program Director.
- Give regular enrollment updates on program numbers.
- Oversee billing and financial transactions.
- Offer student advising and assistance with pre-departure orientations.
- Provide emergency support.
- Initiate and facilitate post-program student evaluations.
- Provide resources to work with Study Abroad providers.

11. Course Creation: Program Directors must work with their department to ensure the study abroad course is set up properly and students are able to register. Program Directors will share registration information with program participants.

12. Mandatory Annual Program Director Training: Program Directors are required to attend several meetings each year with the Director of SAP to 1) discuss study abroad policies and best practices 2) review new and revised SAP materials and processes. They must also participate in Terra Dotta/Online Application Portal training, the annual Emergency Procedures Workshop in the Spring semester, as well as the Study Abroad Programs Title IX training.

13. US Department of State Travel Advisories: Georgia State University does not sponsor international travel for undergraduate students to a country for which the US Department of State and /or the US Centers for Disease Control have issued a level 3 or 4 travel advisory. However, program directors may petition the Provost for an exception.

For details on graduate student travel to countries with travel advisories at level 3, please refer to Georgia State University's Travel Policy (1.00.99) [here](#).

14. Cancellation of Programs: In the event of an emergency - such as civil unrest, pandemic outbreak, a natural disaster, or in the case that a travel advisory rises to a level 3 or 4 after program approval and/or departure—it may be necessary to cancel or significantly alter a program for the safety of all program participants. The Director of Study Abroad Programs will make a recommendation to the Associate Provost for International Initiatives, who will update the Provost on the situation. The Provost is the decision-maker on the continuation or cancellation of Study Abroad Programs.

15. Mandatory Insurance: Georgia State University Study Abroad Insurance is mandatory for all faculty, staff and students participating in Georgia State study abroad programs and all study abroad programs approved by Georgia State University. For faculty-led GSU programs, the cost of this insurance is built into the program cost.

16. Health Clearance Form: Each student participating in a GSU study abroad program must complete the *Health Clearance Form* and submit this form to Study Abroad Programs at least 3 weeks before departure. *Health Clearance Forms* must be signed by a US-licensed physician, not by a nurse or a physician's assistant, unless the form is completed at GSU's Student Health Clinic. The SAP team will review health clearance forms for participation in study abroad programs. The Program Director will review health clearance forms before departure and have immediate access to the *Health Clearance Form* in the online application portal while abroad. Health clearance forms are valid for one year from the date of the US-licensed physician's signature. If any medical incidents occur while abroad, students may be required to have a doctor or physician complete an on-site version of the Physician's Certificate to approve continued participation in the study abroad program.

17. Incident Report Form: In the event of a student incident involving excessive or illegal alcohol consumption, drug use, theft, assault, injury, illness, arrest, a behavior problem, or other serious situations, the Program Director will complete the *Incident Report Form* and email/text it as soon as possible to the Director of SAP. This will inform the Director of SAP and allow SAP to follow up and provide support if necessary. If applicable, SAP will provide the completed Incident Report to the Office of the Dean of Students and/or other University administrators.

18. Program Director Emergency on-site and Contact Information: Program Directors are required to submit their final program itinerary to Study Abroad Programs 15 days before departure and include emergency contact information (name, email, and phone number) and on-site emergency contact information for the students. Emergency information must be submitted 15 days before departure.

19. In-Country Cell Phones: All Program Directors are required to carry a functioning cell phone for the duration of the program. The reasonable cost of a cell phone plan abroad can be included in the program budget.

20. Emergency Pocket Brochure: The Emergency Pocket Brochure includes country-specific information and a list of pertinent GSU phone numbers. The Director of SAP will share the Emergency Pocket Brochure with Program Directors 60 days before departure. Program Directors must complete an emergency pocket brochure template and submit it to SAP no later than 21 days prior to program departure.

21. Pre-Departure Orientation: Program Directors are required to present a program country-specific orientation to all participants with an emphasis on safety issues in advance of their program departure. SAP provides a general mandatory pre-departure for all study abroad participants focusing on GSU policies and procedures, international travel and safety, as well as other practical aspects of study abroad. SAP will provide staff to assist with pre-departure orientations upon request from the Program Director.

22. Student Payment Process: Program participants will pay a \$300 non-refundable deposit or complete a deposit waiver form. To be eligible for GSU Study Abroad Scholarships (IAS) students must pay the deposit and be in “Committed” status by the scholarship deadline. On charge day, Study Abroad Programs will charge the entire program fee to committed students. Once the program fee is on the account, student financial services will monitor payment.

23. Study Abroad Program Fee. The Study Abroad Program Fee is set according to the budget submitted to Study Abroad Programs and approved by the Chair, College and Oll. This program fee cannot be changed. If a Program Director included airfare in the initial Program Fee, the airfare must be included in Program Fee for the approved program. As a reminder, if there are funds leftover in the study abroad budget, Program Directors can issue refunds to students. We encourage program directors to spend down their approved budgets and avoid giving students refunds. We encourage program directors to roll over any unused funds to lower the program fee for the following year, which will help with recruitment for next year’s program.

24. In-Country Orientation: Program Directors are required to present an in-country orientation within 48 hours of arrival. Program Directors should include the following information in their orientation: a general introduction to the local community and physical surroundings, details about housing arrangements and local transportation to avoid any student surprises, reiterate expectations for student conduct while abroad, and remind students of their role as ambassadors to GSU and the U.S while abroad, explain options and any barriers to managing money on-site, highlight the importance of sharing any independent travel (if permitted),

highlight the importance of using the buddy system, and review information included in the emergency pocket brochure. Program Directors should share orientation information with their Study Abroad Advisor.

25. Program Summary and Evaluations: SAP staff will send program evaluations directly to students upon their return from abroad. Once collected, these responses will be shared with the Program Director and their Chair.

Business Management

Program Directors are required to review and abide the [Study Abroad Financial Procedures for Program Directors](#).

All Program Directors will have the support of the Business Affairs Coordinator and the Business Manager from the Office of International Initiatives for their study abroad programs and to ensure Program Directors abide by the approved program budget. The Study Abroad Program Fee is set according to the budget submitted to Study Abroad Programs and approved by the Chair, College, OII and Provost. This program fee cannot be changed. If a Program Director included airfare in the initial Program Fee, the airfare must be included in Program Fee for the approved program.

Approximately 90 days before departure, program directors are required to meet with the business management staff at OII to solidify the financial aspects of your program. This meeting will ensure all contracts, wire transfers, airfare purchases, hotels, cash advances, program providers, and travel authorizations are completed. A week upon return, program directors are required to meet with the Business Affairs Coordinator to review and submit their travel expense statement. Travel expense statements need to be submitted within 30 days of return travel date.

The Business Affairs Coordinator will assist the program director in making payments on behalf of the program, charging students for programs, pulling budget reports for the program director as requested, and help troubleshoot any financial issues that may arise. Please note that the responsibility of study abroad accounts is with the Program Director, and as such, any deficits in study abroad accounts are the responsibility of the program director and their college. All payments and changes to study abroad accounts must be made through the Business Affairs Coordinator at the Office of International Initiatives.

BUDGET SURPLUS/DEFICIT

Before a program ends, we encourage program directors to spend as much remaining funds in the account as possible. Supporting documentation that shows revenue, expense, and fund balances (14XXX and 20XXX), must be maintained for audit purposes, and provided for the required annual institutional budget review. Excess funds realized at the end of a program in Departmental Sales and Services fund must first be used to replenish the required Emergency Reserve Fund, if applicable. Once the Emergency Reserve Fund is replenished, additional excess funds may be encumbered via purchase orders, with acceptable documentation, for

payment of future deposits, site visits, or other known future costs. Final excess funds remaining (other than nominal amounts) must be refunded to students. When excess funds occur, Study Abroad will review program charge budgets with Program Directors to reduce the Program Charge the following year to prevent over collection of funds from students.

Directors can carry forward no more than \$3,000.00 of program fees to the next year if the program is continuing (must be the exact same program). Any remaining amount must be refunded to the students. Program Directors can choose to carry forward less than \$3,000.00 of the program fees and provide refunds to students. If the program is changing or not continuing, any remaining balance greater than or equal to \$500 must be refunded to students. If the same program skips a year, Program Directors can carry forward no more than \$3,000.00 and to the college residual account for future use.

GSU Program Directors are required to abide by the [Study Abroad Financial Procedures for Program Directors](#)

For additional information on USG Study Abroad accounting procedures, please visit: https://www.usg.edu/business_procedures_manual/section21/C1608

Please note there is a dedicated email address for all study abroad financial matters which is monitored by the Study Abroad Programs office. Please contact StudyAbroadFinance@gsu.edu for all study abroad business inquiries.

Crisis Management

The health and safety of GSU study abroad students and Program Directors is our top priority. Study Abroad Programs leads GSU's response to a study abroad incident or emergency abroad by communicating with and guiding the Program Director and students involved and coordinating appropriate GSU partners. Program Directors are required to review the [Study Abroad Emergency Management Plan](#)

I. Pre-Departure Steps:

Student Preparation for Study Abroad

Prior to departure, students will:

- complete Health Clearance Form to obtain medical clearance that they are physically able to participate in the specified study abroad program.
- participate in mandatory, program-specific pre-departure meetings.
- have the option to participate in more general, SAP Pre-Departure presentations.
- be enrolled in mandatory study abroad medical insurance by SAP Staff.
- share their travel itinerary with Study Abroad Programs.
- have access to Pre-Departure Guide in Online Application Portal.
- sign GSU waivers for Study Abroad Programs.
- review Emergency Pocket Brochure shared by Program Director.

Program Director Preparation to Lead Study Abroad

Prior to departure, Program Directors will:

- consider emergency situations and alternate plans in Proposal and Renewal documents.
- attend SAP Emergency Procedures Workshop, Title IX Presentation, and other SAP workshops.
- submit their program's final itinerary and their list of three emergency contacts to Study Abroad Programs 3 weeks before departure.
- complete Emergency Pocket Brochure and share it with SAP and students.
- review the student Health Clearance Forms and have the insurance cards for all their students.
- have the SAP Emergency Phone number and share it with students.
- organize a consistent method of communicating with students prior to departure (WhatsApp, GroupMe, etc.) for the duration of the program.
- Be enrolled in mandatory study abroad medical insurance.
- All students are required to complete their study abroad Health Clearance Form, sign the Study Abroad Programs waiver and complete all documents and requirements to be able to participate in the study abroad program.
- All students and Program Directors are enrolled in GSU's mandatory study abroad insurance for the duration of the study abroad program.
- All students receive an Emergency Pocket Brochure from their Program Director, which includes important emergency phone numbers for the program.
- Students participate in at least one pre-departure meeting for their program and have the option to participate in one of several pre-departure meetings offered by Study Abroad Programs.
- On-site Program Directors will have one orientation session

2. Program Director Steps to Take in the Event of Emergency on Faculty-led Program:

- Program Director is responsible for assessing the emergency and ensuring the safety of all students on program.
- When faced with an emergency abroad, the Program Director is responsible for contacting Study Abroad Programs by calling the Study Abroad Emergency Line at 470-825-3986 with a detailed report of the emergency.
- Program Director should report the incident using the incident reporting form and keep a log of events. It is critical that information is shared accurately and completely, as soon as possible.

3. Questions for Program Director to Consider in an Emergency:

- Are all students accounted for and safe?
- Where are they all now? How can they be reached?
- Describe the local conditions. What is the local response to the situation?
- Does anyone need medical attention?
- Have students been in touch with their families?
- Has Study Abroad Programs been notified of the developing emergency?

4. Responsibilities of Study Abroad Programs in an Emergency:

- Keep a detailed log of the emergency and provide immediate assistance as needed to the Program Director and students.
- Report the incident to the Senior Director for International Initiatives and the Associate Provost for International Initiatives to discuss next steps.
- The Associate Provost for International Affairs will communicate with the Provost, the Vice President for Student Engagement and other members of senior leadership at GSU, as needed.
- Study Abroad Programs will contact study abroad medical insurance for assistance and the emergency contacts for students in the program, as needed.
- Facilitate communication and implement an action plan with the Program Director and insurance provider.
- If any student in the program is not a GSU student, SAP will inform their home institution regarding the situation.
- If needed, OII will facilitate the immediate departure of SAP staff to support a study abroad program abroad in response to an emergency.

5. Emergency Notification System:

In the event of an emergency or crisis abroad, the Program Director should contact the Director of Study Abroad Programs by calling the emergency phone line. The Director of Study Abroad Programs will contact appropriate members of the Crisis Team. If the Program Director cannot reach the Director of Study Abroad Programs, s/he should contact the University Police at 404-413-3333. This number is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by GSU Police. All known information about the emergency should be given, together with contact information for the Program Director. University Police will then contact the Director of Study Abroad Programs, the Chief of University Police and the Dean of Students who will then contact the remaining persons, as appropriate, identified on the contact list set forth below.

- Associate Provost for International Initiatives
- Senior Director for International Initiatives
- Director, Safety and Risk Management
- Dean of the College sponsoring study abroad program
- Department Chair sponsoring study abroad program
- Associate Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students
- University Attorney or Associate General Counsel