On-site Operations Manual
for Study Abroad Program Leaders
Provided by the Office of Study Abroad

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Study Abroad

April 2014 Edition
CHECKLIST

to prepare and respond to emergencies abroad

PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

☐ Read the *Emergency Procedures* of this manual
☐ Provide the Office of Study Abroad (OSA) with student contact information
☐ Remind students to complete the OSA online orientation as health and safety issues are addressed
☐ Remind students to complete the MSU online Bloodborne Pathogen Awareness Training, if required for your program
☐ Inform students of local emergency numbers
☐ Attend the Emergency Preparedness and Response Seminar
☐ Make arrangements for an on-site cell phone
☐ Provide OSA with your complete contact information
☐ Remember to take abroad:
  o 24/7 International Assistance Cards for yourself and all students
  o Wallet Guide to Responding to Incidents Abroad
  o On‐site Operations Manual for Study Abroad Program Leaders
  o Cell phone

UPON ARRIVAL

☐ Notify OSA immediately if a student does not arrive
☐ Advise students of known risks, including transportation risks
☐ Share program leader(s) cell phone and local “911” numbers with students
☐ Obtain student cell phone numbers (if applicable)
☐ Create a communication tree for students
☐ Implement the “Buddy System”
☐ Designate primary and secondary meeting places
☐ Create an Emergency Action Plan

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

☐ Secure a safe location
☐ Contact or respond to directions of local authorities
☐ Call the MSU Emergency Assistance line at +1-517-353-3784
☐ Refer to pages 14-16 for response steps

In Case of a MEDICAL EMERGENCY

☐ Seek appropriate medical care
☐ For risks to life, limb or eye, call an ambulance immediately
☐ Call HTH’s 24/7 Emergency Assistance Center at +1-610-254-8771 for instructions
☐ Call the MSU Emergency Assistance line at +1-517-353-3784
☐ Refer to page 16 for response steps

*In the event of an emergency, call the MSU International Assistance Line*

+1-517-353-3784
INTRODUCTION

Thank you for choosing to commit your time and energy to providing a high quality study abroad experience for our students. The Office of Study Abroad (OSA) believes that a student's study abroad experience can be one of the most enriching and inspiring experiences of his or her life and it is your efforts and dedication that make this experience possible.

Your decision to lead an MSU study abroad program will give you the opportunity to reach students in ways that you never could in East Lansing. You will be spending much more time with your students, both in and out of class, than you ever would at home, and will likely serve as both an adviser and mentor. By sharing this experience abroad with your students, you will see their perspectives broadened and their minds expanded. The effect that you will have on our students will last throughout their lifetimes and will change the way they think forever.

This Operations Manual is intended for program leaders to use abroad as a useful reference tool. As ongoing events bring to light the importance of accurate and timely response during a crisis, all program leaders, including those who have led programs for years, should have this manual with them while abroad.

Please remember that members of the OSA staff are on-call to provide international assistance 24/7. Do not hesitate to contact our office if you have an emergency or require assistance on any other matter that would affect your program. The number is +1-517-353-3784. Do not email us to report or discuss an emergency reportable incident.

This manual is regularly updated and we welcome your suggestions for changes or ideas on how it can be more useful for program leaders.

Thank you again for your time and commitment and for providing this transformational experience to our students!
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Main Office: +1-517-353-8920
Fax: +1-517-432-2082
24/7 International Assistance Line: +1-517-353-3784

Other Contact Media:
Web: studyabroad.msu.edu
E-mail: osapa@isp.msu.edu
Facebook: MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF STUDY ABROAD
Instagram: #spartansabroad
Skype: spartansabroad
Twitter: @MSU_OSA
YouTube: StudyAbroadMSU

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See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
FINANCES ABROAD

Program leaders designated as Chief-of-Party for a study abroad program are responsible for developing and finalizing the program budget, for maintaining fiscal records and academic integrity of the courses, for coordinating class activities, and for responding to any emergency situations which may arise.

Record Class Activities charges by itemizing expenses and collecting receipts for audit purposes. All expenditures (except emergencies) must follow the original approved and finalized budget. Contact your OSA program for approval of any deviations.

NOTE: The budgeting of class activities funds should be mutually agreed upon by all MSU faculty assigned to the program. It is not appropriate to discuss the budget in detail with student participants.

In order to avoid loss or theft, do not carry large amounts of cash with you. You should also bear in mind that it is illegal to enter most countries with $10,000 or the equivalent in "financial instruments" without declaring the money - and declaring the money in some countries may incur difficult or even unpleasant consequences. Have invoices for program-related expenses sent to your program coordinator prior to the program departure so that OSA, rather than you, ends up paying for the charges. Keep copies of these payments so that upon departure you will have a record of all payments that have been made.

Do not deposit funds into your U.S. account and carry a check abroad from your local bank. Even though it may be made payable to a particular vendor, you will have to wait for the check to be cleared by the U.S. bank. This process can take several weeks, leaving you with virtually no access to cash for your program. And even if you have a bank account abroad, do not assume that transactions will be automatic. It is very difficult for OSA to assist you if you have not properly handled your advanced funds.

Most program leaders utilize ATMs on site. ATMs can provide ready access to local currency and are drawn from your own account. For instance, machines displaying the Cirrus symbol are compatible with an MSU Federal Credit Union ATM card. Since daily withdrawals are usually limited and you may need to withdraw large program sums on a daily basis, ask your home bank to increase your daily withdrawal limit. This increased limit may only be accessible during US banking hours – check so you won’t be stranded over the weekend! Also, check with your own bank about service charges and accessibility. Many program leaders also use debit cards. If you intend to use a VISA Checkcard to access your U.S. account, notify your bank that you will be traveling abroad.

Credit cards are a convenient way to cover expenses, and will usually net the most favorable exchange rates. The OSA MasterCard can be used for any program-related expense. It cannot, however, be used for individual travel costs for program leaders. You can also obtain an MSU Corporate MasterCard from the Travel Office, 370 Administration Bldg., 353-4882. Please note that the corporate credit card has a $500 limit on retail purchases that includes car rentals. If you think you will need more than the $500 limit, you should request an increase on the retail limit from the MSU Travel Office. This limit does not apply to hotel and restaurant expenditures. The maximum credit limit on the corporate card is $15,000. Whatever method you use, contact your bank to ensure that you will have access to funds. Due to fraud losses, some banks are limiting access to ATM and debit card transactions outside of the U.S.

It is advisable to carry your funds in a variety of forms (ATM, credit cards and local currency). In some countries, particularly developing nations, U.S. dollars (cash) may be the most readily acceptable form of payment; however, theft becomes a greater risk. Traveler’s checks are inconvenient and no longer used by most program leaders. However, you can order Euro traveler’s checks online through American Express.

If you are leading a long-term program, you may wish to open your own account with a bank abroad. This can be accomplished in a variety of forms (e.g., wiring program funds ahead, obtaining a cash advance on a credit card upon arrival and depositing those funds, etc.). If you write the bank ahead, you may be able to get a check-guarantee card, which will encourage businesses to honor your local checks. Some program leaders have found it helpful to carry a letter of reference from their local U.S. bank. Ensure in advance that funds will be available when needed and not delayed due to international processing. If you are an authorized signer on an account maintained or held in another country, the IRS and U.S. Treasury require that you report such signing authority when completing your tax forms.
If there are surplus funds in any part of the program fee portion of the budget, including class trips and activities, this money cannot be refunded as cash to the students. A surplus in the program fee cannot be used to purchase equipment of any kind. A surplus may only be used to fund additional or unplanned educational activities. Such activities include theater performances, museum entrance fees, and class-related visits. Receipts/ticket stubs must be obtained for these additional activities. If additional class trips require that students pay for their own entrance fees/tickets, they must submit receipts to the program leader, accounting for the disbursement of funds. Once the students document their expenditures with receipts, reimburse them for that amount and have them sign a statement that they received that amount. You no longer have to retain the individual receipts. Surplus program fees returned to OSA are used to fund scholarships.

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. Possible solutions are: have the family deposit funds into the home account so that 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 or Western Union. 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. Students must sign a Loan Agreement (see Appendix) or a similar statement stating responsibility for the loan and the timeline for payment. Only one loan per student will be granted during the period of the program and should be repaid before the student returns. Payment of this loan will be included in your travel expense reconciliation; if you are unable to collect these funds from the student, notify the Office of Study Abroad as soon as possible so a charge can be applied to the student's account.

Various private companies can help replenish funds when bad planning or theft leaves a student or program leader penniless. Most credit card companies provide legal, medical and financial services around the world 24-hours-per-day, including emergency cash advances and card replacement (often within hours).

Money can also be shuttled from a bank in the U.S. to its branch in a foreign city, if it has one. Banks, however, are notorious for keeping bankers' hours. One after-hours option is Moneygram® at +1-800-542-3590, a for-profit money transfer service with 23,000 agents in 103 countries. The service charges $40 to send $500 anywhere (more for larger amounts).

Using the local AMEX office, you can receive funds in about a day, but high fees may apply.

If all else fails, turn to the Bureau of Consular Affairs. After an investigation determines that an American is genuinely stranded, a consular official will seek a friend or relative of the traveler to help. If no one can be found, an official may advance money, but a "limitation" will be put on the individual's passport, signifying that it is to expire when he or she reaches home and cannot be renewed until the loan is repaid.

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2 See "Web Links" in the Appendix for the URL.
HEALTH, SAFETY and SECURITY

Pre-departure Orientation

Encourage participants to complete the online OSA General Pre-departure Orientation, which usually opens in November for winter break and spring semester programs, in February for spring break programs and in April for summer, academic year and fall programs. Monitor their progress using the gradebook feature in the orientation.

In addition, plan, schedule and lead an orientation addressing the key program-specific details your students need to know. For example, it should include information (to the best of your ability) on safety; health; legal, environmental, political, cultural and religious conditions in the host country; potential health and safety risks; and appropriate emergency response measures.

(Major causes of death abroad include injuries, primarily auto-related, and drowning.)

Make every attempt to communicate all necessary information to students prior to the completion of the previous semester. If you plan to email students between or after semesters, alert them so they can regularly check their MSU email accounts. If you create a website for your program that is not protected by a password, please refrain from providing identifying details regarding housing, such as street addresses.

Also, whenever possible, arrange for a get-acquainted party for participating students prior to departure. Please note that the expenses associated with such a party need to be included in the budget.

Below are specific subjects to address in your pre-departure orientation: (See “On-site Orientation Information” on page 9 for tips on what to address once the group is abroad).

Contact Information/Program Itinerary

Notify students that you will be carrying a cell phone during the program and will inform them of the phone number at the on-site orientation. Explain to students that the cell phone is meant to be used in case of an emergency. Consider setting limits on how early or late students can phone or text you for non-emergency purposes.

Also, provide students with a complete program itinerary during orientation to help prepare them for the on-site academics. This itinerary should include the full name, address, phone numbers and URLs (if applicable) for any overnight accommodations. Review examples.

Health Concerns/Immunizations

You must refrain from providing advice about medications, vaccines, or over-the-counter medications. This advice is certainly well-intentioned and given out of concern for students; however, travel recommendations change frequently. The best recommendations are connected to a student’s own personal health history and it is important that all program leaders avoid giving medical advice to their students. Rather, this advice needs to be given by qualified health personnel, or from national or international reputable health agencies such as the CDC, WHO, etc. In addition to frequent changes and the need to tailor personal medical advice, there is significant liability both to the leaders and to the University that can result from giving incorrect medical advice. Practicing medicine without a license is not a good idea. There are links on the MSU Travel Clinic website to reliable sources for travel recommendations, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Travelers’ Health website. For your own sake, and for the sake of the University, please rely on these sources for health and medical recommendations for students.

In general, students traveling to Australia, Canada, Europe, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Scandinavia and the United Kingdom do not necessarily need to make an appointment with the Travel Clinic. However, all students should be advised to fully disclose their health assessment if they:

1) Are unsure of, or not up-to-date on, their routine immunizations
2) Are on prescription medications (to ensure they will have an adequate supply for the duration of the program); or
3) Have a pre-existing medical condition that may require extra attention in the new environment.
If a student forgets to include an important piece of their health history, they need to contact the MSU Travel Clinic to update their health assessment. If any student has questions about their health conditions abroad, they should arrange a visit with their personal physician or the MSU Travel Clinic. It is important to advise your students that many personal health physicians are not certified in Travel Medicine and may not be aware of certain world health issues.

Students traveling to higher health-risk locations, such as Africa, Central/South America, Russia, Ukraine, and Southeast Asia, are likely to need to visit the Travel Clinic or a physician certified in Travel Medicine. Help students prepare for this meeting by following the guidelines for preparing students for the MSU Travel Clinic on their website.

Also, the MSU Travel Clinic can provide half-hour health presentations for program-specific orientation located in countries posing higher health risks. Alternatively, program leaders have used the Ingham County Health Department, which gives group consultation and country-specific presentations, followed by one-on-one consultation and administering of immunizations.

U.S. Department of State Resources

OSA’s online orientation devotes a significant amount of time to health and safety. It also refers students to a special U.S. Department of State Students Abroad webpage.

As a program leader, it is your responsibility to read the relevant Country Information Sheet(s) for each country on your program’s itinerary. Using this and other information provided by your on-site contacts, advise 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 U.S. Embassies abroad. Such briefings help you to reinforce your message to students that travel to dangerous areas should be avoided. OSA also asks students to read a Country Information Sheet for every country/countries your program will visit.

You must also periodically review the travel information on the U.S. Department of State website for updates between the time of orientation and the group’s departure. Once your program has started, OSA will notify you of any significant updates while you are abroad.

If you believe there are regions of the country/countries to be visited that present undue risks, contact the Office of Study Abroad. This includes program-sponsored accommodations, events, excursions, and other activities. Students enrolled in programs located in countries with U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings (and operating under a waiver of the OSA Travel Warning Policy) will be asked to sign an additional release as well as adhere to additional security measures.

Travel Registry with the U.S. Department of State

OSA will register you and your students email address with the U.S. Department of State’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) prior to departure (and for all countries on your program itinerary). This only registers you for notices from the embassy. Students and leaders should register themselves with STEP so that the embassy will have a written record that you are personally in the country. You may also then include personal travel before or after the program or for countries not on the program itinerary.

Community Building

Seasoned study abroad program leaders report their biggest challenges abroad are not emergency situations, public transportation strikes, fluctuating currencies or language barriers, but student behavior problems. Those who have successfully traveled with students for many years advocate discussing appropriate student conduct and behavior-related problems in the pre-departure orientation as well as upon arrival. See the section on Community Building on the OSA webpage for more information.

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3 See "Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
Emergency Preparedness/Response

General emergency procedures, including use of the 24/7 international assistance line, are in place and specific emergency procedures will be discussed in the on-site orientation.

Other Information Resources

MSU GlobalEDGE³ is an excellent resource for student reference and orientation preparation.

Additionally, if your program includes foreign language preparation and instruction, you are encouraged to make maximum use of the Language Learning Center (LLC). The LLC provides media services, computing and audio-visual facilities, and consulting in the use of technology to support language teaching and learning, and research.

Country Background Notes⁴ from the U.S. Department of State are also good sources of information as is the CIA World Factbook⁴.

For comparative purposes, you may also wish to review safety and security advice from other countries foreign affairs departments such as Australia⁴, Canada⁴, Ireland⁴, New Zealand⁴ and the United Kingdom⁴.

On-site Orientation Information

Upon arrival, program leaders should have an on-site orientation meeting centering on health and safety information. Suggested topics include:

- Emergency Preparedness
- The Buddy System
- Communications
- Emergency Action Plan
- Medical Needs
- Paying for Medical Care
- Incident Reporting
- Parental/Family Contacts
- Discipline or Behavior Problems
- U.S. Embassies/Consulates
- Dangers, Risks and Accidents

Emergency Preparedness

Distribute the wallet-sized Emergency Card (see above) you received from OSA as part of your travel advance meeting. Ask students to record your cell phone number and, if applicable, the number of the resident director or another trusted local contact. Also provide all students in your group with the local telephone number(s) that 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). Also note that "112" is a worldwide mobile emergency number.

Students needing immediate emergency assistance should attempt to reach local contacts first, as this will lead to a quicker response. While students are often inclined to call their parents, particularly in a medical emergency, parents are not generally in a position to guide a response given their lack of local knowledge. If students in crisis cannot reach a program leader or on-site contact, they should call MSU’s 24/7 International Assistance Line at +1-517-353-3784. Note there is also space on the reverse side of the card for students to record their individual Certificate number located on their HTH insurance card.

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⁴ See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
The Buddy System

Almost all the critical emergencies you will face will be the result of a student being alone, either on purpose, or most often by accident. Strongly encourage your students to employ the buddy system, especially when going out at night. Suggest a “leave no man (or woman) behind” approach to keeping each other safe.

Communications

Many students now travel with cell phones that work overseas. For students who use pay phones or have rented an international phone on-site, help them figure out how to call the United States. If most of your students have a cell phone, take time to collect their phone numbers and create a communications tree. Make sure those who don’t have a phone will still be able to get information shared by the “tree.”

Emergency Action Plan

As discussed in the program planning section, this is the time to share your Emergency Action Plan with students.

Take time to consider the potential crises that could occur at your program location(s). In some areas, you may have to think about a response to an earthquake or flood, but in other locations it could be a crime, ranging from pick pocketing to terrorism.

In preparing to respond to an emergency that has impacted the country or community, develop a meeting and communications strategy as follows:

1. Designate a primary and secondary meeting place.
2. Agree on when and where to meet.
3. Talk about alternative methods of communication if a physical meeting does not or cannot take place.
4. Identify a student leader in case the program leader is incapacitated or unavailable.

If an incident occurs that is being reported in the international media, be sure to report your status to OSA and ask students to check in with families.

Additionally, you should determine how emergency and non-emergency medical needs will be handled as part of your emergency action plan. This should be discussed prior to departure and again onsite. Feel free to modify the general instructions in the Study Abroad Student Guide under the section on “medical care abroad.” Become familiar with and inform students of the procedures for obtaining emergency health and law enforcement services in the host country. If your program travels to locations where the quality of health care varies considerably, develop a list of preferred providers by consulting HTH’s searchable database. Be sure to select for either “Doctors or Dentists” or “Hospitals or Clinics.” Be sure to discuss this topic in detail as a minor medical problem may evolve into a medical emergency.

During your EAP discussion with your students, be sure to remind them to read the "Pre-departure health preparation, “Medical care abroad” and "Safety and travel" sections of the Study Abroad Student Guide. (Some leaders have even quizzed their students on this safety information during their on-site orientations!)

Medical Needs

Explain to students that the most common “emergency” that programs face is medical in nature. Most often, students just need advice on making an appointment with a local physician for non-emergency care. Remind the students about their international medical insurance coverage through HTH Worldwide and refer them to the section of the on-line Student Guide to arrange for “routine medical care abroad” or respond to “medical emergencies abroad.” Add that OSA highly values a student’s right to medical privacy—disclosures of a student’s condition will be made only to the most appropriate individuals with the highest level of discretion.

5 See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
Paying for Medical Care Abroad

Remind students that HTH Worldwide can usually arrange for direct-billing of hospital expenses when a student is admitted to a facility for long-term care or the hospital is an HTH partner facility. However, HTH must be notified of the need at admission, not discharge. Refer again to the instructions in the online Student Guide under “medical emergencies abroad.” If HTH is not informed of the need for direct-billing in a timely manner, the student may be required to pay upfront and seek reimbursement later.

Students should be prepared to pay for non-emergency care out-of-pocket and seek reimbursement upon return to the United States. To obtain a full reimbursement, students must retain all receipts and the care must have occurred during program dates.

Incident Reporting

Tell students they are required to inform you about any real or perceived emergency or critical incident. Even if the incident is not life-threatening, it is important to notify OSA because exaggerated rumors of the seriousness of the incident may reach parents, who will contact OSA for details. A list of examples is on page 14. If a student requires medical attention on site, but does not warrant emergency treatment (i.e. just an office visit), please contact the International Health and Safety Analyst and your OSA Study Abroad Coordinator so OSA is aware of the situation and can act quickly if the student’s condition should worsen. You may also ask the student to do this – especially if he/she needs advice about reimbursement for medical expenses.

Parental/Family Contacts

Inform students that you, as a program leader, cannot make direct, initial contact with their parents or family members about an emergency or critical incident without student permission. Students should be encouraged to communicate directly with their parents about a critical incident or emergency abroad. In special circumstances, OSA may choose, in consultation with the program leaders or on-site representatives, to inform emergency contacts about a potential emergency abroad without the student's permission.

Discipline or Behavior Problems

Communicate to students the applicable codes of conduct and consequences of noncompliance (which can include dismissal from the program). Refer to the Statement of Responsibility (see Appendix), which every student signs as part of the application process. Also mention that you will follow OSA’s guidelines for minor behavioral problems such as tardiness, to major behavioral problems such as disruptive behavior. MSU has a low-tolerance for misbehavior abroad.

U.S. Embassies/Consulates

Remind students that OSA registers their program-related travel with the U.S. Department of State which serves as the central point for all embassies. However, it is only their email address that is registered. They should create their own STEP account so that the embassy has a record of their presence in the country, as should program leaders and assistants.

It is useful to know the location of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate in each location on your itinerary because it is not uncommon for students to lose their passports during the program. Specific guidelines for replacing lost or stolen passports can be found on each embassy or consulate’s website. In addition, strongly encourage students to register their personal travel (before or after the program) with the U.S. Department of State’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

Dangers, Risks and Accidents

Advise 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 provided by an embassy or consulate employee. Such briefings help to reinforce your message to students that travel to dangerous areas should be avoided. If you are interested in arranging for a consular officer to speak to your students on-site, contact the OSA International Health and Safety Analyst several weeks prior to your program’s departure.

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6 See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
Also discuss preventable accidents with students, emphasizing such things as traffic patterns, pub and drinking culture, drug laws, unsafe swimming, and the types of things that can happen when walking down a street alone at night in a foreign city. Be very specific about safe and unsafe behaviors such as certain types of sexual behavior and how to dress and behave to avoid unwanted attention.

Refer students to the information in the online Student Guide under “everyday safety tips”.

**Loss or Theft of Passport or Credit Cards While Abroad**

Lost or stolen passports must be replaced immediately. If a student's onward travel will be delayed due to time needed to process a new passport, the student cannot be left alone and expected to travel on by him/herself. Either the program leader or the program assistant must stay behind with the student. If there is no second leader, local staff may be asked to look after the student and accompany him/her to the next travel location. If you are unsure how to accommodate a student in this way, please contact the Office of Study Abroad during regular business hours or via the 24/7 International Assistance Line at +1-517-353-3784 after hours or on weekends/holidays. To assist students in reporting a lost or stolen passport while abroad, follow embassy or consulate and click on "U.S. Citizen Services."

To report a lost or stolen credit or debit card, students should contact the bank that issued the card. If they did not record this phone number, they may be able to locate the contact information by searching the Web. MSU students who have cards through the MSU Federal Credit Union may call +1-517-333-2424 or +1-800-678-4968 during normal business hours or +1-800-543-5073 after hours for assistance.

**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 of 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 program leaders and Resident Directors of MSU study abroad 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."

**Program Leader Insurance**

All study abroad program leaders are covered under a policy administered by HTH Worldwide. The coverage and benefits include, but are not limited to:

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7 See "Web Links" in the Appendix for the URL.
• Emergency treatment
• Hospitalization
• Evacuation
• Repatriation
• Prescription drugs
• Dental repairs/injuries
• Accidental death/dismemberment

Review the MSU Study Abroad Insurance Program 2013-14 pamphlet for more details. Program leader/assistant insurance “cards” will be sent via email approximately one month prior to the program’s scheduled start date. Sometimes this message is tagged as spam, so review your junk folder before contacting OSA. If the information is not received within two weeks of departure, contact OSA at +1-517-353-8920. Staff has access to HTH’s database and can forward a PDF version of the needed documents.

To arrange for medical services on site, call HTH’s 24/7 International Assistance line at +1-610-254-8771. For assistance in arranging non-emergency care, such as an office visit, email globalhealth@hthworldwide.com.

If leaders or assistants elect to travel abroad on their own before or after the official program dates, additional coverage for personal travel can be purchased directly from HTH. Like student participants, program leaders are encouraged to purchase international health insurance for pre- or post-program personal travel. See the student guidelines for more information.

**Student Health Insurance**

**NOTE:** If you are referring to this section at the time of an emergency, refer to “medical emergency response” on page 16 for steps to follow.

All students participating in MSU study abroad programs are required to participate in a mandatory health and accident program, which is administered by HTH Worldwide Insurance Services, Inc. (HTH). All information regarding this coverage is provided for students online in the *Study Abroad Student Guide* under *International Health Insurance for Students* and in the online orientation. Students will receive an insurance card via their MSU email accounts.

Non-MSU international students participating in MSU programs may be automatically billed for on-campus insurance. If OSA is informed of this situation and the student does not enter the U.S., this charge will be removed.

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8 See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

General Overview/Approach

As the leader of an MSU study abroad program, you may find yourself facing an emergency involving one or more of the students in your care. Students can and do become ill, suffer accidents, become victims of muggings and assaults, find themselves caught up in potentially violent political situations, and fail to return on time at the end of long weekends.

In case of an emergency, you should be prepared to be on call 24-hours-a-day until the emergency is resolved.

While it is, of course, 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 level-headed 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 leader of an MSU study abroad program, you are expected to follow these procedures and to inform the students in your group about these procedures during their on-site orientations.

Please be advised that during an ongoing crisis, it is important to keep OSA informed on a regular basis via telephone +1-517-353-8920, fax +1-517-432-2082, or email. You may reach us after hours through the MSU International Assistance line at +1-517-353-3784. Phone expenses associated with an international incident will be covered by OSA.

Examples of Incidents or Emergencies

For our purposes, an emergency is any circumstance that poses a genuine risk to, or has already disturbed, the safety and well-being of program participants. Emergencies may include incidents that are "newsworthy" and reach U.S. news agencies, causing alarm to parents or colleagues.

Reportable incidents and emergencies can include, though are not confined to, the following:

- Treatment by a physician
- Physical assault
- Disappearance, hostage-taking, or kidnapping of a student
- Robbery
- Sexual assault or rape
- Serious illness, physical or emotional
- Threat of, or attempted, suicide
- Significant accident and/or injury
- Hospitalization for any reason or length of time
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Local political, natural, or man-made crisis/disaster in the vicinity of student accommodations or classrooms 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
- Death of a student

Pre-departure loss of a passport or documents is not considered an emergency. OSA will assist students or leaders to the best of our ability, but response may be limited to business hours.
General Emergency Response

1. **In an emergency, your first responsibility is to safeguard the safety and well-being of program participants.** Do whatever is necessary to ensure this, whether this means obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, U.S. Embassy intervention, or police protection. In case of a terrorist attack, gather at the pre-arranged location (see pre-departure orientation\(^9\) information on the website and on-site orientation information on page 9) to account for all students and follow the directives of the local authorities. You will be reimbursed for all expenses relating to the management of an emergency.

2. When you have done all that you reasonably can do to ensure the students' well-being, immediately contact the MSU International Assistance line at +1-517-353-3784. The Operations Desk is staffed 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, and will transfer the call to the on-call OSA staff member. OSA has explicit procedures in place to deal with the different emergencies previously listed. This step is critical so that we can assist you with decision-making and be fully informed of the crisis. During a crisis, OSA is the principal conduit of information for the MSU upper administration and the media, so timely and accurate information from on site is critical.

3. Follow-up communication with program leaders will occur primarily via email (provided that Internet access is still available on site). Therefore, it is critical that program leaders regularly check their MSU email accounts for updates and instructions.

4. OSA will notify the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate about the crisis and inform you of whatever procedures they may require if there is a continuing risk to the welfare of the students (during a terrorist threat, for example).

5. After OSA is informed of 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. Should a student not be able to continue with your group, leave the student with an MSU-appointed liaison to assist with the situation. Notify OSA and tell us who is providing assistance. It is not appropriate to appoint another student as the liaison.

6. During a political crisis or other emergency during which foreigners in general or U.S. citizens in particular may be at risk, **tell students to keep a low profile** and to not travel in large groups. 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 remove signs, luggage tags and clothing that would label them as Americans. You may wish to have a pre-arranged plan requiring that all students return to their residences during such a crisis.

7. Experts say that during a political emergency, it is unwise to change locations. Therefore, it is unlikely that students would need to be evacuated from a site abroad. However, leaders and students would be brought home if a situation was to deteriorate to the point where the degree of risk to students was deemed unacceptable. If this were to happen, the OSA Executive Director, in consultation with you, the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate, the U.S. Department of State, and appropriate MSU personnel, would develop an evacuation plan in as much detail as possible. This plan would be transmitted to you in confidence, and OSA would continue to work closely with you throughout the process.

8. **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 these students to continue their academic program on campus, and OSA will work with the students regarding housing, financial issues, etc.

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\(^9\) See "Web Links" in the Appendix for the URL.
Medical Emergency Response

1. In a medical emergency, including mental health emergency, seek appropriate medical care and contact HTH at +1-610-254-8771. This emergency number is on the students’ insurance cards and HTH will accept collect calls. HTH can assist you and help coordinate the necessary arrangements including payment of fees on behalf of the student. Once you notify HTH, allow them to manage all arrangements. For medical and liability reasons, it is not wise to solicit outside input or take control of coordination. In any other sort of emergency, notify the local police about the situation if you and the U.S. Embassy believe this is appropriate; then follow the procedures that the police may require of you or the student.

2. Contact the MSU 24/7 International Assistance line at +1-517-353-3784 to report the incident. All hospitalizations of any length are reported to the Dean of International Studies and Programs (though the identity of the student is not revealed) and the dean of the student’s MSU college. Unless the student’s situation is life threatening, do not make contact with the student’s parents without their permission and consulting the university. This chain of communication serves to diffuse potential miscommunication and misinformation to parents and the media, and provides background to the wider MSU community in case the condition should escalate.

3. When you call the MSU 24/7 International Assistance line, OSA may put you in contact with the University Physician. Please note that urgent medical matters should be dealt with by going to a health care facility in the area where you are traveling. For non-emergency medical advice, OSA can put you in touch with the University Physician by email.

Incidents involving sexual assault may also involve counselors from MSU's Sexual Assault program.10

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

10 See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
CHALLENGES ABROAD

On-site Activities

NOTIFY THE OFFICE OF STUDY ABROAD IMMEDIATELY IF ANY STUDENTS DO NOT ARRIVE BY THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS.

Act as liaison between the students and the resident director/bursar/warden/hotel manager, as well as those individuals providing services related to class activities. If cross-cultural issues or concerns regarding interpretation of the host culture arise, defer to the local resident director or local contact, when such people are available. Cross-cultural misunderstandings with host families, host country instructors, etc., may be avoided if you rely on the local knowledge and expertise of these individuals. For housing problems, see below.

If your program moves regularly, you may wish to intentionally rotate roommates to mix up the students, avoid cliques, and stimulate greater full-group interaction.

Meet with students regularly, preferably weekly, to discuss non-academic issues. Although this is optional, program leaders have reported highly successful sessions specifically arranged to discuss and share impressions, cross-cultural adjustment, personal activities, inappropriate behavior, etc. These sessions can also help to build group cohesiveness and alleviate possible cliques and divisions. Refer to the community building¹¹ section of the web for discussion ideas that can be generated throughout the program.

Some leaders send regular emails to parents or other loved ones. This serves as an excellent way for family members to learn of program activities. If you choose to do this, create a simple statement and have all students sign it, indicating that they understand and approve of such communication and are willing to provide the appropriate email address. When determining the content of the messages, a good rule of thumb is to write only what you would post on a Web site. Avoid reference to individual students or to events/situations that might be considered confidential.

Cultural Adjustment

You will have both an academic and a disciplinary role with students. You should decide on your expectations and limits and communicate those to students during pre-departure and on-site orientations.

Be aware of possible indicators of cultural adjustment challenges, also commonly referred to as culture shock, including compulsive eating or lack of appetite; feelings of helplessness, irritability, and loneliness; homesickness; sleeping more than usual; feeling depressed; easily getting angry; decline in inventiveness, spontaneity, or flexibility; stereotyping of host country/culture; increase in physical ailments or pains; inability to work effectively; boredom; or unexplainable crying. Most study abroad participants will experience some form of cultural adjustment; however, some might experience it after only two days in the host country and others not until three or more months into their stay. In addition, the concrete indicators of cultural adjustment challenges vary from individual to individual.

Encourage students to take care of their health and eat well to help them through these stages. If your students display one or more of these behaviors, it is very likely that they are going through the culture shock phase of cross-cultural adjustment. The Study Abroad, Reentry and Intercultural Communication Bibliography¹ on the web may prove useful when preparing to deal with student cultural adjustment and shock.

Housing Problems

Housing officers and host families will expect MSU program leaders and personnel to share the responsibility for informing students of host housing rules and regulations, encouraging students to abide by the local regulations, and mediating any conflicts that arise.

¹¹ See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
If a student is dissatisfied with the housing, attempt to correct the situation. Reassignment of housing, if necessary, can be provided only once during the program. The circumstances related to the move will determine if the student or OSA will cover the costs (if any) associated with the move. No housing refunds will be provided for additional moves. Additionally, students are not permitted to change housing without notifying you or the Resident Director. Because of the potential impact on relationships and future agreements, students are not allowed to move to another homestay, even if it is permissible by the new homestay family. Students are informed (in the Study Abroad Student Guide11) that since housing payments are commonly made on a monthly basis, any moves made in the middle of the month will result in a forfeit of that month’s rent. Depending on the reason for changing accommodations, the student may be held financially responsible for any costs above those allocated in the program fee.

In the event of a severe infraction of housing regulations, MSU personnel, in consultation with OSA and local University faculty members or staff, will determine whether or not the student should be expelled from the facility and/or face other consequences.

If it is agreed that the behavior does not warrant dismissal, but instead merits a warning, you should notify the student in writing that a repeated offense or other infraction of the housing rules and regulations as established by the local facilities will result in expulsion from housing and dismissal from the study abroad program.

If an agreement is made to dismiss a student from housing but permit participation 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. All dismissals should be reviewed by the Office of Study Abroad Executive Director and by General Counsel.

**Minor Behavior Problems**

Minor behavior problems are not serious enough to warrant dismissal from a program, but they do have a negative effect on the program. Behavior problems that are allowed to continue may affect the atmosphere and morale of the entire group. Minor problems may escalate into major problems.

Examples of minor behavior problems include:
- Excessive tardiness to class or class activities
- Personality conflicts between program participants
- Indifferent or rude behavior toward guests/guest speakers

One way to prevent minor behavior problems is to be proactive in your coordination and communication. It is best to provide strong encouragement of positive behavior, rather than setting rules, unless you are prepared to enforce such rules. Be positive in your guidelines rather than creating a list of "Don't" rules since you will never be able to create a list of all possible negative behaviors. Informal common sense rules (such as travel in groups of at least three, always carry your cell phone, or notify the leader when you leave town) are fine, but more strict rules mean you will be taking on more responsibility and if the students should break them it becomes a liability issue.

Many problems arise because 1) poor behavior was ignored; 2) leaders took on responsibility and did not enforce the "rules;" or 3) leaders facilitated dangerous situations. If you tell students of potentially dangerous situations and they continue to engage in dangerous activities, you will not be liable for their behavior.

Although behavior agreements may be preventive, they are not binding contracts. Instead, include "tips" in the syllabus or orientation. Should behavior problems occur, and your guidelines are challenged, it is acceptable to defend by indicating that these policies were covered during orientation and that all students were expected to attend.

Here are a few creative ways to channel positive behavior, particularly when there is a potential for alcohol abuse:

1. Schedule evening classes so that students spend their evenings in the classroom instead of at the pub.
2. Select key students who can "tip" the program in a positive way. Take advantage of their leadership skills.
3. Provide students with a list of free activities that are close to their accommodations and can provide an alternative to drinking.
4. Offer extra credit for students who explore things to do in the area and report back to the group.
Should problems arise, you may wish to discuss the situation individually with the student or students, or allow it to be openly discussed during a general debriefing session (see on-site activities\textsuperscript{12} on the web). It is not too late to have one, a few, or all students create and sign an individual or group agreement (see examples under community-building\textsuperscript{12} on the web). If you are unsure how to address certain problems, feel free to contact OSA to discuss your concerns.

Whether the behavioral problems are minor or significant, OSA recommends you make a written record of your observations and discussions with the student. There is truth in the statement "Your pen is your power." Let a misbehaving student know you are documenting his/her exact words. This can be especially effective if the student is using foul language or making accusations. Asking the student to repeat the words while you are writing them down can often be an effective way to prevent future verbal confrontations. Please brief OSA (through your study abroad coordinator) of such conversations. This allows OSA to begin a written record of events and provides documentation of early warnings should the behavior persist or worsen and dismissal is contemplated. Should the behavior persist, OSA will continue to work with you to assess the situation and, if necessary, will facilitate the dismissal of a student from the program (see Procedures for Dismissal on page 22).

You are responsible for supervising students and monitoring behavior during program-related activities. Except for providing guidelines for safety and appropriate behavior, you are not responsible for student behavior outside of the scheduled program activities. Additionally, even though you may disapprove of certain behavior (such as student romantic involvement with locals), if it is during the student’s personal time and does not disrupt the group learning process, you are not liable. If such behavior violates program rules (such as a requirement to stay in program accommodations or not travel alone at night), it thereby violates guidelines set in the student’s Statement of Responsibility (see Appendix), and you may follow the suggested disciplinary procedures.

If a student’s behavior during personal time impacts the group, talk privately to the student. Inform him/her of the impact of the behavior and tell him/her to either be more private or stop the behavior.

**Major Behavior Problems**

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 program leader, local resident director, or designated MSU staff has the authority to immediately dismiss a student from a study abroad program. The following behaviors are among those that could result in dismissal from the program (see Procedures for Dismissal on page 22):

- Conduct that violates MSU’s General Student Regulations\textsuperscript{12}
- Violation of the laws, rules and regulations, or customs of the host country, community, institution and program
- Behavior that is disruptive and detrimental to the group learning process and academic success of the program
- Conduct that damages or destroys property of another person, institution or organization
- Behavior that gives the program director and the MSU Office of Study Abroad reasonable cause to believe that the continued presence of the student in the program constitutes a danger to the health or safety of themselves, persons or property or threatens the future viability of the program
- Repeated offenses or severe infractions of the housing rules and regulations as established by the local facilities
- Alcohol misuse (as defined under Drug use and alcohol abuse and misuse below)
- Physical or sexual assault
- Harassment
- Possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs

\textsuperscript{12} See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
• Setting a fire or possession of explosives
• Possession of a weapon, including BB guns and knives
• Theft
• Repeated bad behavior for which the student has been warned in writing

Drug Use and Alcohol Abuse and Misuse

MSU has a zero-tolerance policy regarding the possession, use, manufacture, production, sale, exchange or distribution of illegal drugs by students participating in MSU study abroad programs. Even if a student has a medical marijuana card, use of marijuana on study abroad programs is prohibited. If the Office of Study Abroad becomes aware that a student uses marijuana for medical reasons, the office will recommend that the student identify an alternative form of treatment. If she/he is unable to find one and continues to need the use of marijuana, the student will have to withdraw from the program.

It is illegal for a student to possess, consume, furnish, manufacture, sell, exchange or otherwise distribute any alcoholic beverages except as permitted by host country laws and local institutional regulations. Alcohol misuse and abuse are not tolerated anywhere in the world and will not be tolerated on MSU study abroad programs.

Violation of local laws and/or MSU regulations or policies may result in (i) dismissal from the program; (ii) academic withdrawal from the University for the semester in progress; and (iii) disciplinary action upon return to campus. (This section is taken from item #1 in the Statement of Responsibility 13 that all students sign.)

The following provides guidelines for responsible alcohol use. This message is reinforced in the OSA online pre-departure orientation and should be emphasized during your program-specific orientation. Additionally, responsible use of alcohol should also be discussed at the on-site orientation. Alcohol misuse is defined as any use that is harmful or potentially harmful to self or others. Alcohol abuse is planned, systematic misuse of alcohol.

What is "alcohol misuse?" Alcohol misuse is present when:

1. A student misses any scheduled event because of the effects of alcohol consumption;
2. A student becomes ill due to the effects of alcohol consumption;
3. A student is disrespectful of others sharing the same housing, and congregates with loud groups for social purposes;
4. A student engages in inappropriate behavior toward other individuals that is the result of alcohol consumption;
5. A student engages in destructive behavior toward property that is the result of alcohol consumption;
6. A student does not abide by the laws of the country in which he or she is staying;
7. A student engages in behavior that causes embarrassment to the other members of the group, the program leader(s) or the in-country host(s) as a result of alcohol consumption;
8. Students in a group facilitate, encourage, or ignore a fellow student who is misusing or abusing alcohol; or
9. Students transport quantities of alcohol to program sites with the intent of sharing the alcohol with members of the group.

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13 See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
Program leaders may choose to file a MSU Disciplinary Report\textsuperscript{14} to report the above behaviors for judicial action through MSU's Judicial Affairs in the Department of Student Life. If a formal complaint is filed by the program leader, the student will be contacted by a Student Life staff member once he/she returns to campus and the judicial process will begin. If found responsible for violating University policy, the complaint and its resolution will become a formal part of the student's MSU record and could be available to both internal and external offices on a need-to-know basis.

**Alcohol misuse and abuse will not be tolerated on MSU study abroad programs.**

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

If a student becomes incapacitated due to alcohol overuse, or if he/she is in need of medical attention, others are strongly encouraged to contact a local emergency medical service. The program leader or resident director should then be contacted immediately, in order to protect the health and well-being of the affected student. The individual needing medical attention will be referred for assistance to address issues of chemical use/abuse. Peers are encouraged to make the responsible choice to notify program or emergency personnel quickly. The person (or persons) making the call will not be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy also includes program leaders. No OSA funds may be used to purchase alcohol. If students are individually purchasing alcohol at a group function, it is your responsibility to monitor responsible alcohol use by both you and the students. While you are not ultimately responsible for an individual student’s drunkenness, you can be liable if you are shown to encourage consumption. As a program leader, you are in a position of authority and responsibility and you must be capable of addressing an emergency should it arise. As a result, it is strongly advised that you do not consume alcohol at such functions.

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

**Addressing Behavioral Problems**

The previous sections have described typical minor and major behavioral problems. However, the best way to handle disciplinary problems is to avoid them in the first place. Seasoned program leaders recommend discussing student behavior problems and creating program-specific codes of conduct that students read and sign on arrival. Examples and suggestions are included in the discussion of community building.

As a condition of acceptance to participate in an MSU study abroad program, every student has signed the Statement of Responsibility (see Appendix). This statement, particularly items 1-3, lists expected behaviors and consequences for violation. In discussing conduct and discipline with students, please refer to this document.

In the event of an incident/infraction 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 General Student Regulations, **but does not cause immediate danger to others**, the following procedures will apply:

1. **VERBAL NOTIFICATION:** The program leader-in-residence, on-site resident director, or program assistant representing the Office of Study Abroad (referred to as the “leader”) will investigate the alleged violation using the resources available to him or her. He/she will:

   - inform the student of the inappropriate behavior
   - tell the student to stop the identified behavior
   - state the consequences of inaction (written notification, possible dismissal)
   - inform the Office of Study Abroad

   The leader should have a frank discussion with the student of expectations and consequences, giving the student an opportunity to respond in person and present any witnesses or ask questions of witnesses, if any, that the complainant has identified.

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\textsuperscript{14} See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL.
Unless there is a clear and present danger to the health or safety of persons or property, do not involve the local authorities. If deemed necessary, you may restrict the activities of the student in whatever manner is appropriate. Send an email summary of your verbal discussion to OSA and copy the student. This will serve as documentation and provide written clarification to the student.

2. **WRITTEN NOTIFICATION**: If the discussion did not result in mutual understanding and if the behavior continues, inform and consult with OSA regarding the alleged violation. Sometimes the initial incident may warrant a written notification without any prior verbal notifications. That is permissible. OSA can draft a written warning to the student.

The warning statement will provide a brief description of the undesired behavior; clearly stated expectations and consequences (including restricted activities, if applicable) that will remain in effect for the duration of the program; and a statement that this is the final warning and any continuation of the undesirable behavior may result in dismissal with no refund.

3. **HOUSING REASSIGNMENT OR DISMISSAL**: If, after the facts have been examined and after discussion and authorization from the Office of Study Abroad in consultation with General Counsel, it has been decided to reassign housing or dismiss the student from the program, take appropriate action and inform the student in writing of the decision.

Depending on the severity of the case, one or more of the following should apply if the student is found guilty of the allegation:

1. Reassignment to another housing location, if available.
2. Written dismissal from the study abroad program (which automatically means dismissal from Michigan State University for that semester or summer session). OSA will facilitate any dismissals.
3. Report submitted to the Judicial Affairs Office to become part of the student's record. This referral to the University Judicial System may include a hearing upon return to Michigan State University.
4. Other action deemed appropriate to the specific case.

Academic credit and grade will be awarded according to University policy (see Withdrawal section).

**Procedures for Dismissal**

If the student has committed a violation that may require dismissal as described in Major Behavioral Problems (see above), or if the student has committed a lesser violation and the procedures under Addressing Behavioral Problems (see above) have been followed and the situation has reached the dismissal stage, you are required to discuss the next course of action for dismissal with the Office of Study Abroad.

If you haven't already done so, document the violation(s) and response in writing for the Office of Study Abroad. Next, arrange a meeting with the student. Inform the student that he or she is under review for dismissal from the program. Describe the violations/infractions that led to this decision. Ask the student to explain his or her conduct, but make no promises that such an explanation will allow the student to remain on the program.

Dismissal action will occur in consultation with the program leader/resident director, the relevant college Coordinator, General Counsel, and the Office of Study Abroad. Letters of dismissal are written by OSA in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel. Depending on the student’s location, he or she will have 24-48 hours to vacate program-arranged housing. The student is not generally required to leave the country, but OSA will strongly encourage the student’s swift return to the U.S.

The letter of dismissal will also inform the student that a disciplinary report\(^{15}\) may be filed and he or she may be referred to the University Judicial System for a hearing upon his or her return to Michigan State University. 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.

If a student is dismissed for disciplinary reasons during a semester, grades are assigned as described in the following Voluntary Withdrawal section.

\(^{15}\) See “Web Links” in the Appendix for the URL
Withdrawal from a Program

Voluntary Withdrawal

If a student has arrived at the program site and decides to withdraw, he or she must begin by discussing the situation with the MSU personnel (program leader, resident director, or local institutional foreign student adviser) on site. The MSU personnel should consult with OSA to determine whether or not a solution exists for the situation. If, after consultation, the student still plans to withdraw from the program, he or she must submit a signed and dated statement of explanation to the on-site personnel. This statement must indicate that the student understands that, effective on the date indicated, he or she will no longer be considered a student or participant in the program, and is therefore responsible and liable for his or her own behavior, transportation home, full program fee, insurance, etc. The student will be financially responsible as described in the Statement of Responsibility (see Appendix). Fax or scan this signed and dated statement to OSA immediately.

Consideration will be given to the student who leaves a study abroad program because of an emergency situation or illness (either personal or of a family member). Should a student need to return home due to an emergency and cannot obtain sufficient funds for transportation, the program leader may, in consultation with OSA, loan funds. The loaned amount will be billed to the student's account.

A student may voluntarily withdraw from the University prior to the end of the twelfth week of a semester, or within the first 6/7 (86%) of the duration of the student's enrollment in a summer or special session (calculated in weekdays). Withdrawal is not documented on transcripts after these deadlines.

In case of official withdrawal from the University after arrival abroad, no program fees are refunded, and tuition and fees are as follows:

1. Tuition and Fees - Fifteen-week Semester
   Refunds for recoverable tuition and fees are based on the study abroad course calendar. For changes made through the first quarter of the term of instruction of classes (measured in weekdays, not class sessions), 100% of recoverable tuition and fees will be refunded. After that date, there will be no refund.

2. Tuition and Fees - Abbreviated Session
   Refunds for courses that operate on shorter than a fifteen-week format will be based proportionately on the above policy using the abbreviated calendar of that program.

In addition to billing for the dropped credits associated with withdrawal, there may be additional billing, particularly if a student has received federal financial aid funds to cover the entire semester educational costs. Withdrawal through the first quarter of the term of instruction will result in 100% billing of federal grant aid and Michigan Competitive Scholarship, and may also result in a partial or complete billing of loan aid and other financial aid. Withdrawal from any semester during the regular academic year may result in cancellation of a student’s financial aid award for the remainder of the academic year.

Upon official voluntary withdrawal from the University, symbols (grades) are assigned to courses in which the student was enrolled according to the effective date of the withdrawal as follows:

1. If withdrawal is before the middle of the semester or summer session, no symbols will be assigned to courses in which the student was enrolled.
2. If withdrawal is after the middle of the semester or summer session, symbols will be assigned by instructors to courses in which the student was enrolled as follows: W (no grade) to indicate no basis for grade regardless of the grading system under which the student is enrolled, N to indicate failing in a course authorized for P-N grading, or 0.0 to indicate failing in a course authorized for numeric grading.

Should a student need to withdraw from a course for serious reasons (medical, crime, crisis, family emergency, etc.) and not withdraw from the program, the assigned grade is determined by the college’s associate dean.

The result of a late drop with cause may be:

1) "W" grade with no refund
2) No grade with no refund
3) No grade with refund
The type of grade recommended by the associate dean is directly related to the medical condition/trauma that causes the withdrawal.

If one or more complete semesters of attendance are missed subsequent to the withdrawal, excluding summer sessions, the student must apply for readmission through the Office of the Registrar, Room 150 Administration Building.

If a student cancels or withdraws from a program for any reason (voluntary or involuntary), he or she will be required to return any scholarship funds disbursed by the Office of Study Abroad. If the withdrawal is done after the award is disbursed, the student's account will be billed for the award amount.

**Unauthorized withdrawal**

If a student misses three or more consecutive class days without explanation, the program leader should seek to determine the location of the student. If the student cannot be located, it will be considered an emergency situation and the emergency contacts listed on the student's application will be contacted. If, after investigation, it is determined that an emergency situation does not exist, the student will be reminded that attendance is a critical part of the study abroad experience. A student who, through his or her absence, demonstrates that he or she has withdrawn from the program during a semester or summer session without obtaining an official withdrawal will be reported as having failed all courses.

A student who leaves the University without formally withdrawing forfeits any fees or deposits paid to the University. The student will continue to be billed and be responsible for payment of tuition and course fees and study abroad program fees. Re-enrollment in the University will not be granted until all debts are cleared.
I am applying to an MSU study abroad program and if accepted, I agree to abide by the following statement of responsibilities:

1. Alcohol and Drugs. As an MSU study abroad program participant, I must abide by host country laws and local institutional regulations with respect to alcohol and other drugs. Unless permitted by host country law and local institutional regulations, I will not possess, consume, furnish, or distribute any alcoholic beverages. Further, I understand that Michigan State University has a zero-tolerance policy with respect to the possession, use, manufacture, production, sale, exchange, or distribution of illegal drugs. Whether a drug is illegal is governed by U.S. federal drug laws, the laws of the State of Michigan, and host country laws. I am responsible for knowing and obeying the laws of the host country, as well as all local institutional regulations, regarding alcohol and other drugs. I will adhere at all time to OSA’s “alcohol use and misuse” policy. I understand that violations of law or policy may result in (i) dismissal from the program; (ii) academic withdrawal from MSU for the semester in progress (grade determination will be made by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education); and (iii) disciplinary action upon my return to campus.

2. University Policies. I must abide by MSU policies, including the MSU General Student Regulations, while enrolled in the program and I may be subject to disciplinary action for violations of those policies upon my return to campus.

3. Host Country Customs. I will abide by the laws and customs of my host country, community, institution and program. I know that I need to be sensitive to the social mores of the host culture. I am also subject to the disciplinary codes and processes of the host institution.

4. Dismissal. If my behavior gives the program leader(s) or onsite personnel with oversight responsibility reasonable cause for concern that my continued presence is likely to impede the achievement of program objectives or to disrupt program activity, or that I pose a danger to the health or safety of myself or others, I may face summary dismissal. If I am dismissed from my internship placement or the host institution, I may also face summary dismissal from the study abroad program. Alcohol, drug and weapons related violations, assault, and sexual or racial harassment are so seriously problematic that dismissal is highly likely. For lesser infractions, the disciplinary procedure described in the “Program Withdrawal” section of the Study Abroad Student Guide will apply. Before I may be removed from the program, I will have an opportunity to explain my conduct to the program leader(s), on-site personnel with oversight responsibility, or a member of the Office of Study Abroad staff. A decision to dismiss me from the program is the responsibility of the Executive Director of the Office of Study Abroad and would be final with no refund. Transportation back to the United States would be at my own expense. (Only applicable to MSU-sponsored study abroad programs.)

5. Travel Arrangements. MSU may make changes to the program itinerary, including cancellation, at any time upon OSA’s determination that such is necessary. I will be responsible for any costs paid to outside agencies (such as airlines or travel agencies) due to such cancellation or change. MSU is not responsible for penalties assessed by air carriers or any other associated costs based on operational and/or itinerary changes. If I travel independently and arrive after the start of the program, I will notify my program leader or Office of Study Abroad personnel and am responsible for all academic consequences such as lost class time and assignments. I must confirm departure and arrival times and locations with my program leader. My property is transported at my risk. MSU is not responsible for travel delays and hassles. I will notify my program leader or on-site personnel of my itinerary whenever I leave the site for longer than one day. MSU is not responsible for any injury or loss I may suffer when I am traveling independently or am otherwise separated from any University-sponsored activities. If I become separated from the program group, for any reason, I will rejoin, at my own expense, the group at the first opportunity. MSU may substitute hotel accommodations or housing at any time. Specific room and housing assignments are within MSU’s sole discretion. (Only applicable to MSU-sponsored study abroad programs.)

6. U.S Department of State Travel Warnings. I understand that OSA has specific policies associated with the issuance of U.S. State Department Travel Warnings that may impact my program.

7. Spouses/Partners and Children. MSU is not responsible for providing support for accompanying non-participants, i.e., spouses/partners and children. I must obtain overseas health insurance for any accompanying non-participants. Such persons...
cannot attend classes or other activities formally associated with the program. If such a person disrupts the program, it may be grounds for my dismissal.

8. Health. I will be responsible for my own health maintenance. In the event of serious illness, accident or emergency, I will inform an appropriate program official so that assistance may be secured and so that my designated emergency contact may be notified. If I am applying more than one year before the beginning program date, I agree to update my Student Health/Emergency Treatment Authorization within two months of my scheduled program departure.

9. Fees. I will be responsible for the non-refundable application fee. I understand that my withdrawal after accepting admission may be very costly. (Only applicable to MSU-sponsored study abroad programs.)

10. Withdrawal/Transfer*. If I withdraw or transfer from the program after accepting admission, I understand that notifying the program leader is not sufficient and that I must submit my withdrawal or transfer on "My Study Abroad" account. If my withdrawal is submitted more than 8 weeks before the program’s first day, I will be financially responsible for the $100 application fee and $200 deposit (if applicable). If I transfer my application more than 8 weeks before the program’s first day, I understand the $100 application fee will be transferred only once to an alternate program and I will be financially responsible for the $200 deposit (if applicable). If I submit my on-line withdrawal or transfer less than 8 weeks before the program’s first day, I will be financially responsible for the $100 application fee and $200 deposit or any non-recoverable costs incurred and/or committed by MSU and its affiliates on my behalf at the time of my withdrawal or transfer (whichever is more). If I withdraw after the program’s first day, I will be financially responsible for the entire program fee.

If I withdraw or transfer, I will submit my notification through “My Study Abroad” account. The date I submit my withdrawal or transfer is the date by which the financial calculation will be determined. If a balance is due to the Office of Study Abroad at the time of withdrawal or transfer, I will pay MSU to cover expenses incurred to that point. If I should decide to withdraw or transfer and fail to submit my withdrawal or transfer and/or fail to show up at the program site, I understand I will be financially responsible for the entire program fee.

If I withdraw or transfer from the program prior to the program’s first day, I will be required to withdraw from my course(s) + and will receive a full refund of tuition and matriculation fees. If I transfer, it is my responsibility to enroll in the courses for the new program. If I withdraw after the program’s first day, refunds for recoverable tuition and fees will be based on the University calendar, as stated in the Study Abroad Student Guide.

If I am put on probation or recessed from MSU after acceptance, I am responsible for withdrawing from my program.

11. Credit for Non-MSU Students. If I am a non-MSU student and participate in a faculty-led program, I understand MSU will issue the transcript. If I am a non-MSU student and participate in a co-sponsored program, I understand that MSU will not issue a transcript. I am responsible for ascertaining whether and how my home institution will accept such credit directly from MSU or the institution abroad.

12. Credit. I will comply with the MSU Office of Study Abroad course credit requirements and with MSU’s academic policies and procedures. I will maintain enrollment for the duration of the program in the specified courses for at least 12 credits (MSU credits or equivalent MSU credits) for a semester program (unless the particular program requires more) or the minimum number of credits specified for my short-term program. I understand the only exceptions to this policy are enrollments for graduating seniors who are abroad during their final semester and graduate students who are participating in programs requiring more than three credits. These students must take at least one of the regularly offered program courses and no fewer than three credits. Doctoral dissertation credits cannot substitute for program credits. If I fail to enroll (or fail to remain enrolled) for the minimum number of credits, I may be dismissed from the program and/or I will be billed and responsible for paying an additional program fee. Even if I pay this additional fee after completion of the program, I cannot be retroactively enrolled in my desired courses.

If I miss a substantial portion of the program, for whatever reason, the amount of credit awarded will be determined at the program leader’s discretion. If I withdraw, depart or am dismissed from a program before its formal completion, I may be ineligible for academic credit. Should I receive permission to return home early, I may be eligible to receive a grade of “W” on my academic transcript. Any refund of tuition and fees would be according to the policy stated on the MSU Office of the Registrar website. (Only applicable to MSU-sponsored study abroad programs.)
I understand that if I participate in certain co-sponsored programs, I must enroll in and will be financially responsible for paying tuition for the minimum number of credits, and I will not receive a refund if I enroll in fewer credits. There are no exceptions to this policy for graduating seniors or graduate students who participate in such co-sponsored programs.

13. Waiver. In case of an emergency in which I cannot be reached, I authorize U.S. Embassies and Consulates to release information concerning my welfare and whereabouts to Michigan State University.

14. Release of Claims and Indemnity. For myself and all those who may claim through me, I release the University (and its employees and representatives) from liability for all injuries, illnesses, and losses, including death, I may sustain to my person and/or property, which are in any way connected to my program participation, except as regards any claim of “gross negligence” that is actionable under Michigan’s Governmental Tort Liability Act. I further agree to defend and hold MSU harmless with respect to any loss, claim or expense it may sustain by reason of my behavior.

15. Governing Law. Any dispute arising from this Statement will be determined according to Michigan law.

In submitting this my program application, I acknowledge that I have had an opportunity to ask any questions I have about this Statement of Responsibility, that I have read and understand it, that I accept its terms, and that I have signed it knowingly and voluntarily.

* Freshman Seminar Abroad participants are not permitted to transfer their application
+ Freshman Seminar Abroad participants will not need to withdraw from their FSA course; OSA will do this on their behalf
Student Loan Agreement

DO NOT loan students program or personal funds unless it is an emergency. Despite all the advice and pre-departure preparation, some students will find themselves short of funds. Have the family deposit funds into the home account so the student can access the funds through an ATM or have the family send a foreign draft by express mail, a bank wire or transfer, or a transfer through American Express. This latter option is quite costly. Loans should be avoided, but in cases of 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.

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STUDENT LOAN AGREEMENT

I acknowledge receipt of a loan of ____________________________________________________________________________ from ____________________________________________________________________________
(amount and currency, not to exceed the equivalent of U.S. $100) (name of program leader)

on ____________________________________________________________________________.
(date)

I understand:

• This loan is made because it is considered an emergency situation.

• This loan is made on behalf of Michigan State University and I accept full responsibility for the repayment of this loan.

• I am expected to make every attempt to repay this loan before the end of the program. If I am unable to do so, I understand that this amount will be billed to my MSU student account.

• I am permitted to receive only one loan during the length of my study abroad program.

Signature: ____________________________________________________________________________ Date: ____________________________________________________________________________

Printed name: ____________________________________________________________________________
### Web Links

#### OFFICE OF STUDY ABROAD

**Accident and Sickness Insurance Pamphlet:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/forms/insurance_pamphlet.pdf](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/forms/insurance_pamphlet.pdf)

#### Community Building:

[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/faculty_handbook/program_planning/community.html](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/faculty_handbook/program_planning/community.html)

**Everyday Safety Tips:**

**Insurance Coverage Before or After Your Program:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/studenthandbk/predeparture_health/insurance_before_after.html](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/studenthandbk/predeparture_health/insurance_before_after.html)

**International Health Insurance for Students:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/studenthandbk/predeparture_health/health_insurance.html](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/studenthandbk/predeparture_health/health_insurance.html)

**Medical Emergencies Abroad:**

**On-site Activities:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/faculty_handbook/difficulties_abroad/onsite_activities.html](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/faculty_handbook/difficulties_abroad/onsite_activities.html)

**Pre-departure Orientation Information:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/faculty_handbook/program_planning/predeparture_orientation.html](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/faculty_handbook/program_planning/predeparture_orientation.html)

**Reimbursement Claims:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/studenthandbk/medical_care_abroad/reimbursement_claims.html](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/studenthandbk/medical_care_abroad/reimbursement_claims.html)

**Staff Listing:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/about/staff_list.htm](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/about/staff_list.htm)

**Study Abroad Student Guide:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/studenthandbk/](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/studenthandbk/)

**Study Abroad, Reentry and Intercultural Comm. Bib:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/faculty_handbook/appendix/bibliography.html](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/faculty_handbook/appendix/bibliography.html)

**Travel Warning Policy:**
[http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/safety/warnings.html](http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/safety/warnings.html)

**Guidelines for Preparing Students for the Travel Clinic:**
MSU GlobalEDGE:
http://globaledge.msu.edu/Global-Insights

MSU Sexual Assault Program:
http://www.endrape.msu.edu/contact

MSU Travel Clinic homepage:
http://travelclinic.msu.edu/

MSU General Student Regulations:
http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/

Travel Information:
http://travel.state.gov/

Travel Warnings:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw_1764.html

U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and Diplomatic Missions:
http://www.usembassy.gov/

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Country Background Notes:
http://www.state.gov/misc/list/index.htm

Country Information Sheets:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP):
http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789

Students Abroad:
http://studentsabroad.state.gov/index.php

MISCELLANEOUS

CIA World Factbook:

Moneygram:
http://moneygram.com

Department of Foreign Affairs for:
Australia
http://smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/

Canada
http://travel.gc.ca/

Ireland
United Kingdom
http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice
The Office of Study Abroad at Michigan State University is dedicated to providing all MSU students with high quality international academic opportunities that allow them to develop knowledge and skills needed to become productive and successful members of the global community. In partnership with MSU colleges, departments, support units, faculty, and staff, we seek to increase awareness of education abroad opportunities, to promote intercultural learning, and to advocate for diversity in participants and programs.