METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

STUDY ABROAD
GUIDE FOR FACULTY

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I. INTRODUCTION

This document lays out the procedures governing the development and offering of short-term faculty-led study abroad courses. This guide should be reviewed in conjunction with the University's Policies for Faculty-led and Faculty-chaperoned Study Abroad Programs, available at the OIS website: https://www.msudenver.edu/international-studies/

MSU Denver strives to provide students with high quality international educational experiences and faculty members are encouraged to create programs that expose students to the international dimensions of their disciplines as well as offer rewarding cultural experiences.

II. NATIONAL STANDARDS

In order to ensure that institutions of higher education offer academically credible and effectively managed study abroad courses, there are national and international standards and expectations that have been established by professional organizations. The Forum on Education Abroad's **Standards of Good Practice for Short-Term Education Abroad Programs** are among the most widely recognized standards. Please consult the Forum's website www.forumea.org. Other valuable study abroad materials can be found on www.nafsa.org and www.studyabroad.state.gov websites.

III. CONSULTATION WITH THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES STAFF

Faculty members wishing to offer a new or a repeat course must consult in advance with the staff of the Office of International Studies. OIS will provide guidance regarding travel logistics, budget, host country visa requirements, itinerary, completion of required forms, emergency procedures, program promotion, pre-departure orientation and related matters.

To ensure that the course proposal is reviewed and approved at all levels in good time, the planning process should begin at least 18 months in advance of the proposed program.

IV. PREPARATION OF PROPOSAL

A proposal consists of a Study Abroad Application Form (available at the OIS website) together with various attachments.

The application form asks for:

- A statement about the relevant *qualifications and experiences* of the proposed faculty leader.
- A detailed statement on the *international learning outcomes* of the proposed course.

- A detailed *daily academic schedule* showing departure and return dates, as well as specific daily academic activities. The daily itinerary should clearly show scheduled lecture hours and field excursion hours. The proposal should clearly describe who is giving the lectures in the field – the faculty member or another person. If a collaborating host country institution or agency (museum, tourism board, and tour company) is supplying the lecturer, this should be specified.
- Specific *written evidence that arrangements* have been made with travel or sponsoring agencies to handle arrangements such as airfare, visas, lodging, meals, ground transportation, admissions, health and travel insurance
- A *detailed budget outlining* per student costs for airfare, lodging, MSU Denver tuition and fees, any host country instructional fees, visa/s, local transportation, books, health insurance, estimated personal expenses, administrative fee to cover faculty expenses.
- A *detailed group budget* for the total funds to be collected for the course and a *specific disbursement* schedule for payment of expenses.
- A *payment schedule* for all travelers and *refund policy* for the return of collected money.
- An *evaluation instrument* that provides students with an opportunity to rate the quality of the learning activities and logistical arrangements
- Information regarding any *alerts, advisories or warnings* issued by the U.S. Department of State involving the proposed destination.

To the application form, the faculty member should attach an official approved course syllabus, a detailed student syllabus and a copy of the course evaluation for participants. Submit this form and attachments to your department and then to your Dean. The department is responsible for assuring that the academic content of the course meets academic standards of the department and the University. Some MSU Denver Colleges/Schools have an International Studies Committee to review study abroad applications and advise the Dean. Consult with your Dean's office to determine if this is the case for your College/School.

V. COURSE ACCOUNT

Study abroad courses are either cash-funded or department-funded.

Cash funded courses are run through Innovative and Lifelong Learning, and costs such as faculty salary, benefits, and expenses must be generated from the tuition paid by the participants. The tuition will be processed through the Office of Innovative and Lifelong Learning (I&LL). The students will pay the tuition through their student account. I&LL will register the students and pay the faculty salary.

If the course is offered as a regular part of a department's schedule, then the regular procedures of the department for creating a course in the schedule and enrolling the students will be followed and the faculty member will be paid her/his salary through the department's budget.

Upon final approval of a proposed study abroad course, OIS will inform the Accounting Services that a new study abroad course has been approved and will request the establishment of an account and worktags for the course. The faculty director of the course will be designated as the signatory authority.

All funds, **excluding tuition and fees**, collected, and expended in connection with the course must be processed through this worktags according to established University policies.

The faculty member is responsible for collecting travel fees from the participants by deadlines and authorizing any payments to vendors. Collections of student fees should be processed through an MSU Denver e-market account. To create this account, faculty should complete an e-market questionnaire as soon as they have their course worktags. Questions about an e-market account can be sent to Molly Blair and Megan Maison in the Cashier's Office: cashier@msudenver.edu. Site: https://www.msudenver.edu/cashier/faculty-staff-student-organizations/

The Accounting Services Office generally does not favor giving large sums of money to faculty to carry with them to pay for expenses while abroad. As much as possible, the costs must be paid directly to the service providers through the Accounting Services Office. The need for cash travel advances must be adequately justified (contingency funds, honoraria for host county lectures, local public transportation costs) and expenditures must be fully documented in Workday upon return. For currency exchanges involving cash, currency exchange receipts must be saved to document the exchange rate that is current at the time of the exchange. For expenses involving use of a credit card, the exchange rate specified on the credit card statement is used. For all other cash expenses, documentation of the exchange rate on the date of the expense should be obtained from the online Oanda currency converter (oanda.com/currency-converter/).

VI. SPEND AUTHORIZATION

Prior to spending any account funds, the faculty member must complete a Spend Authorization on Workday and obtain all the required signatures. If you are requesting any cash advances, you must use the worktags that are designated for your study abroad course. Every faculty/staff who travels abroad must complete a spend authorization, even if no money is going to that traveler. In the spend authorization under 'Business Purpose,' indicate that the expense is related to study abroad.

VII. VISAS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

Certain countries require that visas be obtained prior to departure from the United States. Please check with embassy of the country that you are planning to visit. Also, if any of the participants plan to extend their stay abroad by visiting any other country upon the completion of your study abroad course, have them determine the visa requirements of these countries and the logistics of changing airline tickets.

Certain countries also require that travelers to those countries carry records of immunizations. Even if proposed destination country does not require any immunizations, advise your students to consult their personal physicians for medical advice related to what immunizations should be taken as safeguards.

The U.S. Department of State and the Center for Disease Control web pages contain valuable information on these matters.

VIII. HEALTH AND TRAVEL INSURANCE FOR PARTICIPANTS

It is mandatory that each participant be enrolled in an insurance plan that provides medical coverage abroad.

If the course works with a provider/vendor who covers medical insurance for the students, then students do not have to purchase additional coverage. If the course does not include health insurance coverage, then faculty must tell students that they are required to purchase their own supplemental health insurance. This must include, at a minimum, **the name of the company, policy number and documentation that coverage includes emergency medical evacuation and repatriation of remains.**

Participants who are covered by MSU Denver Insurance during the study abroad, can use that insurance plan's coverage. This health insurance plan includes medical evacuation and repatriation of remains.

The faculty director should inform the students that in the event of emergency medical evacuation, the participant is responsible for any costs incurred at the time. They should then file claims with the insurance provider after returning to the United States. If MSU Denver incurs any expenses related to the participant's emergency evacuation (such as airline fees, hotel or local transportation costs) the participant must reimburse MSU Denver.

OIS will give faculty a handout with insurance information to pass along to participants. Students must provide insurance information as part of OIS required paperwork.

Participants may also want to consider taking out trip cancellation coverage as well.

OIS will cover/pay for faculty insurance purchased from iNext.

IX. FACULTY ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The faculty leading the study abroad course is responsible for following all appropriate University policies. Study abroad courses are quite demanding with respect to time and effort. In addition to the normal curricular responsibilities, the faculty director must be prepared to invest time in preparing a suitable proposal, recruiting participants, account

keeping, making the necessary travel and host country arrangements, and managing emergencies and crises while abroad. Quality of leadership is critical to the degree of success of a study abroad course. The faculty is literally "on call" for the entire duration of the study abroad. Following are some of the most important expectations of the faculty:

Before the study abroad course takes place:

- If directing a study abroad program for the first time, faculty leader(s) must meet with the Executive Director of the Office of International Studies 18 months prior to the semester in which the course will be offered.
- Prepare and submit the Study Abroad Application Packet to the Department Chair and the Dean for their approval prior to submitting it to OIS.
- Become familiar with MSU Denver's accounting procedures, and complete required trainings for an MSU Denver Corporate Travel Card.
- Ensure that the participants meet any necessary course prerequisites and enrollment criteria as s/he would do with an on-campus course.
- Provide prospective participants with complete and current information regarding the program content and travel arrangements.
- Provide the latest U.S. Department of State travel advisories on the country(ies) to be visited. If the areas to be visited are described to be unsafe and pose undue risk to American nationals, approval may be denied. The advisories are available on the web at http://www.state.gov/travel/. Advise participants, in writing, on any risks involved in travel to the destination involved in the specific course.
- Review guidance provided by the Department of State for International travel and ensure that all participants register on the Department of State's Smart Travel Enrollment Program (STEP), which can be accessed at www.travel.state.gov.
- Advise participants:
    - on additional optional insurance for trip cancellation
    - on passport, visa, and vaccination requirements
- Provide participants a detailed student syllabus that lists the requirements, expectations, and all other information related to the specific course including a detailed daily itinerary.
- Be knowledgeable about the availability of emergency medical services in the host country.
- Work with OIS to ensure that each participant has completed all MSU Denver required study abroad paperwork. OIS maintains all study abroad paperwork through an online system called viaTRM, including:
    - Initial Application Form [this form includes the Dean of Students Authorization Form, Release of Liability, Student Code of Conduct, Travel Release, Health Information & Release, Terms of Agreement, Payments & Financial Aid Responsibilities]
    - Health Insurance
    - Travel and Contact Information [emergency contact, insurance info, passport info] – ***This document must be completed at least 4 weeks prior to departure***.
- OIS will provide faculty with MSU Denver Emergency Communication Plan and their students emergency contact information. Faculty will need to keep this information and have access to it during their travels.
- Conduct pre-departure orientation meetings.

While abroad:

- Maintain access to the students' emergency contact information [provided by OIS].
- At least one faculty member must stay with the group at the lodging site.
- Give immediate attention to complaints, issues raised by any participant (illness, problems with accommodations, inter-group conflicts, harassment, etc.) with a view to remedy the situation. Complete an Incident Report if appropriate.
- Carry US Embassy/Consulate 24/7 phone number in case of emergency.
- Remind students that MSU Denver's academic and behavioral standards are fully applicable while abroad.
- Review emergency procedures with students (where to meet, who to contact).
- Advise participants not to leave their passports, money, or other valuables in their rooms if they are staying in hotels. Advise them to always carry at least one piece of photo identification while they are abroad.
- Distribute a participant roster with local contact information and encourage participants to develop a "buddy system."
- Remind them that the possession and use of drugs can result in very serious consequences.
- If the students do not travel as a group, advise them where and when to meet in the host country and if their flights get delayed or cancelled, they will be responsible for any extra costs.

X. STUDENT REGISTRATION

University policy mandates that all participants in the study abroad course(s) must be admitted to MSU Denver and be officially enrolled in the specific course.

If the course is offered as a cash-funded course, then contact staff in the Innovative & lifelong Learning office (ILL) to register students in the course. **All participants must be registered.**

XI. RECRUITMENT AND PUBLICITY

The faculty member must plan on investing time to promote the study abroad course and to recruit participants. The promotion may be started before all the approvals have been obtained **provided that the promotion materials state that the University approval is pending**. OIS staff is available to assist.

XII. FINANCIAL AID

Students are eligible to use their financial aid award to participate in a study abroad course. Financial aid amounts and disbursements follow MSU Denver procedures and dates.

Upon the approval of a study abroad course, OIS submits the budget to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (OFAS). OFAS uses that budget to calculate the amount of award for each student.

Please note that Financial Aid works in the same way for students whether they are taking regular/campus courses or a study abroad. Students can anticipate their same awards, and in some cases, students may have access to additional loans through OFAS for a study abroad. Importantly, awards are distributed only 10 days prior to the beginning of the semester and will not be accessible to pay for course/travel deposits which are usually due much sooner. Participants will have to make other arrangements.

XIII. CONTRACTS, INVOICES AND WIRING FUNDS

Contracts or Agreements for any services provided by a private company for the academic and logistical arrangements for the course must be reviewed and approved by Contracts and Business Services, Office of the Controller. Under Workday, the faculty member or the department fiscal officer must submit the contract as soon as received via the requisition task for the Contract Manager to review the contract to ensure that it is acceptable by MSU Denver. The approval is necessary for all contracts, even those that do not require funds.

Invoices for hotels, etc., accompanied by signed check requests and approved Spend Authorization, need to be submitted to the Accounting Services for payment.

If any of the program providers require funds to be wired, please work with Accounting Services for the completion of tax and other forms required for such transfers.

XIV. STUDENT REQUIRED FORMS

All MSU Denver study abroad participants are required to complete a series of forms for their study abroad. OIS collects all the forms through an online platform called viaTRM. There are three distinct forms that students must complete. OIS relies on faculty involvement to help ensure students complete these documents in a timely manner.

1. Initial application form – This form is made up of student academic information and various waivers, including: the Dean of Students Authorization Form [for student conduct review], Release of Liability, Student Code of Conduct, Travel Release, Health Information & Release, Terms of Agreement, Payments &

Financial Aid Responsibilities. ***OIS strongly recommends this document be completed by students before faculty approve them for their study abroad***:

2. Health Insurance Acknowledgement
3. Emergency Contact and Travel Information – ***This form should be completed at least 4 weeks prior to departure; information from this document is shared with faculty leaders to have with them while abroad.***

If the faculty is working with a provider/vendor, that requires students to complete its own paperwork, then students are required to do both; even if there's an overlap in some information.

Connect with OIS while working on your course approval packet to go over these documents and determine how to best work with OIS & participants to get these documents completed.