

Education Abroad



Security & Risk Management Protocol



Division of Global Affairs

Education Abroad

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Education Abroad Group Program Preparation Overview

Planning for a safe program abroad is only part of ensuring that the group travels abroad without incident. It is important that students understand their role in maintaining their safety. As faculty develop student orientations they should carefully consider how they will empower students to take responsibility for their safety, health and security; how they will prepare them for site specific issues; and how they will prepare them for safety concerns related to program activities.

The Faculty Director's Agreement of Responsibilities

The Faculty Director's responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

Communication:

- Provide to EAO prior to departure: a program itinerary, participant, director and program staff emergency contact information, copies of passports, and copies of all information given to students;
- Serve as liaison between EAO and on-site institutions, agencies, staff, etc.
- Maintain contact with students throughout the program, counsel as needed on issues of cultural adjustment, conduct, and other non-academic issues.
- Consult with EAO as needed concerning student problems and concerns throughout program.
- Inform the Behavioral Response Team (BRT) and EAO immediately of any emergency or medical situation involving students.
- Provide EAO with regular updates on activities throughout the program;
- Submit a written report to EAO within three weeks of the conclusion of the program highlighting its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Communicate regularly with EAO year-round as needed with regard to planning and preparation for future programs.

Student Orientation/Management:

- Organize pre-departure orientations (at least two) and an in-country orientation immediately following arrival of students. The orientation should include all of the following issues: review of the student handbook, program administration, communications, lodging, public transportation, health/safety, passports/visas, program rules/behavioral expectations, group dynamics, academic expectations, cross-cultural adaptation, cultural differences, and other daily living concerns
- Organize lodging, meals, transportation, guides and entrance fees for excursions to be conducted in locations of cultural/historical interest (as indicated in program budget).
- Verify service hour requirements for the Global Learning Scholarship.

Safety and Liability:

1. The Faculty Director must comply with the Emergency Safety Protocols established by EAO.
2. Must provide all students with business cards detailing contact numbers for emergency support and services while on-site.
3. The Faculty Director is also responsible to make sure that all participants in the program read and sign-off on the following materials: FERPA, the student statement of responsibility, liability waiver and code of conduct (medical release forms are optional).
4. Copies of the above forms must accompany the Program Director on the education abroad program.
5. Generally, faculty are required to travel to and from the country of study with the students. Any exceptions must be approved in advance by the EAO Director.

Risk Management and Incident Reporting

DGA develops policies and procedures for coordinating the management of risk affecting participants of education abroad programs. The safety and well-being of students, faculty and staff participating in KSU programs abroad is of the highest importance and all reasonable actions will be taken to manage risk and response to emergencies, while recognizing that no single plan can address all contingencies. While our emphasis is on prevention, KSU's emergency plans include procedures for responding and reporting incidents that occur while abroad. Below are our procedures for effectively responding to critical incidents and implementing appropriate methods of collecting, analyzing, and reporting the data:

Safety and Security Workshop

KSU requires all Faculty Directors to attend a Safety and Security Workshop each year they are leading a program abroad. *Upcoming workshops for AY 2015-2016 will be administered through online-modules.*

Health and Safety

The following materials have been developed in order to assist Faculty Directors ensure the health and safety of participants in education abroad.

I. Please read the following (included in this document):

1. Emergency Protocol for Education Abroad (an abbreviated summary)
2. Risk and Crisis Management (more specific/detailed protocol for dealing with a crisis)
3. Education Abroad Emergency Contact List (to be kept by program director and on file at EAO)
4. Optional Reading: [The National Association for International Educators \(NAFSA\) Guidelines for Responsible Education Abroad \(general guidelines of responsibilities by institution, program faculty, and students\)](#)

II. Please ensure that all students in the program read and sign-off on the following materials using Studio Abroad:

1. [Responsibilities and Education Abroad Code of Conduct](#)
2. [KSU Waiver of Liability for Education Abroad Participants](#)
3. [Student Statement of Responsibility](#)
4. [Student Handbook \(review with students\)](#)

Faculty Directors should take these materials on the education abroad program, making sure that they have the emergency contact information at all times. In addition, please note that all programs are required to conduct at least two orientation sessions and to conduct program and course evaluations. Assistance in the development of orientations is available from EAO.

Overview of Emergency Protocol for Education Abroad

The Faculty Director traveling with the group is primarily responsible for an immediate and appropriate response to any incident occurring in an education abroad program. However, students may at times feel the need to report incidents directly and the resources in this document are available for all such situations. The general rule in all crisis situations is to remain calm and act as would a responsible person under the circumstances and document actions. **Contact [the KSU Police](#) at the first available opportunity to report that an incident has occurred. Their emergency response team will respond to the call and triage concerns to the Director of Education Abroad and other campus units appropriate.** When necessary, the Director of Education Abroad will escalate the response by contacting senior University administration as and arrange a critical incident team to respond to all ramifications of the incident.

RISK MITIGATION:

1. Be informed. Utilize the Partner Institution/State Department/Embassy/CDC and other responsible government and NGO contacts to constantly evaluate and monitor the local/international environment. To receive the latest update, be sure to enroll in the U.S. State Department's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) to automatically receive the most current information that they compile about the upcoming travel site. Utilize the Partner Institution/State Department/Embassy/[The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and other responsible government and NGO contacts to constantly evaluate and monitor the local/international environment and receive site-specific information.
2. Review the [University's policy](#) with [Cultural Insurance Services International](#) and ensure you have purchased insurance if you are not participating on a faculty-led program (EAO purchases emergency medical insurance on behalf of faculty-led program participants).
3. Before you leave, please verify the appropriate outside dialing instructions for your site, it is typically 011 for US access from most international locations.
4. Visit local health care facilities and have local emergency contact information for the police and hospital.
5. Conduct a comprehensive pre-departure orientation that includes detailed discussion about risk management while on education abroad, emergency procedures should they become necessary, and the responsibilities students have to themselves, the group, the faculty and KSU.
6. Collect information from students regarding any dietary restrictions, allergies, medications, health concerns. Invite/involve parents/significant others with orientation so that they are aware of the dangers and appropriate protocol in case of emergency.
7. Distribute the required student forms and have students acknowledge having read and understood their responsibilities.
8. Communicate applicable codes of conduct and consequences for non-compliance. Have a process for the warning and/or dismissal of students in the event of disruptive/dangerous conduct.
9. Establish clear, strong, effective lines of communication/decision making with host/partner institutions, home campus, students, and families.
10. Have an Emergency Contact list that includes:
 - KSU Police
 - On-site local contacts/administrators
 - U.S. campus administrators (Include EAO, Campus Security, Dean of Student Success, Legal Affairs, and Upper Administration)
 - Home /cell phone/ office phone for EAO contacts
 - Student emergency contacts/medical information/passport #
 - Insurance Provider

- 911 equivalent information

RESPONSIVE:

1. Document and keep a record of all actions taken (complete the [BRT incident reporting form](#))
2. Inform and consult appropriate contacts (local officials, host partners, home campus, and family if FERPA waiver is signed).
3. Collect information from multiple sources. Collect as much information as possible.
4. Obtain permission for medical treatment when required (done during student orientation).
5. Have a reliable language interpreter if needed.

Risk Management

Education abroad may involve unique risks to participants and a higher level of responsibility for supervisors. This document describes how program directors and faculty can best protect their students from harm and themselves from litigation. The final section is devoted to procedures for handling crisis situations abroad. These procedures for handling crises are not optional, and are to be followed exactly by ALL program administrators or faculty in the situations described.

Safety and Tort Liability Issues

Tort law covers civil suits involving wrongful acts that result in injury, loss, or damage, with negligence being the most common type of tort litigation. In education abroad, the most common example of negligence is a failure to counsel students sufficiently about the risks and dangers (natural, social, political, cultural, and legal) inherent in living in a foreign environment.

A legal judgment of negligence must prove duty, breach of duty, proximate cause, and actual injury. Duty is defined as an obligation recognized by the law, and is determined when the risk in question is deemed to be foreseeable through the objective eyes of "a reasonably prudent person in a similar situation." Once a duty has been determined to exist, a standard of care is established. Disregard of this standard of care is a breach of duty and can result in a lawsuit (i.e. a program director who takes a group of students into a known war zone has breached their duty).

With a breach of duty established, a litigant must determine proximate cause. Proximate cause is proof that the breach of duty resulted in the injury, loss, or damage in question. Finally, successful litigation requires proof that an actual injury (physical or mental) occurred.

It is important to note that the standard of care in education abroad programs is higher than at the home campus because students are in unfamiliar environments without the support networks to which they are accustomed. In addition, students may be operating in non-English speaking populations. You must be conscious of this fact during pre-departure preparations and on-site management of your program.

The following are ways to minimize the risk of tort litigation:

1. Program and Site Familiarity

You must be thoroughly familiar with the program; providers of services; and the cultural, political, and social conditions of the site. Investigate the security of all accommodations and the safety record of all transportation providers. Research the security of all destinations and the areas through which the group will travel using ground transportation. Monitor [State Department Travel Advisories](#), [the Overseas Security Advisory Council](#), and [Consular Information Sheets](#). A site visit/planning trip well before the program begins is absolutely necessary.

2. Supervision and Backup

Make sure that someone is always in charge. An assistant director or leader must be available in case the director is unable to function. Students should always be accompanied during group travel. Someone (site director, co-director, faculty member, host institution staff, student leader or KSU staff) should be available to handle emergency situations at all times.

3. Insurance

Students going abroad must carry insurance that will cover medical expenses, repatriation of remains, and medical evacuation. This must be made very clear to students upon application and during orientation. KSU currently has a [policy](#) with [Cultural Insurance Services International \(CISI\)](#).

4. Student Orientations

One of the best ways to ensure the safety of students and minimize the occurrence of litigation over negligence is to provide a thorough orientation. The orientation should include:

- Cautions about alcohol and drug abuse and a warning not to use, carry, buy, or sell illegal drugs.
- A warning that students are subject to local laws and that little can be done by the program or the U.S. Embassy to help students who are caught breaking the law. In addition, students may also be subject to the code of conduct of Kennesaw State University and U.S. law.
- Region-specific health information such as the nature, prevention, and treatment of region-specific diseases; required and recommended vaccinations; water and food risks; and description of persistent and epidemic diseases.
- Travel health information available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Advice to prepare a customized medical kit including prescription medications in labeled bottles, generic prescriptions for refills, and an extra pair of eyeglasses (if needed).
- Information about the physiological and psychological consequences of jet lag, culture shock, homesickness, loneliness, changes in diet, lack of exercise, etc.
- General instructions for emergency medical situations — using a country's emergency telephone system (like 911), calling an ambulance, a hospital or doctor, or an embassy or consular office.
- Prudent advice on how to minimize the possibility of being the victim of crime.
- Warning to avoid political activity.
- How to locate routine and emergency professional medical help.
- Facts on local crime and the political situation. You may wish to distribute the State Department's Travel Advisories and Consular Information Sheets.

5. Ready Access to Emergency Information for Students

It is standard operating procedure for Faculty Directors to provide students with identification cards that they can carry with them at the program site. Identification cards must include daytime and evening telephone numbers and addresses for the program, and local emergency telephone numbers.

6. Keeping Basic Information on Students

Program directors should have on-site, photocopied information pages from the passports of every student and participating faculty member in case passports are lost or stolen or individual persons have to be identified. Recognizable photographs of program participants should also be on file. These may be printed from StudioAbroad or acquired from an EAO Advisor.

Contractual Liability

This form of liability stems from not providing the services or quality of services that are promised. In order to avoid contractual litigation, you should do the following:

1. Be honest about travel, prices, housing, food, etc.
2. Include disclaimers (e.g. prices may vary; services may change) in program literature. For example, "all costs are subject to change because of unanticipated increases in airfares or other program elements or fluctuations in monetary exchange rates."
3. Provide equivalent services when changes are made.
4. Obtain clear, written contracts with service providers that include services, costs, and a refund or alternate plan if first-choice services cannot be provided.

Education Abroad Incident Response and Reporting Procedures

While DGA's emphasis is on prevention, the emergency protocol includes procedures for responding and reporting incidents that occur while abroad. Below are our procedures for effectively responding to critical incidents and implementing appropriate methods of collecting, analyzing, and reporting the data.

What is a reportable incident?

Incident reporting should be used for any code of conduct violation which may include crimes or incidents *reported or committed by* a student that involve bodily harm, the threat of bodily harm, or any racially motivated verbal or physical harassment. This may also include physical or mental illness. In all instances, it is critical to document when the crime or incident occurred, when it was reported, and what response protocol was used by program staff.

All incidents must be reported using the Behavioral Response Team Red Flag Reporting System which can be found at www.kennesaw.edu/brt. The "Red Flag" reporting system was created in an effort to take a planned approach to identifying and assisting individuals who are distressed and/or exhibiting abnormal, threatening or dangerous behavior.

After any incident, the response needs to be timely and professional. It should also be personal and sincere. All incidents should be treated confidentially. The standardized incident report that the overseas staff will generate should address the following:

1. Did the reported event (or events) involve a program student?
2. Time and date of the incident.
3. Did the student need medical attention?
4. Were there witnesses?
5. Was the host institution notified?
6. Was a police report filed?
7. Did the incident affect the rest of the student cohort/program?
8. Any recommended follow-up actions? (i.e. need for counseling, medical check-up, etc)

It is important to note that, at all times, faculty/staff should be respectful of a student's privacy. Faculty Directors should not reveal information, even to a student's family members, without the student's express written consent (FERPA Waiver). If a reporting student requests anonymity, this request must be honored to the extent permitted by law. Accordingly, no information should be included on the incident report form that would personally identify the victim without his or her consent. In all cases of critical incidents, every effort should be made to encourage the student to contact a parent and/or guardian. If the student's life is in danger, it may be considered prudent and necessary to involve families; and either to consider sending the student home, or bringing the family members abroad to assist the student. Such actions should be taken in consultation with the EAO.

Education Abroad Critical Incident Management Plan

This plan has been developed by DGA as an adjunct to [Kennesaw State University's Emergency Action Plan](#) to ensure the University's critical incident management procedures.

Procedure Description

1. This plan provides a framework for managing a critical incident involving education abroad students
2. This plan includes risk reduction measures, assigned responsibilities, critical incident management and reporting procedures and emergency contact details.
3. This plan applies to all University staff that work with education abroad students involved in critical incidents.

Definitions

A Critical Incident is defined as: a traumatic event, or the threat of such which causes extreme stress, fear or injury to KSU education abroad students, staff or faculty. It can include but is not limited to:

Student arrest
Student is the victim of a crime
Report of missing student
Acute illness (physical or mental)
Student hospitalization, emergency medical evacuation, or death
Drug and alcohol abuse
Sexual assault
Student physical assault
Student suicide attempt
Natural disaster
Fire, explosion, bomb threat
Civil disorder

Responsibilities

Plan Manager: Iyonka Strawn-Valcy, Director of Education Abroad and Exchange Programs

Procedures

1. Risk Mitigation Measures

The Division of Global Affairs is responsible for ongoing risk reduction activities in an effort to minimize critical incidents and the effects on students. These measures include:

Education: Ensure that faculty program directors conduct information sessions regarding personal safety, road rules, security, and KSU's stance regarding drug and alcohol use while abroad are given to all education abroad

students. Students are also educated about local support services that can assist and support in case of an emergency.

Participation & Building Networks: Students are advised to develop a support network within the group while traveling abroad together (i.e. it is important to use the buddy system rather than travel alone).

Staff Training: The Education Abroad Advisors and faculty leaders are required to review and be thoroughly familiar with all of the safety and security procedures in order to be well-prepared to deal with any critical incidents.

Emergency Contacts: Per standard operating procedure, program directors will provide all students with emergency contact cards detailing contact numbers for emergency support and services.

2. Designated Officers Responsibilities

The supervising faculty member accompanying the program is the immediate university contact when an education abroad student has been involved in a critical incident. If there is no KSU faculty member accompanying the program, then the first point of contact is the local host. The supervising faculty member, or local host, is responsible for an immediate and appropriate response. When possible they will consult with the Education Abroad Office before taking action.

The supervising faculty member or local host will contact their Education Abroad Director at the first available opportunity to report that a critical incident has occurred, in addition to completing [a BRT incident report](#).

When necessary the Education Abroad Director will escalate the response by contacting Senior University staff as required in the University Emergency Procedures Plan and arrange a critical incident team to respond to all ramifications of the incident.

The critical incident team may include:

Vice Provost of Global Affairs
Education Abroad Advisors
Dean of Student Success
Director of Counseling and Psychological Services
Legal Affairs
Public Safety
Registrar, Financial Aid, Bursar
University Relations

3. Program Faculty and Staff Response to Critical Incident

Immediate response:

1. Assess the risk to student, others, and self. Take actions to ensure all parties involved are safe from further harm.
2. Assess if there is a risk of further harm to the student, harm to the education abroad participants, or other life or property. The assistance of emergency services must be requested immediately if necessary.
3. Arrange medical treatment as soon as possible if necessary, and provide immediate appropriate personal support, and any other assistance as reasonably required.
4. Identify the full name and student identification number of the student(s) involved in the critical incident (if possible).

5. Contact the KSU Police Emergency number and they will notify the Director of Education Abroad and other relevant members of the critical incident team, and request additional support and/or escalation of management of the incident if required.
6. Contact the EAO Office or Director of the Education Abroad Office. This person will advise on the need for further action.
7. The program director and Education Abroad Office will make notes of key facts of the incident at the first available opportunity.

This phase is completed when the student is safe from further harm, in receipt of necessary immediate support and services, and in a stable care environment.

Secondary response:

1. The Faculty Program Director and Education Abroad Advisor responding to the situation should discuss the critical incident with the Director of the Education Abroad Office to determine the next course of action.
2. The Education Abroad Office is to identify other interested parties who may need to be notified, or may be affected by the incident, and inform the Director who will advise on an appropriate communication and support response.
3. Sensitivity to the student's wishes in terms of contact and notifying others must receive high priority where it does not conflict with statutory obligations placed on the University and its staff.
4. The Education Abroad Office will arrange access to counselors for students and staff affected, as necessary. The Director of the Education Abroad Office may establish an information point for students, family, and others who are affected by the situation as necessary.
5. The Director of the Education Abroad Office, in conjunction with the faculty program director or on-site host, is to assess if emergency funds or other resources are required.
6. The Director of the Education Abroad Office, in conjunction with the faculty program director or on-site host, is to make all necessary arrangements depending on the situation (e.g. extra security, funeral arrangements, etc).
7. The Director of the Education Abroad Office will consult with the Vice Provost for Global Affairs who (where applicable) will involve University Media Relations and the Legal Office at the first available opportunity to provide a briefing regarding the incident.
8. The Faculty Program Director or on-site host responding to the situation must submit a full written report of the incident and response.

This phase is complete when all affected parties have been notified and support services have been mobilized (as required), necessary practical arrangements made, and an incident report form filed.

Follow up response

1. Review the implications of the incident for the student's academic studies and determine the need for alternative accommodations and implement a support plan if required.
2. Review the incident and identify implications for future responses. Develop plans and amend policy if necessary to prevent a recurrence of the incident or any shortcomings in the response.

Critical Incident Reporting

1. The Faculty Program Director or on-site host managing the critical incident is required to establish the facts and keep detailed records.
2. These records must be kept on file and marked as confidential.
3. These records may be used in the case of coronial enquiry, media interest, and/or police investigation.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Permission must be sought from the student to disclose personal information as outlined in the Privacy Act, except in the case that there is concern for the student’s safety and disclosure of the information may lessen or prevent a serious and imminent threat to the students' life, health or safety.

Education Abroad Office Contact Telephone Numbers

**Contact KSU Police first for Incidents Abroad: Non-Emergency: 470-578-6206 Emergency: 470-578-6666
Additional campus resources and KSU numbers can be at the DGA’s [Risk Management Page](#):*

**Education Abroad Office
Kennesaw State University
Hours: Monday – Friday 8am-5pm EST
Phone: 470-578-6336**

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