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***About this handbook...***

We are pleased to have you serving as the Resident Director of a Michigan State University study abroad program. Your role is critical to the success of this program and you will be influencing our students in multiple ways as an adviser and mentor. By sharing this experience with these students, you will see their perspectives broadened and their minds extended. The affect you will have on our students will last throughout their lifetime and will change the way they think forever.

This handbook is intended to assist you in your role as on-site director. The Michigan State University Office of Study Abroad (OSA) encourages you to become familiar with the information contained in this handbook. It has been designed to give you background information related to general administration, academic, student and financial matters with which you will be dealing on a daily basis. Like the *Study Abroad Student Handbook*, this handbook has been divided into sections related to each stage of the program. We urge you to also read the *Study Abroad Student Handbook*, as it informs students of all aspects related to their participation before, during and after studying abroad. It also covers a number of OSA policies that you may be called upon to enforce, or which support you in your role as a resident director.

This handbook is updated annually. This information is based on our experience and the needs of students; however, nothing here is “written in stone,” so please share your suggestions, ideas, criticisms and changes, so we can improve this document.

OSA staff is pleased to have you on board. We believe that a student's study abroad experience can be one of the most enriching and inspiring experiences of his or her life, and we're committed to making this opportunity available to every qualified MSU student.

Office of Study Abroad  
109 International Center  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing, MI 48824-1035

Phone: (517) 353-8920  
Fax: (517) 432-2082  
e-mail: [studyabroad@osa.msu.edu](mailto:studyabroad@osa.msu.edu)  
internet: <http://study-abroad.msu.edu>

## ***EXPECTATIONS AND BACKGROUND***

### ***A. What is the role of a Resident Director?***

Resident Directors serve as the administrative and academic representatives of MSU abroad. In this role, they are interpreters and enforcers of rules and managers of resources for MSU study abroad programs. Successful resident directors will balance their demeanor as program administrators and authority figures with a sensitivity to student needs and interests and an approachability more associated with the professional counselor. They will enforce program rules but temper those rules when fairness would be better served in an individual case. They may need to abandon their strict supervisory role by assuming the role of uncritical student advocates.

One of the most time-consuming responsibilities of the Resident Director will be dealing with the tangible and intangible problems students face in making personal, cultural, and academic transitions to their new environment. For many students, participation in a study abroad program is their first extended period away from home and first intercultural experience. Accordingly, they need a certain amount of guidance and support. In this regard, the Resident Director can have a significant affect on the adjustment of many students and upon the success of their study abroad experience.

While many people have been involved in the development and implementation of a study abroad program, from the student's perspective the Resident Director **is** the program. At the beginning of the experience, students tend to place a large share of responsibility for successes and failures on the Resident Director, to whom they look not only as a figure of authority and comfort in a strange environment, but also as a convenient scapegoat. As time progresses, this initial dependence will decrease for most students. When considering the logistical and personal aspects of the initial student contact, the successful Resident Director should take this into consideration in order to plan ahead and be well informed. The impressions left by these early contacts will either produce an attitude of confidence and respect among the students or one of distrust and hostility. Once established, such initial attitudes are difficult to change.

Resident Directors, acting within the guidelines and rules, will solve most student-related problems on their own authority and within a reasonable period of time. When necessary and possible, the Resident Director should consult with the Office of Study Abroad staff on difficult matters. Resident Directors must provide direction; students who have problems must feel that they can bring them to the Resident Director and expect timely and concerned action.

Perhaps the greatest challenge of serving as the Resident Director is reaching students and, directly or indirectly, influencing their lives in ways you never thought possible.

You will not only serve as a "resident director" but as a counselor, leader, adviser, friend and administrator for U.S. students abroad, and your responsibility can be a twenty-four hours-a-day job. You will be faced with demanding situations that may be rewarding or frustrating, but we hope, at the same time, that they will be positive learning experiences - for you, as well as the

students! From translator to personal confidant, you will be involved in various situations that students, very imaginatively, seem to find themselves in when they are adjusting to different cultures.

You should familiarize yourself with the specific responsibilities as laid out in your individual job description. In general, these responsibilities are:

1. Act as Michigan State University's principal contact with the host university and governmental offices for matters relating to MSU's study abroad program. If approved by the Director of OSA, represent OSA in negotiations with the host university or other entities involved with MSU's program.
2. Act as the academic liaison between MSU's appropriate academic departments and the host university. This will include providing advice and information to the departments about matters relating to MSU students' academically credited coursework at the host university.
3. Act as the liaison between MSU's Office of Study Abroad and the host university for logistical and other non-credit matters relating to the program.
4. Keep OSA informed of various developments with the program and students.
5. Coordinate the academic program on-site; this includes collecting and confirming accuracy of courses and grades at the conclusion of the program, and having the appropriate office at the host university send them in a timely manner to the Office of Study Abroad for forwarding to the appropriate academic departments on campus.
6. Function as the on-site academic advisor to MSU students enrolling in courses at the host university. This will include offering information and advice about courses that will be offered, communicating with the University professors about issues in relation to MSU students in their courses, aiding them in getting registered, and providing counseling to them regarding issues relating to these courses.
7. Select, coordinate, and evaluate the local families that house MSU students; place students with the appropriate families; and resolve problems related with these homestay situations.
8. Pay the families that house MSU students, as well as any bills associated with the program, including the host university academic fees and those associated with orientation activities and excursions.
9. Plan and organize the cultural orientation activities at the beginning of the academic program. This will include meeting and/or organizing the host families to meet the students at the airport; arranging intensive language and cultural activities; and organizing and participating in cultural visits and excursions during the orientation period and throughout the semester. It is essential that the Resident Director be available prior to the arrival of the students each term, when all arrangements are made for the coming semester.
10. Plan and organize appropriate excursions and other cultural activities for the students. This will include arranging teachers or guides, transportation and housing.
11. Keep students informed of local laws, regulations and customs of the host country, community, institution and program. Keep OSA informed of any changes related to these laws, regulations and customs.
12. Handle behavioral problems according to established procedures. This may involve dismissing a student from a program.
13. Prepare for and respond to emergencies as described in this handbook:

Kathleen Fairfax: 517-432-4346(work); 517-337-7096 (home)  
Cindy Chalou: 517-432-4345(work); 517-337-2641 (home)  
Inge Steglitz: 517-432-2685(work); 517-349-8104 (home)

14. Arrange for the arrival, housing, orientation, and optional group activities of students.
15. Assist students with personal matters and help them adjust to the new culture.
16. Maintain organized records and files of participants.
17. Be available to spend time with professors and administrators when they visit the study abroad program in the host university in an official program capacity.
18. See to the health and well being of program participants. This will include following regulations provided by the Office of Study Abroad regarding emergency procedures, and identification of health services. For student medical emergencies, call collect 410-453-6330 or see the *Student Handbook* for a listing of the MEDEX International Toll Free Telephone Access Numbers.
19. Submit a budget to the Office of Study Abroad, following the budget format provided before the start of the program; maintain records during the program according to the terms specified in the approved budget; and submit a final accounting to the Office of Study Abroad at the conclusion of the program.
20. Hold regular office hours at the university, in the office provided by the host university for this purpose, so as to be available for MSU students.
21. Visit MSU as needed in order to assist with the recruitment of MSU students (MSU will pay for transportation and room/board expenses in East Lansing).
22. Assist in exploring the possibility of offering internships on site and work with OSA on establishing internships, if feasible.
23. Assist the Office of Study Abroad in other matters related to the smooth functioning of the study abroad program at the host university.

Above all, successful resident directors must always be prepared to apply their professional and personal experience, common sense, and general understanding of program rules and philosophy to new problems and issues as they arise, all the while maintaining the confidence of their students.

### ***B. Objectives of the Study Abroad Experience***

The MSU Office of Study Abroad has identified four skill areas that define the outcomes that students gain while participating in a study abroad program:

1. Academic/intellectual (students develop skills in problem solving and foreign languages; they gain geographical and historical knowledge; they're exposed to people who process information differently than they do; and so on.)
2. Professional (students make professional contacts, gain a sense of direction for their future career, gain a sense of responsibility in working on a project, gain an intimate knowledge of a foreign culture, and so on.)
3. Personal (students may gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for the U.S.; they often develop confidence, a strengthened sense of personal identity, flexibility, creativity; they develop greater self-knowledge and self-awareness by encountering the values of other cultures; and so on.)

4. Intercultural (students may increase their interest in other cultures, become less ethnocentric as they become aware of cultural differences, develop language skills within a cultural context, become more culturally sensitive and accepting, and so on.)

### ***C. Student Profile***

While it is inappropriate to generalize about any particular group of people, a few things can be said about study abroad participants. This may help the Resident Director understand the group and create realistic expectations of the students.

- Study abroad participants are typically slightly above average academic performers at MSU. They are generally serious students in terms of trying to pursue an academic program. However, the quality of work students perform abroad may vary from excellent to poor.
- Study abroad participants, while having different interests, are generally slightly more highly motivated to learn about other cultures, languages or countries.
- Study abroad participants may find several distractions as they discover the new culture or are exposed to new challenges. They need to develop a certain degree of discipline, such as balancing time for academics with going out, weekend travel, dating, etc., to be able to achieve academic excellence.
- US students, in general, tend to lack historical perspective and knowledge—not only about their host country, but also about the United States. They also tend to be poorly informed and naïve in regards to intercultural situations.
- Participants can be quite demanding when they feel a service is due, especially when they feel they are entitled to, or have paid for, that service. Students view most services and experiences as established by contract and especially resist changes once they are in writing.
- The majority of MSU study abroad participants are grateful, at the end of the stay, for the opportunity of having lived abroad and grown intellectually and emotionally during this time and will retain these experiences for the rest of their lives. Some will never travel abroad again but will have developed a whole new set of skills and understanding towards a different culture. It is this growth and experience that is typically the most tangible reward for the Resident Director.
- The ideal candidate will demonstrate emotional stability, a sense of responsibility, flexibility, and good interpersonal communication that will determine the ability to adapt to a radically new social and academic environment.

### ***D. Student Selection and Screening***

Student acceptance is a three-step process based on:

- A faculty review of the academic transcript. MSU and your institution establish the academic pre-requisites and the faculty reviewer confirms that these criteria have been met.
- A faculty review of the Judicial Affairs Office records. In some cases a student may have a judicial record (commonly underage alcohol use or illegal drug use) while living in the residence halls. The faculty reviewer is informed of any record but cannot deny admissions

merely because there is a judicial report. In most cases, the reviewer will meet with the student to determine whether the violation is sufficiently grievous to deny admission.

- Review of the health form by MSU medical staff. If there is a concern about a health condition that might be affected by travel, students will be contacted by the MSU Travel Clinic. Resident directors will receive relevant information about health conditions of students in their group. This list, which will be forwarded from OSA, will include the names of the students with health concerns and basic health related information. In some cases, the Travel Clinic may require that the student see a physician to review a health issue before participating in the program. If the student refuses to see a physician or sign a waiver, he/she will not be allowed to participate in the program.

There are two primary US laws that impact the selection and the sharing of information about study abroad students. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1973 requires that university programs and activities make necessary modification in their policies, practices and procedures to accommodate students with disabilities. This means removal of procedures in admission and other student services that create a bias against the inclusion of students with disabilities. Although federal disability rights law does not apply to countries outside of the US, it is expected that MSU and the host institution will make “reasonable accommodations” for such students. OSA asks students with disabilities to notify us six months to a year before arrival about any disability-related needs. In turn, OSA will contact you to determine whether these needs can be met.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) prohibits the release of personally identifiable information from student educational records without a student’s written consent. Although, in most cases, the students have given this consent, all confidential information can be disclosed only on a need-to-know basis. The law states that an official requesting information must have a legitimate need to have the requested information for the effective functioning of the position or office. Therefore, there may be cases when OSA will not share information because it is our feeling that the student’s privacy overrides your need to know that information. Should the student’s health and safety be at risk, the FERPA law will be disregarded.

## ***PRE-PROGRAM PREPARATION***

### ***A. Academic Calendar***

In order to adequately inform students of the program calendar, the Office of Study Abroad must be informed of all relevant dates. The Resident Director is responsible for gathering all pertinent information regarding the academic calendar and keeping OSA updated and informed of any changes that may occur during the year. Dates and information regarding the following activities are needed by OSA as far in advance as possible to advise students and prepare publication materials. (A) indicates the information is needed one year in advance; (B) indicates information is needed 90 days before arrival; and (C) indicates information is needed at least 30 days before arrival.

Student Arrival (A)	Holidays (B)
Orientation (A)	Field trips (B)
Beginning of housing placements (C)	Last day of classes (A)
Intensive language classes (A)	Exams (A)
Course registration (C)	Departure from homestay/accommodations (A)
First day of classes (A)	

### ***B. Housing***

Housing must be arranged prior to arrival and varies from site to site, depending on availability, cost, convenience, safety, etc. The Resident Director will try to meet students' needs as closely as possible; however, particular demands sometimes cannot be met. The Resident Director should explain what is expected from students and what they can expect from the host families, facility and local community. Students should understand that although changes in writing can be made, they have to allow flexibility and adjustment on both sides.

Remind students that adjusting to a new housing situation can be a critical part of the total cultural adjustment, and flexibility is the key to a successful experience. Students should be aware of the cultural differences and try to respect and adapt to the host country's customs. Students must allow time for this adjustment period: in some cases the living situation will define the success or failure of the experience. Some cultural differences that may require adjustment include mealtimes, amounts and quality of food, usage of electricity, water, cleaning standards, curfews, etc. It helps for the students to know what the local customs are, so such explanation must be incorporated into early orientation.

Program-arranged housing includes living with families or staying in dormitories, pensions and apartments. Although the program is responsible for providing reasonable housing, it is not required to meet each student's wishes regarding convenience, luxury and cost. In most cases the standards of living abroad are different from the US, but an attempt should be made to locate comparable housing for all students.

Students are informed that housing arrangements are done for the program dates only. If they arrive earlier than the starting date of the program, they must make their own housing arrangements. The Office of Study Abroad, RD, or host family cannot make special arrangements regarding their early arrival. In keeping with MSU policy, arranged housing will not allow members of the opposite sex to live in the same housing unit, whether it is a dorm room or an apartment.

MSU is required to pass on requests for special accommodations by students with disabilities. OSA will work with you to determine whether reasonable accommodations can be made. If these arrangements are possible, you are expected to make them; however, you will not be asked to make accommodations that result in substantial modifications or fundamental alterations in the nature of the program.

The most common means of housing accommodations are family stays, dormitories, sharing apartments with other students, and renting an apartment to live independently.

***Living with a family*** is the best way to immerse students into the local culture, help them improve their language skills, and allow them to build long-lasting relationships. It is through the family that students will have the first introductions to the host country's social structure. Students need to be advised that while some families have had experience hosting international students, others have not. Students may be warmly welcomed as an extended family member; or students may be treated as boarders. While some families will have college-age children, others may have younger or no children. Regardless of the family structure, it is through this living situation that students will have the first taste of the local society and culture.

While this experience may be a very rewarding part of studying abroad, students need to have some knowledge of the social and family structure. Inform students that they may be expected to give up some privacy and independence; in some cases, female students will be expected not to go out as much or will be expected to arrive home earlier than the male students. It is wise to prepare a written list of questions or issues students and their families should agree upon at the start of their stay.

Students should be informed that a significant difference between US families and families abroad is that US families are more nuclear; whereas, families abroad tend to be more extended with closer relationships with uncles, aunts, grandparents, cousins, etc. In general, people abroad grow up expecting a broader network of family members.

The neighborhood where students live may be another building block of basic social networks. Students can expect to feel like the center of attention or they may feel like their privacy is invaded through personal questions asked by people whom they consider strangers. Tell the students that this is merely curiosity and shouldn't be taken as offensive.

It is the Resident Director's responsibility to find appropriate families for students. The families are interviewed and the RD visits each family personally to make sure the minimum standards are met. Visits should be scheduled periodically, as conditions may change. Students should be treated as part of the family, with the same rights and responsibilities as the other family members.

The following factors should be recorded when looking for host families:

- Family environment: number of people living in the household, pets, and cleanliness;
- Location: distance to the university, downtown, other students, and public transportation;
- Socio-economic level of the family;
- Flexibility and accommodation of the family, such as types and timing of meals, schedules, and openness to student diversity;
- Comfort of the student living in that family.
- Willingness to include the student in family life.

Once a family is chosen, the RD should draw up a contract specifying payment and services in writing. The contract should indicate when payment will be made; in most cases, the Resident Director will pay the families monthly. The rent should include: warm, clean individual room with a comfortable bed, window, closet or dresser, and desk with a lamp; bathroom for student use; three substantial meals, or number as written in the program materials, per day (if the student is not present for a meal, the family will pack it for the student to take); water for regular hot showers; electricity; linens and clothes cleaned once per week; house key. The family cannot rent the student's room if the student leaves during holidays. The room will be held for the student. The language of communication in the household will be that of the host country.

The family must be informed of the program dates. If they agree to have the student stay beyond the end date, the student must pay the full rent in advance, along with a security deposit for damages.

The RD must provide a written copy of the family and student responsibilities to both groups.

It is the family's responsibility to:

- Provide an environment where the local language is spoken.
- Provide a clean, warm, private bedroom that includes a comfortable bed, window, a closet or dresser, and a desk with a lamp.
- Provide three substantial meals, or the number as written in the program materials.
- Pick the student up at the airport, bus depot, or train station, upon your arrival, and arrange for transportation upon departure.
- Provide suitable laundry facilities (washer, dryer, detergent), and cleaning supplies to clean the bedroom (vacuum, duster, etc.).
- Orient the student to the local vicinity and to the neighborhood, and familiarize the student with bus routes to downtown and the University.
- Assist with banking procedures and help set up a bank account.
- Invite the student to join family activities whenever possible, and help the student to feel at ease in their home. Assist in the adjustment to life in their country, and encourage the student to learn about the local culture, lifestyle, and family life.
- Respect the rights, privacy and culture of the student, including religious and political beliefs, and conduct themselves appropriately at all times.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Obey the house rules in regard to meal schedules and arrival at night;
- Let the family know if he or she will not be present for a meal or if he or she will go traveling when class is not in session;
- Ask permission of the family to bring guests to the home. Students cannot have members of the opposite sex spend the night at the family's home;
- Inform the family of special diet, allergies or other needs;
- Be considerate of water and electricity usage;
- Not use the phone to place calls, only to receive them. Students are asked to call their parents/ friends using a calling card;
- Maintain a clean room;
- Be responsible with the house keys.

As time passes, it is likely that the RD will develop close relationships with some families, and some of these relationships may be closer than your relationships with students, particularly if students are unhappy and complaining. Though it may be difficult, it is very important for you to remain impartial in cases of conflict and remember your first responsibility is the student.

Students may also be placed in student *residence halls or dormitories*. In these cases, students will be more independent, food may be provided, and they can come and go as they please, but they will not have the accessibility to the host culture that they would if they lived with a family. Additionally, if a group of MSU students is placed in the same dorm, their language skills may not improve as rapidly as in a family setting. Because of the university structure in some countries, residence halls are not an option; in this case, students will be informed of the different options.

If a student wishes to *live with non-participants*, it is the student's responsibility to find this type accommodations on his or her own. The Resident Director will advise students about the safe areas of town and the various housing options. Although living with local students sounds attractive because students will have more freedom, will come and go as they please, and will prepare their own meals, it could also be potentially dangerous. US students may not know their roommates and may find themselves in difficult situations. OSA will rely largely on your judgement to determine if a housing option is not suitable for students. Work out general guidelines on this issue with OSA before the program begins.

*Living independently* should not be recommended since students have a limited understanding of their surroundings and how contracts and verbal agreements are negotiated. Students often have to sign a lease and submit a deposit; and if anything goes wrong, they may go to the Resident Director expecting a solution to their problems. Additionally, students living on their own will not be able to access the culture and language as efficiently and quickly as living in a setting where they could integrate themselves into the culture.

If a student is dissatisfied with the housing, she/he is instructed to notify the Resident Director. Every attempt should be made to correct the situation. Reallocation of housing, if necessary, will be provided only once during the program. No housing refunds will be provided for additional moves. Furthermore, since housing payments are commonly done on a monthly basis, any moves made in the middle of the month will result in the student's forfeit of that month's

rent. When the student relocates, have him/her sign a statement indicating his/her understanding that: relocation is provided once and no housing refunds will be provided for additional moves; if the move is made in the middle of the rental payment period the student forfeits the payment balance of that period; no gifts given to the host family can be reclaimed; and all payments to the new housing provider must follow the program's established payment procedure.

If you have serious complaints about, or dissatisfaction and incompatibility with, a certain host family, do NOT use that family again, even if you or the housing coordinator is very fond of that family. MSU students commonly report their concerns to OSA and if the allegations are serious enough, repeat selection of a problematic family may result in legal difficulties.

In the event of severe infractions of housing regulations, the RD, in consultation with the MSU Office of Study Abroad and local University faculty members or staff, will warn students *in writing* about possible expulsion from the housing facility or other consequences. Repeated offenses or severe infractions of the housing rules and regulations as established by the local facilities may result in expulsion from housing and expulsion from the study abroad program. If a student is removed from housing but remains in the program, the student will be responsible for locating and paying for the alternative housing. If alternative housing cannot be found, the student must return home and forfeit academic credit and any financial refund.

### ***C. Student Arrival***

It is essential that the Resident Director have all arrival preparations and attention to details completed at least two weeks before the students arrive. A nice gesture is to send all the students an email at this time to introduce yourself, reassure them of arrival logistics, and to extend a warm welcome to your country. An organized and smooth arrival is crucial for the initial development of the program. Students will immediately associate the overall success of the program with the level of arrival organization.

#### *1. Group arrival*

OSA recommends that students arrive on a group flight. If a group flight exists, the Office of Study Abroad will make arrangements and inform the RD of the flight arrival details, including the names of students on that flight. The Resident Director is responsible for arranging student pick-up and delivery to the housing site. Plan on greeting the group personally upon arrival. Students will remember if you are not there to greet them. The Resident Director will keep the OSA informed of the group's arrival and any problems. If any student has not arrived, the RD will inform OSA immediately and follow up on each particular case.

Prior to the group arrival, the Resident Director should utilize the following checklist:

- a. Travel Information (information to be provided by OSA):*
  - Arrival airport
  - Arrival month, day, and time
  - Air carrier and flight number
  - Names of passengers, including any accompanying non-participants

b. *Transfers (information to be provided by RD):*

- If the airport is the final destination, details regarding transfer to temporary or permanent housing. Contingency plans for delayed flights or very early or late arrival times of the day. Arrangements for students with disabilities (if applicable).
- If the airport is not a final destination, details regarding transfer to secondary transportation (bus, rail, etc.). Information should include method of moving from one location to make the connection; location of secondary transportation; date, departure time, bus/rail number, and planned arrival time.
- Details regarding host family pick-up. Inform families of location, date and time of arrival. Contingency plans in case a family doesn't show up.

c. *Temporary Accommodations:*

- If offered, these housing arrangements are for a limited time period, either to allow the students to rest while en-route to a particular site or to allow for a transition period before occupying permanent housing. When making temporary arrangements, the Resident Director must know the number of students and accompanying non-participants by: males; females; couples; couples with children; single parents with children; students with disabilities. Temporary rooms should be arranged by numbers and in accordance with these needs.

2. *Independent arrival*

Students are given the option of traveling independently to their study abroad site. Although not encouraged, some students exercise this option for a variety of reasons. OSA will inform all independent arrival students of specific steps to follow to arrive easily and safely at the program site. However, independent travelers are informed that neither the OSA nor the Resident Director is responsible for their transportation to the program site. Necessary arrangements will be made for their inclusion in housing once they join the group.

The Resident Director will be given a list of participants that contains the group arrival and independent arrivals.

## ***ON-SITE PROGRAM COORDINATION***

### ***A. Safety***

#### *1. Communication*

As Resident Director, you will have groups of students under your charge and responsibility. Communication with the students, OSA, and relevant local individuals is absolutely critical, and must be handled with the highest level of accuracy and objectivity to avoid misunderstandings. The Resident Director must have skills to identify problems and learn to solve them efficiently and effectively.

Students look to the Resident Director to serve as a mediator and problem solver. They expect responses and solutions from you, although sometimes they will not agree with the results. You need to let them know that you care about their problems, no matter how small they seem to you, and that you are doing everything possible to help them resolve those issues. Furthermore, you need to convey to students that you are the person to contact **first** when they find themselves in a problem or emergency. Once you have acquired their confidence you should be able to take the necessary steps to handle a situation.

The keys to successful communication include the following. If these issues have not already been addressed with the OSA Educational Program Coordinator, feel free to discuss them so communication is timely and effective.

- Mutually define and clearly state the expectations and goals of both parties before, during and after the program. This includes the job description as well as other issues such as effective methods and timing of communication. For instance, is e-mail sufficient, or is phoning preferable? How and when will communication be done during emergencies or times of strife?
- Clarify your salary and program budgetary issues so that finances do not interfere with communication.
- Both you and the OSA staff must remind one other of obligations. This requires trust and willingness to make a long-term commitment. It also requires rapid communication when there are problems and not waiting until they have festered too long.
- There must be a willingness to share sensitive issues such as internal politics of the home or host institution, student behavioral problems, etc. This is especially important if these issues are impacting the program.
- Each side must be willing to share the pressures that may interfere with communication, such as political or institutional strife, nagging parents, inaccurate media coverage, false perceptions, personal or professional obligations outside of the relationship, etc.
- In order for it to work, the partnership needs to be nurtured and not just maintained. This means communication should be done regularly and not just when there are problems.

It is very important to keep the Office of Study Abroad well informed of issues or problems as they occur and keep up-to-date on developments until problems have been solved. OSA needs all

the details of relevant issues. We need to inform parents and the University community that we have complete and up-to-date information and that we are doing our best to solve the issues.

All students participating in MSU study abroad programs are covered by a mandatory health and accident program administered by HTH Worldwide Insurance Services (see Appendix for sample card and claim form). This is a comprehensive policy that covers students from arrival to departure at the study abroad site. See the *Student Handbook* Appendix for details.

Refer to *Emergency and Safety Information* in the Appendix. This procedure will clarify what situations constitute an emergency. If you are in doubt as to whether an event is an emergency or not, please contact the OSA immediately. If the students are not living in a central area, like a dormitory, a procedure for quickly locating students must be developed. If the situation is an emergency, follow the procedure to ensure effective and rapid response. If it is a medical emergency, refer to the summary and detailed description of the Student Insurance coverage in the *Student Handbook* Appendix. If it is not an emergency, keep the OSA informed through regular communication and the end-of-program report.

The Resident Director needs to communicate with the appropriate OSA Educational Program Coordinator twice per month regarding development of the program and adjustments of the students. The communications should include categories such as general, academic, financial, personal and/or confidential.

## 2. *Contact Information*

The Resident Director must keep a list of student information that includes their local contact information and passport numbers. All MEDEX/HTH information is provided in the *Student Handbook*. It is important for all students to receive a list of the local contact information, including emergency numbers. All students need to have a card or form with the following information:

- Resident Director name, address, phone number, and phone number in case of emergency
- Host university address and contact number (if different from RD)
- Police number
- Medical emergency number
- Closest medical facility approved by MEDEX (see *Student Handbook* Appendix for the local MEDEX listing to obtain recommendations)
- Host family address and phone number

## 3. *Liability Coverage for Resident Directors*

Michigan State University has a foreign liability policy for Resident Directors of MSU study abroad programs. It insures against bodily injury or property damage and applies to claims occurring outside the United States or Puerto Rico.

Resident Directors, acting as employees of MSU, are covered for acts within their scope of employment and services performed on behalf of or under the direction of the University. Coverage is excluded for intentional acts of injury or injury to a fellow employee.

#### 4. *Office*

The Resident Director (RD) will have an office or central location where students can meet. It is important to provide some privacy so students can feel comfortable when discussing sensitive issues. The Resident Director must not discuss a particular student's problem with the rest of the group. Each problem, even if it is a small issue in the eyes of the RD, should be dealt with in a confidential manner.

Office hours need to be established and clearly communicated to students. The Resident Director must be accessible outside of office hours, and students and OSA must be informed of RD contact information in case of an emergency.

Files must be kept on each student. These files are confidential and are meant to be used solely by the Resident Director. Information to be kept in each student file should include:

- Copy of passport and visa (if applicable).
- Copy of student application
- Information, if applicable, about student allergies, reactions, medications etc. (If a student has health needs that the RD needs to be made aware of, OSA will provide this information via the MSU Travel Clinic).
- Student's local address and U.S. address, in case of an emergency.
- Current list of classes in which students are enrolled.
- Copy of student's traveling itinerary.
- Detailed records of incidents related to the student that may prove useful for action taken throughout and after the program.

#### **B. *On-site orientation***

Prior to the student arrival, Resident Directors should thoroughly read the *Student Handbook* that provides the type of information and preparation students receive prior to departure. As soon as practically possible after the students arrive, the Resident Director should hold a group orientation meeting. If possible, break the orientation into several segments: one or two initial "survival" meetings to cover critical topics and then regular meetings throughout the program to cover topics of less importance. Discuss topics as and when the students need them so you will have their full attention. Allow and encourage the students to express their fears and expectations.

There will be some topics that will require emphasis upon arrival, and later reinforcement (such as disciplinary issues) or discussion (such as dating and sex) throughout the program. Do not assume "orientation" is complete after the first week: by establishing with the students that

orienting to and understanding the new culture is an on-going process, they will come to appreciate your regular meetings as an opportunity to discuss issues and reactions.

While the content and conduct of this orientation will depend on the circumstances, the following topics should be discussed:

- *Cultural adjustment*: Refer to the *Student Handbook* regarding survival strategies for cultural adjustment. Although students may have read this portion before departure, its relevance will become real and significant upon arrival. Discuss each item with students so that they can “expect the unexpected” and know that everyone will experience some level of adjustment. Since housing has a critical impact on cultural adjustment, use the previous housing section to cover relevant topics during orientation. It is best to arrange a deeper discussion of these issues about three weeks later. A mention in the initial orientation meetings won’t be sufficient and students at that point are still in their “honeymoon” stage and may not completely absorb the significance of the discussion.
- *Office hours*: Inform students of office hours and information on how they may contact the Resident Director after working hours in case of emergency. One of the difficult RD tasks is to walk the fine line between student dependency and being available for students in case of real emergencies.
- *Academic regulations*: Relevant academic information and instructions should be reviewed, such as significant dates, enrollment procedures, time and place to enroll, placement exams, explanation of the evaluation system for the placement exam, course grading policies, acceptable classroom behavior, typical study habits, etc.
- *Attendance*: Rules for class attendance and vacations should be reviewed.
  - *Classes*: Students are expected to attend all class meetings unless they are ill. Students may think attendance is unnecessary but they need to be informed it is mandatory.
  - *Vacations*: Students should not leave before vacation periods begin and must be back for the first day of class following a vacation period. If an emergency arises and the student cannot return before the start of classes, the Resident Director must be informed. Before departing on any vacation, students must provide the Resident Director with their approximate itinerary and contact information. Students should be told that this is not to keep track of their activities, but for emergency use.
- *Controlled substances*: Students must understand that while in a different country, they are subject to and **must** obey the local laws and regulations with regard to the consumption or sale of controlled substances, i.e., drugs and alcohol. In most countries the use and sale of drugs is illegal and a US passport will not protect them or get them out of trouble. Refer to the *Student Handbook* for information on alcohol abuse and illegal drug use.

While it is the students’ responsibility to become familiar with local laws and regulations, the Resident Director must cover this with students, including the rules of the host university and program site.

Michigan State University’s General Student Regulations apply to students in Study Abroad Programs. All-University Policies that also may be applicable include: the

Anti-Discrimination Policy, MSU Drug and Alcohol Policy, and the Sexual Harassment Policy. These regulations are published in *Spartan Life* (<http://www.ssb.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm>). The Resident Director has the authority to dismiss students who violate the MSU zero-tolerance policy regarding the possession, use, manufacture, production, sale exchange or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol. (See the Student Handbook for *Statement of Responsibility*)

The following behaviors are among those that may result in immediate dismissal from the program: alcohol abuse; physical or sexual assault; harassment; unlawful possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs; setting a fire or possession of explosives; possession of a weapon, including BB guns and knives; theft. See the latter section of this handbook for the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

- *Safety*  
Students should exercise the same safety precautions that they would at home. Such precautions are listed in the *Student Handbook*. The Resident Director should cover these points and inform students of the safe parts of town and areas to avoid. Any precautions specific to the local area and culture should be emphasized.
- *Dating*  
It is important to note that different cultures have different norms in regard to gender. Resident Directors should have a candid conversation with all students regarding the role of dating and sex in the local culture. Comments in the *Student Handbook* should serve as a springboard for discussion and applicability to local circumstances. Spend extra time on this topic, especially with women, to make sure students understand expected local norms and how to take care of themselves. Organize special meetings or forums after classes have begun to regularly talk about these and similar issues.
- *Money*  
The Resident Director should provide information on banking practices, operating ATM machines, drafts and wires. The RD should recommend to students the best and easiest ways of handling their finances. A list of banks, American Express offices, and other financial institutions should be provided.

Resident Directors will have to use their best judgment when it comes to approving student loans. Inform students that **loans should be granted only in cases of extreme emergency**. Students must sign a form (see *Appendix*) stating responsibility for the loan and timeline for payment. Resident Directors are responsible for the payment follow-up. Students should know that they can apply for loans only in case of emergency and the maximum amount is equivalent to US\$100. Only one loan per student will be granted during the period of the program and must be repaid before the student departs.

- *Student conduct*  
Students should be reminded of the expected rules and regulations of each particular institution and site. The RD will clearly state the different sanctions when these expectations are not being met. The following section, “Typical Problems”, should aid in clarifying expectations and consequences of student behavior as they relate to housing, drugs and alcohol, and the MSU discipline policy.

- *Physical orientation*

The RD should organize one or two walking tours to show students places such as university buildings, program office, banks, post office, drugstores, medical facilities, etc. This will orient and give students a sense of self-reliance.

### **C. *Academic Policies***

The academic credibility of the program depends upon the ability to translate the students' academic experience abroad into terms understandable on their home campus. Quality and quantity of work performed need to meet or exceed established standards. Student participants remain responsible for meeting the academic requirements of their MSU college and department.

The academic curriculum is fundamental to MSU's study abroad programs. Travel and acculturation are important facets of the program, but the former is made more meaningful and the latter is made possible by the intellectual preparation required by MSU's academic programs. This emphasizes language acquisition, formal cultural orientation, and the closest possible daily contact with the career objectives of participating students. Contrary to the widespread view that "getting to know the people" is a simple matter of organized or freelance touring, the road to genuine intercultural understanding is difficult, but more rewarding. Language study and serious inquiry into gaining a holistic understanding of a people by serious and motivated students constitute a quality and rewarding program.

Students are expected to attend classes every time they meet, comply with the university's guidelines and perform well in every subject in order to earn credit for a course. Part of their experience will be the development of flexibility and understanding of a different academic system.

#### *1. Course descriptions/Syllabi*

The Resident Director will submit the appropriate course descriptions to OSA. Additionally, he or she will keep the OSA up-to-date with the changes in the curriculum and calendar.

Students may seek the Resident Director's help in trying to understand or find a syllabus for a particular course. The RD will explain the different educational systems and in cases where no course syllabus exists, try to obtain a list of dates and basic course requirements from the professor.

#### *2. Academic field trips*

Field trips that are included as part of the program fee (and thereby not refundable) must have an academic purpose and content related to or that complements the approved course content. Such organized field trips should be treated as mandatory since students may otherwise miss the only opportunity to visit a particular site or establishment where they wouldn't go by themselves. Some points to take into consideration when organizing a field trip are:

- The employment of a field trip must meet a clear need for on-site, as opposed to classroom, instruction. An appropriate balance of classroom instruction and field instruction should be maintained.
- For liability reasons, field trips should be limited to participants from the MSU program. No friends or family of the RD or students may accompany the students on field trips.
- The resident director must arrange all details for the successful organization of a field trip. This includes making sure that the facilitators have had previous experience working with students, checking references of trip organizers, travel agencies, tour guides, etc.
- The Resident Director will accompany the students during the field trip.
- Field trips are budgeted into the program fee and attendance is mandatory. If a student chooses not to participate, he or she will be refunded no money.
- The Resident Director will evaluate the field trip and make future recommendations in the end-of-program report.

Informal optional field trips, such as visits to culturally interesting sites, can also be planned but do not need to be part of the course.

### 3. *Enrollment and Credits*

Students participating in a study abroad program will receive MSU credit or transfer credit for courses taken abroad. Students are required to take a full load of courses, which translates into a minimum of 12 credits per semester. The total number of required credits will vary according to the particular program. Not meeting this requirement could jeopardize financial aid and establish a sense of inequality among the other participants in the group. If a student wants to enroll in fewer credits he/she will need written authorization from the Director of OSA.

If the program offers MSU courses, OSA will monitor the enrollment of students before the program begins and notify them if they are enrolled below the minimum number of credits. The RD will be provided with a list of courses for each student and monitor any enrollment changes. At the end of the on-site enrollment period, the RD must finalize all enrollment changes, if any, and fax a revised course listing to the OSA coordinator.

In some cases a student may disenroll from a course through the MSU computer system and not inform the RD or OSA. Therefore, if the RD becomes aware of a change in a student's enrollment, attendance, or academic participation (i.e., no longer attending classes), the RD must immediately notify the OSA coordinator.

If the program offers transfer credits from the host institution, the Resident Director will inform students about the different requirements for enrollment and ensure that each student is enrolled in a full load of courses.

A student may enroll in courses, but not receive grades, with prior approval from the appropriate professor(s); however, students must still enroll and pay for the minimum number of credits stated in the program brochure.

#### 4. *Grading Policies*

The RD should determine and communicate guidelines used for impartial review of grades. It is expected that students will be graded fairly, following the regulations and grading scales from the host institution. If a student feels a grade does not reflect the amount of work or knowledge put into a particular subject, he/she may discuss this with the RD and determine whether a re-take or re-grading of the exam is appropriate. The student should submit a written petition and the professor is expected to provide a written response. It is the responsibility of the Resident Director to follow up with these types of petitions from students and assess whether the student is being reasonable. OSA should be informed and copied on all communication related to grade petitions.

It is the responsibility of the Resident Director to compile the courses and grades at the end of the program, confirm their accuracy, and send them in an organized manner to the OSA. You may be called upon to provide grade equivalencies for MSU courses (OSA will assist you in establishing the conversion scale).

Timely reporting of grades is extremely important. If possible, attempt to forward the grades no later than 15 days after the last day of classes. The Office of Study Abroad will process the credits and grades of each student through the appropriate MSU offices.

#### ***D. Culture Shock***

A general term for a variety of psychological, social, and even physical complaints, “culture shock” refers to a sense of alienation from a host cultural environment on the part of a foreign visitor. Expressing itself in a wide variety of ways, it may include symptoms of hostility, withdrawal, or irrational behavior. In its milder, most basic form, culture shock is called homesickness.

Culture shock may occur at different stages throughout the experience. External factors, such as unpleasant weather, academic challenges, or holidays trigger certain responses. Check discreetly but regularly with professors, host families, and others to try to identify student problems before they reach a crisis stage. Some students will talk of returning home; a few may actually withdraw from the program. In extreme cases nothing can be done other than to facilitate the student’s immediate return. In most cases, however, peer support and encouragement and/or Resident Director counseling can help the student through the critical period. Work with your OSA coordinator to obtain helpful materials, if you need them.

Encourage students to reflect upon the timeless tips for a speedy acclimatization and more meaningful stay abroad. These tips may serve as a reference when Resident Directors are assisting students through difficult stages:

1. Learn about your destination before you leave.
2. Learn the local language.
3. Settle in as soon as you can after you recover from your jet lag.
4. Plunge into the local life in your new home as soon as you arrive.
5. Don't allow negative experiences from your first encounter sour you on the country for the rest of your stay.
6. Ignore complaints about the country.
7. Reflect on positive things and avoid unhappy classmates.
8. Accept the challenge of establishing yourself in the new country and work hard to enjoy your stay.

Refer to the *Student Handbook* section on culture and survival strategies for additional ideas on assisting students through the challenges of adjustment.

### ***E. Group Activities***

Planned extracurricular group activities are suggested, especially during difficult times. Sometimes these activities help students debrief and air some problems. Acknowledge the difficulties students may be having, but use these informal gatherings as time to lessen negative energy among the group: encourage problem solving and positive attitudes. These activities should not coincide with times when students are attending class. These sessions require preparation by the Resident Director, but are greatly appreciated by students.

A group meal should be organized upon arrival and departure of the group. The Resident Director will take care of all the logistics for these meals, and submit receipts as part of the program budget.

Students often experience culture shock during holiday seasons. These serve as times to get the group together to discuss concerns and try to put things into perspective. Students also appreciate when their birthdays are celebrated. A monthly birthday celebration can honor birthdays of that month without a large time and financial commitment.

### ***F. Typical Problems***

Most Resident Directors are surprised to discover the extent to which they become involved in the personal problems of students. Some examples of major problems are listed below. In all cases, the OSA should be informed of such problems, either through emergency communication or the end-of-program report.

#### ***1. Financial crises***

Despite all the advice and pre-departure preparation, some students will find themselves with a shortage of funds, or may experience theft of funds. In some cases a financial aid error may have been made, but until money is deposited into their account students need to be advised on what to do. Some of the possible solutions could be: have funds deposited into the student's account that he/she can access them through an ATM; have the family send a foreign draft by express mail; send

a bank wire or transfer; or send a transfer through American Express. This latter option is quite costly. See the *Student Handbook* regarding money matters and suggestions for obtaining funds (see *Safety* section).

In any case, it is the student's responsibility to solve his or her financial problems. The Resident Director will help as much as possible in terms of giving advice.

Loans should be avoided, but **in cases of extreme emergency** a loan for a maximum amount of U.S \$100.00 can be authorized. In these situations, the Resident Director must have students sign a form agreeing to repay the loan in full (see in the *Appendix*). Only one loan per student will be granted during the period of the program and must be repaid before the student departs.

## 2. *Theft*

If a student loses or has a passport or visa stolen, it should be reported immediately to the local US Embassy or Consulate. If the student has a copy of the documents, the replacement process should be easy and quick; if not, they may spend extensive time and energy replacing them.

If theft occurs, report it to the local authorities in the usual manner appropriate to your culture. If the theft involves money, refer to the section above for action.

## 3. *Relationships*

Whenever a student leaves behind a boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse or child, tension is created. The individual left at home may be supportive in the beginning, but as time passes doubts may be expressed about the student's loyalty, concern, etc., or vice versa. Occasionally, the student may find the emotional pull too hard to resist and will abandon even the most carefully laid study plans. The Resident Director may try to reinforce the student's original purpose and motive, but may not be successful.

Students occasionally become emotionally involved on site and want to extend their stay based on false assumptions of a lasting relationship. They may become more realistic as they return to their normal schedule and realize that their stay shouldn't have been based on a fragile relationship.

In both instances the student may seek advice from the Resident Director. It is important for the Resident Director to address these issues, inform the student of his or her opinions, but not try to solve the problem.

Married students may find that the pressures of cultural adaptation put special strains on a marriage; if these become too severe it may be best to advise them to withdraw. Even more common, however, are the problems posed by non-student spouses. Isolated from the surrounding culture by an inability to speak the language and lacking the normal social contact they have at home, spouses often rely on the program to provide the social interaction needed. Please note that accompanying non-participants are not part of the program and therefore cannot attend classes, field trips, or any other activities formally associated with the program. If such individuals become disruptive to the program it may be grounds for dismissal of the student.

#### 4. *AIDS, Pregnancy, STDs and Sexual Assault*

The Resident Director should keep an updated list of local professional resources and contacts, counselors, legal representatives, etc. to refer to in case of problems or emergencies. This list should preferably include English-speaking professionals. In case of an assault or rape, the emergency procedures in the *Appendix* must be followed. Do NOT contact the student's parents unless you have her written consent. When communicating in writing to OSA, only indicate the student's first name in order to protect her privacy.

In case of pregnancy or acquisition of AIDS or STDs, students should be advised to see a professional counselor on site (the Resident Director should facilitate this) to determine the most appropriate action. Whatever decision may be made, it is critical that the RD handles any medical related situation with the utmost care and confidentiality. If abortion is being considered, the student must be informed by a medical professional of the possible risks her decision may carry, including safety and legal aspects.

#### 5. *Drugs and alcohol*

The Resident Director must inform students of all dangers associated with alcohol abuse and the consumption and possession of illegal drugs. Students need to be well informed of the laws and regulations of the local country, community, institution and program, and know that the Resident Director has the authority to dismiss students from the program in the event that they jeopardize the integrity of MSU. Refer to the *Student Handbook* as a reference and the *Statement of Responsibility* to remind the student that they signed this document, agreeing not to abuse alcohol or use illegal drugs, and with understanding that violation of this agreement may result in dismissal from the program.

#### 6. *Sexual harassment*

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, or other behavior of a sexual nature. This includes sexual gestures, physical contact, or a statement that is offensive, humiliating or an interference in an individual's status in a course, program or activity. Sexual harassment is reprehensible and will not be tolerated on Michigan State University programs. Such behavior subverts the mission of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience and well being of students, faculty and staff.

Students should be informed that in some instances the local methods of communication differ from what they are accustomed to and may be uncomfortable for them. Some cultures touch as a manner of conversing or to get a point across; other cultures stare to make eye-contact and be friendly. However, if after acknowledging cultural differences students still feel uncomfortable they should have an open conversation to express their own perspective. This could help them understand the different ways of seeing things and perhaps allow them to accept different perspectives. If a Resident Director should receive a student complaint regarding possible sexual harassment, contact your OSA coordinator. OSA will determine the appropriate response and action.

To the extent permitted, the confidentiality of each party involved in a sexual harassment complaint will be observed, provided it does not interfere with the University's ability to investigate the allegations or take corrective action. Persons from the MSU community who engage in sexual harassment are subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal for employees and/or suspension for students. Students and staff who believe they are the victims of sexual harassment should seek information and assistance from the OSA and be referred to the appropriate MSU unit.

### ***G. Discipline Policy***

Michigan State University's General Student Regulations apply to students in study abroad programs. These regulations may be found on the MSU Web page under Spartan Life (<http://www.ssb.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm>).

Michigan State University expects study abroad participants to abide by the laws, regulations, and customs of the host country, community, institution and program. There are certain areas under which the faculty leader, local resident director or designated MSU staff have the authority to dismiss a student from a study abroad program. Any behavior that endangers another person or property can result in immediate dismissal. The following behaviors are among those that may result in immediate dismissal from the program or temporary suspension pending a final resolution of the matter:

- Conduct that violates Michigan State University's General Student Regulations;
- 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;
- Behavior that gives the RD or OSA reasonable cause to believe the student's continued presence in the program constitutes a danger to the health or safety of persons or property, or threatens the future viability of the program.
- Alcohol abuse (as defined in the *Student Handbook* under "Alcohol Use"); physical or sexual assault; sexual 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.

If a student is alleged to have violated the MSU Drug and Alcohol Policy or participated in these above mentioned behaviors while participating in an MSU study abroad program, he or she may be referred to the University Judicial System for a hearing upon his or her return to Michigan State University. This may be in addition to any action taken by the on-site resident director. Consequences for drug and alcohol violations may include, but are not limited to, some form of disciplinary probation, required attendance at educational programs, referral for assessment at educational programs, referral for assessment and treatment, and suspension from Michigan State University for sale of illegal drugs or repeated violations of the regulations.

In the event of severe infractions of housing regulations, the RD, in consultation with the MSU Office of Study Abroad and local University faculty members or staff, will warn students in

writing about possible expulsion from the housing facility or other consequences. Repeated offenses or severe infractions of the housing rules and regulations as established by the local facilities may result in expulsion from housing and expulsion from the study abroad program.

See the *Student Handbook* for consequences should a student be dismissed for disciplinary reasons during a semester.

In the event of an infraction that does not cause immediate danger and where there is an allegation of a violation of the laws, regulations, and customs of the host country, community, institution or program or a violation of the MSU Drug and Alcohol Policy, the following procedures will apply:

1. The on-site resident director representing the Office of Study Abroad will investigate the alleged violation using the resources available to him or her.
2. The student will be informed, in writing, of the alleged violation and will be given an opportunity to respond in person and present supporting materials and accounts from other parties. The on-site resident director representing the Office of Study Abroad will immediately inform and consult with the Office of Study Abroad regarding the alleged violation and the process to be pursued in investigating it.
3. The on-site resident director may, with the concurrence of MSU's Office of Study Abroad, temporarily suspend the student pending final resolution of the matter.
4. After the facts have been examined, the on-site resident director will, after consulting with and receiving authorization from the Office of Study Abroad, take appropriate action and inform the student in writing of the decision.
5. Sanctions, if the RD finds the allegation has been proven, may include the following:
  - a. Letter of warning
  - b. Reassignment to another housing location, if available
  - c. Dismissal from the study abroad program (which automatically means dismissal from Michigan State University for that semester or summer session)
  - d. Referral to the University Judicial System for a hearing upon return to MSU
  - e. Other action deemed appropriate to the specific case

## ***H. Withdrawal***

If a student wants to withdraw from the program, the RD must be notified in writing of the student's decision and the RD will inform the OSA immediately. Unless a student cancels with the RD, OSA will continue to make arrangements and pay expenses on the student's behalf. Refer to the *Student Handbook* for details regarding program fee, tuition refunds and grade issuance after withdrawal.

Inform students that they cannot earn credit for the academic work unless they complete the full term of the program. Also, students who withdraw after the midpoint may receive a failing grade or other negative comments on their MSU transcripts (see *Student Handbook* for details). As a general rule, students may not take an "I", or incomplete grade, while abroad. In cases of unusual or exceptional circumstances, contact OSA immediately for advice.

## ***I. Diverse Student Populations***

For students with special needs that do not include physical, psychological or medical concerns, Resident Directors should keep a list of referrals. This list should be updated annually. It should include local resources for students of the following populations as well as religious groups, including religious minorities.

It is common for RDs to assume there are no serious problems within the local community or society that relate to the concerns of these students, and therefore no available resources. However, these assumptions are no longer valid in the global world. RDs may be surprised by how much information, especially on the web, is available if they look. Even if they don't come across much themselves, they should find contacts who can do more to assist students.

RDs shouldn't worry if they don't have time or resources to become experts on all these special needs. If they make contacts in the community, they can rely on them to keep up to date. An idea for obtaining more materials and contacts with a minimal amount of time is to have students look for contacts. Ask the students to prepare written advice for future students. This process is therapeutic for students, saves time for the RD, and is invaluable for future students.

### *1. Gay and lesbian students*

Resident Directors should be aware that gay and lesbian students might be part of the group. If these students disclose their sexual orientation, it is your responsibility, to the best of your ability, to make them feel comfortable and to present them with different options, such as clubs, activities, etc., so they can integrate better with the locals. The Resident Director cannot, under any circumstances, discriminate against these students.

These students should be aware that, as in the United States, some societies and ethnic groups are more open to accepting diversity than others. People will react differently to those to whom they are not accustomed. Students should be advised to not take these reactions too personally. It is usually not the students who are being rejected, but it is a reaction due to a lack of experience or inability to understand differences. Try to convey to students that the way others handle and react to their sexual orientation could be viewed as yet another cultural difference.

### *2. Students with disabilities*

While it is illegal in the US to discriminate against students with disabilities, it is also understandable that foreign countries may not have the appropriate facilities for these students. Resident Directors will be informed of any students with disabilities in order to investigate available facilities and accessibility of the city, university and home. The Resident Director will make a recommendation that will be shared with the Office of Study Abroad and student to allow a discussion regarding the feasibility and level of participation. See *Student Selection and Screening* for more information regarding students with disabilities.

### 3. *Students with nontraditional racial/ethnic backgrounds*

It is vital to be open and realistic about the possibility of outright racism and likelihood of insensitive attitudes. If students know about possible attitudes and customs during the orientation, they will be better prepared for these actions. Discussing issues of racism and intolerance in a broader manner can result in a stimulating and educational discussion for all. It can assist in making these concerns pertinent to a large number of students who can learn from each other, rather than marginalize the issue or label it to a specific group. Students may also find that their “Americanness” is a more important factor in determining their treatment abroad than their racial or ethnic heritage. They may also find that the United States is not the only country with a complex of minority cultures.

#### ***J. Re-entry Orientation***

Students should be well informed that they may experience re-entry shock and difficulties returning to life back in the US. This adjustment is sometimes more difficult than the initial adjustment to the foreign culture since it is often unanticipated and preparation is commonly overlooked. It is helpful to hold a re-entry orientation at the end of the program, but before final exams. In this way, the advice they obtain will help them through the most stressful part of the leaving. The *Student Handbook* has thoughts for re-entry discussion amongst the returning students.

## ***POST PROGRAM ACTIVITIES***

### ***A. End-of-Program Report***

The Resident Director must prepare an end-of-program report that will serve as a means for improvement of future programs. This report should cover all the categories of the Resident Director Handbook and carry recommendations for the future. The Office of Study Abroad will use this report as an internal document.

Address student issues. Could satisfactory solutions be found to most student problems? How could such problems be avoided/minimized in the future? What could be done in the future to enhance the cross-cultural learning component of the program? Which aspects of the culture did students react to negatively/ positively? Were issues of cultural adjustment and re-adjustment discussed with students? Was there a special event marking the end of the program? Could a student with a disability have easily participated on the program? If not, what changes would you make for the future?

The report should also include but not be limited to such matters as the following:

- Arrival orientation
- Results of language exams and regular classes
- Student performance
- Local faculty performance
- Relations with the host institution
- Program related activities
- Grade reports
- Housing
- Official visitors
- Program development
- Local travel and excursions
- Financial matters
- Suggestions to OSA for improvement of the program

Address health and safety issues: What, if any, preventive safety measures do you recommend? Were there any health-related incidents such as accidents, serious illness, and mental health issues? Were there any crimes committed against students? Were health care facilities satisfactory? What, if any, steps need to be taken to make program sites safer? What political, social, cultural, environmental developments on site warrant special attention for next year's program? Complete and submit Incident Report Form (in *Appendix*) for any crimes that affected students during the program.

OSA will develop program handbooks. The Resident Director has the responsibility to work with the OSA in up-dating the program and Resident Director handbooks. The updating of the program handbook can be organized on-site with groups of students. In this way, the process can serve as

part of re-entry orientation, guiding students through the acceptance of re-entry culture shock and providing valuable feedback for these handbooks.

## **B. Finances**

Resident Directors are responsible for following established accounting procedures. See the *Appendix* for the expenditure-reporting format. You are the only person on-site authorized for transferring funds and signing checks and banking documents. You are responsible for making sure all the financial needs of the entities that work with the program are met in a timely manner.

### *1. Preparation of budgets*

By the time the program ends you should have a clear idea of what the projected figures for the next program will be, and can inform OSA of increased program fees, housing, tuition costs at the host institution, etc (see *Appendix*). Although these figures may not be absolutely accurate at the time, they will help OSA better prepare the following year's budget.

### *2. Invoices*

In order for OSA to transfer money to parties other than the Resident Director of each program, original invoices stating the amounts and a break down and description of the charges are necessary. If possible, invoices should be in US dollars.

### *3. Financial report*

The Resident Director is responsible for preparing and submitting a financial report that may be done either (1) on a monthly basis; or, (2) at the end of the program. The RD will submit a list of all the expenditures along with original receipts. Each receipt should be numbered and translated into English. The report has to be reconciled and mailed to OSA within 30 days of the conclusion of the program (see *Appendix*).

### *4. Program Bank Account*

It is advisable that the Resident Director open a bank account for the use of the program. As soon as this is in place, you will need to notify OSA so money needed for the program can be transferred. It is also your responsibility to maintain a monthly follow-up on the state of this account. The Resident Director's official expenses, such as entrances to museums, field trips, welcome and farewell dinners are covered under the program budget.

## **C. Performance Evaluation**

At the conclusion of a program and upon receipt of the end-of-program report the OSA Educational Programs Coordination will provide you with a written performance evaluation. This will include the successes and challenges of the completed program and suggestions for future improvement.

# APPENDIX

## **Emergency Assistance Cards**

## **HTH/MEDEX Cards**





## ***EMERGENCY AND SAFETY INFORMATION***

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As someone responsible for an MSU study abroad program, you may find yourself facing an emergency involving one or more of the students who are in your care. Students can and do become ill, suffer accidents, are the victims of muggings and assaults, find themselves caught up in potentially violent political situations, and fail to return on time to programs at the end of long weekends. While it is impossible to plan for all contingencies involving our students abroad, we do need to follow procedures that will allow us to react in a responsible and levelheaded way when emergencies do arise. We need to be able to provide, in a consistent and predictable way, for the safety and well being of our students. We also need to take reasonable and prudent measures to limit the University's legal liabilities.

MSU has, therefore, developed a series of specific procedures designed to safeguard the well-being of program participants, and to protect the University's interests. OSA is responsible for coordinating the University's management of emergencies affecting participants in MSU study abroad programs. As a Resident Director of an MSU Study Abroad program, you are expected to follow the procedures outlined below, and to be sure to inform the students in your group about these procedures during their on-site orientations.

### ***A. What is an emergency?***

For our purposes, an emergency is any circumstance that poses a genuine risk to, or that has already disturbed, the safety and well being of program participants. Emergencies will include, though not be confined to, the following types of events and incidents:

- physical assault
- disappearance or kidnapping of a student
- robbery
- sexual assault or rape
- serious illness, physical or emotional
- significant accident and/or injury
- hospitalization for any reason
- terrorist threat or attack
- local political crisis that could affect the students' safety or well-being
- arrest or questioning by the police or other security forces
- any legal action (lawsuit, deposition, trial, etc.) involving a student

### ***B. How should you prepare for emergencies?***

Read the following *Safety Information* section for detailed information on how to prepare for the program prior to and immediately upon arrival of the students.

1. *Prior to the arrival of students:*

- If the students are to be housed with local families, inform the families that they are required to notify you if there is an emergency involving a student; also tell the families that you have advised the students about the MEDEX/HTH Assistance and Insurance Program, and be sure to share information about MEDEX/HTH with the families. If the students are housed in a residence system or rented house inform the local housing supervisor that he or she must notify you if an emergency occurs. Provide this same information to other individuals who may be in regular contact with your students.
- You should explain to the students that they are required to inform you about any medical emergency, and that you in turn are required to contact the Director of MSU's Office of Study Abroad as soon as possible in order to inform her about the emergency. If you are not available and the host country emergency services are not available, students should report the emergency by calling collect 517-353-3784. Inform the students that this information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Also let them know that if the crisis involving the student is grave enough to jeopardize his or her safety or well-being, the emergency contact they have provided on the study abroad application will be informed.

2. *During the on-site orientation:*

- Provide all students in your group with the local telephone number(s) they should use to contact emergency services (i.e. the equivalent of the "911" that we use in the U.S., which provides access to police, fire and emergency medical services).
- All students are provided with an emergency assistance card (see sample in *Appendix*). Discuss this procedure during orientation.
- Provide all students in your group with a written list of reputable local medical clinics or hospitals, available through MEDEX Assistance Center. See *Student Handbook Appendix* for the local MEDEX listing to obtain recommendations.
- OSA will provide the appropriate U.S. embassy with a list of students on your program. Inform the students of the exact location of the U.S. Embassy and highly encourage them to register with the Embassy. In order to register, they will need all of the information provided on the front page of their passports. Strongly encourage the students to stop in at the Embassy or Consulate before and during their travels away from your site in order to get updated information about each country they plan to visit.
- Advise the students to avoid travel to or through any location where tensions exist and travel may be dangerous. Experience has shown that students may benefit from a security briefing offered at US. Embassies abroad; such briefings assist you in reinforcing your message to the students that travel to dangerous areas should be avoided.

3. *How should you respond to emergencies?*

- **In an emergency, your first responsibility is to safeguard the safety and well being of program participants.** Do whatever is necessary to assure this, whether this means obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, Embassy intervention or police protection. You will be reimbursed for all expenses relating to the management of an emergency.
- When you have done all that you reasonably can to assure the students' well-being, immediately contact the MSU Emergency Assistance line collect at (517) 353-3784. The Operations Desk is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week and will direct your call to the most appropriate person.
- In a medical emergency, including potential suicide, contact the local MEDEX Assistance Center to assist you and help coordinate the necessary arrangements including payment of fees on behalf of the student. See *Appendix* for Continental Assurance Company claim form to be completed by the attending physician. In any other sort of emergency, **notify the local police about the situation, if you and the Embassy believe this is appropriate**; then follow the procedures the police may require of you or the student.
- **Notify the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate about the crisis**, and follow whatever procedures they may require; if there is a continuing risk to the welfare of the students (during a terrorist threat, for example), ask the appropriate Embassy or Consulate Officer to advise you on a regular basis about the evolution of the crisis, and about how the students should respond.
- During an on-going crisis, keep OSA informed on a regular basis, through telephone (517) 353-8920, fax (517) 432-2082 or e-mail messages, about the evolution of the crisis, until it has passed.
- In the event of a crisis, it is important that all concerned not overreact or panic: the students are counting on you to help get them through a difficult time. We in OSA have had experience dealing with crises in the past, and are ready to assist you during and after any type of event or incident.
- After OSA is informed about an emergency, and after we consult with you and other appropriate individuals on site, we may, depending on the acuteness of the crisis, fax or email you a description of the course of action that you and the students will need to follow. **All program participants will be required to sign a statement acknowledging that they have received, read and understood this response plan**; after all of the participants in your group have signed, please fax OSA the signed acknowledgments.

- During a political crisis or some other emergency during which foreigners in general or U.S. citizens may be at risk, **tell the students to keep a low profile**. Tell them to avoid demonstrations, confrontations or situations where they could be in danger; to avoid behavior that could call attention to themselves; to avoid locales where foreigners or Americans are known to congregate; and to take down signs and avoid using luggage tags and wearing clothes that would label them as Americans.
- It is unlikely that participants would need to be evacuated from a site abroad. However, we would, bring students home if a situation were to deteriorate to the point where the degree of risk to participants was deemed unacceptable. If this unlikely event were to happen, the Director of OSA, in consultation with you, the U.S. Embassy and State Department, and appropriate individuals on the home campus, would develop an evacuation plan in as much detail as possible. This plan would be transmitted to you in confidence, and we would continue to work closely with you throughout the process.
- In the event of a significant crisis, individual students have the option of returning to the U.S. Every reasonable effort will be made to allow them to continue their academic program on campus, and to be housed appropriately as well. Refund policies are outlined in the *Student Handbook*.
- When you call the Emergency Assistance line, the office may contact the MSU Counseling Center. You can also check the Web site at <http://www.couns.msu.edu/> for detailed information on referring a distressed student. The counseling center can provide advice over the phone to RDs for dealing with situations but cannot provide direct therapy to students over the phone. The following is a brief summary of the guidelines for interaction:
 

“Talk to the student in private. Listen carefully. Show concern and interest. Repeat back the essence of what the student has told you. Avoid criticizing or sounding judgmental. Suggest visiting a counseling center and discuss this with the student. If the student resists help and you are still worried, contact a counseling center to discuss your concerns. If you consider the situation to be an emergency, convey this information when contacting a counseling center. Sometimes it is helpful for you to accompany the student to the counseling center. Some students may find it comforting for you to wait while they meet with a counselor. Follow-up with the student by inquiring as to whether he/she kept his/her appointment and how he/she felt about the session.”
- Your call may also be referred to the University Physician, Dr. Beth Alexander. Please note that urgent medical matters should be dealt with by going to a local health care facility.

Observing the procedures outlined here will help assure that our students will have the unique educational experience abroad that you, they and we are hoping that they will have.

### C. *Safety information*

Safety is a prime concern of all who are involved in study abroad ventures - participants, their families, advisers, MSU, the host institutions, faculty leaders, Resident Directors, OSA staff and any other MSU personnel associated with our programs. Although statistics are in short supply, it is generally considered that study in a foreign country is no more dangerous than study in the United States. On the other hand, there are risks that are unique to the settings abroad, and when incidents occur, the impact on participants and their families is often more profound because of the unfamiliarity of the context and the distance that separates participants from their primary sources of consolation and support.

The provisions of the Family Rights and Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment) coupled with the age of majority at eighteen, often come into conflict with (a) OSA and leaders' needs to have full information about the participants we serve, and (b) the desire of parents and OSA/MSU to be briefed fully when something goes wrong. This conflict is not unique to study abroad - the issue is faced continually on campus but it does pose a more delicate challenge for study abroad because of the heightened sensitivities and the distance. (This text was adapted from *Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad*, a joint venture and publication of AIEA, SECUSSA, CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchange, other professional organizations and a number of major study abroad providers.)

#### 1. *Pre-departure Preparations*

- In the program orientation packet students receive a printout of the U.S. State Department consular Information Sheet for the country/countries where the program visits. It is the students' responsibility to access the U.S. State Department Web site ([http://travel.state.gov/travel\\_warnings.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html)) periodically for updates between the time of orientation and departure.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention maintain an international hotline (404-332-4559), an automated fax-back service (404-332-4565) and a home page (<http://www.cdc.gov>). OSA has a copy of *International Travel Health Guide* that contains disease and immunization advice and other guidance, including information about risks in particular countries. If students believe there is a health risk, possibility of exposure, or recent medical outbreak in the country/countries to be visited, they are advised to contact OSA or the MSU Travel Clinic.
- If you believe there are regions of your country that present undue risks, contact OSA. OSA will, after discussions with you, issue a release to be signed by each participant and collect them prior to departure. Such a release will require that students acknowledge in writing that the University has warned them against travelling to specific areas.
- The MSU Travel Clinic staff reviews all student health forms and will inform you, via OSA, of students with any specific health needs or concerns and information on these conditions.

Be particularly aware of students who use physician-prescribed epi-pens for severe allergic reactions: simple instructions are always available with the pen.

- Students with a pre-existing medical condition that may require treatment should carry a letter from a doctor describing the condition and any prescription medication that may be needed, including the generic names of prescription drugs.

## 2. *Safety Orientations*

The Office of Study Abroad will rely on the RD to coordinate efforts to:

- Conduct appropriate inquiry, on an on-going basis, regarding the potential health and safety risks of the local environment of the program, including program-sponsored accommodations, events, excursions and other activities. RDs should promptly express any health or safety concerns to OSA.
- Conduct appropriate inquiry regarding local medical and professional services, provide information to participants, and help participants obtain the services they may need. You may obtain a list of MEDEX recommended clinics and physicians by contacting the listing in the *Student Handbook* Appendix.
- Provide health and safety information for OSA to disseminate to students during orientation for so that they can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation and behavior while on the program. General information is provided by OSA; it is expected that RDs will provide country-specific health and safety information.

The program-specific orientation, which OSA provides prior to departure includes information on: safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural and religious conditions in the host country; dealing with health and safety issues; potential health and safety risks, including unsafe areas for swimming; and appropriate emergency response measures. (*Major causes of death abroad include injuries, primarily auto-related, and drowning.*) This information should be repeated by the RD during the on-site orientation.

Additional on-site orientation topics should include discussion of preventable accidents with the students, such as traffic patterns, pub and drinking culture, drug laws, and the kind of things that can happen when walking down a street alone at night in a foreign city. Get very specific about safe and unsafe behavior such as kinds of sexual behavior and how to dress and behave to avoid unwanted attention.

- Become familiar with and inform students of the procedures for obtaining emergency health and law enforcement services in the host country. Specifically, provide students and OSA with a list of names and phone numbers for:

1. 24 hour emergency contact;

2. nearest U.S. Embassy (OSA provides a list of students and addresses for all programs to the US Embassy in the host country);
  3. law enforcement/police department; and
  4. nearest hospital/emergency facility. Obtain a list of English-speaking doctors and/or health care providers from MEDEX by contacting local MEDEX listing indicated in *Student Handbook* Appendix.
- If students or parents should inquire about how MSU deals with safety and security issues, you may provide the following information:

MSU has recognized the importance of establishing policies and procedures that are designed to safeguard the safety and well-being of study abroad participants while acknowledging that no single plan can address all contingencies. Listed below are just a few of the ways MSU strives to keep study abroad, before and during program participation, as safe as possible.

- OSA daily monitors safety issues in countries and locations for all of our programs. The office regularly reviews State Department advisories and other reports to learn of any emerging safety concerns. There is a multi-layer of review for all study abroad programs at departmental, college, and university levels where safety, security, and overall quality are measured.
- A committee, headed by the Vice President of University Projects, analyzes safety and security conditions of newly proposed and already existing MSU study abroad programs. The committee, independent from programs and OSA, has ultimate authority for approving programs and sites with regard to safety issues, including canceling programs or requiring revisions to programs to ensure safety and security.
- All participants are required to attend one or more general orientation sessions that stress safety issues and the importance of understanding cultural differences. Additionally, most programs provide country-specific orientation for students where safety precautions are also outlined. Participants are advised on safety and health conditions in the host country.
- Emergency procedures are in place, including medical and general emergency evacuation procedures. In the event there are U.S. State Department public announcements, worldwide cautions, or travel warnings, OSA has plans in place to be in contact with faculty and students abroad. MSU's procedures for handling emergencies abroad have served as a model for other institutions.

### 3. *On-site Safety*

- Communicate appropriate codes of conduct and the consequences of noncompliance to participants.

- In the event there are U.S. State Department public announcements, worldwide cautions, and travel warnings, OSA will send e-mails and faxes to RDs and e-mails to students abroad. In the event of a local, regional or global crisis, you should maintain contact with the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate for updated security information. If a crisis should occur, review precautions with students so they can better secure their safety. Brief students on the desirability of blending with the local culture, including, when possible, speaking the host country language in public. Advise students to maintain a low profile, avoid crowds and protest groups, restaurants, and discos/night clubs where Americans, especially U.S. service people, are known to frequent. Students should keep up with local news through newspapers, radio, and television and, in the event of disturbances or protests, NOT get involved. Ask students to use common sense and caution when divulging information to strangers about themselves, the program and their fellow students.
- In cases of serious health problems, injury, or other significant health and safety circumstances, follow the emergency procedures as indicated in this *Handbook*.
- If you need clarification regarding MSU's general policies, access <http://www.msu.edu/dig/safety> for the MSU Drug and Alcohol Policy, which includes information on drug and alcohol educational and counseling resources, defines prohibited behavior, and outlines consequences for violations; the University's Policy on Sexual Harassment which defines prohibited behavior and the consequences of engaging in it, and explains how, and with whom, to file a complaint about sexual harassment; and the University's Statement on Sexual Assault, which describes procedures to follow when a sex offense occurs.
- Under the University's Policy, you have an obligation to process all sexual harassment complaints. Occasionally, an informal resolution of a complaint may be appropriate. Before seeking to resolve a complaint informally, however, you should be confident that the complainant is willing to proceed in this fashion.

#### 4. *Liability for MSU Faculty and Staff*

- All MSU employees are covered for workers' compensation benefits through MSU's self-insurance program. This coverage includes medical, wage-loss, and rehabilitation benefits as applicable.
- MSU has a foreign liability policy that insures against bodily injury to others or property damage outside the United States or Puerto Rico. MSU employees are covered for acts within the scope of employment and services performed on behalf of or under the direction of the University. Revenue resulting from employment conducted abroad must flow to the University in order for the employee to be covered for liability. This includes MSU faculty leaders and Resident Directors of MSU programs. Coverage is excluded for criminal activities, intentional acts of injury, or injury to a fellow employee.
- The following policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on March 15, 1974 and revised on September 2, 1983:

“Michigan State University will support its trustees, officers, faculty, and staff when acting in the performance of assigned duties on behalf of the University. This policy also applies to students while engaged in approved academic programs and volunteers who are performing services for the University with prior written approval of the appropriate University official. The University will defend, save harmless, and indemnify such persons against any suit or proceeding, wherever brought, premised upon the fact that he or she is or was a member of the Board or an officer, employee, student, or volunteer of the University. The indemnity extends to expenses including attorney fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement, actually and reasonably incurred, and with respect to any criminal action or proceeding where such person had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful. As a condition of indemnification, the trustee, official, employee, student, or volunteer is required to cooperate fully on a continuous basis with the University Attorney and the Office of Insurance and Risk Management.”

##### 5. *Addressing Transportation Risks in Foreign Travel*

Use of automobiles driven for program purposes by RDs should be reviewed very carefully. All risks associated with travel in the U.S. are present, as well as difficulties involving cars, roads, laws and traffic, all of which will, to varying extents, be governed by customs and rules different from those found in the United States. While these risks may be managed with experience, obtaining valid and effective insurance in the countries being visited may be problematic.

Because of unique laws in foreign countries, complications in settling claims, and personal policy limitations, travelers on University business should "buy back" the liability waivers, that is, purchase liability and collision coverage from rental agencies in all areas except the U.S. and Canada. The University will reimburse insurance costs of foreign automobile rentals. (*MSU Manual of Business Procedures* 35:V. D.4.)

If RDs are driving rental vehicles, they should have a valid driver's license (a chauffeur's license may be required in some countries for transporting groups), good driving record, and be familiar with the handling of the type of vehicle to be driven. When traveling on program-related activities, students should be transported via public transportation or in vehicles rented by MSU for that purpose and driven by professional, hired drivers or by MSU employees. Student participants are not permitted to drive vehicles as part of the program transportation.

It may be better, from a risk avoidance perspective, to use taxis or minibuses rather than rental cars, despite an increase in cost or some inconvenience. Distinguish between official taxis and so-called "gypsy" cabs in which travelers in some locations abroad have been robbed. Information on identifying official taxis can be obtained from the local U.S. embassy.

If group travel is to be conducted, travel should be through a reputable company that has a record of good performance. Determining how reputable the company is should include questions about how drivers are selected, what training drivers are given, and the amount of liability insurance available. Maps should be obtained and travel routes determined prior to the trip.

Travel plans should be followed and no side trips made. Drivers should be instructed not to pick up additional riders.

Care should be taken to verify that the driver has a valid license, that the vehicle appears to be well maintained, and that there is insurance covering the vehicle. From a practical standpoint, this would include attention to whether the vehicle appears to be well maintained and the tires are in reasonably good condition. Request to see the driver's license and a certificate or statement as evidence of insurance coverage.

For additional information, contact OSA.

## **GENERAL STUDENT REGULATIONS**

Michigan State University's General Student Regulations applies to students in study abroad programs. These regulations may be found on the MSU Web page under *Spartan Life*.

### **Introduction**

General student regulations shall be those regulations established within the University community (students, trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff) to secure the safety of members of the University community and University facilities, maintain order, and ensure the successful operation of the institution. Such regulations shall apply to all students regardless of class level, place of residence, or group affiliation as well as to all governing bodies, governing groups, living groups, and registered student organizations ([5.2.1 Academic Freedom for Students at Michigan State University](#)).

The regulations apply to students and student groups while on the land governed by the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University or when students or student groups are engaged in University-sponsored or student group-sponsored (student governing groups and registered student organizations) activities off campus. The regulations relating to scholarship and grades, University functions and services, and University property, however, apply without reference to where the activity occurs. Because technology is constantly changing teaching, learning, and administrative processes, it is understood that the general principles that govern these regulations should be extended to apply to new and unanticipated situations.

Any member of the University community may file a complaint involving the alleged violation of these regulations by a student or student group. The University through its internal judicial system shall maintain jurisdiction over these regulations and conduct hearings in accordance with established University procedures. In the application of the regulations, it is intended that one be held accountable for conduct that fails to meet the standard of what a reasonable and prudent person would or would not have done under similar circumstances.

### **1.00 PROTECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES**

The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

**1.01** claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own.

**1.02** procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.

**1.03** complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.

**1.04** allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.

**1.05** alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.

**1.06** fabricate or falsify data or results.

## **2.00 PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUALS**

Physical security and an environment free of harassment are necessary for individuals if they are to successfully pursue their educational endeavors and fulfill responsibilities; therefore, no student shall:

- 2.01** cause or threaten physical harm to another, or endanger the physical safety of another.
- 2.02** continuously or persistently intimidate another individual so as to coerce that individual into some action or avoidance of action.
- 2.03** possess or use any firearms, explosive materials, incendiary device or other dangerous objects or substance without proper University authorization.
- 2.04** obstruct or disrupt the activities or functions of another individual as protected by law, ordinance, regulation, or policy.
- 2.05** enter or remain in another individual's place of residence or work without permission of that individual or without proper authorization.
- 2.06** possess, use, manufacture, produce, sell, exchange or otherwise distribute any drug prohibited by federal or state laws.
- 2.07** possess, consume, furnish, manufacture, sell, exchange or otherwise distribute any alcoholic beverages except as permitted by state law and University ordinance.

## **3.00 PROTECTION OF STUDENT GROUPS**

The functions of student groups serve to extend and provide support for the learning environment; therefore, no student shall:

- 3.01** obstruct or disrupt the activities or functions of a group as protected by law, ordinance, regulation, or policy.
- 3.02** continuously or persistently intimidate a group so as to coerce that group into some action or avoidance of action.
- 3.03** provide false information to a group for the purpose of gaining membership, service, or privilege.
- 3.04** represent a group falsely or use the resources of a group without proper authorization.

## **4.00 PROTECTION OF PROPERTY**

It is important that the property of individuals, student groups, and the University be protected if the University and the members of the academic community are to engage in their activities and to effectively discharge their responsibilities; therefore, no student shall:

- 4.01** damage, deface, or destroy the property of another person or the University.
- 4.02** tamper with or misuse University fire or safety equipment, including, but not necessarily limited to, fire extinguishers, fire hoses, and alarm systems.
- 4.03** copy, appropriate or use the property of another without proper authorization.
- 4.04** remove property or goods from their assigned place without proper authorization or accept or convey property or goods that have been procured without proper authorization.
- 4.05** use any University facility, equipment, or materials except for their authorized purposes.
- 4.06** procure, alter, damage, remove, manufacture, or use, any University key card, lock, password, or other security device without proper authorization.
- 4.07** without proper authorization enter or remain in any University building or designated area that is officially closed according to hours posted or which is restricted for designated purposes or to designated individuals.

**4.08** place posters, signs, or handbills except on one's own personal property or in areas authorized by the University.

## **5.00 PROTECTION OF UNIVERSITY FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES**

Functions, services, and processes of the University must be protected if the institution is to be effective in discharging its responsibilities; therefore, no student shall:

**5.01** provide false information for the purpose of gaining benefit for oneself or others to any office, agency, or individual acting on behalf of the University.

**5.02** interfere with the functions and services of the University (for example, including, but not limited to, classes, social, cultural, and athletic events, computing services, registration, housing and food services, governance meetings and judicial hearings) such that the function or service is obstructed or disrupted.

**5.03** alter or forge any University document and/or record, including identification materials, issued or used by the University.

**5.04** allow any University document and/or record, including identification materials, issued by the University for one's own use to be used by another.

**5.05** use any University document and/or record for other than its authorized purpose, including identification materials issued to another.

**5.06** act as an agent of the University unless authorized to do so.

**5.07** fail to present correct identification issued by the University for the student's use when requested to do so by an authorized University agent acting in the performance of designated job responsibilities or who has reason to believe that the student may be involved in the violation of a regulation.

**5.08** without proper authorization, sell or make contracts for purchase or delivery of any commercial merchandise or services for personal profit or gain, or solicit voluntary contributions for organizations.

- University Committee on Student Affairs, February 19, 1988
  - Academic Council, January 17, 1989
  - President, to become effective September 1, 1989

**INCIDENT REPORT FOR CRIME ABROAD**

**Michigan State University  
Office of Study Abroad Incident Report for Crime Abroad**

**Date of Report:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Reported to (OSA Staff):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Reported by (on-site):** \_\_\_\_\_

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A. Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Victim:            \_\_\_ Male    \_\_\_ Female            \_\_\_ Student            \_\_\_ Faculty

Type of Crime    \_\_\_ Assault            \_\_\_ Mugged            \_\_\_ Sexual Abuse/Rape

                     \_\_\_ Battery            \_\_\_ Pickpocketed       \_\_\_ Theft

                     \_\_\_ Other: explain - \_\_\_\_\_

Was Alcohol Involved:    \_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No

Description of Incident:

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Was a police Report filed?    \_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No                    Copy available?    \_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No

Follow-up:

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**STUDENT LOAN AGREEMENT**

*DO NOT loan students program or personal funds unless it is an extreme emergency. Despite all the advice and pre-departure preparation, some students will find themselves short of funds. Some possible solutions could be: have the family deposit funds into the home account so the student can access the funds through an ATM; have the family send a foreign draft by express mail; send a bank wire or transfer; or send a transfer through American Express. This latter option is quite costly. Loans should be avoided, but in cases of extreme emergency a loan for a maximum amount of US\$100.00 can be authorized. In these situations, the student must sign the form below, agreeing to repay the loan in full.*

**STUDENT LOAN AGREEMENT**

I acknowledge receipt of a loan of \_\_\_\_\_  
(amount and currency, not to exceed the equivalency of U.S. \$100)

from \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of faculty leader )

on \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

- I understand this loan is made because it is considered an emergency situation.
- I understand this loan is made on behalf of Michigan State University and I accept full responsibility for the repayment of this loan.
- I understand that a hold will be put on my transcript if this loan is not repaid before I leave the country.
- I understand that I am only permitted to receive one loan during the length of my study abroad program.

I agree to repay this full amount on \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (please print)

# Budget Preparation for Succeeding Year

## Program Name

## Next Budget Year

Use the following format to accumulate information that would be useful in compiling next year's program budget. Please include as much detail as possible (i.e. cost per student, location, number of credits, tuition, etc.). It is understood that these might not be absolutely accurate but is helpful in planning for next year. Please feel free to use a spreadsheet program if one is available to you.

*Exchange Rate:* \_\_\_\_\_

<b>C. Instruction Costs:</b>	<b>B. Description</b>	<b>C. Total Cost in Foreign Currency</b>
Tuition		
Fees for guest speakers		
Classroom rental		
Other room/ facility rental		
Other (please detail):		

**Student Costs:**

Please include as much detailed information as possible. Accommodation information should include the number of meals per day included, type of housing (homestay, dorm, etc.) and if different arrangements are necessary, for instance during a holiday period.

Class Activity/Field Trip information should include cost per student for entrance fees and tickets, total coach costs, and housing information while on a field trip if applicable. Please list each activity individually.

<b>D. Student Costs:</b>	<b>D. Description</b>	<b>E. Total Cost in Foreign Currency</b>
Accommodations		
Class Activities/ Field Trips		
Other		

Use the following format to substantiate bank account activity. All expenditures must be receipted, numbered, and included with this summary. Please feel free to use a spreadsheet program if one is available to you.

*E. Exchange Rate at date of wire transfer:* \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>F. G. Description</b>	<b>H. Total Cost in Foreign Currency Or U.S. \$\$</b>	<b>Receipt Number</b>
Student Accommodations			
Class Trips/Activities			
Guest Speakers			
Instructors			
Tuition/Fees			
Resident Director Costs (excluding payroll)			