FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD POLICY MANUAL

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Implemented by
WKU’s Office of Study Abroad & Global Learning
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FOREWORD

The purpose of this manual is to state the policies related to credit and non-credit travel outside the United States during which WKU employees and students interact. It is designed to protect the faculty, the students, and the University by stating the responsibilities of parties involved with WKU study abroad programs. It was developed primarily by the International Education Council (IEC) in conjunction with the Chief International Officer (CIO) and the Interim Director of the Office of Study Abroad and Global Learning (SAGL). It was approved by the Council of Academic Deans on October 20, 2009.

Program Leaders are free to implement stricter policies at their discretion, but all program participants shall be fully informed of the policies.

These policies cover neither Alumni nor Athletic foreign travel. Research programs without WKU students are not required to adhere to these policies. However, research programs that do include WKU students in any capacity must adhere to these policies. It is strongly recommended that these policies be applied to all foreign travel, regardless of purpose or participation, in that the policies have been carefully vetted by experienced travelers with a deep understanding of the inherent risks of international travel.

Consortia programs such as, but not limited to, KIIS, CCSA, and CCIS remain under the oversight of the consortia program managers. WKU defers to the policies of these program providers in areas that overlap with this policy manual. However, a WKU student is always held to the WKU Student Code of Conduct as long as he/she is enrolled at WKU.

Good luck with your study abroad program. The Study Abroad & Global Learning office offers assistance with the processes contained in this manual and in the logistical, itinerary, and financial planning that goes into successful study abroad programs. In addition, each college has an international liaison to help guide the proposal and program management process.
I. WKU Study Abroad Leadership

WKU Study Abroad Programs
WKU Study Abroad Programs are defined as WKU credit and non-credit programs that include student travel outside the United States conducted by WKU faculty and other appropriate WKU employees.

Executive Director of International Programs
The Executive Director of International Programs reports to the Provost, represents international interests on the Council of Academic Deans, provides leadership support for the WKU International Education Council, and provides leadership for implementing international dimensions of the university’s strategic plan as well as for refinement and administration of the strategic plan. The primary responsibility is to expand opportunities for the active engagement of students in international learning experiences both off-campus and on-campus.

International Education Council
The International Education Council (IEC) consists of faculty and student representatives charged with promoting and strengthening the international mission of the University. The IEC initiates, advocates, and oversees various efforts to help integrate internationalization throughout the institution and to deepen its impact for teaching and learning at WKU. The IEC retains the right to approve or deny WKU study abroad programs.

Office of Study Abroad & Global Learning
The Study Abroad & Global Learning office (SAGL) facilitates the process of creating, managing, and marketing study abroad and global learning opportunities. All forms referred to in this policy manual shall be provided by SAGL.

Program Leadership
All WKU study abroad programs require two WKU representatives.

Program Leader
The Program Leader (PL) is any WKU employee teaching a course within a WKU-led program. If a program has more than one PL, the Program Leaders shall designate one of the PLs as the primary contact with SAGL and other WKU offices. All PLs share equally in the safety and financial responsibilities of the program, and serve as the WKU representatives for the program.

If multiple courses are being conducted in the same location at the same time, compensation will be based on enrollments in individual courses. Students enrolled in multiple sections within a program will be counted as one-and-one-half students for compensation purposes, and compensation will be divided evenly between the multiple sections.
Program Co-Leader

The Program Co-Leader is a WKU representative whose primary responsibility is to provide assistance in the administration of the program as directed by the PL. Normally, a Program Co-Leader does not teach a course within the program. The PL is to state the Co-leader’s name, title, and qualifications in the Program Proposal. The PL may choose the Co-leader from three (3) options:
1. A WKU employee appropriate for the level of responsibilities as stated in the policies
2. A graduate student with the approval of the department head. Graduate students may not serve as program co-leader if they are enrolled in the program. Exceptions may be made if graduate students are pursuing a directed studies course.
3. An official from another institution with an established relationship with WKU, and with the approval of the department head.

The PL may opt for SAGL to recruit a Program Co-Leader.

The PL and Co-leader shall be identified on the Program Proposal, thereby accepting responsibility for the program.

Staffing Requirements

There will be a minimum of two leaders for each program enrolling up through 24 students. For student groups beyond 24, another leader should be added. Larger groups should maintain the minimum student/leader ratio of 24:2. Staffing needs for a program will be determined by comparing the enrollment in all courses taught in the program with the number of faculty teaching in the program. Students enrolled in multiple courses will be counted one-and-one-half times. If a program leader desires staffing beyond the level recommended in these guidelines, compensation (if any) for additional personnel must be budgeted and covered in the program budget. This includes overhead charges associated with the compensation. The compensation for additional personnel must not exceed that in the compensation guidelines for a program co-leader.

The expenses for the program leader and co-leader(s) are included as part of the program budget. Expenses associated with additional personnel should not normally be covered by student fees.

Policy Notes: Existing Policies

This document is based upon several existing policies. These include, but are not limited to, the WKU Student Handbook, the WKU Faculty Handbook, HR policies, purchasing guidelines, travel guidelines, workers compensation, and liability statutes for employees of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

II. Program Development

A WKU study abroad program must be approved in advance by the Department, College, IEC, and CIO.
WKU Study Abroad Program Proposal

WKU Study Abroad Program Proposals, including credit and non-credit bearing, are to be submitted at least 90 days prior to the planned departure, except in extraordinary circumstances, which must be explained in the program proposal. The Proposal must be approved by an Academic Department Head and Dean, ensuring academic value, prior to submission to SAGL. The SAGL Director shall review the proposal to ensure all sections are addressed and to make a recommendation to the IEC for action by the next regularly scheduled IEC meeting. The IEC shall recommend action on the application to the CIO. If approved, SAGL shall contact the PL(s) within five (5) working days on how to proceed.

Proposal Deadlines

Winter/spring semester 2012: October 1, 2011
Winter/spring semester 2013: October 1, 2012
Summer 2012: February 1, 2012
Winter/spring semester 2014: October 1, 2013
Summer 2014: February 3, 2014
Fall 2012: April 1, 2012
Fall 2013: April 1, 2013
Winter/spring semester 2015: October 1, 2014
Summer 2015: February 2, 2015
Fall 2014: April 1, 2014
Fall 2015: April 1, 2015

Program Budget

The PL shall calculate the costs for the program to be paid by students, including insurance costs as determined by the AHP cost structure. Those costs should include the program costs for the PL(s) and Co-Leader. Costs for other accompanying individuals shall not be calculated into the costs charged to students.

Tuition/Fees

*Summer and Winter Term* – WKU students shall be charged $50/credit hour for Summer and Winter term courses, to be calculated into the program costs and billed by the Bursar.

*Fall and Spring Semester* – WKU students shall be billed by the Bursar, based upon student status (i.e. full-time or part-time, in-state or out-of-state), at the published rate for fall and spring semesters.

III. Financial Management of the Program

Program Leaders shall be the financial managers of the approved WKU study abroad program.

Program Account

After program approval, the WKU Controller’s office shall establish an account for the PL for use to deposit payments (revenue) and to pay expenses as listed on the budget. All WKU purchasing policies and procedures are in force with this account. PL must apply for a procurement card and attend training. Any deficits incurred by the program shall be the responsibility of the affiliated Departmental
and Dean’s offices to reconcile. Unused fees shall be used at the discretion of the PLs, in consultation with the Department Head, adhering to WKU’s financial policies. The WKU Internal Auditor forbids charging the costs of any other travelers (spouses, friends, etc.) to the students. The PL is prohibited from mixing official program funds with personal accounts.

**Student payment**
The PL shall submit complete invoices for each student on the program roster. The invoice must reflect the total program cost minus the $50/credit tuition fee. The PL must put in writing the payment/refund policy for program funds (in Program Proposal) and ensure that students are fully informed of the policy.

**Compensation**
SAGL shall initiate compensation through WKU’s payroll process for the PL(s) and Co-leader(s) based on policies of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and published on the IEC web site. Non WKU personnel will not be compensated by WKU.

WKU faculty will receive a stipend *processed by 10th of the month (upon receipt of a post-program report) to receive in end of month paycheck*

**IV. Post-Approval Process**
The PL shall communicate the policies to all participants (leaders, students, and accompanying individuals).

**Program and Course Information**
The PL shall provide SAGL the following information when it is made available to students:

1. Program enrollment deadlines
2. Program and course requirements, guidelines and policies
3. Preliminary itinerary
4. Payment/refund schedule
5. Accommodations information
6. Transportation information

**Training**
The PL(s) and Co-Leader(s) shall complete a SAGL training program that will cover relevant topics.

**Recruiting and Selecting Students**
The PL(s) is responsible for recruiting and selecting students. SAGL shall provide marketing support for recruiting students through postings on the website, the publication of info cards promoting the program and through class and table presentations. The PL shall require that each participating student complete the Study Abroad Application and Acceptance Packet provided by SAGL (to include approval and release forms). The PL shall communicate pertinent health and safety risk information during the recruitment and application phase. Issues may include, but are not limited to required immunizations,
level of strenuous activity, potential risks of required activities, limited medical treatment, and medications.

**Setting up the Course in Banner**
The PL shall ensure that each course within the program is created in Banner.

**Student Disabilities Act**
PLs are advised that the American Disabilities Act rarely applies to students outside the United States. Accommodations and accessibility may be much different outside the United States and should be investigated by PLs prior to students registering in the program. PLs are advised that students enrolled with WKU Student Disability Service are encouraged to meet with SDS officials prior to departure.

**Visiting Students Enrolled in Course**
SAGL requires that non-degree seeking students from an institution other than WKU (visiting students) complete a WKU visiting student application (available online) and obtain an #800 through the Office of Admissions. Students must pay the corresponding $40 application fee. Following completion of the application, students must fill out the Study Abroad Application and the Acceptance Packet.

**Accompanying Individuals**
WKU permits other persons to accompany a program. However, accompanying Individuals may travel with the program at the discretion of the PL and must be approved by the PL prior to departure. Such individuals are not considered official WKU representatives and may not have any program responsibilities nor any expenses paid through program fees. Children under eighteen (18) years of age must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian who is not serving as a PL, a Co-leader, or a program participant. All adults and children accompanying a program must be listed on the Program’s travel roster.

**V. Pre-Departure**
The program leaders are responsible for due diligence in the management of a study abroad program.

**Orientation**
SAGL shall conduct a general WKU orientation for study abroad students. This session shall complement, not replace, program-specific orientations provided by the PL. SAGL shall inform PLs of the WKU orientation schedule. Failure to complete SAGL orientation may result in the revocation of the student’s right to participate in the program.

The PL shall conduct a program-specific orientation that includes, but is not limited to, topics such as itineraries, program-specific policies, deadlines, travel and housing information, relevant medical and health information, completion of WKU required forms, refund policy, behavioral expectations, and
alcohol/drug policies. Specifically, the PL shall provide information to the students on these topics and provide the same information to SAGL:

**Destination Information**
The PL shall inform all travelers on destination-specific travel issues, including, but not limited to, customs, duties, regulation, penalties related to Immigration and Customs, health and safety, food and water issues, and currency. The PL shall inform ALL travelers of health issues through the [Centers for Disease Control’s](https://www.cdc.gov) website.

**Medication**
The PL shall communicate to program participants the regulations regarding the transport and use of medications. Program leaders are prohibited from providing medication (even OTC) to students. The PL shall take reasonable steps to be aware of any medical conditions that could impact a participant’s ability to function within the program; the steps taken to determine this information should be equivalent to what is usual and or permissible in regular on-campus WKU courses.

**Destination Safety**
The PL shall communicate to program participants the risks of traveling within the destination(s) and provide systems (e.g., buddy system) to show due diligence in keeping participants safe. The PL shall communicate to program participants the local norms for the destination(s) and the expectations the PL has for participant behavior outside the “classroom” environment.

**Travel Documents**
The PL shall inform all program participants of the need for a valid passport and necessary travel documents. If the passport is lost/stolen, the PL shall assist the person in contacting the US Embassy and/or US Consular office. Prior to departure, the PL shall provide to all program travelers and SAGL information on how to contact the US Embassy and/or Consulate in the countries to be visited.

**International Travel Documentation**
The PL shall notify all participants (leaders, students, and accompanying individuals) of the required travel forms and documentation to be provided to SAGL.

**Program Roster**
The PL shall provide SAGL the program’s final roster to include ALL program travelers. Based upon the program’s final roster, SAGL shall register the travelers with the Department of State prior to the departure of the program.

**Release and Emergency Contact Information – All Travelers**
The PL shall inform all travelers of the requirement to submit the Release and Emergency Contact Information form to the SAGL office.
Study Abroad Approval – Students
The PL shall inform the student participants that they are required to submit the required SAGL forms (Study Abroad Approval Package) to the SAGL office.

International Medical Insurance – All WKU Travelers
WKU requires international medical insurance be purchased by each student traveling outside the United States for any WKU activity. PLs and Co-leaders are required to purchase the AHP insurance that is also provided to students. Accompanying individuals, who are WKU employees, will also be required to purchase the insurance at their own expense. SAGL will arrange payment with provider. SAGL will provide insurance cards and information for each policyholder prior to departure.

Travel Authorization & Restrictions
WKU requires all employees to submit to the Provost an International Travel Authorization (formerly Out-of-Country Travel Authorization) with the Program Proposal. WKU prohibits travel to countries or regions within countries for which the U.S. State Department has active travel warnings. Exceptions will be considered based upon other official sources such as the U.S. Peace Corps and federal granting agencies. The IEC and CIO reserve the right to deny a program that would undertake activity in a country or region of a country that is deemed unsafe.

Export Controls Compliance
Activities involving individuals outside the United States directly related to program activities (i.e. guest lecturers, in-country faculty, colleagues) should be listed in the itinerary.

Equipment and materials taken to a foreign destination or received in a foreign destination during the journey fall under other restrictions. WKU’s Compliance Coordinator in the Office of Sponsored Programs provides access to Stanford’s Export Control Decision Tree as a resource to help WKU employees determine export control requirements. It is the PLs’ responsibility to review the rules related to export controls and obtain appropriate approval from the WKU Compliance Officer prior to departure. (http://export.stanford.edu/tree/index.html)

Visas
The PL shall verify that all US-passport holders obtain the appropriate visa. The PL shall verify that all non-US-passport holders, originating from the US, conform to visa requirements of the destination(s).

Emergency Planning
The PL is responsible for providing a safe program within the official program dates. To reduce the overall risks of a study abroad program and ensure due diligence in providing a safe program, the PL is required to develop an emergency plan that includes the following elements.
Communication Protocol
SAGL shall provide a Communication Protocol within five (5) days of the departure. The PL shall use every means possible to contact SAGL related to events including, but not limited to, hospitalization, major injuries and/or trauma, crime, civil unrest, major natural disasters, or evacuation from the location if necessary.

Local Emergency Plans and Rendezvous Locations
The PL shall create and communicate to participants a local emergency plan to include rendezvous procedures and locations in case of emergencies.

Evacuation Plan
The PL shall provide a group evacuation plan from the country to SAGL prior to departure.

SAGL Emergency Cards
SAGL shall provide wallet-sized emergency cards to the PL seven (7) days before departure for each program traveler. The PL shall inform the program travelers of the appropriate use of emergency cards based upon these Emergency Planning policies the PL develops.

Drug and Alcohol Use
The PL shall inform students of expectations regarding behavior and of university sanctions regarding misconduct. PLs shall inform all program travelers that violations of local laws will be handled within the legal system of the country in which a violation takes place.

Illegal Drugs Policy
WKU has a zero-tolerance policy regarding the possession, use, sale, exchange or distribution of illegal drugs by anyone participating in WKU study abroad programs.

Alcohol Policy
Alcohol use during study abroad programs is a leading cause of health and safety incidents that adversely affect students, PLs, academic administrators, and WKU as whole. Extra effort is required to ensure all program participants (Students, PLs, and Accompanying Individuals) are informed of the risks of alcohol use.

While consumption of alcohol is not prohibited on study abroad trips, the PL and Co-leader shall:

1. Complete SAGL Alcohol Education training;
2. Encourage students who are legally allowed to consume alcohol outside the U.S. to drink responsibly and be aware of the dangers of excessive alcohol consumption;
3. Ensure that the program itinerary in no way inhibits the full participation of those who do not drink alcohol;
4. Inform participants of local laws and ordinances (including drinking age), regarding alcohol;
5. Ensure these policies are clearly presented to program participants in writing prior to departure.
Program Leaders are free to implement stricter policies at their discretion, but all program participants shall be fully informed of the policies.

**WKU Student Handbook**
Just as students are protected by, and held to, the standards stated in the WKU Student Handbook while on the WKU campus, they are also held to the same standards while abroad. Due to the unique nature of international travel, PLs and Co-leaders are expected to familiarize themselves with this Handbook. For students, violations are just cause for immediate termination of their right to participate in a program, possibly resulting in a failing grade.

**VI. In-Program**

**FERPA and Communication with Parents/Guardians**
The PL shall be aware of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). While certain academic and personal protections exist within the FERPA guidelines, the PL may exercise discretion on reporting matters to a participant’s emergency contact. The basic definition is that if a *student creates a situation that puts an individual student or the people around the student at risk*, then FERPA does not apply. If the matter is an academic issue, where there is no physical risk, then FERPA does apply. For details, see the [Faculty Handbook, pg. 14](#). If there are any issues that need attention from WKU or about which the PL determines a student’s family needs to know, the PL shall contact SAGL immediately. The Director of Study Abroad & Global Learning shall advise the PL on a course of action.

**In-Program Health Issues**
The PL shall provide information for obtaining local emergency medical care. The location of care and the relevant methods of transportation to each location should be learned in advance or immediately upon arrival, and communicated to program participants. If a student is unable to be with the group for medical reasons, one of the leaders shall stay with the student until he/she is released to rejoin the group, a family member arrives, or additional WKU personnel arrive.

**Student Travel**
PLs are responsible for informing all program participants of the risks of international travel and provide mechanisms to address safety issues prior to and during international travel.

**In-Program Travel**
In-program travel is defined as travel between the official start and end dates of a program as stated on the final program itinerary. During a WKU program, the PL retains the right to deny non-course travel.

**Outside-Program Travel**
Outside-program travel is defined as travel outside the official start and end dates of a program as stated on the final program itinerary. SAGL shall include a means for a student to opt for Outside-Program Travel.

**Local Ground Transportation**
The transportation of WKU study-abroad participants shall be left to the discretion of the PL.

**Vehicle Rental**
The PL is allowed to rent a vehicle and drive the program participants him/herself. However, the PL is advised that the WKU Certificate of Liability for vehicles does not extend internationally. If the PL elects to drive a vehicle, the PL shall purchase mandatory insurance and supplemental liability insurance offered through the rental agency.

**VII. Code of Conduct While Abroad**
The PL shall communicate the expected conduct of students and other program participants, and enforce the policies stated in the student handbook.

**Faculty/Staff Code of Conduct**
All WKU employees are held to the conduct stated in the Faculty Handbook, accessed via the Web.

**WKU Code of Student Conduct**
While the institution does not desire to act as a policing authority for the activities of the student off of University property, and while it cannot serve as a sentencing authority for a student's violation of federal, state or local law, the University may take appropriate action in situations involving misconduct that violates the WKU Code of Student Conduct. When actions or incidents occur off campus, such conduct may call into question the student's continued membership in the educational community either because the student grossly violated elementary standards of behavior required for the maintenance of the educational community or because the student's continued presence would adversely affect the pursuit of educational goals by others.

The PL shall inform students that the WKU Code of Student Conduct is in force to protect the student and uphold the standards the same as if the student were on the WKU campus. Violation of WKU regulations or policies may result in disciplinary action upon return to campus. The PL shall familiarize himself/herself with this handbook.

**Procedures for Addressing Behavioral Problems and Disciplinary Action**
While *en loco parentis* (the responsibility to take on the role of a surrogate parent) does not explicitly exist, the PLs and Co-Leaders are expected to maintain and execute responsibilities that are not normally part of on-campus teaching responsibilities. The PL shall set clear
guidelines regarding disciplinary criteria, behavioral expectations, sanctioning processes, and dismissal criteria and procedures, and communicate these to the students prior to departure.

On Site Disciplinary Action
The PL shall be responsible for documenting a situation that may lead to student disciplinary action. The following shall be considered:
1. The degree of willfulness or inadvertence;
2. The degree of injury or risk of injury to the accused or to another person, if any;
3. The extent of damage to property, if any;
4. The danger or risk of danger to the University community, if any; and
5. Any other factor or circumstance bearing reasonably upon mitigation or aggravation or the seriousness of the alleged offenses should it be established as a violation.

The following steps are required for dealing with such a situation:
1. Start a written journal, noting all details about the situation (date, location, persons involved);
2. If the PL does not consider the situation severe, the PL shall discuss the policies with the students;
3. If the PL considers the situation serious, the PL shall discuss the policies with the students AND provide a written warning to the student(s), with a copy shared with SAGL in a timely manner. A warning statement should include, but not be limited to:
   a. Date and location;
   b. Detailed description of the behavior, and reason(s) it was considered inappropriate;
   c. Clearly stated expectations and consequences (including restricted activities, if applicable) to be in effect for the remainder of the program;
   d. Indication that this is the final warning and any continuation of the undesirable behavior shall result in disciplinary action with no refund.

VIII. Post-Program

Evaluation
PLs shall complete the post-program report provided by SAGL thirty (30) days prior to the start of the next academic semester to help SAGL promote future trips and to inform the University of the value and contribution of the overseas learning experience.

IX. Compliance

Deadlines
Unless otherwise noted, the PL shall provide documentation and forms to SAGL not less than seven (14) days prior to scheduled departure.
Legal Liability of WKU Program Leaders
WKU’s General Counsel defines the WKU employee’s rights related to workers’ compensation and liability engaged in study abroad activities (as found on the IEC website). As with any legal matter, liability protection is not absolute and an individual may choose to also have additional personal liability insurance policies.