FACULTY HANDBOOK
FOR FACULTY LED
STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS
The Center for Global Engagement has created this handbook to serve as a resource for UNG-sponsored study abroad program directors. Any of the documents referenced in this handbook can be found on the Center for Global Engagement website ung.edu/cge on the left side menu under “Faculty & Staff Resources.”

The Center for Global Engagement is happy to address any questions or concerns you may have regarding the content in this handbook or your role and responsibility as a program director.
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Revised November 2020 by the CGE staff. The following resources were also used in compiling this handbook: multiple sections of the NAFSA website (nafsa.org), the 2012-2013 University of Northern Iowa Handbook for Short-term Instructor-led Study Abroad Program, and the Guide to Successful Short-Term Programs Abroad edited by Sarah E. Spencer and Kathy Tuma.
PRE-DEPARTURE

One year
- Contact the CGE – obtain the Site Visit Form and Program Director Handbook
- Determine program feasibility
- Confirm institutional support
- Draft marketing plan

8-10 months
- Submit budget and/or program proposal
- Obtain program approval

6-8 months
- Complete faculty travel authorization
- Attend New Program Directors Orientation
- Submit program brochure information
- Market and recruit student participants
- Attend UNG Study Abroad fairs

3-4 months
- Confirm final participation number
- Finalize pending payments
- Conduct a pre-departure orientation with CGE’s assistance
- Register travel in Terra Dotta

WHILE ABROAD

- On-site orientation
- Monitor student experience
- Administer coursework
- Prepare students for re-entry

AFTER RE-ENTRY

2-4 weeks
- Submit completed travel expense statement to the CGE
- Submit grades and/or grade change form to the Registrar
- Submit completed Clery Form
- Conduct a program evaluation review in conjunction with the CGE

1-1.5 months
- Conduct a re-entry workshop in conjunction with the CGE
THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Program directors facilitate and oversee student participation in short-term study abroad programs; they must plan, carry-out, and manage the course of the study abroad program. Responsibilities of the program director include, but are not limited to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Create</th>
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<tr>
<td>• A vision and mission for the program</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A program proposal to be approved</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A budget that you will help manage</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A Risk Management Plan</td>
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<td>• A recruitment and selection strategy</td>
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<th>Attend</th>
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<td>• Program director orientations</td>
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<td>• Study abroad fairs</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
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<tr>
<td>• A student pre-departure orientation with help from your study abroad advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>• An on-ground orientation and re-entry workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To stay in contact with your program participants before and during the program</td>
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<td>• To stay in contact with the CGE throughout the process</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Program participants and your study abroad advisor with a program itinerary</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Program participants with expectations and consequences regarding academics and appropriate behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Program participants with emergency preparedness while abroad</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Support and conflict resolution for program participants and any issues that arise</td>
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<td>• Invoices to study abroad advisors in a timely manner</td>
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THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

One of the functions of the CGE is overseeing faculty-led study abroad and study away programs offered through the University of North Georgia. The CGE acts as a partner to the program director throughout the entire process. Responsibilities of the CGE include, but are not limited to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provide</th>
<th>• Program director resources including program proposal and budget forms</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare</td>
<td>• Students by advising on program details and scholarships</td>
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<td>• Online application and program brochure with input from the program</td>
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<td></td>
<td>director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collect</td>
<td>• Student applications via online Terra Dotta system</td>
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<td>• Student documentation as part of the application process</td>
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<td>• Copies of student passports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitor</td>
<td>• Student application status and payments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assist</td>
<td>• By making program-related payments to international service providers</td>
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<td>(hotels/hostels, tour companies, travel agent, etc.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Program directors with retrieving student documents from Terra Dotta</td>
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THE STUDENT

Program directors and students on UNG Study Abroad programs serve not only as representatives of the University of North Georgia, but further as cultural ambassadors from the United States of America. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting this important role. The student is expected to do the following:

**Comply**
- With the UNG Student Code of Conduct
- With all appropriate requests and directives of the program director and study abroad advisor
- Comply with all of the host country’s laws and regulations

**Complete**
- All required materials and payments listed in Terra Dotta
- Any required course work before, during, and after the program

**Attend**
- All orientations and meetings
- All scheduled program events

**Communicate**
- With the program director about any side travel plans
- Any safety or health-related issues to the program director or study abroad advisor

**Prepare**
- For travel to and from the airport on the day of departure and return
- For your experience by becoming familiar with the culture(s) in which the program takes place
- By bringing an open mind and respectful attitude toward the culture of the host country
- To assume responsibility for your own health and safety during your time abroad
PRE-DEPARTURE
1. ASSESSING INTEREST

Before selecting a program site and starting work on program development, it is important to assess the amount of interest among the student population. There are clear patterns of student preference, with destinations in Western Europe by far the most popular. Promoting a program in a geographic or academic area without an existing core of interest is difficult. Through aggressive marketing, it is possible to develop student interest. Please keep in mind that a determined effort and significant preparation time will be necessary.

Some methods of assessing interest include:

- Gathering evidence from the appropriate departments on the number of students enrolling in classes in the subject or major area of study.
- Determining whether similar programs have been offered at University of North Georgia or the University System of Georgia. Contact the Directors of such programs to determine the enrollment history and any problems encountered.
- Surveying students formally or informally for interest.

2. SITE SELECTION

The most common reasons for choosing a program site involve academic interests and contact. A contact at an institution, however, is not reason enough to launch a study abroad program. Consider the following questions:

- Is there a valid reason for taking a group of students to a particular site? Will the environment contribute something to the program’s course offerings? In other words, does the location contribute to the learning experience in ways that could not be duplicated by the students who stayed at home?
- Will the site compete with any existing University of North Georgia or University System of Georgia programs?
- Does the city offer enough sites to occupy and enrich students’ free time? Ideally, the city will provide convenient access to other sites of interest so that students may visit nearby cities during their free time.
- What is the cost of living? Sometimes staying in large cities is much more expensive for students than staying in small to medium size places. Also, some countries are extremely expensive compared to the U.S. and excessive costs will deter students from participating. It is important that the program director makes the students aware of the exchange rate and whether or not it is comparable to the U.S. rate.
- Will the city host a major event, such as the Soccer World Cup or the Olympics? This would probably increase the cost of the program due to the difficulties in securing housing and transportation and would certainly make it more difficult for students to explore the local culture.
- Are Americans welcome in the host city/country? The city need not roll out the red carpet, but if the locals harbor a significant grievance that manifests itself when dealing with Americans, the students will be unhappy and will not be able to move beyond the hostility to learn objectively about the host culture.
- Is the region stable enough to ensure the safety of the students? If a politically or otherwise volatile region is chosen for the site, extra attention must be paid to safety concerns. For the most current information regarding safety and security abroad, program directors should visit the Department of State – International Travel section - [https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html).
2.1 Site Visit

A visit to evaluate the study abroad site is required for all University of North Georgia sponsored study abroad programs. The program director should document the visit and submit a report to the CGE Director. The site visit report should include the following information:

- Detailed description of destination; geographical location, political situation, etc.
- Detailed description of local partner institutions
- Detailed description of teaching facilities
- Detailed description of living arrangements
- Identify accessible centers for mental and physical health care, and provide contact information
- Describe possible logistical arrangements, and identify challenges
- Identify potential risks to students, faculty, and staff

For a detailed site visit guide, please see the Site Visit Guide found on the CGE website.

3. COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Program directors must be especially vigilant in the area of academic integrity. The reputation of all study abroad programs can be diminished by the practices of any program that does not keep academic integrity as a top priority. Some of the issues that must be considered while developing a program follow:

- Courses taught abroad should have the same number of contact hours as on-campus courses. If a program’s duration is only 5 weeks rather than 15 weeks of a regular semester, students will have to attend courses three times as often as on campus. Such programs are intensive and students do not perform well if overburdened; program directors should be careful not to include more courses than reasonable in relation to the length of the program. Also, most students will want to see some sites in and around the host city. This factor should be considered in calculating the number of credit hours students will be allowed to take.
- For programs shorter than the normal 15-week semester, program directors are advised to give students a course syllabus, required reading list, and a first homework assignment prior to departure, so they can prepare in advance.

4. PROGRAM APPROVAL

The Board of Regents requires annual approval for all study abroad programs. A new study abroad program will need to submit both a complete proposal and budget to the CGE. After initial program approval, if no significant changes are made, only a new budget form is required annually. If significant changes are made, a new complete proposal and budget must be submitted for approval. All programs, whether renewing or new, will need a current Travel Authorization Form attached with detailed itineraries. The CGE will maintain all program proposals and budgets on file. Program Proposal instructions and forms can be found on the CGE website.

The procedures for obtaining program approval require a faculty member (program director) to prepare a formal proposal. The proposal must provide the following information:

- Purpose of the program
- Course description: number of credit hours and contact hours, course title and number, course-related activities and excursions, and level (undergraduate or graduate)
- Minimum/maximum number of students and faculty
- Projected budget
- Program affiliations and in-country personnel
- Security and travel arrangements
- Supervision plan (only for program directors who will not be on-site)
- Countries and cities visited
- Insurance and risk management information
- Deadlines for deposits/payments and registration
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the institution or organization abroad
- Study Abroad Application Checklist
After the program has been approved by UNG officials, the CGE will send the proposal to the Board of Regents office for approval. A copy of the approval will be forwarded to the Registrar’s and Business Office when completed.

In order to allow enough time for proposal reviews and recruiting for programs, please keep in mind the CGE deadlines for program approvals. Check the CGE website for current important dates and deadlines.

5. REVENUES AND EXPENSES

In order to obtain approval for a program, program directors must prepare an overall budget for the program which indicates all expected revenue and expenditures.

TUITION & FEES

Students will be responsible for paying the following in addition to program costs:

- UNG tuition (which will vary depending on number of credits and tuition rate per student)
- UNG technology fee
- UNG institutional fee

Other fees for students are waived.

The total tuition revenue for a specific program must be enough to cover all faculty and staff expenses (salary, benefits, travel, etc).

PROGRAM FEES

Program fees include all expenses that the program will pay on behalf of the students which could include classroom rental, administrative costs on site (such as telephone calls, faxes, postage, etc.), site visit(s), guest speakers, on-site staff, and international health insurance.

It is recommended that the current exchange rate should be used when calculating expenses. An additional 5-7% contingency should be included to account for fluctuations in exchange rates, unexpected costs, and to ensure that the institution can meet reasonable contingencies. A program’s budget must show that its revenues will be sufficient to cover all expenditures.

The full Study Abroad Refund Policy can be found on the CGE website.

FACULTY SALARIES & EXPENSES

Study abroad programs vary widely in terms of structure and method of operation. For this reason, it is difficult for the University of North Georgia to specify a single system of faculty compensation for participation in study abroad programs. In general, the total tuition revenue for a specific program must be enough to cover all faculty expenses (salary, benefits, travel, etc). Each program must consult with the Director of the Center for Global Engagement and their Dean.

All study abroad programs must comply with the accounting procedures issued by the Board of Regents, approved by the Chancellor, and published by the University System Chief Fiscal Officer. A Departmental Sales & Services Account and a Tuition Account will be established by the University of North Georgia Comptroller Office at the request of the Center for Global Engagement. These accounts will be managed by the Center for Global Engagement to ensure that they meet the Board of Regents financial guidelines.

All study abroad accounts will be updated and reconciled by the CGE on a monthly basis. The reconciliation should provide verification that all revenues and expenditures were recorded on a timely manner to the correct accounts. Program directors may request verification of revenues and expenditures to CGE staff as needed. See section 21.0 of the USG Business Procedures Manual for more information on Study Abroad Financial Management.

TUITION ACCOUNT

Tuition fund expenditures are subject to all of the purchasing laws, rules, and regulations normally governing state funds. The total tuition revenue for a specific program must be enough to cover all faculty expenses (salary, benefits, travel, etc).
DEPARTMENTAL SALES & SERVICES ACCOUNT (DS&S)

DS&S fund expenditures are subject to all of the purchasing laws, rules, and regulations normally governing state funds. In general all student-related expenses should be paid out of the DS&S account. See section 21.0 of the BOR Business Procedure Manual for more information on Study Abroad Financial Management.

5.1 Recruitment Expenses

Program directors are required to submit all of their recruitment expenses such as study abroad fair registration fees, mileage, and any other travel related to program recruiting directly to the CGE. The CGE will then make sure that all of the pre-trip expenses are recorded accurately and are paid out of the appropriate account.

5.2 Student Payments

All student payments should be submitted online through Terra Dotta or at the Business Office with a deposit slip provided by CGE. Program directors should not take payments from students. The CGE does not take payment from students.

All accepted students will pay for their mandatory tuition & fees directly through their Banner account upon registration. The tuition money will be reflected into each program’s tuition account and will be used to pay for program director’s expenses.

5.3 Payments for Program Invoices

All requests for payments of invoices related to a study abroad program must be made through the CGE. The CGE Business Officer will be in charge of processing all payment requests. Program directors are required to provide invoices from vendors to the Center for Global Engagement.

Requests can take up to 20 business days to process, so please submit the invoices in a timely manner.

Requests for funds to be transferred to another bank for purposes of the trip must be submitted to the CGE at least 14 business days prior to the day the transfer is requested. The CGE and the Comptroller’s Office will verify the request before initiating the wire transfer process. Verification will consist of making certain all students have paid all charges. A reconciliation of the remaining funds will also be done before funds are transferred.

Cash advance requests must be submitted to the CGE at least 14 business days prior to departure. The cash advance will be direct deposited into your bank account. The Center for Global Engagement will provide the Comptroller’s Office with the following:

- Documentation about the cost of the trip, including any payment plans and the deadlines for these payment plans. Based on Program Proposal and Budget Approval Forms.
- Requests for DS&S and Tuition Accounts. Account numbers will be assigned for each trip. The time of year and nature of the expenditure will affect which account number should be used for the expenditure. Travel associated with recruitment of students will be charged to the pre-paid expense account. Other charges will be charged to the DS&S account set up for the program. The expenditure account on the chart of accounts is only used by the Comptroller’s Office during the accounting close of the trip or for employee travel associated with the trip.
- Documentation items needed for check requests for expenditures prior to the trip.

6. INSURANCE FOR STUDENTS AND FACULTY

The Board of Regents requires international health insurance for all faculty, staff, and students participating in a program abroad. Please check with the CGE for insurance provider, rates and coverage details.

7. FAMILY POLICY

Please note that if a person is the spouse, child, or guest of a faculty member or program director, he/she should not be treated as a participant. Therefore, his/her fees should not be channeled through UNG. Please contact CGE for the full Family Participation Policy for additional information.
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Group travel arrangements can be made through a travel agency or individual service vendors, i.e., hotel, bus, airline, etc. A group is typically designated as 10 or more travelers. Program Directors should contact the service providers for quotes and research the best travel alternatives. Keep in mind that group space should be booked at least six months in advance. If the group is traveling during peak months, it may be necessary to book even further ahead.

Please work closely with the CGE advisors as all group travel contracts will be managed by CGE.

MARKETING & RECRUITING

It is critical that each program develop a marketing plan, start as early as possible, and use all means of communication. Many programs have struggled or failed due to a lack of sufficient marketing.

Each program must use the pre-approved CGE Brochure format to develop a brochure/flyer, which should be distributed to students seeking preliminary information on the program. In addition to the information and pictures meant to draw students’ attention, brochures and flyers must indicate the term and location of the program, the program fee, what it includes, the courses that will be offered, a contact person for further details, and a disclaimer that all information is subject to change.

The following are some methods of marketing that have produced positive results:

- **Flyers** posted around campus in major buildings and residence halls with general program information or advertising informational meetings; flyers can be distributed during high traffic times and can also be placed in students’ campus mailboxes.
- **Informational Meetings** during meeting hours or in the evening when students are more likely to attend; reserve a room (especially if the program can recruit for different majors); discuss the program in detail as well as the host city and country. Be sure to bring along flyers and brochures to inform and entice students.
- **Informational Tables** can be placed in high-traffic areas during lunch time; bring information on the program and the country as well as maps, pictures and other attention-grabbing materials.
- **Classroom Appearances** are probably the most effective way to disseminate information to students; ask faculty to post flyers near their offices and to make an announcement in their classes; ask to give a short presentation on the program in their classes.
- **CGE Study Abroad Fair** is held at least once a year on the majority of UNG campuses. The CGE will invite you to host a table to talk with students about your program.
- **Other Study Abroad Fairs** are held at several institutions throughout the state; arrangements can be made to reserve a table to recruit transient students.
- **UNG Magazine** reaches the target audience; pay for advertising space; write an article or ask a former program participant to do so.

Additional legal considerations are presented in developing promotional materials. Much care should be devoted to the language of program literature. Commitments should not be expressed unless they can be delivered in a concrete and ascertainable manner. Moreover, certain warnings should be in the advertisings or applications: (1) a disclaimer cautioning that changes in the program could occur and that reasonable substitutions will be made to the best ability of the program director; (2) no refunds are made for activities missed by group members; and (3) damage caused while on the program is the responsibility of the person causing the damage.
THE ONLINE APPLICATION

All students must complete an online study abroad application in TerraDotta. A comprehensive list of application requirements can be found on the CGE website.

1. APPLICATION TYPES

1.1 Credit Bearing

Credit bearing study abroad programs are the most common type of short term program at UNG. Similar to a non-credit bearing program, a credit bearing program is approved by the faculty’s department head, dean, the CGE Director, and the UNG Cabinet. The approval is based on the following criteria, but not limited to: academic and cultural integrity, logistics, sustainability, and finances. Academic content issues must be considered; they include learning objectives, readings, and methods of evaluation. These content issues can be addressed in the program proposal or course syllabi.

1.2 Non-Credit Bearing

Non-credit bearing study abroad programs include experiences that are not associated with a particular course, and for which students do not receive University of North Georgia academic credit. When proposing this type of program, it is important to keep in mind that the program must be relevant to the department’s academic mission. While the program itself is academically relevant, students who choose to participate in such programs will not receive academic credit.

Non-credit bearing international program proposals should originate with faculty or staff and carry the endorsement of appropriate departmental and college administrators.

1.3 Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

The CGE must be informed of any participants seeking CEUs.

In order to receive CEUs for participants, program directors will need to provide the Office of Continuing Education with the following information:

- Course name
- Course description
- Copy of brochure
- Hour-by-hour course schedule
- Participants’ names and social security numbers
- Program director’s credentials

Program directors should be aware of possible in-country limitations and work with students and Disability Services to prepare for differences.

2. APPLICATION REVIEW

Students will submit their application to the CGE for initial review. After the initial review, the study abroad advisor will mark the applications ready for review and notify the program director. Program directors then will accept/deny/waitlist students into their programs. When the review is completed, the program director will notify the study abroad advisor. At that time, the study abroad advisor will change the student’s application status to generate an acceptance or rejection letter.

Disclaimer

University of North Georgia is committed to the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities and to the principle of individual rights and responsibilities. To that end, the policies and procedures of University of North Georgia reasonably ensure that a person with a disability is not, on the basis of that disability, denied full and equal access to and the enjoyment of academic programs and co-curricular activities or otherwise subjected to discrimination in such programs and activities.
Students with declared disabilities who are considering overseas studies should consult with the Coordinator of Disabilities Services to review Sections IV and V of “Academic Program Access for Students with Disabilities,” the official policy manual of University of North Georgia. They also should make sure that all their documents for obtaining services at the institution are current and complete. It is important to remember that other countries may not have an Act comparable to the American Disabilities Act.

REGISTERING STUDENTS

Students will be enrolled in classes based on the Course Equivalency/Course Selection form. The program director must guide transient students through the admissions process to not only the program, but also to the University of North Georgia. Following the completion of the Course Equivalency or Course Selection forms, the CGE will register students. Please visit the CGE website for the complete University of North Georgia Registration Policy and the current University of North Georgia Study Abroad Forms for Grade Assignment of Incomplete and Grade Change.

WITHDRAWING/CANCELLATION

Students who wish to withdraw from a program will need to notify their study abroad advisor in the CGE. The student will be required to complete a Study Abroad Withdrawal Form in order to officially withdraw from the program.

If a student has made any payments, completion of a Student Vendor Authorization Form will also be required to process any student refunds. Please note: any payments made on the student’s behalf (e.g. travel insurance, airfare, etc.) before withdrawal will not be refundable.

RISK MANAGEMENT

1. STUDENT RISK AND LIABILITY AWARENESS

Students should be made aware of the potential risks associated with studying abroad. While University of North Georgia will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the safety of students involved in its study abroad programs, participating students and their parents must be aware that the institution cannot do any of the following:

- Guarantee the safety of participants.
- Assure that risk will not be greater than at home.
- Monitor the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of individual participants.
- Stand in loco parentis.
- Prevent participants from engaging in illegal, dangerous, or unwise activities.
- Represent the interest of participants accused of illegal activities.
- Assume responsibility for the actions of persons not employed by or otherwise engaged by the institution.
- Assume responsibility for events that are beyond the control of the institution and its subcontractors.
- Assume responsibility for situations which arise due to the failure of a participant to make full disclosure of pertinent information prior to departure.
- Assure the adherence to U.S. social norms of appropriate and acceptable behavior in matters between the sexes among diverse racial, cultural, and ethnic groups.
- Assure the adherence to the U.S. systems of due process and individual rights.
Additionally, students possess certain responsibilities that will not be assumed by University of North Georgia. These obligations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Making available to the institution complete health, psychological, and any other information that will be useful in planning for the participant’s study abroad experience.

- Assuming responsibility for the consequences of his/her own decisions and actions.

- Purchasing and maintaining appropriate insurance policies and abiding by the condition, if any, imposed by the carriers of such policies.

- Abiding by the student Code of Conduct provided by the institution.

See the Student Responsibilities section on page 8 for more information.

Student participants must inform their parents and/or guardians of the responsibilities listed below. These obligations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Obtaining and evaluating safety information concerning the study abroad location.

- Providing counsel in the decision of a student to participate in a particular program.

- Engaging the participant in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues related to the program overseas.

A study abroad program must be carefully planned and implemented to prevent potential legal difficulties. In general, liability for an injury exists only where a “duty is owed.” This means, in practical terms, that the preparation and execution of a study abroad program should accommodate all foreseeable risks. The legal standard governing the behavior of a faculty member is to act in the manner of a “reasonable person” under the circumstances. Prior to departure, a plan must be formulated to deal with all known hazards. It is necessary that students are fully alerted about any risk and instructed on how to appropriately respond.

A pre-departure orientation is mandatory in discharging UNG liability associated with study abroad. The same level of care is required while on the program; all reasonable steps must be taken to avert foreseeable risk and students should be notified about all possible threats to safety. Risk Management Policies and Procedures can be found on the CGE website.

**2. EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

In the event of an emergency overseas, contact the Center for Global Engagement as soon as possible after handling any immediate health or safety issues. In most cases, when dialing from overseas, you will first dial 00 + 1 + area code + number. Before leaving the US, check the in-country dialing standards

**24-Hour Emergency Number**

706-864-1500
ORIENTATION

Orientations help students prepare for the experience of going abroad and position them to reap the greatest benefits of the study abroad program. A pre-departure orientation is mandatory for any study abroad program operated by or through the university. Attendance is compulsory for students as a condition of participation in the program. The orientation should be scheduled at least two weeks before departure to enable students adequate time to assimilate the information and to make adjustments in preparation. The objectives of an orientation are the following:

- to discuss important logistical information, including passport and visa requirements, travel arrangements, communications, and financial aid;
- to explain the components of the program, including study and grading requirements;
- to create a forum to discuss expectations for the experience;
- to develop an inter-cultural and personal cultural awareness;
- to understand safety, security, and health-care issues abroad;
- to cultivate an understanding of the host country and its culture; and
- to assume responsibility for risks associated with study abroad.

Students require basic information about the process of going overseas. Program directors need the following information to answer certain key issues:

1. GETTING A PASSPORT

Entry into most foreign countries is impossible without a valid passport. To obtain a passport or to renew an expired one, an application (Form DS-11) must be obtained from a clerk of state court, a designated post office, or the Department of State website. Since a passport takes from 2 to 8 weeks to arrive, the form should be mailed as soon as possible. A passport is often needed to acquire other vital documents, such as a visa or student rail pass. Please check the State Department website for passport costs and renewal processes.

2. GETTING A VISA

A visa is an official authorization (stamp) affixed in a passport that allows visitors to enter a country for a defined time period and for a specific purpose (student, tourist, business, work). Visas are not always mandatory and are seldom a requirement for most Western European countries. Contact the embassy or consulate of all countries to be visited to determine whether a visa is needed for any of them; some travel agencies will provide this information.

To get a visa, apply directly to the embassies or consulates of the countries or go through a travel agent. Embassy and consulate addresses can be obtained from the Department of State website (www.travel.state.gov). The visa is stamped on one of the blank pages of a passport, so it is necessary to send one’s passport along with the application. Depending on the country, a photograph(s) and processing fee may be part of the application as well. If visiting several countries that require a visa, start early because it may take up to four weeks to secure each stamp.

It should be noted that almost all countries demand a visa for visitors wanting to work or study for a period longer than three months. Thus, be careful about “over-staying” a study abroad period even in nations that have no visa provisions for initial entry. In addition, a visa clearly indicates the purpose for which admission into a country was granted; students should not risk trying to work on a student visa.

3. VACCINATIONS

Disease and sanitary conditions may pose a risk to travelers in certain countries. Check with the Centers for Disease Control to receive information on mandatory and recommended vaccinations. If vaccinations are a prerequisite for entrance into a particular country, they must be recorded on an international certificate of vaccination available through passport agencies and some public health offices. The certificate must be presented with one’s passport. Consult a physician about the scheduling and timing of inoculations.
FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is available to eligible students for participation in a University of North Georgia study abroad program. While there is no special financial aid for these programs, eligible students who receive HOPE grants, federal grants/loans, and other forms of aid administered by the Office of Financial Aid can use these funds towards participation in a study abroad program. The CGE requires that applicants meet with their financial aid advisor as part of their application process.

Most types of financial aid cannot be awarded until 10 business days after the first day of classes, and some aid cannot be disbursed until after University of North Georgia’s new fiscal year. Thus, program directors should be prepared for students to ask for payment deferments. If and how much of payments can be deferred varies because of the different financial situations of each study abroad program. Each program director should evaluate, based on available funds and on payment deadlines to airlines, institutions, hotels, etc., whether or not they will be able to defer any payments. Program directors must notify CGE of student need for deferment.

Program directors who allow payment deferments are advised to have students complete a Financial Aid Deferral Form so that, if a participant drops out of a program after payment deadlines, he/she will still be responsible for meeting program expenses. Also, a Financial Aid Deferral Form is useful if a student fails to pay all expenses by the agreed upon date because it allows the program director to ask the Business Office to send the student’s delinquent account to a Collection Agency. It is important to notify the CGE if a deferment is approved.

Program directors should be aware that if the Office of Student Financial Aid is ever audited and there is a question about the budget for a study abroad program, the person who signs the form will have to explain how he/she developed the budget.
ORIENTATION

After arriving in the host location, it is mandatory that the program director hold an on-site orientation. This orientation plays a significant role in the success of the program, because it sets the tone for the remainder of the program. When preparing the agenda, you should consider the length of the program, the type of student, and the coursework. This is an ideal time to establish trust and clear lines of communication between the students and program director. It is important that they know how to contact you in the case of an emergency.

The orientation should cover the following topics:

- Arrival and Survival: housing location, how to call home, area maps
- General Information: program itinerary/calendar, money & banking, communication, health & safety, transportation
- Accommodations: describe housing type, local social norms and laws, host’s expectations of the students, and confirm participants are satisfied with their housing arrangements

This orientation should be held on the day after arrival; this will allow the students to get settled in as well as help combat jet lag.

RISK MANAGEMENT

All faculty and staff who work on-site must abide by the procedures outlined in the Emergency Response Plan for Faculty-led Programs which can be found on the CGE website. The University of North Georgia prescribes a series of steps to be taken in the event of an emergency overseas. If a specific emergency does not fall into the categories outlined in the Response, an immediate telephone call should be made to the CGE.

1. INCIDENT REPORT

In the event that a problem occurs with one of the program participants, program directors are required to inform the CGE and complete an incident report. This report will serve as a starting point for analyzing the situation and ensure that students receive the same disciplinary sanctions as a student on campus. It also protects the program director and the University of North Georgia from any possible liability issues. This report must accurately record the names of students involved, a full description of the incident, and what action was taken by the program director.

Refer to the CGE website for the complete University of North Georgia policy regarding alcohol and drugs.

COURSE MANAGEMENT

Attendance records should be kept. Be vigilant in enforcing an attendance policy. A foreign environment has even more distractions and “reasons” for missing class.

PREPARING FOR RETURN

On the plane, passengers will be handed a customs declaration form, on which everything acquired abroad must be reported at the price paid, including gifts. Failing to declare or understating the value of items can result in penalties. Do not take any unwise risks to save money. It is possible that a customs officer will search one’s luggage and person on arrival in the United States.

Some items cannot be brought into the United States and will be seized upon entry. Other penalties may be imposed as well. Here is partial listing of such items: biological materials, unauthorized reprints of copyrighted books, liquor-filled candy, firearms and ammunition, fruits, plants, vegetables, goods from North Korea or Cuba, hazardous articles like fireworks, narcotics, pornography, pets, and switchblade knives. For a more detailed list please visit www.tsa.gov.
COURSE EVALUATION

All participants should complete an evaluation of the study abroad program. Evaluations help continuously improve programs, help ensure that the quality of all services and facilities remains high, and can be used in marketing for the following year(s).

For the highest rate of return, evaluations should be completed on the last day of class or on the last occasion that all students are together. Evaluations can be completed once students return to campus; however, return rates are normally very low in these circumstances.

If the program ends before grades are due, it is the program director’s responsibility to submit students’ grades. If the program has not ended before the date of grade submission, it is the program director’s responsibility to contact the CGE and his/her department head so they can submit incompletes on the program director’s behalf. After re-entry, the program director must submit the grade change form for each student to the registrar.

RISK MANAGEMENT

INCIDENT REPORT

If any incident reports were submitted while abroad, the program director must follow-up to find out the outcome for each case. Depending on the violation, students may have a hearing with the Student Council Board.

CLERY REPORTING

What is the Clery Act?

Signed into law in 1990, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act is a federal law that requires colleges and universities to disclose information about campus crime activity and security policies in an annual report. Information disseminated in accord with Clery Act guidelines serves to inform the personal safety and college selection decisions of current and prospective campus community members. All post-secondary public and private institutions participating in federal student aid programs must adhere to Clery regulations.

What is UNG obligated to do?

To ensure compliance with the Clery Act, UNG must meet obligations in the following three broad categories: (1) policy disclosure; (2) records collection and retention; and (3) information dissemination.

- Policy Disclosure — UNG must provide the campus community and the public with accurate statements of current policies and practices regarding procedures for students and others to report criminal actions or other emergencies on campus, security of and access to campus facilities, and campus law enforcement.
- Records Collection and Retention — UNG is required to keep campus records of crimes reported on campus to campus security authorities, make a reasonable good faith effort to obtain certain crime statistics from appropriate law enforcement agencies to include in the annual security report, and keep a daily crime log open for public inspection.
- Information Dissemination — To provide members of the campus community with information needed to make informed personal safety decisions, UNG must provide: 1) A “timely warning” of any Clery Act crime that represents an ongoing threat to the safety of students and employees; 2) Develop and maintain a log of all crimes reported to the UNG Public Safety, ensure public access to the crime log during normal business hours, and; 3) Publish an annual security report, make the report available to all current students and employees, and ensure the annual security report is made available to prospective students and employees.
What is considered a Clery Act crime?
- Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter
- Manslaughter by Negligence
- Forcible Sex Offenses
  - Rape
  - Fondling
- Non-Forcible Sex Offenses
  - Incest
  - Statutory Rape
- Robbery
- Aggravated Assault
- Burglary
- Motor Vehicle Theft
- Arson
- Hate Crimes (race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, national origin)
- VAWA (Violence Against Women Act)
  - Dating Violence
  - Domestic Violence
  - Stalking
- Arrests/Disciplinary Offenses
  - Weapon Violation
  - Drug Violation
  - Liquor Violation

Does Clery Act apply to study abroad?
Yes, in locations “controlled” by the UNG. That could mean hotels, classrooms, meeting areas, etc.

What is the responsibility of the Study Abroad Program Director or Faculty Advisor to report a Clery Act violation?
The program director or faculty advisor should complete an incident report online. CGE will make a decision if the incident is a Clery Act violation.

REVENUES AND EXPENSES

1. FACULTY AND TRAVEL EXPENSES
Program directors are required to submit their completed study abroad Travel Expense Statement to the CGE within ten days of returning to the country. These statements must be submitted for expenses that will need to be reimbursed or to reconcile a cash advance. Program directors’ expenses need to be paid and tracked separately from student expenses in order to accurately record all of the program directors’ expenses on two separate Travel Expense Statements.

2. ACCOUNTING RECONCILIATION
The Comptroller’s office will complete the reconciliation of accounts once all receipts for cash advances and wire transfers are turned in to the CGE.

The CGE, in conjunction with the Bursar, will reconcile both the tuition and agency accounts for all study abroad programs at the end of each program’s cycle. Generally, for programs occurring during the summer and crossing-over fiscal years, an initial reconciliation will be done at the end of the fiscal year, and a final reconciliation will be done at the end of the program cycle.

Program directors CANNOT request any payments/withdrawals until this reconciliation has taken place, and all parties agree on the balances to be carried forward.
Most students encounter “reverse” culture shock upon returning home. They have undergone a life-altering experience while everything at home has remained unchanged. Friends seem dull and immature. Boredom is common. In some cases, particularly when a person has adjusted well to the host country, reverse culture shock may cause greater distress than the original culture shock.

The reason for reverse culture shock is quite simple: an individual is not the same person. The antidote is to become involved in things that keep expanding one’s horizons. A reentry program can provide needed perspective and re-entry to the experience abroad by helping students readjust to American culture and campus life, reflect upon and articulate their experiences, assimilate and incorporate what they learned abroad into their on-going degree studies, and consider how they might build on what they have learned for post-graduate and career opportunities.

For short-term programs, particularly those where many aspects of the home campus (such as faculty and staff) are preserved in the program abroad, reverse culture shock is much different and milder, but still an important factor for some students. Therefore, if possible, attempts should be made to organize a meeting upon the group’s return to campus. It should always include an opportunity for the participants to informally discuss their personal experiences. In particular, students should be encouraged to make friends with exchange students, talk to classes about the experiences, and alter career plans. **The most important point is to impress upon students not to allow a study abroad opportunity to be wasted.**