

# Faculty Directors Handbook

## Getting Started

Learning Abroad provides a framework to faculty and departments to offer high quality, academic programs in a manner consistent with national best practices. By collaborating with Learning Abroad, departments can focus on the scholarly elements of programming rather than the administrative tasks of program administration, allowing students to have a transformative global learning experience. Learning Abroad works with experts in a variety of fields to help departments develop sustainable, valuable experiences that promote learning and help students develop transferable skills for the classroom, community, and workplace

Over the past two decades, educators have worked to establish best practices and national standards that promote the safety and quality of education abroad programs. As part of this vast and dynamic network, Learning Abroad provides departments access to national and international resources such as affiliates, partner institutions, and professional organizations that establish standards for student programming abroad. Examples of these networks include the [Diversity Abroad Network](#), [Association of International Education Administrators](#), [NAFSA: Association of International Educators](#), the [Forum on Education Abroad](#), and the [Institute for International Education](#).

Additionally, the legal landscape for international programming has changed dramatically challenging universities to ensure that programs are transparent and accessible for all students and mitigate health and safety risks. Learning Abroad is on the cutting edge of these developments and assists departments in navigating international programming.

The Faculty Directors Handbook provides information on policy, procedural overview, and guidelines related to leading a University of Utah Faculty-Led Program. If you have questions about any content in this handbook, contact your Learning Abroad Coordinator directly or reach out to our general email at [learningabroad@utah.edu](mailto:learningabroad@utah.edu).

## Learning Abroad Responsibilities

An education abroad program is a complex learning experience for students. It involves coordination, preparation, and integration before, during, and after a program. To facilitate global learning throughout this continuum, Learning Abroad offers a variety of support services that reduce the burden on academic departments and, in turn, Faculty Directors. A description of these services is found below.

### Academic

**Registration & Enrollment:** Course creation, course registration coordination, scheduling support, and enrollment monitoring. International Requirement coordination and recording.

**Teaching and Learning:** Pedagogy consulting and curriculum integration support. Support for new program development and program enhancement. Development, implementation, and analysis of program assessments and evaluations. Workshops for academic advisors, faculty, and departments.

**Networking and Connections:** International education networking and connections to enhance programming and cultural integration onsite. Coordination of programs with strategic initiatives of the University, College, and Department.

**Policy Exceptions:** Coordinates exceptions to university policy that create barriers to student participation including residency policies, graduation policies, etc.

## **Advising, Applications, & Marketing**

**Advising:** Advising services for students and departments. Application assistance and processing. Support for non-U of U applicants.

**Application Management:** Access to the Terra Dotta application portal. Development, management, and monitoring of student applications. Customized reports for Departments and Faculty.

**Marketing:** Brochure development, editing, and printing. Learning Abroad Fair. Promotion through UPN screens, posters, classroom presentations, yard signs, banners, shuttles, and other venues. Tabling events to speak with interested students. Utilization of on-campus marketing through collaboration with student organizations, Plazafest, ASUU, residence halls, academic departments, UAAC, Campus Recruitment Committee, and various relevant clubs.

## **Pre-departure & Re-entry Programming**

**Student Orientation and Preparation:** Student orientation development, coordination, and monitoring. Scheduling support for program-specific orientations. Learning Abroad 101 developments, coordination, and tracking to ensure that students are prepared for learning abroad commitments.

**Re-entry Integration:** Global U Program development, support, and implementation. Integrated reflection that promotes the development of transferable skills. Sponsorship of activities, workshops, and events for returned students.

## Financial

**Tuition Discounts:** Discounted tuition for Learning Abroad courses offered on Faculty-Led Programs.

- Undergraduate: \$45 per credit
- Graduate: \$60 per credit
- Medical: \$70 per credit

**Financial Aid and Scholarships:** Coordination with University Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid (OSFA) for eligibility and distribution of Federal Financial Aid. Collaboration with OSFA to ensure that scholarships comply with state and federal law. Office for Global Engagement scholarship access, coordination, and disbursement. Scholarship promotion, access, distribution, and compliance.

**Budgets and Billing Management:** Budget development and management. Post-program reconciliation processing. Bill pays and reimbursement. Wire transfers. Travel office administration. Student billing and collection of funds.

**Taxation:** Automated integration of billable costs into 1098-T (tax forms for education expenses).

## Risk Management, Legal Compliance, and Liability

**Health, Safety, and Security:** Safety and Security Assessments for University-managed international programs. Review of specific support/assistance concerns related to University-managed international programs traveling to high-risk travel locations. Customized, site-specific pre-departure health and safety orientations, risk mitigation tools, and strategies. Management and oversight of student behavioral issues, health risks, concerns, and individual medical issues (Student Health Clearances; Dean of Students Office disciplinary clearances; CDA requirements). Collaboration with on-campus offices, such as the Behavioral Intervention Team, to support students with mental health concerns.

**Emergency Response and Preparedness:** 24/7 International Emergency number and response assistance. Emergency Response Plans/Protocols/Training for Faculty Directors and Facilitators. Crisis response coordination alongside local and U.S.-based international assistance providers. Department of State traveler registration and consular services response coordination. Management/oversight of student data and information within a centralized, accessible database.

**International Insurance, Travel Assistance and Support:** Management/oversight of student, faculty, and staff enrollment in University-contracted international health insurance, travel assistance, and emergency evacuation coverage. Health insurance contracting, student enrollment management, policy and coverage awareness for students, and insurance claims support. Management of individual or group evacuations (medical and security). Faculty/staff access to University liability and indemnification coverage.

**Contract Management:** Ensure that contracts comply with federal, state, and local statutes by coordinating with the Office of General Counsel. Coordinate with University Purchasing for bidding and outsourcing regulations. Ensure that agreements are designed to benefit students and departments and provide high quality interactions with partner agencies. Confirm that agreements adhere to best practices in education abroad. Reduce redundancy or conflicts with pre-existing University contracts. Ensure that contracts align with University oversight of critical student concerns (i.e. Dean of Students policies; ADA; Student Health and Safety; Title IX and Clery Act reporting; sexual assault response, etc.)

**Compliance:** Reporting and compliance for federal, state, and local legislation. Awareness of and compliance with Campus Security Authority (CSA) responsibilities for Clery Act Reporting and Sexual Assault Response Protocols required by law at the University. Legal waivers, disclosures, and notices that protect the U, Faculty Directors, Facilitators, and students. Women Against Violence Act and Hate Crimes Reporting and Compliance. Title IX Reporting and Compliance. CDA Reporting and Compliance. Basic visa and passport advising for travelers.

## **Faculty Director Responsibilities**

As a Faculty Director, you are the cornerstone of learning abroad at the University of Utah. Your dedication and enthusiasm create global opportunities for students. You have a year-round commitment to the program starting with program planning and continuing with student support after returning from the host country. A full list of responsibilities is outlined in a Facilitator Application, which is a required step for all Faculty Directors. In general terms, you should expect to fulfill the following responsibilities when leading a program:

**Program Recruitment:** Successful programs have Faculty Directors who aggressively recruit applicants. Learning Abroad supports and guides recruitment and marketing efforts with you.

**Application Review:** Review student applications and coordinate decisions with Learning Abroad.

**Teaching & Academic Coordination:** Serve as the instructor of record for all courses connected to the program and coordinate the academic components of the program. For most programs, Faculty Directors provide direct instruction. In others, Faculty Directors coordinate with local universities to provide instruction. Faculty Directors are expected to attend all program related activities and provide pastoral care while on-site.

**Cultural Integration:** One of the key learning outcomes of learning abroad is to increase intercultural competence in students. Faculty Directors integrate cultural themes and scholarly activities into the academic and social component of the program to ensure that students have an authentic, valuable cultural experience abroad. Critical to this element of the program is direct interaction with local

residents and post-activity reflection so that students can process their experience and recognize how experiences outside the classroom impact their personal, professional, and academic lives.

**Financial:** Co-create the program budget, manage on-site expenses, act as responsible authority of program budget, follow post-program reconciliation steps according to University of Utah policy and guidelines.

**Logistical Coordination:** Coordinate the logistical aspects of the program including housing, excursions, on-site transportation, and guest speakers. Learning Abroad strongly encourages faculty to identify an affiliate organization in the host country to assist with support and logistics.

**Risk Management:** Provide 24/7 emergency support during the program. The Office for Global Engagement and Learning Abroad train Faculty Directors and Facilitators, and provide support and coordination from the University of Utah.

**Orientation Meetings:** Lead at least one group pre-departure orientation meeting before departure and one on-site orientation meeting after arrival. In orientation meetings, Faculty Directors prepare students academically, culturally, and logistically for the host country.

**Post-Program Reflection:** Provide informal advice, mentoring, and reflection for program participants after the program is over to facilitate continued learning.

## Eligibility

All Faculty Directors must be approved by their Department Chair to lead a Learning Abroad Program. Additionally, they must meet the following requirements:

Must be an active University of Utah employee for 6 months before the program start date, during the program, and for 3 months after program end date.

Be in good academic and disciplinary standing with the University (if applicable).

Complete training requirements by the established deadlines.

## Learning Abroad Facilitator Applications

Faculty Directors are also considered program “Facilitators”. A Facilitator can be any University of Utah faculty, staff, or student in the role of Faculty Director, Program Manager, Program Assistant, or Volunteer. Facilitators are required to complete a Facilitator Application each year. This is a simple, multi-step process in which Facilitators agree to the Learning Abroad and University of Utah policies and guidelines and provide information about their program. They also submit personal information to facilitate enrollment in our international insurance policy.

Updated contact and travel information for all University Facilitators strengthens the U’s ability to provide fast and efficient support and assistance in the event of health and safety incidents abroad. Before we can move forward with Program preparations, including paying invoices or signing agreements, Facilitators must

complete the first part of their Facilitator Application online and complete any required reporting related to conflicts of interest.

## **Learning Abroad New Faculty Director & Program Assistant Training**

All new Faculty Directors and Facilitators are required to complete the New Faculty Director & Program Assistant Training through Terra Dotta. The training consists of modules that cover financial administration, marketing, academic policies & procedures, and other important topics. All Faculty Directors and Facilitators are responsible for understanding the information provided.

## **Conflict of Interest**

As a Faculty Director, you will be closely involved with the financial and budgetary needs of your program, and, as such, procurement conflicts or issues may arise. [Policy 1-006: Individual Financial Conflict of Interest Policy](#) describes the process by which the University identifies, evaluates, and manages financial conflicts of interest of individuals without violating its central mission. It uses disclosure as the key mechanism to bring potential financial conflicts of interest to light for evaluation and possible oversight. This policy also identifies types of financial conflicts of interest in which individuals are not allowed to engage because they would be in violation of law or are judged by the University to be in violation of its central mission.

The [Conflict of Interest Office](#) supports the University community in identifying and managing financial conflicts of interest in three areas:

- Research and Scholarly Activities
- Procurement
- Intellectual Property

They work with faculty, staff, postdoctoral fellows, students and others who are required to disclose external financial interests to the University for evaluation. Learning Abroad also works with the [Individual Conflict of Interest Committee](#) to review and manage financial interests that create conflicts of interest.

The University of Utah closely monitors faculty and staff business relationships to ensure compliance with state law regarding conflicts of interest. Learning Abroad's processes help protect you as a Facilitator from paying personal income taxes on program payments or reimbursements or running the risk of your Program being canceled due to non-disclosure.

## **Nepotism Restrictions**

Learning Abroad programs are subject to state and institutional regulations governing nepotism. The University's complete policy governing the [Required Professional Boundaries in Relationships](#) can be found in the Regulations Library.

Anyone who has an authoritative, teaching, financial, or administrative role with the Program—both on campus and abroad—is subject to the policy. Other roles may be subject to the policy. If the University financially supports an individual's service in any way either on campus or abroad, they are subject to the policy. This includes housing, travel expenses, meals, honoraria, etc.

In situations where an individual has a teaching position at the University and an academic role on the Program, we recommend that parties co-direct the Program. Both individuals will be listed as instructors of record.

Faculty can petition to get an exception to the U's nepotism policy. Exceptions must be approved by the Office of General Counsel, the appropriate vice president, and the President of the University. Information about requesting an exception to the policy is found in the Rules, Procedures, Guidelines, Forms, and other related resources section in the Regulations Library. Learning Abroad does not determine if an exception to policy is appropriate or legal. Approval must be provided to Learning Abroad 9 months in advance of the Program's departure date.

## **Program Proposal**

### **Priorities for New Programs**

The University has identified several strategic priorities for new Programs. Faculty Directors should take this information into account and are encouraged to align proposals with these priorities.

Programs that align with University and/or college strategic priorities

Programs offering coursework that satisfies core graduation requirements

Programs that satisfy [general education](#) courses (aside from the [International Requirement](#))

Programs that appeal to a wide variety of students, are not restricted to specific majors or colleges, and offer at least some coursework in English

Proposals that collaborate with or enhance existing Programs

### **Faculty Fellows Program & Submitting a Proposal**

All Faculty are highly encouraged to participate in the Faculty Fellows Program. The purpose of this program is to develop a proactive, supported approach to faculty-led program development where we provide workshops and training to faculty so they are equipped with the knowledge of how to successfully propose and eventually lead a program. In addition, faculty who complete the program are eligible to receive a \$2,500 grant in the first year.

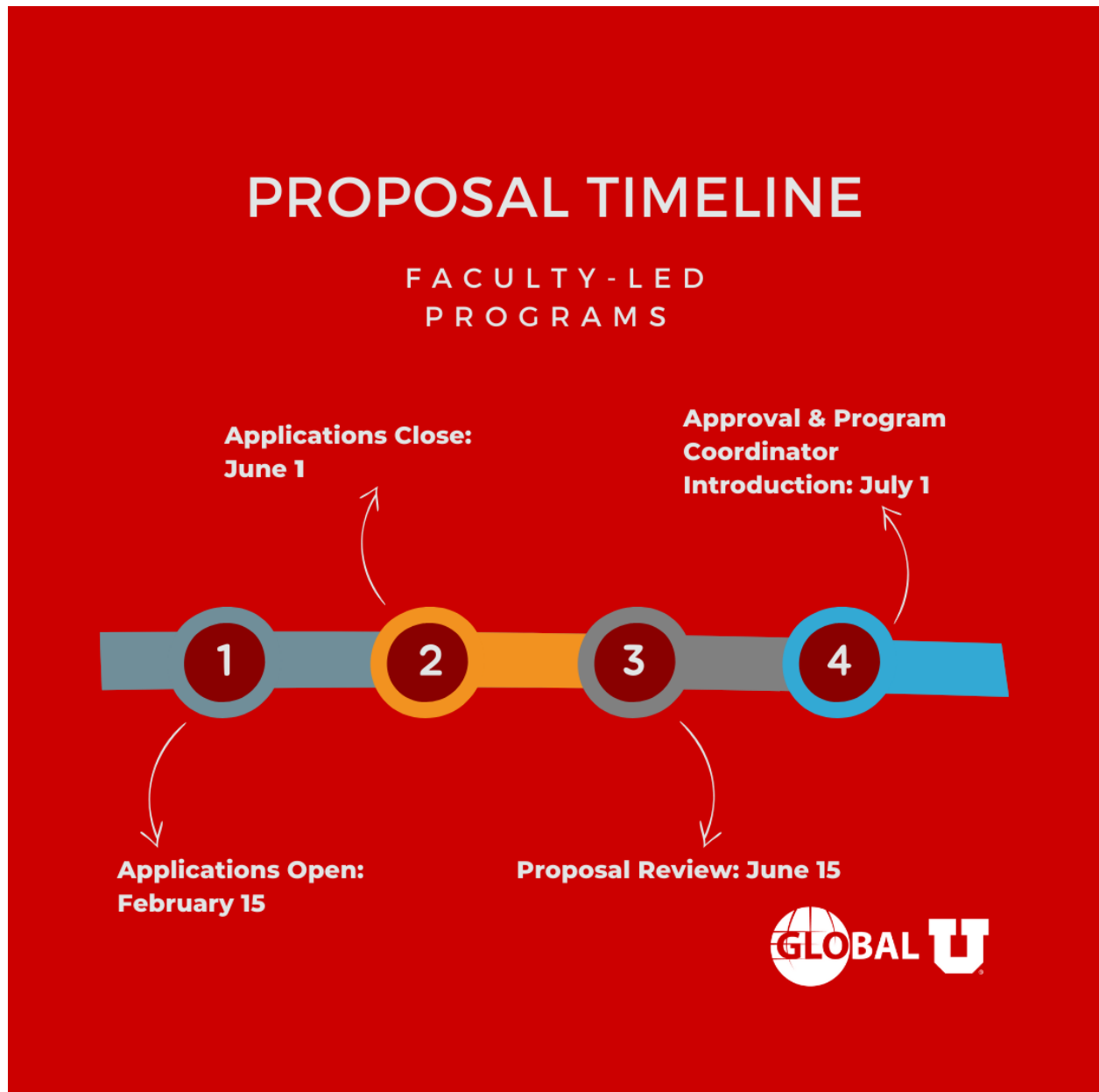
By the end of the Faculty Fellows Program, faculty will know how to submit new proposals using our application system. If Faculty are not able to complete the Faculty Fellows Program, they can still submit a proposal for consideration. You can visit the [proposal brochure page](#) for an overview of requirements and start an application during the proposal period of February 15th to June 1st each year. One



proposal is submitted for each Program regardless of the number of faculty involved in the Program.

## Proposal Deadlines

Learning Abroad accepts proposals by **June 1** for programs that run in any term in the following calendar year.



## Proposal Review

Once the deadline passes, the Senior International Officer, Director of Learning Abroad, and the Associate Director of Learning Abroad will review your proposal. The proposal will be evaluated based on its alignment with the established priorities and

required information in each stage of the application. If the initial proposal does not receive an approval, Learning Abroad will work with you to redesign it. The review process takes 2-4 weeks after the proposal deadline.

## **Program Approval**

If the proposal is approved, the Program will receive Probationary Approval. Probationary approval is typically granted for 3 years. During this time, the Program must demonstrate that it is sustainable, complies with University guidelines, and adheres to [best practices](#).

If the Program receives a satisfactory review after the probationary period, it automatically receives official approval status. Official approval is granted with the assumption that the Program will continue to be sustainable, adhere to national best practices, and meet University standards for Learning Abroad. A periodic review of all Programs is conducted to verify they continue to meet these requirements.

If a program either struggles to make or does not meet approval requirements, faculty can work with Learning Abroad to address concerns and work through an improvement plan. If a Program fails to run for two consecutive years, Learning Abroad can require that the faculty submit a new proposal.

## **Academics**

### **Curriculum Integration and Course Selection**

In determining what courses you would like to offer, departments are strongly encouraged to implement a curriculum integration approach to programming. The most successful programs are integrated directly into the curriculum of the sponsoring department. Another option is to offer courses that fulfill general education requirements. This provides an incentive for students outside of your department to consider participating in the program. When selecting courses, consider the advantages and opportunities of teaching and learning in the host country. Be sure to offer courses that take advantage of possible field trips, local culture, and expertise within the host country.

### **Developing a Syllabus**

Teaching on a Learning Abroad Program is different from teaching on campus. For that reason, we strongly encourage faculty to think very strategically about their syllabi. Any aspect of the program you intend to factor into the final grade should be included in the syllabus. This includes participation expectations, field trips, and guest speakers. Keep in mind that many students have never been on a class field trip, not to mention a Learning Abroad Program, and will benefit from clear expectations.

## Number of Credits

Be sure to design the Program so that students can meet the [minimum credit requirement for financial aid and scholarships](#). In general, the following guidelines for undergraduate students will support this:

- Fall/Spring Semester Programs: 12 credits
- Spring Break, Fall Break, Winter Break Programs: 3 credits\*
- Summer Programs: 6 credits

***\*Based on assumption students will take other classes during the semester***

## Textbooks and Canvas

Order textbooks and prepare class outlines/handouts through your department, just as you do for on-campus courses. Advise students about textbooks and other materials to be purchased before departure. If you will distribute course materials on-site, ensure that the cost of these materials is covered in the Program fee. Faculty can also use Canvas as an online platform for electronic course materials and other course activities.

## Non-billable Academic Expenses

If there are costs associated with the academic portion of the program that are not included in the billable program cost, we strongly encourage you to incorporate these costs into the non-billable costs listed in the Program Cost Sheet. Examples of these expenses include:

- Fees for internet access that is required for classwork but is not included in the billable program cost
- Transportation costs that are not included in the billable program cost, but are required for field trips or assignments

## International Requirement

All students who earn a minimum of 3 credits and receive a C- or better on an approved Learning Abroad Program satisfy the International Requirement.

## Creating Learning Abroad Course Sections

Learning Abroad Courses are designated with the 084-089 section number. For example, FILM 2500-084 denotes in CLSS that it is a Learning Abroad course and eligible for discounted tuition rates. All Learning Abroad courses are suppressed from the course catalog so that only students accepted into the program can enroll.

Faculty and the sponsoring department confirm course and credit information and provide it to Learning Abroad. This typically occurs 9-12 months before the Program term and before applications are open. Once the course(s) has been identified, Learning Abroad will create the course(s) in CLSS. Course section creation deadlines follow the [standard scheduling deadlines](#) as identified by the Office of the Registrar. In order to create your course section, you will need the following information:

- Course Name
- Course Code

- Course Number
- Number of credits
- Instructor of record
- Capacity

## **Course Registration**

Students register for Learning Abroad courses through CIS. Learning Abroad provides enrollment instructions to students after they have committed to their program. Students need to use the SIS ID# provided in their course registration instructions to enroll in the appropriate courses by the stated deadline.

## **Instructor of Record & Submitting Grades**

All Faculty-led Programs earn University of Utah credit. As such, the Faculty Director coordinating the program typically serves as the instructor of record. At the end of the program, you must submit course grades using the regular University system and adhere to University timelines and policies. A delay in grading can have severe impacts on your students. It can delay graduations and even cancel their eligibility for financial aid and scholarships.

## **Minimum Credits**

All learning abroad programs are credit-bearing. All participants are required to enroll in the courses associated with the program. Minimum credits are established on a Program by Program basis. Programs must meet the required course contact hours to satisfy the credits earned by students.

## **Monitoring Class Rosters**

It is very important that Faculty Directors check their class roster to ensure that students have registered for the appropriate courses. Before departure, check the list to make sure that only students who have been accepted into your program are enrolled. Your Learning Abroad Coordinator will also verify course enrollment for program participants. Notify your Coordinator if you or your students have any enrollment problems.

## **Intercultural Learning & Competence**

A common myth about Learning Abroad is that students will informally gain intercultural competence. Research shows that intercultural learning is most effective when it is formally integrated into program courses (Almeida, Fantini, Simões, & Costa, 2016; Anderson, 2016; Berg, 2009; Lou & Bosley, 2012; Spenader & Retka, 2015; Stoner et al., 2014; Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, & Paige, Fall 2009; Vande Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012)\*. This is best achieved when [active](#), [experiential](#), [authentic](#), or [targeted intervention](#) pedagogies and assessment are integrated into Program courses. Reflection activities throughout the program are also linked to successful intercultural learning.

## **Transferable Skills**

Students are very focused on the return on investment for Learning Abroad Programs. To help students integrate their experiences abroad into their academic, professional, and personal goals here on campus, Learning Abroad developed the [Global U Program](#). The Global U Program awards micro-credentials and all Programs are encouraged to participate.

## **Addressing Behavioral Problems**

Most students are well behaved before and during the Program. However, there are instances in which behavioral issues disrupt Program activities and preparations. As a Faculty Director, you will have both an academic and a disciplinary role with students. You are responsible for supervising students and monitoring behavior during official Program activities. You also play a crucial role in preparing students for the experience and ensuring that they meet pre-departure expectations.

To appropriately address behavioral issues, a comprehensive and coordinated approach is necessary to protect the student, the group, and the University. It is important to recognize that Programs are an extension of our on-campus community. As such, behavioral issues are not isolated to the Program. They may manifest themselves before departure and there may be on-campus repercussions after a Program ends as well. Failing to report a behavioral issue could create problems in the future.

## **Learning Abroad Student Conduct Policy**

Faculty Directors should familiarize themselves with the [Student Conduct](#) policies in the Learning Abroad Handbook. These policies are designed specifically to guide students and being familiar with them will empower you to address difficult situations with confidence. When students commit to the Program they agree to adhering to the University's Code of Conduct.

## **Preventing Behavioral Issues**

We recommend building a strong, positive group dynamic during pre-departure orientation and reaffirming it throughout the duration of the Program. While not all behavioral issues can be prevented, establishing participation expectations and setting standards during pre-departure puts students in a position to succeed while abroad. Moreover, it provides opportunities for you to get to know your students before you are abroad. Some faculty find it helpful to create expectation agreements for the group during pre-departure that is agreed upon by the group. While not official policy, it can be a positive team building approach.

We recommend Faculty Directors be proactive and open about their concerns. If there's a problem, address it with the student. If you let a student know that you're concerned about their behavior, they typically modify their behavior voluntarily. It is also important to address behavior during free time that impacts official Program activities. If a student's choices during free time impact the group or the student's participation in Program activities, reach out to them and talk about the situation.

We recommend creating an itinerary that gives students some time to explore, but generally keeps them busy throughout the Program. Creating a list of free or inexpensive suggestions for free time encourages a constructive use of personal time that may reduce problems.

## **Culture Shock**

Culture shock can have a dramatic effect on a student's behavior. As culture shock impacts behavior, it can also create health and safety issues. The excitement of the new environment may make students feel invincible, or, as they become more familiar with the host country, they may become complacent about safety. In either case, culture shock can impact a student's decision-making abilities. If not addressed, it can create safety and health hazards for individuals, the group, and the local community.

Remember that students may not recognize culture shock, and you may need to help them identify the problem and brainstorm solutions. Information on culture shock, preparing for culture shock, and coping strategies can be found in the student's application.

## **Dismissing a Student Before or During Your Program**

Learning Abroad Programs are an extension of on-campus programming. As a result, any disciplinary actions taken against a student must align with University policy and protocol. With the assistance of University Counsel and the Dean of Students Office, we have developed a 3-step process for addressing behavioral issues before and during Programs. A team effort between Faculty Directors, the Dean of Students Office, Learning Abroad, the Office for Global Engagement, other campus offices, and onsite partners (if appropriate) is needed to implement these protocols. This process is outlined for students in the [Learning Abroad Handbook](#) and includes:

- Step 1: Verbal Warning
- Step 2: Written Warning
- Step 3: Dismissal

The process can be implemented before or during a Program. Depending on the severity of the incident, steps may be skipped leading to immediate dismissal. To initiate each step, contact your Learning Abroad Coordinator. We will implement the process in accordance with University protocols.

## **Dismissing a Student While Abroad**

When a student is dismissed from a Program, it affects the group. In some cases, the group may be relieved. If the dismissed student caused problems for the group or made others feel uncomfortable, the group dynamic may actually improve. Alternatively, the group may experience stress as a result of the situation. Faculty Directors may need to talk with the group about the situation. Talking points are available to help you with this conversation. Contact your Learning Abroad Coordinator for a copy. The dismissed student has a right to privacy and the group is not privy to details on the situation.

## **Risk Management**

As an institution, we are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to mitigate risk, promote participant health and safety, and provide a positive learning experience for our students. Despite our preparations, incidents involving health and safety occur. When these situations arise, they affect individuals, groups, the local community abroad, and our communities here in Utah.

In fact, risk management for learning abroad programs has become a major focus for U.S. colleges and universities. A national movement has urged universities to ensure that certain infrastructure and training mechanisms are in place to protect students, faculty, and staff. The Office for Global Engagement and Learning Abroad have developed a risk management workshop that provides training on best practices, on-site emergency response, and resources in the event of an emergency. All faculty are required to participate in this workshop. Information includes

- CISI international insurance coverage, benefits, and AXA assistance
- Incident reporting and communication
- Student Code of Conduct
- Learning Abroad Disciplinary Protocols
- Health Clearance Forms & Travel Health Questionnaire
- University OEO/Title IX requirements for responding to student sexual assault incidents and allegations
- University Clery Act crime reporting requirements
- Student personal information sharing (FERPA)
- Global Incident Management Team
- Emergency protocols

## **Mitigation & Prevention**

Mitigation and prevention should be used to lessen the chance of an incident occurring and the severity of the incident if it were to occur. If an incident were to occur, advanced planning, monitoring of events, and being familiar with the resources available both in your host country and at the University of Utah will enable you to quickly gather information, make decisions, and respond to issues more appropriately. The following elements are part of the University's risk mitigation and prevention process:

- Safety, security, and health assessments
- Pre-departure / onsite orientations
- Monitoring conditions in the host country
- Creating an onsite emergency plan
- International medical and security evacuation insurance
- Faculty and Program Assistant Training
- Learning Abroad, Office of Global Engagement, and U of U policies
- 24/7 emergency phone number
- Required onsite emergency contact information
- Reviewing application information
- AlertTraveler

## **Security, Safety, and Health Assessments**

As part of the proposal process, Learning Abroad conducts an International Program Safety & Security Assessment (IPSSA). An IPSSA assesses your program in light of local conditions, program activities, itinerary, logistics, and resources including:

- Public Transportation System & Traffic
- Crime / Kidnapping / Civil Unrest
- Natural Disasters & Emergency Response Teams
- State Department Travel Warnings & Alerts
- Government Structures
- Terrorism / Geopolitics
- Public Safety Services
- Common Illnesses/Diseases
- Resources for Travelers with Pre-existing Conditions
- Immunizations
- Access to Health Care
- Food / Water Quality
- Host Country Coordinators
- Program Activities
- Communication Infrastructure

This assessment is conducted by Learning Abroad and the Faculty Director and generates recommendations for mitigating risk. Faculty directors are required to adhere to these recommendations.

## **Pre-Departure Student Orientations**

Faculty Directors should start thinking about health and safety while planning their pre-departure and on-site orientations. Learning Abroad provides an online pre-departure orientation to all program participants. Integrated into the student's post-decision steps in their Learning Abroad application, topics surrounding health and safety are discussed with students. We provide links to U.S. Department of State resources, CDC, CISI insurance, AlertTraveler, and other resources. Our office gives students tips for staying safe and also provides information about what to do in the event of an emergency.

To help Faculty Directors prepare for pre-departure orientation meetings, we have created a digital presentation with talking points that you can use to discuss risk, health, and safety on your program. When you and your Learning Abroad coordinator meet with your group before departure, take the time to go over both general and country-specific talking points. Students who are aware of the risks are more likely to make better, safer decisions on-site. Upon arriving in the host country, Faculty Directors deliver an on-site orientation, which includes a risk management, health, and safety refresher.



## Monitoring Conditions in the Host Country

The more you know about the conditions in your host country, the more effective you will be at mitigating risk. Be aware of any outbreaks of illness, political events, and possible natural disasters. If you identify a potential issue, contact Learning Abroad to discuss ways that we can mitigate risk during the program.

We also recommend that all Faculty Directors register in the State Department's [STEP](#) program. By registering for the program, you can elect to automatically receive Embassy and Consulate notices for your host country.

## Creating an Emergency Plan

All Faculty Directors should create an emergency plan for their program, which will reduce confusion during an incident. At a minimum, the plan should include:

- Emergency meeting points
- A communication plan
- An alternative group leader

Begin by establishing emergency meeting points for your program. Each program should identify at least two emergency meeting points. Examples of meeting points include:

- Student housing facilities (not necessarily appropriate for homestays)
- Public library
- Church
- Museum
- Classroom facility

When establishing a meeting point, make sure that the location is safe after dark and also has an outdoor space for after-hours emergencies. Also remember that public transportation may not be available during an emergency. These locations should be accessible without public transportation.

Next, establish a communication plan. Faculty members are required to provide students with their local cell phone number before departure. Remember that communication systems may be down in the event of an emergency. Talk about alternatives to phone and internet communication. If an incident has attracted media attention, you should expect to hear from parents and family members. Be prepared to coordinate responses with Learning Abroad.

Finally, you should also identify an alternative leader in the event that you are incapacitated. If you have a Program Assistant or Co-Director, one of these individuals should serve in this role. You could also identify an on-site support person to assist during an emergency. If you need to activate your emergency plan, contact Learning Abroad and the Office for Global Engagement at [globalriskmanager@utah.edu](mailto:globalriskmanager@utah.edu) as soon as possible. We can begin taking steps here in the US to help you navigate a continued response.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

All Faculty Directors are required to have a cell phone onsite. This phone must meet the following criteria:

- The number must be distributed to all group members for emergency use
- You must be able to use the phone in the host country
- The number must be provided to Learning Abroad
- The phone must be able to make and receive international phone calls
- In some destinations, you may be required to provide a satellite phone.

There are many ways to obtain cell service abroad. Options for International Cell Phones:

- Find your own provider through on-site contacts or online
- Add international service to your personal cell phone for the times and locations that you are abroad
- Rent or purchase a phone upon arrival

Learning Abroad can include funds for business-related calls in the program budget. Personal calls made on the phone will be the responsibility of the Faculty Director. Details on submitting program emergency contact information are found in your Facilitator Application.

## **International Medical and Security Evacuation Insurance**

The U's CISI international insurance policy is a key component of risk mitigation and prevention. Full details are found on the [Office for Global Engagement's website](#). All Faculty Directors and Facilitators will be enrolled and will receive an email. You will then be able to log into myCISI portal to access the policy, insurance card, claim forms and other resources. We highly recommend downloading the CISI app for ease of convenience.

In order to receive support from CISI (emergency or non-emergency), a case needs to be opened. Many travelers do not open up cases when seeking treatment for common ailments. Unless CISI has already made special payment arrangements at a clinic in the program location, you will be required to pay for visits out-of-pocket and then request reimbursement.

If your program visits locations where the quality of health care varies, consider contacting CISI in advance to identify clinics that can treat your students in an emergency. We recommend that you review all CISI information before departure and have it readily available.

If you have dependents traveling with you, they are encouraged to purchase a CISI policy or be added to your policy as dependents. Faculty Directors and Facilitators are responsible for enrolling dependents. Insurance costs for dependents are different than they are for students and facilitators.

Contact [globalriskmanager@utah.edu](mailto:globalriskmanager@utah.edu) for more information about the CISI insurance policy.

## **Mental Health**

Most students with mental health conditions successfully learn abroad without incident, but Faculty Directors should be sensitive to the unique aspects of these conditions. In addition, new mental health issues can arise due to the stress of learning abroad or existing conditions can be exacerbated.

We encourage all students to disclose pre-existing health conditions in their Travel Health Questionnaire. This includes mental and emotional health conditions. Due to cultural stigmas associated with mental and emotional health conditions, it is not uncommon for students to exclude this information from their health form. For that reason, it is important that you establish a high level of rapport with your students before departure.

If you have concerns with a student after arriving on site, and you believe that there may be a mental health condition involved, do not independently diagnose the student. Focus on addressing the specific behaviors that are disruptive and how those behaviors impact the learning environment. Speak to the student about your concerns in private. Be sure to listen carefully and show concern.

Students have access to virtual counseling services through the U and our CISI policy. Referral to an on-site counselor through CISI may be possible. If you consider the situation to be an emergency, call the local emergency services and stay with the student.

## **Transportation and Vehicle Safety**

Traffic accidents are one of the leading causes of injury to travelers abroad. The University does not recommend that any faculty, staff, or students drive abroad. Many of the risks of driving in the United States are exacerbated abroad through poor road conditions, different laws, unique traffic patterns, and unsafe vehicle standards. The risk of accidents increases substantially after dark. Plan your program itinerary and budget so that groups do not travel after dark when possible. The [World Health Organization](#) and the [Center for Disease Control](#) maintain records and statistics on traffic accidents abroad. A country profile is also available. We strongly encourage you to be familiar with the information about your host country and talk with students about transportation safety in onsite orientation.

If group travel is to be conducted, travel should be through a reputable company that has a record of good performance. Service contracts need to be in place for organized travel as a part of the official program. Learning Abroad can assist you in finding transportation companies, which is commonly coordinated by Affiliates.

Faculty Directors should ensure that any transportation providers in the host country have insurance. Always request a vehicle with seatbelts. We recommend that you map out your routes in advance to avoid delays and/or ensure that road conditions are adequate. Do not agree to take side trips that are unplanned or into

areas that you are unfamiliar with. Drivers should be instructed not to pick up additional riders and all passengers should wear seatbelts if they are available.

## **Emergency Coordination**

### **Emergency Response**

When an emergency occurs, it is important to respond effectively. Emergency response for Learning Abroad programs is multi-layered. Your onsite response is often determined by the immediate needs of students and the conditions in the host country. Remember to:

- Remain calm
- Evaluate the situation
- Account for all participants
- Contact emergency numbers
- Follow protocols

In an emergency, your first responsibility is to ensure the safety of program participants. If your group was not together at the time of the incident, make sure that you can account for all of your students and confirm they are safe. If a student needs immediate medical attention, contact emergency services and seek out the nearest health care facility. Then contact CISI who can help coordinate the necessary arrangements including the payment of fees on behalf of the student. Contact Learning Abroad to report the incident so we can coordinate accordingly. .

Unless you are legally licensed to provide medical care, you are not authorized to provide medical treatment or administer medication to students while abroad.

To ensure that we are able to locate you and your group throughout the program, all Faculty Directors and Facilitators are required to submit on-site emergency contact information for their program during the proposal process and in their Facilitator application. This includes:

Program dates plus countries to be visited during program

Cell phone number

Name, address, and phone number of the hotel, hostel, or residence hall in which faculty and students stay. Each phone number should include the 011 international dialing code and the country code.

### **24/7 Emergency Phone Number**

In cases of emergencies abroad, Faculty Directors should contact the local emergency services number in their host country (International 911 Numbers) for immediate support.

Individuals on University-related travel who require additional assistance abroad should contact the University international assistance provider (CISI/Team-Assist) at +1 312 935 1703 or (855) 327-1411 (or via email [medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us](mailto:medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us) or the

MyCISI app). CISI/Team-Assist accepts collect calls and is available 24/7 to assist with overseas medical or security emergencies.

A student's first point of contact in the event of an emergency should be local emergency services, then work with CISI/Team-Assist, the faculty director, or other onsite personnel. You can reach Learning Abroad and the Office for Global Engagement by calling:

**+1-801-585-2677**

This is a 24/7 emergency number where you will first be connected with University Police. Calls will then be redirected to the Senior International Officer in the Office for Global Engagement.

Learning Abroad provides digital emergency cards to Faculty Directors and students. We recommend that you keep these cards with you at all times.

## **Emergency Email**

In the event of emergency or incident abroad, contact the following email addresses at the University of Utah:

- [globalriskmanager@utah.edu](mailto:globalriskmanager@utah.edu) (main inbox for risk management)
- [randy.mccrillis@utah.edu](mailto:randy.mccrillis@utah.edu) (Senior International Officer)
- [rick.batchelor@utah.edu](mailto:rick.batchelor@utah.edu) (Director, Learning Abroad)

## **Communication During an Emergency**

Clear, consistent communication can mean the difference between satisfactorily resolving an issue and unnecessary problems during a Learning Abroad Program. While an emergency might seem localized when it is occurring, news of an event can spread quickly, and crises abroad often impact many offices on campus as well. If there is an emergency abroad, follow protocols and ensure you contact 801-585-2677 and [globalriskmanager@utah.edu](mailto:globalriskmanager@utah.edu).

When communicating with family members during an emergency, remember that all students are protected by FERPA and HIPAA. We cannot disclose protected information to anyone other than the emergency contacts listed in a student's application. Also remember that we are required to protect a student's information from other program participants, the press, and others who might inquire about the situation. Follow-up communication between our office and Faculty Directors will occur primarily via email. Therefore, it is critical to check Umail for updates and instructions.

## **University of Utah Coordination**

When you contact Learning Abroad and the Office for Global Engagement, we will begin coordinating with other University offices. This includes the U Public Safety, Risk Management, Disability Services Center, the President's Office, University Counsel, the Dean of Students, the Counseling Center, Marketing and Communications, and many more. Be aware that you may need to coordinate action

steps with your onsite partners, medical facilities, and the Embassy. Be sure to keep Learning Abroad informed about the status of the situation so that we can effectively coordinate a response.

## **Evacuations**

In the unlikely case of an evacuation, we will work closely with you and CISI to communicate a plan. All evacuations must be coordinated by CISI.

## **Evaluation**

While it is tempting to put an emergency behind you when you return to campus, appropriate follow up is very important. Evaluating the situation will enable us to learn from your experience. It will also ensure that we provide the appropriate support services to students affected by the incident and follow up on any disciplinary actions. Learning Abroad will contact you to schedule a follow up meeting to document with an official Incident Report.

## **Finances**

As a way of providing support to programs, Learning Abroad oversees the financial processes and guidelines so they align with University policy and processes. It is important that Faculty Directors understand the financial aspects of their program, as they are responsible for in-country expenses and for adhering to the set budget.

At times, Facilitators may be responsible for program expenses. All expenditures (except emergencies) must be accounted for in the program budget before departure. Any revisions made after arrival should be approved by the Associate Director of Learning Abroad. Funds spent without prior authorization may not be eligible for reimbursement.

Information about what is and is not included in the program is available to the public in the Cost Sheets.

## **Creating a Budget & Minimum Enrollments**

Budgets development is a collaborative effort between Learning Abroad and the Faculty Director. Each budget is unique, but there are some line items included in every budget. For this reason, Learning Abroad and the Faculty Director work closely to keep the overall cost of each program as low as possible.

Learning Abroad will work with the Faculty Director and all in-country providers to calculate costs and post a budget 2-3 months before the application deadline. Although not anticipated, program costs may change due to fluctuation in currency exchange rates, tuition increases, contracted agencies, or number of participants. Learning Abroad will work with the Faculty Director to set the program fee based on a minimum number of students. Once set and published in the budget sheet, these fees do not fluctuate, unless there are extraordinary circumstances.

An important element of budget development is the minimum enrollment requirement. These requirements are intended to control Billable Program Costs for students, ensure that programs are sustainable, and promote good stewardship in program budgets. A good rule of thumb is that programs enroll 12 students; however, the actual minimum enrollment depends on the program.

## **Billable and Non-billable Costs**

The Cost Sheets that are posted on the program brochure are divided into two categories: Billable Costs and Non-Billable Costs. Combined, billable and non-billable costs provide students with an estimate of the total cost of participation.

Billable Costs are paid directly to the University of Utah by the student. Billable costs for Faculty-led programs typically include:

- Lodging for students
- In-country transportation costs
- Payment to host institution or other third party for excursions, classroom space, etc.
- Faculty Directors and Facilitator expenses (airfare, housing, and per diem, if applicable)
- Compensation
- Student credit hour fees/tuition
- Transaction fees

Non-billable Costs are paid by the student to other entities. Examples of non-billable costs include immunizations, passport, visa costs, books, and flights.

The Billable and Non-billable Costs are determined by Learning Abroad and the Faculty Director. Budgets are approved by Learning Abroad's Finance Manager, Associate Director, and relevant Department Chair. Final billable costs are based on the number of committed applicants after the application deadline.

## **Timelines for Creating Budgets**

Learning Abroad has specific timelines for creating program budgets. We will contact you several months in advance of the Program application deadline to develop your budget. The first step is to set the public budget (Cost Sheet) on the brochure so that students have an accurate expectation and can plan ahead. This happens according to the following timeline:

### **Public Budgets**

- Fall, Fall Break: May 1
- Spring, Spring Break: October 1
- Summer: December 1

After the program application deadline, we will determine the final number of committed students. Learning Abroad and Faculty Directors will then finalize the budget based on the number of committed students. This will be completed after

the 100% Withdrawal & Penalties Process Deadline for the relevant term and according to the following timeline:

### **Final Budgets**

- Fall, Fall Break: June 16
- Spring, Spring Break: November 16
- Summer: March 2

The final budget might be lower than the original public budget if we exceed the established minimum enrollment. Final budgets cannot be higher than the original public budgets.

### **Student Credit Hour Fee (SCH)**

In an effort to increase the number of U of U students participating in Learning Abroad, the University offers reduced tuition for Faculty-led programs. In lieu of regular tuition, students participating pay a reduced Student Credit Hour Fee (SCH). Students pay \$45 per credit hour for undergraduate courses, \$60 per credit hour for graduate courses, and \$70 per credit hour for medical courses. This revenue is charged to students' University of Utah Tuition Accounts when they enroll in the program course(s). In addition to the reduced SCH fee paid by students, Central Administration contributes an additional \$25 per credit hour per student to departments sponsoring Faculty-led programs. After the tuition due date, these funds are combined and transferred to the academic department through the University's regular SCH distribution system.

### **Learning Abroad Compensation**

Determining total compensation for a Learning Abroad Faculty-led program is a collaborative process between Learning Abroad, the Faculty Director, and the home department. We work together to set compensation, which takes into consideration several factors including, but not limited to, teaching on-load, teaching overload, and how program instruction is structured. All faculty are eligible to receive per diem. Expenses such as transportation, housing, phone, and international health insurance are included in the program budget. Total compensation will be determined during the program proposal process.

In most scenarios, Learning Abroad manages the funds for a given program. In these situations, Learning Abroad will transfer the predetermined compensation to the home department 1-3 months after the program end date. The home department will then manage the disbursement of funds and coordinate processes. If a program has more than one Facilitator, compensation will be divided evenly among them. Program Assistants, Volunteers, Observers, and Administrators generally do not receive compensation.

IRS regulations consider Faculty Directors, Program Assistants, and Administrators to be employees of the University. As such, these individuals should work with their departments to ensure that an ePAF is completed and tax documentation is



collected for any compensation received. Per diem and program operation expenses are not considered taxable compensation.

## **Other Considerations for SCH and Compensation**

Learning Abroad compensation and SCH are not necessarily sent to the same department. For example, if the Faculty Director is from the Anthropology department but academic credit for the program is through the Communication department, the SCH would go to the Communication Department and the Learning Abroad compensation would go to the Anthropology Department.

A department or college may choose to identify other mechanisms for supporting Faculty Directors and Facilitators for their contributions to Learning Abroad Programs.

## **Per Diem**

Per diem is available for Faculty Directors leading Learning Abroad Programs. Per diem is paid in lieu of reimbursements for actual expenses and eliminates the need to keep receipts for meals and incidentals. If you are submitting receipts for group dinners that include yourself, you cannot collect per diem and be reimbursed for the group meal. Additionally, the University will calculate prorated per diem for travel days.

Per diem must be factored into the Program budget. Keep in mind that the cost of per diem is passed directly on to your students, and that setting a high per diem rate could jeopardize your Program as the cost to students increases. The University uses the [U.S. Department of State rates](#) as maximum rates for per diem, but these rates are designed for individuals participating in diplomatic activities and traveling Heads of State. For that reason, most Faculty Directors agree to lower per diem rates to make their program more affordable for students. When you develop your budget, we will make a recommendation for your per diem rate based on our experience with program travel and your destination.

Spouses or dependents traveling with Faculty Directors, who are not officially employed by the program, are not eligible for per diem.

## **Setting Exchange Rates**

As part of the budgeting process for your program, the University will set the exchange rate. This ensures that all programs within a given currency are paying equal rates for service. The University uses a conservative exchange rate when calculating Billable and Non-billable Costs. This protects the University from deficits caused by unforeseen exchange rate fluctuations.

## **Purchasing Alcohol**

All Learning Abroad Program funds are considered state funds. According to [University Rule 3-100E: Restricted Purchases and Special Procurement](#), alcoholic beverages may not be purchased with these funds. You will not be reimbursed by the University for any alcohol purchased while abroad.

## **Departmental Subsidies & Scholarships**

Departments have the option of subsidizing Learning Abroad Programs. Subsidies are divided among all students participating in the program or can be used to offset a shared program cost. Subsidies cannot be directed to a specific student. To include a subsidy in your program budget, Learning Abroad will request confirmation from your department verifying the amount of funding for the subsidy.

Some departments also choose to provide scholarships for learning abroad. Learning Abroad does not disburse other department's funds. Scholarships need to be coordinated and disbursed through the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid. Additionally, Program funds cannot be given to a student as a scholarship.

## **Honoraria**

The University has specific policies governing honoraria. An honorarium is defined as a payment made on a special and non-routine basis to an individual who is not an employee of the University. The payment recognizes outstanding achievement, demonstrates respect or esteem for the individual's status or position, or acknowledges the contribution of gratuitous services to the University. Honoraria must meet University requirements, be included in your program budget, and go through the appropriate processes for procurement and taxation. Details on these requirements and procedures can be found [here](#). Honoraria do not include prizes and awards to University personnel (e.g., distinguished teaching or research awards, etc.).

## **Program Cancellations**

On occasion we must cancel a Learning Abroad Program due to failure to reach the minimum enrollment or other factors. All Faculty-led programs must be financially solvent to operate.

Program enrollment is reviewed after the application deadline and after students are required to commit. At that point, Learning Abroad will determine if the program is solvent. If the program is severely under-enrolled or would require a significant price increase to students, the program will be cancelled in consultation with the Faculty Director.

Learning Abroad Departmental compensation and SCH are only available if the program runs. If the program is cancelled for any reason, there will be no resources with which to compensate departments or provide SCH.

## **Learning Abroad Withdrawal & Dismissal Penalty Policy**

Learning Abroad has a very transparent withdrawal and dismissal penalty policy that students agree to in their application. If a student contacts you and requests to withdraw from the Program, refer the student to your Learning Abroad Coordinator and the [Withdrawal and Dismissal Penalties page](#). Our staff will provide the student with the appropriate action steps. Until the student completes the

necessary steps, they will continue to incur withdrawal & dismissal penalties. Notifying a Faculty Director is not sufficient to withdraw from a program.

## **Paying Bills before Departure**

Learning Abroad provides assistance to Faculty Directors for making payments. Typically, the more expenses that we can pay in advance, the smaller the cash advance you will have to manage onsite. During the budget process, we will arrange to pay any invoices prior to departure. We will arrange for wire transfers, [TCard](#) payments, or checks. We require an itemized invoice to make advance payments. We recommend that you keep copies of these payments so that you have a record of any advance payments when you arrive onsite.

In rare situations do we pay for services in cash. In these situations, confirmation by the department chair or dean that a cash payment is acceptable may be required. An itemized, detailed receipt of services performed will be required and failure to procure a receipt may prevent reimbursement.

## **Cash Advances**

During the budget process, we will calculate a travel advance. Cash advance is typically disbursed 4 weeks before departure. Learning Abroad will coordinate your cash advance with the University Travel Office. Faculty Directors are eligible for a cash advance after they have completed the Facilitator Application in Terra Dotta. If you would like to have your cash advance via direct deposit, please complete this [online form](#) for Accounts Payables, otherwise, your cash advance will be issued via check mailed to your office address.

Be aware that there are restrictions on how much cash can be carried into a foreign country. Many countries require travelers to pay taxes if they are entering a country with an excess of \$10,000 in cash. Keep this in mind as you determine how different expenses will be paid for your program.

## **Receipts and Reconciliation**

Faculty Directors and Facilitators should keep detailed records of itemized expenses and collect receipts for reimbursement purposes in order to submit an expense report in SAP Concur. SAP Concur is the University's travel booking, reconciliation, and reimbursement system. The system can be used to search and reserve air, car and/or hotel for university business travel.

All Faculty Directors and Facilitators must submit receipts for cash advance reconciliation within 30 days after the program ends or within 90 days for all other receipts. If any cash advance is unused, write a check made out to the University of Utah and provide it to the Learning Abroad Finance Manager within 30 days of return. If the budget is not reconciled within that time frame, we won't be able to submit your expense report, you will not receive reimbursement if needed, and you will receive emails from the University Travel Office reminding you to submit your report. If the budget is not reconciled within 30 days after the program ends, the University has the right to garnish your wages

Your program's reconciliation will start as soon as you input your receipts into Concur. Receipts must be submitted for all program expenses except per diem purchases (personal meals and incidentals). This includes housing, transportation, exchange rates, and entrance fees. TCard purchases can be directly allocated to Concur.

For most expenses, you will be able to obtain a receipt. Learning Abroad can provide Faculty Directors and Facilitators with a receipt book for instances in which it is difficult to obtain a receipt. SAP Concur has a phone app you can download and take instant pictures of your receipts. This automatically adds the receipts to your Available Expenses in Concur, making it easier to submit receipts after your program ends. We also recommend keeping a log or spreadsheet with the following information for each transaction:

- The date that the expense was incurred
- The activity or purpose
- The recipient of the funds
- The amount of the expense
- The method of payment

Your program budget will also contain a tab to help you track expenses, which will compare and track against the final set budget line items. In order to reconcile your budget, you also need documentation verifying the exchange rate that you receive when you exchange your travel advance funds for foreign currency. Concur also provides daily exchange rate information. If your program has multiple currencies, you will need documentation for each currency.

For more information on University policies regarding travel receipts, review the information on the [Travel Office](#) website.

## **Surplus Funds**

Occasionally, there is a surplus of funds at the end of the program. If there are surplus funds at the end of your program, this money cannot be refunded to the students and must be returned to the University. This is due to the fact that refunds could negatively impact a student's financial aid and scholarships. Additionally, as a state institution, any funds paid to the University become state funds, which are subject to a variety of laws and regulations.

## **Accessing Program Funds while Abroad**

We recommend that you carry your funds in a variety of forms. TCards and cash (as a part of your predetermined cash advance) are the recommended methods for paying for Program expenses.

In some locations, particularly developing countries, U.S. dollars may be the most readily acceptable form of payment; however, theft becomes a greater risk when you have large sums of cash. If you are interested in having local currency before

departure, check with your bank. Some currencies may be readily available, but others will need to be ordered.

Most Program leaders utilize ATMs on site. ATMs can provide ready access to local currency and are drawn from your own account. There are limitations to using ATMs. Most ATMs have a daily withdrawal limit, and you may need to withdraw large sums to cover program expenses. Before departure, ask your bank to increase your daily withdrawal limit. Be sure to ask about any restrictions on the increased limit. Also, check with your bank about service fees and accessibility.

Using personal credit cards is an option, but should be used with caution. Faculty Directors are not eligible to receive reimbursement for any accrued interest on their personal credit card for program related expenses. Visa and MasterCard are commonly accepted abroad; Discover and American Express are more problematic.

## **Student Financial Emergencies**

Occasionally students experience financial emergencies during their program. Do not loan students program or personal funds unless it is an extreme emergency. If you have a student experiencing problems, consider the following solutions first:

- Have family deposit funds into the student's account so that the student can access the funds through an ATM
- Have family send a foreign draft by express mail
- Arrange for someone to send a bank wire or transfer
- Have family send a transfer through American Express or Western Union
- Contact the student's credit card company for support (many provide emergency cash advances and card replacement)
- Contact Learning Abroad to see if our insurance policy can provide emergency funds
- Contact the US. Embassy's Consular Affairs Officer. They may have resources or loan options that can help the student.

## **Marketing & Recruitment**

Marketing and recruitment is an essential component of a successful Learning Abroad program. While it can be challenging, an effective recruitment effort will lay the groundwork for a successful program. Marketing and recruitment is a joint responsibility between the Faculty Director and Learning Abroad. A program is more likely to be successful with a Faculty Director who is highly engaged in recruitment.

You should begin marketing your program at least 9-12 months in advance. We recommend that you learn about and take advantage of the recruitment, publicity, curriculum, and administrative practices of your department's or college's programs. You may be able to duplicate the successful efforts of other program offerings in your College or Department.

It is essential that you consider implementing the following methods and activities for recruitment.

**Class Visits:** Once you've thought about your target audience, promote your program in targeted classes, including your own classes and others in the department. Share information about your program with colleagues who can make announcements in their own classes. These class visits can be short and can drive student traffic to the brochure and to information meetings.

**Information Meetings:** Host regular information meetings about your program. The purpose of these meetings is to introduce prospective students to your program. Timing is important for information meetings. Meetings scheduled before breaks, vacations, and [scholarship deadlines](#) are especially effective so that prospective students can discuss their options with family members.

**Learning Abroad Fair:** Learning Abroad hosts two fairs each year (usually in September and January). We typically reach over 500 potential participants through these events. Be sure to reserve a table and have your program represented. We strongly encourage you to invite former participants to assist you.

**Social Media:** Depending on your Department's use of social media, using various social media outlets can be an effective way of promoting your program and information meetings. Learning Abroad regularly uses Instagram to promote programs and events. Please contact your Learning Abroad Coordinator if you would like to utilize Learning Abroad's social media presence to promote your program.

**Academic Advisors:** Inform and work with academic advisers who work with your target student audience.

**Past Participants:** Involve students who have previously participated in the program, especially at information meetings and in classroom presentations. Prospective students are very interested in hearing another student's perspective. The testimony of past participants is one of the most effective marketing tools at your disposal.

**Creative Program Description:** Provide a catchy and comprehensive program description for the brochure. Highlight what makes your program unique from a student perspective. Keep in mind that students are typically most concerned about cost, return on investment or long-term value, uniqueness, and attractiveness of the program as it fits with their degree requirements, along with their personal, academic, and professional needs and interests.

**Photos:** You should use student centered photos when promoting your program. To post photos to your brochure, send images to your Learning Abroad Coordinator. If you have photos of prior participants, ensure you have permission to use their images.

**Program Flyer:** Learning Abroad develops a flyer for each program. The purpose of the flyer is to garner interest, highlight the most important points, and direct students to the brochure page, where they can find more details about the program. Contact us to request copies for your promotional events.

**Personal Contact:** Begin communicating with interested students as early as possible and continue encouraging their interest until the program application deadline has passed. Collect interested student information on interest lists. This way, you can send emails, or personally contact students who are likely to find the program interesting. Be available to advise and assist interested students who have questions about the program. Interest lists should include students' names and uNID.

**Special Events:** Promote your program at special events on campus, especially events sponsored by your college or department. Get involved in your college/department's Orientation Program to be sure your program is highlighted to incoming freshmen.

**Publications:** Make sure your program is featured in your college/department's communication and publications (e.g. newsletters and magazines).

**Promote Scholarships:** Cost is one of the largest obstacles for students to learn abroad. Learning Abroad awards \$400,000 annually in Office for Global Engagement scholarships. Encourage students to begin their financial planning early and apply for Learning Abroad scholarships.

**Canvas Events:** Create calendar events in your Canvas course pages to remind students about information meetings, the Learning Abroad Fair etc.

**Non-U of U Students:** Some programs can incorporate non-U of U students.

**U Asia Campus:** If your program dates align with the U Asia Campus academic calendar, including U Asia Campus students can be a great addition to your program.

## Program Assistants

A Program Assistant is any individual who volunteers their time to assist Faculty Directors with the administrative, financial, or academic tasks of running a Learning Abroad program. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Paid staff members
- Unpaid staff members
- Teaching assistants
- Graduate assistants
- Student leaders

A Program Assistant is engaged in the pre-departure stage of the program and travels with the group to the host country. Program Assistants typically contribute 50 hours of service before departure. In the host country, Program Assistants often contribute more than 40 hours per week.



Program Assistants face the same liability risks as Faculty Directors. In order to be covered by the University's [liability and indemnity insurance](#), a Program Assistant must be recognized as a program authority. For the purposes of Learning Abroad programs, Program Assistants are officially recognized when they complete all training, meet all eligibility requirements, and complete a Facilitator application.

Program Assistant expenses are often included in the program budget. Program Assistants often are not eligible for compensation.

## **Program Assistant Responsibilities**

The duties of a Program Assistant will vary by program. Never assign a task to a program Assistant unless you are confident that they have been trained to complete the task. They must also complete all relevant University training, including FERPA, before they begin working on the program. Sample duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

### **Pre-departure Responsibilities**

- Assist Faculty Directors in coordinating pre-departure or on-site orientation
- Represent the Program at the Learning Abroad Fair
- Monitor applications
- Coordinate classroom visits and info sessions
- Advise interested students

### **On-site Responsibilities**

- Group wakeup calls
- Pick up tickets for events and excursions
- Assist students having trouble with homesickness and culture shock
- Confirm reservations
- Identify how to get to classrooms, housing, and activities
- Contact guest speakers with details about the group, directions, and dates/times of class
- Go to classrooms early to make sure that tech equipment is set up
- Provide support in student housing

### **Academic Responsibilities (if serving as a Teaching Assistant)**

- Grade papers
- Give lectures
- Create, distribute, and collect assignments
- Develop learning activities
- Facilitate discussions
- Organize or facilitate activities in Canvas
- Provide tutoring or support study groups

### **Post-program Responsibilities**

- Coordinate a welcome home event for the group
- Collect outstanding assignments from students
- Submit a Concur expense report (if applicable)



### **Financial Responsibilities**

Faculty Directors should carefully consider whether or not a Program Assistant will be responsible for program funds and should discuss with their Learning Abroad Coordinator. For many Program Assistants, this is their first experience with business transactions. Despite the training provided, many Program Assistants fail to submit the required receipts. In these cases, the Program Assistant is required to reimburse the University for those expenses even if they are part of the program budget. If you choose to make your Program Assistant responsible for University funds, be sure to mentor them through the process of documenting expenses onsite.

### **Health and Safety Responsibilities**

Program Assistants leading and accompanying University of Utah students in international locations are recognized as University representatives in this role, and as such are responsible for working to create safe and healthy environments for students abroad. Program Assistants are also responsible for ensuring that all University of Utah students have adequate understanding of, and access to, local health and safety support and resources in their location. Program Assistants and Faculty Directors work to communicate student issues and incidents abroad to Learning Abroad and the Senior International Officer. They are a critical link to connecting students in international locations to support services available on the Salt Lake City University campus.

### **Eligibility**

Learning Abroad looks at each program individually and works with the Faculty Director to determine if a Program Assistant is required. Because the costs are built into the budget and passed on to students, we recommend that programs have a 1:14 Facilitator (Faculty Director, Program Assistant) to student ratio. The Faculty Director's home department or Learning Abroad can select Program Assistants. Learning Abroad staff can also step into the role of Program Assistant, as needed. All Program Assistants must meet the following criteria:

- Must be an active University of Utah graduate student or employee for 6 months before the program start date, during the program, and for 3 months after program end date.
- Be in good academic and disciplinary standing with the University (if applicable).
- Complete training requirements by the established deadlines.
- Does not create a [conflict of interest](#) or violate [nepotism](#) policies.

To ensure that all parties understand the financial arrangements of the program, all Program Assistants will be required to complete the following document:

**Travel Expenses Agreement:** Learning Abroad will provide a Travel Expenses Agreement for each Program Assistant. This outlines which travel expenses will be covered by the Program. Any expenses not outlined in the agreement are the responsibility of the Program Assistant.

## Conflicts of Interest

Program Assistants play an authoritative role in the program. They have access to FERPA and HIPAA-protected information of program participants and have the same legal responsibilities as Faculty Directors. By law, they are Campus Security Authorities and have both Title IX, and health and safety responsibilities to the program. This creates a power dynamic between the Program Assistant and student participants on the program. As a result, the following requirements mitigate common conflicts of interest that impact Program Assistants:

- Program Assistants cannot also be enrolled in the program as a student participant.
- Program Assistants serve in a supervisory capacity. As such, it is inappropriate for them to share housing facilities with students on the program.
- Program Assistants may not be in violation of University policies on [nepotism \(see Policy 5-105\)](#).
- If Program Assistants are employed by an organization or business that may profit from the program, contact Learning Abroad. The Program Assistant will need to go through the Conflict of Interest process in Academic Affairs.
- Learning Abroad strongly recommends that the Program Assistant is a University faculty or staff. Graduate students can be considered case-by-case. Faculty Directors should discuss with Learning Abroad for undergraduate students.

## Training Program Assistants

Training is a two-part effort. Learning Abroad provides mandatory training for Program Assistants. This includes financial expectations, student advising training, emergency preparedness and response, FERPA, etc. Training is provided online for all new program facilitators, including Program Assistants. Additional training is offered in person each semester.

Faculty Directors are responsible for training Program Assistants on program-specific duties and tasks. All Faculty Directors should expect to dedicate time to training the Program Assistant.

Program Assistants who do not complete their training commitments will be prohibited from participating on the program and will be obligated to return any travel advances that they receive. They are also responsible for reimbursing the University for any expenses incurred on their behalf.

## Program Logistics

### Onsite Logistics

The Faculty Director is responsible for coordinating program logistics. This includes:

- Schedule and coordinate excursions
- Identify and arrange for guest speakers or lecturers
- Onsite transportation reservations
- Making housing reservations
- Reserving classroom space
- Onsite transportation

The University recognizes that this can be a time consuming task. As such, we strongly encourage Faculty Directors to work with Learning Abroad to identify an Affiliate to coordinate these details.

### Program Dates

There are several factors to consider in selecting program dates. The average Faculty-led program lasts 3-4 weeks; however, some groups are onsite for as long as 8 weeks or even a full semester. Faculty Directors have flexibility in determining the length of their program, but be sure that your program is long enough to satisfy the contact hours required for the courses you are offering. Learning Abroad programs and any travel required to participate in the program cannot conflict with on campus class and exam schedules.

Refer to the [Academic Calendar](#) provided by the Registrar's Office for term dates. Learning Abroad can assist you in identifying program dates that do not conflict with on campus calendars. Additionally, programs that take place over the summer should consider the schedule for summer sessions. Many students intend to take classes on campus during the summer in addition to learning abroad. Scheduling your summer program so that students can still take advantage of on campus course offerings will help your recruitment efforts.

### Student Housing

When selecting housing there are several factors to consider. Consider possible accessibility issues for students with disabilities. If you have students who intend to bring partners or dependents, please review the policy on [Non-Participant Travel](#). Keep in mind that University policy prohibits unmarried students of the opposite sex from sharing the same sleeping quarters unless they opt into gender inclusive housing options. Each student must be assigned their own bed through the duration of the program.

Students are required to reside in program housing. In rare exceptions can students arrange independent housing and will need to complete an appeal through Learning Abroad. Contact your Learning Abroad Coordinator if you receive a request from a student.

When making housing assignments, you should provide a gender-inclusive housing choice where possible and allow students to opt in. This is helpful in identifying students who, regardless of gender identity, can be assigned as roommates. A housing questionnaire will be discussed with Faculty Directors and provided to students when they have committed to the program.

Faculty Directors and all Facilitators are not permitted to share accommodations with students. This exposes you and the University to unnecessary liability. In general, Faculty Directors should not share apartments or rooms with Program Assistants either.

Housing representatives and host families will expect you to share the responsibility for informing students of host housing rules, encouraging students to abide by these expectations, and mediating any conflicts that arise. To prevent problems after arrival, clearly communicate the housing options before departure and again during the on-site orientation once the program has started. Talk about any differences in facilities, curfews, costs, and inclusions.

If a student requests assistance with on-site housing arrangements, before or after the program dates, you may provide the student with recommended contact information. However, you are prohibited from making specific arrangements for students prior to or after the official program dates due to liability risks for you and for the University.

## **Faculty Housing**

Housing expenses are reimbursed based on the program budget. The amount of funding available to you for housing will be discussed when your program budget is created. If your housing costs are based on a "per person" rate, you will be reimbursed for only one person.

We refer to guidelines from the U.S. Department of State when determining maximum housing allowance. However, in an effort to create affordable programs, we often will lower rates based on the individual program design.

Keep in mind that the cost of housing is passed directly on to your students, and that reserving expensive housing could jeopardize your program as the cost to students increases. When you develop your budget, we will make a recommendation for your housing rate based on our experience with program travel and your destination.

We encourage faculty to stay in the same facility as students. In some cases, this isn't an option. Although Learning Abroad may be able to suggest possible options for your housing, Faculty Directors are responsible for identifying housing in the host country and managing the reservations. If invoices are available, the office can pay for your housing directly.

## **Group Flights**

We do not recommend that Faculty Directors arrange group flights. There are several reasons for this recommendation.

Application deadlines are often too late to ensure that you will have enough students to be eligible for a group flight.

Most students intend to independently travel before or after their program. This reduces the number of students who will actually book a group flight.

Group flights are often more expensive than purchasing an individual flight.

Many students use buddy passes or frequent flyer miles, which are not eligible for group flights.

The billing and withdrawal & dismissal policies of the University are not conducive to making deposits for group flight contracts.

These elements make group flights unnecessary and impractical for most programs. Discuss with your Learning Abroad Coordinator if you are considering a group flight.

## **Faculty Flight Reservations**

Before reserving your flight, contact our office to obtain a travel authorization. Keep in mind that we will not authorize a flight purchase if there are concerns about program enrollment. Faculty Directors can reserve flights with a TCard, or in Concur via Christopherson Business Travel. The university will pay transportation costs based on the lowest practical scheduled rates as described in the [Schedule of Allowable Rates](#). The policy does not require the purchase of refundable flights. One of the main advantages of booking through CBT and/or the Concur booking tool is that CBT can often negotiate changes or cancellations with no or reduced fees. If the traveler books outside of those sources, any additional costs or different fares are at the discretion of your department to reimburse. Finally, you may purchase flights using a personal credit card and request reimbursement; however, reimbursement will only be processed after all receipts are submitted and the Expense Report in Concur is completed. Please note that any interest accrued on your credit card will not be reimbursed.

Please note that Learning Abroad typically budgets in economy airfare for the program dates/locations. Faculty who wish to upgrade their flight from Economy to Economy Plus or a higher class must obtain approval from their department chair. If faculty are wishing to upgrade seats or travel alternative dates/destinations, additional costs will be on the faculty to cover.

## **Guidelines for Accompanying Dependents**

The University assumes no responsibility for accompanying dependents. The University reserves the right to impose limits and/or conditions on the roles, activities, and presence of family members or friends who accompany Faculty Directors. Such limits or conditions derive from programmatic concerns related to health, safety, or security as determined by Learning Abroad. Faculty Directors

should consider the following when determining whether or not to bring dependents on University business travel:

- **Student Perception:** Students are often frustrated by the presence of dependents. They feel that their program fees are covering what they perceive to be your family vacation.
- **Insurance Requirement:** All dependents traveling with university employees are encouraged to purchase a [CISI insurance policy](#).
- **Emergencies:** The University will not provide support for dependents during an emergency. It is the responsibility of the employee to coordinate any emergency assistance without jeopardizing the program or negatively impacting your ability to perform your duties.
- **Liability:** It is the responsibility of all dependents to read the US State Department information sheets if they participate in any group travel by land, sea, or air. The dependents are responsible for their own safety and insurance coverage. Dependents are not covered by the Liability and Indemnification privileges extended to University employees.
- **Housing:** Accompanying dependents may share housing with the Faculty Director(s), provided such sharing is allowed by the housing provider. Faculty Directors will receive housing reimbursements for one person, regardless of how many accompanying family members share housing. If housing costs are based on a "per person" rate, the Faculty Director will be reimbursed for only one person.
- **Funds:** University funds cannot be used to pay for or subsidize dependent travel. If the costs for a dependent are included on your receipts, they must be deducted before the receipt is submitted for reimbursement.
- **Minor Dependents:** Minor children accompanying Faculty Directors must be adequately supervised at all times. The presence of minor children or other family members cannot disrupt or alter the program in any way. The University does not provide childcare on Programs.

## Passports & Visas

All travelers will need a passport. It is the responsibility of the Faculty Director and Facilitators to determine if a visa for all countries on the official itinerary is needed before departure. Consult with the Consulate/Embassy of your host country to determine visa entry requirements. Visa requirements may be different for [non-US citizens](#).

## Immunizations and Health Issues

It is the Faculty Director's responsibility to determine if international travel is safe for them and to obtain any recommended or required immunizations.

## Legal Contracts and Agreements

As you coordinate your Program, it is likely that the University will need to sign contracts, agreements, or MOUs with the agencies assisting you onsite. It is important to recognize that there are legal ramifications to signing an agreement on behalf of the University. For this reason, the University's Senior International

Officer is the designated signing authority for all Learning Abroad agreements. All agreements are processed through the Office for Global Engagement's eMOU system. Learning Abroad will work with you and oversee this process.

## **Liability and Indemnification**

Faculty Directors are considered legal representatives of the University. As such, they are entitled to the same liability protection given to all University representatives. Legal representation will be provided for the Faculty Director and Facilitators in all matters related to the program if required. Details on liability can be found on the [Office of Risk Management and Insurance](#) website. Please note that this protection does not extend to dependents traveling with you.

## **Program Excursions**

We strongly encourage all Faculty Directors to incorporate excursions into the academic content of the program. These excursions are often the highlight of the Program for many students and serve to enhance student learning on-site. If you include excursions as part of the course and the program cost, they should have academic relevance. Ensure that they are academically-focused or culturally relevant, not merely tourism. Writing these activities into your syllabus and requiring accompanying assignments will make students take these experiences more seriously and improve the quality of the classroom dialogue.

## **Group Chat**

Group chats through applications like WhatsApp can be a great way to communicate with students. They should be used with discretion and should not replace Umail for official communication with students.

We recommend using group chats for basic types of communication. For example, they can greatly assist in reminding students about meet-up spots and times. Group chats can be especially helpful to quickly check in with students when a health and safety situation arises. Ensure students understand communication expectations and uses through an app during orientation.

When creating a group chat, ensure that only students, faculty and staff in the program have access and that privacy is maintained. Keep FERPA policies in mind when using a group chat.

## **Communicating with Family Members**

Like any other University Program, Learning Abroad Programs are subject to [FERPA](#) and HIPAA. The act forbids the university from releasing personal identifiable student educational records or files, or personal information contained in those files, without the student's written consent, except in specified situations. Students may allow information to be released to specific individuals by completing the online Consent to Release Form located securely within the Campus Information Services.

Whenever possible, the student should communicate with their family members directly. When communicating with family members, we recommend the following guideline: If the information is not available to the public on the program brochure for Learning Abroad website or if it is non-directory information, the information should not be provided to family members without the student's written consent.

It is not uncommon for a student's family to call Learning Abroad for information about their student.

## **Laptops and Equipment**

Keep in mind that if you are traveling abroad with controlled equipment or materials (e.g. global positioning systems, encrypted software, or select agents) you may be in violation of federal law or IRB regulations. It is also important to consider the kind of student information kept on any laptops you take abroad. If your laptop is lost or stolen you could put students at risk of identity theft. Avoid keeping student information on your laptop as much as possible. If you have participants' home addresses, phone numbers, or emails, please encrypt or protect the information with passwords.

## **No-shows**

If a student does not show up for their program, contact Learning Abroad. Our office will follow up with the student's emergency contacts to verify their whereabouts

# **Reviewing Applications and Monitoring Enrollment**

## **Learning Abroad Application**

All applications are submitted online. The application is primarily divided into pre-decision steps and post-decision steps. Students' applications cannot be considered for acceptance until all pre-decision steps are complete. A description of the steps can be found below:

### **Pre-Decision**

Signature Documents & Questionnaires

In the pre-decision phase, students submit a personal statement and provide background. They agree to several waivers and the Learning Abroad Withdrawal & Dismissal Penalties. They also acknowledge that all program correspondence will be sent through Umail. They provide us with emergency contact information and complete Learning Abroad 101.

### **Learning Abroad Program Deposit**

Every program application requires a \$250 program deposit in the pre-decision phase. This will be applied to the total program cost. When students make the deposit, it indicates that they are serious about attending the Pprogram.



### **Recommendations (if requested)**

Faculty Directors have the option to require online recommendations from applicants in the pre-decision phase. Most Faculty Directors do not use this option, but it is available upon request. A student's Application status is marked as pending until all pre-decision steps are complete.

### **Accepting Students & Committing to the Program**

Once a student has completed the pre-decision steps of the application, they can be considered for admission to the program. A student has 3 business days to commit to the program after being accepted.

### **Late Applications**

Students who do not complete their applications by the posted deadline may submit a late application on a case by case basis. The Learning Abroad Coordinator will consult with the Faculty Director.

### **Failure to Commit**

If students fail to log back into their Learning Abroad application and commit to the program within 3 business days, their application is moved to incomplete. Applications may be reinstated on a case by case basis.

### **Post-decision**

The post-decision steps are available to students after they commit to the program. In the post-decision steps, students submit medical, passport and flight information, complete online orientation modules, and sign waivers.

## **Selecting Students**

After a student's pre-decision steps have been completed and the Learning Abroad Coordinator marks their Application as "Ready for Review", you can consider the application for admission to the Program. Faculty Directors have the choice of using rolling admissions or reviewing all applications on an established decision date. As you review applications, we encourage you to consider the following:

Does the student meet the eligibility requirements for the program? Eligibility requirements are listed on the Program website. If the student does not meet the eligibility requirements, is there a case for making an exception? If so, contact your Learning Abroad Coordinator to discuss the possibility of making an exception. Students must meet the Learning Abroad minimum GPA eligibility requirement of a 2.5. If a student is below a 2.5 GPA this can be reviewed on a case by case basis with the Learning Abroad Coordinator and Faculty Director with additional steps to review the student's academic plans for success. Learning Abroad cannot accept any student under a 2.0 GPA due to academic and financial risk for the student because their status with the University of Utah is not in "[good standing](#)". Please review the University of Utah's [Academic Standings Definitions](#) from the Academic Advising Center for the risks students face if their GPA drops below a 2.0 while on a Learning Abroad program.

How many students can I accommodate? Some programs receive more applications than they can accommodate. Be sure that you know the maximum number of

students you could take and the minimum number of students needed to run the program. If you have more applicants than spaces available, speak with your Learning Abroad Coordinator about the possibility of setting up a waitlist.

After you decide to accept, reject, or waitlist the applicant, your Learning Abroad Coordinator will change the student's application status and email the student of the decision.

## **Health Review**

Legally, the University cannot request medical information from students before they are accepted into a Program; however, we take steps to make applicants aware of certain requirements before they submit an application.

While applying, students are provided with the Participation Requirements for Learning Abroad. This signature document is intended to help students think about the physical and psychological rigors of Learning Abroad. It is also intended to encourage them to contact us if they need accommodations or have concerns about potential medical issues. All students agree to these requirements before being accepted to a program.

In the post-decision steps of the Application, students are asked to self-disclose any medical conditions they have in the Travel Health Questionnaire. They also submit a [Health Clearance Form](#). The Health Clearance Form must be completed by a healthcare provider before departure and sent to Learning Abroad.

During orientation, it is important that you encourage students to be honest with their disclosures. You should also encourage students to disclose pre-existing conditions that might be important to know about during a medical emergency (such as allergies, prescription medications, and mental health issues). If you are made aware of a medical issue that is not disclosed on the health form, contact Learning Abroad as soon as possible. We can assist you in identifying the nature of the problem and finding accommodations, if needed.

Please note that some medical conditions may qualify as disabilities. The University encourages students with disabilities to participate in Learning Abroad Programs. We will work closely with the student, the Faculty Director(s), our insurance company, and the Center for Disability & Access to provide reasonable accommodations where possible.

## **Student Orientation & Preparation**

Orientation is a critical part of the learning abroad process. It provides necessary, practical information and sets the stage for student success onsite. Orientation can be divided into three parts:

- Mandatory, online orientation provided by Learning Abroad
- Program-specific orientation meeting(s)
- On-site orientation meeting(s)

All Faculty Directors are required to hold at least one orientation meeting before departure and one on-site orientation meeting upon arrival. Faculty Directors, who are actively engaged in orientation programs, tend to have more successful academic programs with fewer disciplinary problems abroad. Additionally, orientation protects you and the University from liability. By ensuring that we provide every student with certain information before departure and upon arrival, we protect the University, faculty, and our students. We also encourage you to familiarize yourself with the policies outlined in the [Learning Abroad Handbook](#).

## **Online Orientation**

Learning Abroad provides a mandatory, online orientation program for all students. The program is based on thematic modules covering topics such as cultural adjustments, policies, money matters, health, and safety. Within each module, students are required to view information and answer quiz questions.

The information covered in the online orientation is applicable to all programs and is intended to provide general information to all students. It does not include program specific information.

## **Program-Specific Orientation Meetings**

We have developed talking points to help you facilitate orientation meetings. Your Learning Abroad Coordinator will also attend your Pre-Departure Orientation to cover important information regarding health & safety, insurance, billing, and other logistical items. We also can assist you by reserving rooms and communicating orientation times to your students. To help you prepare for orientation, please consider the following tips:

- Be aware of holidays, breaks, and exam schedules when picking a time or date for orientation. We find that the most well attended sessions happen after 5pm Monday through Thursday.
- 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 Umail accounts. Be prepared for family members to attend the session along with the student. Many students will invite parents or partners to participate in these meetings.

## **Pre-departure Orientation Talking Points**

When preparing for an orientation meeting, it can be overwhelming to organize information. To reduce this burden, Learning Abroad has created a Pre-Departure Orientation PowerPoint template that covers topics concerning health & safety, conduct, and risk management. Your Learning Abroad Coordinator will reach out to you after the program deadline with this template. Below are some suggested topics for program-specific orientation meetings. This list is not exhaustive; we encourage you to think about the unique aspects of your program, destination, and time frame so that you can address the most appropriate topics for your group.

Topic	Suggested Talking Points	Responsibility
<b>Online Orientation Reminder &amp; Learning Abroad Handbook</b>	Remind students that they must complete the online orientation provided in Learning Abroad Application Highlight the <a href="#">Learning Abroad Handbook</a> for preparing for this experience.	Learning Abroad Coordinator
<b>Academic Expectations and Requirements</b>	Provide syllabi and other relevant documents if they are available. A detailed syllabus that outlines the expectations, includes excursions as part of the program, and identifies the requirement that students will write papers, do research, and take tests reinforces the message that this is an academic experience. Include a written attendance policy in the syllabus that clearly states that students will not be excused from program activities for visitors or independent travel. Remind students that the grades they earn will appear on their permanent transcripts and affect their GPA.	Faculty Director

**Local Culture and Language**

Discuss important cultural and linguistic norms for your destination.

If your students will have local instructors or guest speakers, we also encourage you to discuss classroom etiquette in the host country.

If your program is taught in English but takes place in a non-English speaking country, consider having a language "crash course" of important vocabulary.

Remind students that they are representatives of the University and cultural ambassadors for their country. Poor or inappropriate behavior will be attributed to the entire group and affect the experience of all students. Be honest with your students about how their poor behavior reflects on you, as the program leader, and to your local colleagues. Most importantly, participants need to understand that the viability of a program rests in their hands. Offensive or indifferent behavior resulting in negative evaluations by colleagues abroad could lead to the cancellation of a program.

Faculty Director

**Packing and Appropriate Dress for Program Activities**

Discuss any special items or clothing (e.g. formal attire) that your students should pack and the likely climate in your destination.

Provide students with notice if there is a dress code for certain activities, make students aware of those expectations.

For instance, if it is inappropriate to wear sandals or flip flops on an excursion, let your students know.

Faculty Director

## **Travel Health and Safety**

CISI and AXA Assistance Information  
Travel Health- Health Clearance Form and Travel Health Questionnaire  
General Safety- Discuss basic safety tips with your students.  
Site-specific Safety Information- Discuss key information from your Safety, Security, and Health Assessment. Keep in mind that the list may not be exhaustive. You can add tips and suggestions based on your expertise in the host country.  
[Emergency Action Plan](#)- provide students with a pre-set meeting place, the [Learning Abroad 24/7 Emergency Line](#), and instructions on what to do in case of an emergency.

Learning Abroad  
Coordinator &  
Faculty Director

## **Passports and Visas**

Instruct students to apply for passports immediately and use the following guidelines  
Students should ensure that their passport does NOT expire less than 6 months after their intended return date.  
If a visa is needed for your destination, discuss this with your students. Learning Abroad does not acquire visas for students. Remind students that it is their responsibility to acquire the proper entry visa.  
Non-US passport holders may face special visa considerations. Be sure to direct [non-US passport holders](#) to the information on our website

Learning Abroad  
Coordinator

**Flights & Arrival Instructions**

Provide students with flight suggestions  
Discuss when students should leave if they want to arrive on time. Many destinations require that students leave 2 days before their required arrival date.  
Provide your students with arrival instructions including:  
When to arrive  
Where to arrive  
Where to meet the group upon arrival  
What to do in the event of a flight delay or if they miss the group

Faculty Director

**Program Itinerary**

Provide students with a tentative program itinerary. Having a sense of what to expect on sight will reduce student anxiety before departure.  
Highlight the tentative nature of an itinerary. Students are often frustrated by unexpected changes to program itineraries or course offerings. We discuss the likelihood of itinerary changes in the online orientation program, but we recommend that faculty take a few minutes to reiterate the unpredictability of international travel.

Faculty Director

**Program Housing**

Discuss the program accommodations and what students should expect (i.e. availability of air conditioning, roommate assignments, and linens).  
If your program utilizes homestays, we recommend discussing gifts, expectations, and family culture.  
If there are pricing differences for different housing options on your program, discuss these factors with students. This will enable them to budget appropriately.  
Provide students with the full name, address, phone numbers, and URLs (if applicable) for any overnight accommodations. Remember, this information should not be posted in a public forum to avoid FERPA violations.

Faculty Director

<b>Alcohol and Drug Policies</b>	Inform that students are held to the University of Utah's <a href="#">drug and alcohol policies</a> for learning abroad which are discussed in the Student Conduct section of the Learning Abroad Handbook.	Learning Abroad Coordinator
<b>Course Registration Information</b>	Inform students that Course registration instructions are provided in the online Learning Abroad Application and remind students that there are course registration deadlines.	Learning Abroad Coordinator
<b>Money Matters</b>	Discuss local currency, exchange rates, and the use of debit and credit cards. Remind students that they should notify their bank before departure to avoid problems using debit and credit cards abroad. Discuss issues relevant to your destination even though general information about money matters is provided in the students' Learning Abroad Application. Billing Statements are provided in Learning Abroad application one month before billing deadline	Faculty Director & Learning Abroad Coordinator
<b>Independent Travel</b>	Discuss <a href="#">independent travel plans</a> Remind students that they should notify you if they plan to travel independently. The University of Utah is not responsible for students traveling independently.	Faculty Director & Learning Abroad Coordinator

## Teambuilding

Many Faculty Directors indicate that one of the more challenging aspects of leading a program is creating a team environment among group members. When a team environment is developed, students tend to behave better and meet expectations more successfully.

To develop a team environment with your group, you need to discuss appropriate conduct and academic expectations in the pre-departure orientation as well as upon arrival. Begin by developing a vocabulary that highlights the nature of learning abroad. For instance, refer to the experience as a "program," not a "trip." A "trip" implies that this is a vacation, a "program" implies that this is a serious endeavor.



Discuss your academic expectations from the beginning and remind students that poor behavior onsite reflects on themselves, the group, and the University. Planting these ideas sets the stage for a successful program.

Next, consider creating a group "contract" that allows students to contribute to the expectations for the group. You can create one in advance, or employ a method of community-building similar to that used in the residence halls. Please note that these are not legal contracts but are good faith efforts and written agreements between the students and leaders or among the group.

For this exercise, ask students to identify acceptable and unacceptable behaviors onsite. Based on your dialogue, create a "contract" that the students sign and agree to. In some cases, it is important for you to identify non-negotiable expectations from the beginning.

Once your group has come to a consensus about their expectations for the program and each other, create a document that they can sign. As a member of the team, the Faculty Director should also sign the agreement. In the event of a behavioral problem, showing the student that they agreed to certain behaviors as a member of the team is often very effective in correcting inappropriate behavior.

## **Advising Students on Travel Health**

Students and parents will inquire about immunizations, medications, and travel health. This is a normal part of pre-departure preparations and Faculty Directors should expect to receive some questions relating to travel health. Faculty Directors are advised to use caution when discussing these matters with students. Be aware that most Faculty Directors are not licensed medical personnel, and discussing health care options with students can open you and the University up to unnecessary liability.

Since travel medicine recommendations change rapidly, the best recommendations are often provided by a traveler's own physician or qualified travel health professionals. In pre-departure orientation, we provide students with general information about travel health. We also provide students with a list of local practitioners that provide travel health consultations and administer immunizations. When talking with students about travel health, we recommend that you consider the following:

- Review the information provided to students in the [Learning Abroad Handbook](#). Familiarize yourself with the information available for your host country so that you can talk in general terms about this topic.
- Be honest about your limitations. Explicitly tell students and parents that you are not a licensed healthcare professional.
- Be familiar with recommended and required immunizations. Know what immunizations are required and recommended for your destination, but always remind students to check the [CDC](#) website.
- Recommend that students schedule an appointment with the experts. Obtaining adequate pre-departure advice will protect the patient, you, and the University. A list of [local travel clinics](#) is found on our website.

- Encourage your students to fill out the Travel Health Questionnaire. A travel health questionnaire is included in the post-acceptance steps of the application. We cannot require that students disclose medical conditions, but having this information available will enable us to accommodate a student's needs and respond to emergencies onsite.
- Pre-existing conditions are important. International travel can exacerbate pre-existing conditions even if these conditions are well-controlled here at home. Every student should discuss pre-existing conditions with a medical provider before departure.
- Never give a student personalized medical advice unless you are licensed to do so. This creates unnecessary liability for you and the University.
- Be aware that by giving students information about your own personal choices, you could be influencing a student's decision to obtain adequate health care. For instance, telling a student that you have chosen not to take malaria medication could be perceived as a recommendation by the student.
- Be cautious about local impressions of risk. Your contacts in the host country may not be the best source of advice for preventative health care. Cultural perceptions and limited knowledge about travel health can lead to poor, albeit well-intentioned, advice from local contacts.

Contact Learning Abroad with any questions or concerns you might have regarding advising students about travel health.

## **Accommodating Students with Disabilities**

Learning Abroad and the [Center for Disability and Access](#) (CDA) are committed to helping as many students learn abroad as possible, and for students with disabilities, planning is the key to successful learning abroad experiences.

Students with disabilities face unique challenges when learning abroad. The rights, privileges, cultural beliefs, and infrastructure to support students with disabilities vary depending on the destination. Additionally, institutions are beginning to see Learning Abroad as an extension of the on-campus community. As such, many universities are beginning to apply the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to international programs to the extent possible.

The University recognizes that some of the variables that impact students with disabilities are beyond our control abroad, including infrastructure and cultural beliefs. However, we are committed to finding ways to support students with disabilities who want to participate in a Learning Abroad program. For this reason, we will make every effort to make reasonable accommodations in the host country.

In conjunction with the CDA, Learning Abroad has developed a process for handling accommodations requests for students with disabilities. Be aware that, while the process for handling accommodations on a Learning Abroad Program is similar to the process for on campus activities, faculty may need to take extra steps to ensure that the student receives the accommodations to which they are entitled.

Disclosures are student-driven and voluntary. Students cannot be compelled or forced to disclose a disability. Additionally, while faculty and staff have the right to know what accommodations a student needs, they do not have the right to know what a student's disability is. A Faculty Director has no responsibility to, nor should they, provide any accommodations related to a disability without formal approval from CDA. Only CDA can determine if a student qualifies as a student with a disability and approve accommodations. When you contact Learning Abroad about the student's disclosure, our staff members will work with CDA to ensure that the accommodation request has been approved.

For more information about the services available for students with disabilities, visit the [CDA](#) website.

## **On-Site Orientation**

After arriving on site, Faculty Directors should hold an on-site orientation session. The purpose of this session is to familiarize students with their new home and reiterate some of the points discussed in pre-departure orientation.

On-site orientation can be as interactive and creative as you would like. Some Faculty Directors include a city tour or scavenger hunt in their onsite orientation. We recommend that you utilize the resources and experts on-site to help you. If your students are staying in residence halls, request that a resident director or housing manager talk to students about housing rules and regulations. You might also include materials such as city maps and local transportation guides.

Regardless of the format, there are several points that should be covered in on-site orientation. We suggest reframing topics from the pre-departure orientation for on-site orientation meetings. This list is not exhaustive; we encourage you to think about the unique aspects of your Program, destination, and time frame so that you can address the most appropriate topics for your group.

## **End-of-Program Meeting**

Including a formal end-of-program meeting before leaving the host country can help students acclimatize to their home culture again, discuss how to use the transferable skills that they have developed, and generally prepare for returning to campus. Providing an end-of-program meeting also re-enforces the connections that Faculty Directors make with their students during the Program and provides a space for them to express their thoughts, concerns, or insights. Additionally, students often help Faculty Directors by serving as advocates for the program and recruiting future applicants. The meeting gives Faculty Directors the opportunity to identify students who might be interested in helping the Program in the future.

Below are some suggested topics. This list is not exhaustive, and we encourage you to think about the unique aspects of your Program, destination, and time frame so that you can address the most appropriate topics for your group. Depending on your Program location you can choose to conduct this meeting at a more traditional

space such as a classroom, but you might find that a local restaurant or informal setting could be better. We encourage you to be creative and to consider what is appropriate and works for your Program.

<b>Academic Expectations and Requirements</b>	Review syllabus as necessary and remind students of any academic requirements or assignments that occur after the program ends Discuss the grading timeline
<b>Travel Logistics</b>	Discuss departure information and local transportation to the airport Prepare for U.S. Customs and declaring items Remind students to store their passport in their CARRY-ON LUGGAGE and in a safe, secure location Discuss exit visas or exit taxes (if necessary)
<b>Cultural Adjustment &amp; Re-Entry Resources</b>	Discuss reverse culture shock and adjusting to life back “home.” Resources for Reverse Culture Shock can be found on the <a href="#">Returned Students section</a> of the Learning Abroad website. Highlight the <a href="#">Returned Students</a> section on the Learning Abroad website for information on readjustment, meeting returned students, future research opportunities abroad, and more Refer students to the <a href="#">Learning Abroad handbook</a> and to their Pre-Departure Orientation modules for support services on campus

**Communication**

Talk to students about how to communicate their experience with friends, family, employers, etc.  
Identify ways to keep in touch with host family, local colleagues, or contacts  
Highlight ways to keep in touch and be advocates for prospective students (attending info sessions for example)