Study Abroad Management Requirements

Georgia State University recognizes that issues of program management and crisis prevention for study abroad programs are complex. Therefore, the guidelines below are tailored to the unique demands of study abroad.

Program Management and Participation

1. **Program Director Eligibility:** Each Georgia State University faculty-led study abroad program must have at least one Program Director. Program Directors must be regular faculty able to exercise a high degree of discretion and responsibility on behalf of the institution while also leading an academically challenging study abroad program. A study abroad Program Director must be a member of the University faculty as listed below and qualified to be the instructor of record for courses they will teach abroad.

   Leading a study abroad program involves making important decisions on behalf of the institution including participant safety, crisis management and institutional risk. Program Directors should be well-versed in the location of the study abroad program, either through past experiences living, working or studying there or because of a GSU-funded site visit. Program Directors must travel abroad with the students who are participating in the program and stay in program accommodations with the students for the duration of the study abroad program. Program directors must.

   *Eligible Program Directors:* Full-time, benefit-eligible faculty.

   *Ineligible Program Directors:* Public Service Professional, Research Scientist, Research Associate, Research Engineer, Research Technologist, graduate students, part-time faculty, part-time instructors, adjunct faculty, and faculty or staff with temporary or visiting positions.

2. **Program Director Responsibilities:**
   - Complete and submit the Study Abroad Proposal or Renewal documents, including the Budget, Itinerary, and Course Syllabus each year
   - Coordinate program logistics (housing, meals, transportation) or work with a provider to do so
   - Arrange and manage program academics (syllabus, textbooks, international/domestic partners, guest lecturers, etc.)
   - Actively promote the program to meet enrollment targets with assistance from Study Abroad Programs
   - Review applications and select participants in Terra Dotta
• Facilitate a program-specific pre-departure orientation for students
• Complete a mandatory pre-departure preparation for program directors, including GSU’s Emergency Procedures Workshop each year
• Provide an on-site orientation for students upon arrival in host location
• Manage and adhere to the approved budget on-site and following GSU and USG financial guidelines and procedures.
• Respond to student crises, including emergency situations, student misconduct, and behavioral/personal problems
• Remain on-call 24/7 for emergency response procedures

3. **Eligible Assistants to the Program Director**: Additional OII or College staff willing and able to assist the Program Director may be added to a study abroad program roster. Additional program staffing needs will be evaluated and determined by the Program Director and the Director of Study Abroad Programs. Only SAP-approved official program staff may accompany the group. Staff expenses and time away from the office must be discussed and approved by staff member's supervisor. Graduate Assistants can be assistants to the Program Director and their travel expenses can be covered by the study abroad program budget. However, their GA stipend may not be included in the study abroad program budget.

4. **New Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs**: A New Program Approval Form must be completed by the Program Director(s) and approved by the Program Director(s), Chair, Dean or Dean’s designee, SAP Director, Associate Provost for International Initiatives and the Provost. Program Directors must meet with the SAP Director before a new program will be approved. New Program Approval Forms must be submitted to the Study Abroad Programs Office no later than February 1 for fall programs, July 1 for spring programs and July 1 for Maymester/Summer programs. The SAP Director has the authority to withhold approval for any proposed program.

5. **Renewed Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs**: Programs that qualify as “renewals” are those that have been approved as a new program five years ago or less and have been offered continuously since then except for cancellation due to low enrollment or travel warning. Additionally, renewals may not have any changes to the country destination, program director, program courses or significant changes to their program format since the last time they were approved. Programs qualifying as “renewals” must complete a Study Abroad Program Renewal Form. The Study Abroad Program Renewal Form must be signed by the Program Director(s), Chair, Dean or Dean’s Designee, SAP Director and Associate Provost for International Initiatives. All Study Abroad Program Renewal Forms must be submitted to Study Abroad Programs no later than February 1 for fall programs, July 1 for spring programs, and July 1 for Maymester/Summer programs. For substantial changes to an existing program (change in Program Director, program locations, program terms, etc.), a new Study Abroad Program Approval Form needs to be completed. The SAP Director has the authority to withhold approval for any proposed renewal program.
6. **GSU Exchange Programs**: Exchange Program Directors are required to submit an Annual Exchange Program Renewal Form no later than February 1 for fall and/or academic year exchange programs and June 1 for spring exchange programs. As detailed in the Annual Exchange Program Renewal Form, Exchange Program Directors will need to provide a list of students enrolled in the exchange over the past academic year, the current balance of the exchange and, if applicable, a plan to increase exchange enrollments in the following year.

7. **Site Visits**: Site Visits are required of Program Directors for new programs. Exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Director of Study Abroad Programs. The SAP office has limited funding available for site visits each year. SAP site visit reimbursements may be awarded to future Program Directors upon submission of the Study Abroad Application for Site Visit Funding. Academic departments may also have funding for site visits upon request from the faculty.

8. **Eligible Participants**: Any student participating in a GSU faculty-led program must be enrolled in GSU course credit while abroad. Non-enrolled participants or auditors may not accompany the group. If Program Directors would like to accept non-credit participants, they should request an exception by writing the Director of Study Abroad Programs.

9. **Terms and Conditions of Student Participation**: Students who participate in any study abroad program must be in Good Academic Standing at Georgia State University. GSU defines Good Academic Standing as a cumulative 2.0 GPA for Undergraduate students and 3.0 GPA for Graduate students. Students who are not in Good Academic Standing will not be permitted to study abroad as a student of Georgia State University. Certain study abroad programs may require a higher GPA or specific prerequisite courses before acceptance into the program. Robinson College of Business requires a 2.5 GPA for upper-level courses. Students must not be on academic probation, suspension, or exclusion. Students must have an institutional (Georgia State University) GPA by the time they begin their study abroad experience. First-year students are eligible to study abroad during the Maymester/Summer following their first completed Spring semester. Transfer students and Perimeter College students must complete at least one semester at Georgia State before they can study abroad in order to establish an institutional GPA. International students at Georgia State who hold F-1 visas must contact the International Student & Scholar Services at (404) 413-2070 to discuss possible implications of study abroad for their immigration status. Study Abroad Programs will also check that students are in good Conduct standing with GSU. In order to participate in study abroad, students must complete all the required steps and documents as outlined in their Study Abroad Application, including the Study Abroad Programs waiver, Refund Policy, Student Code of Conduct Acknowledgement, Limitation of Liability, Health Certification, Health Insurance, Vaccinations Acknowledgement, and Medical Consent. The terms and conditions of participation are embedded in the GSU Study Abroad Program Application.

10. **Study Abroad Programs and Office of International Initiatives Support**
One of the functions of the Study Abroad Programs office is to support Program Directors. Below are some of the ways in which we provide support to Program Directors:

- Work with Program Directors to create safe, inclusive, academically sound, and fiscally responsible programs
- Provide guidance regarding best practices for global education programming
- Assist with budget management in conjunction with the Program Director
- Manage all required documents in Terra Dotta
- Promote study abroad across campus in a variety of ways, including social media, SAP newsletter, study abroad virtual and in-person programming, annual Study Abroad Fair and regular Study Abroad Advising.
- Review applications and prepare them for review by Program Director
- Give regular enrollment updates on program numbers
- Oversee billing and financial transactions
- Offer student advising and assistance with pre-departure orientations
- Provide emergency support
- Initiate and facilitate post-program student evaluations

11. **Mandatory Annual Program Director Training**: Program Directors are required to attend an annual meeting with the Director of Study Abroad Programs in order to 1) discuss study abroad policies and best practices 2) review new and revised SAP materials and processes. They must also participate in the annual Emergency Procedures Workshop in the Spring semester.

12. **US Department of State Travel Advisories**: Georgia State University does not sponsor international travel for undergraduate students to a country for which the US Department of State and/or the US Centers for Disease Control have issued a level 3 or 4 travel advisory. However, program directors may petition the Provost for an exception. For details on graduate student travel to countries with travel warnings please refer to Georgia State University’s Travel Policy (1.00.99).

13. **Cancellation of Programs**: In the event of an emergency - such as civil unrest, pandemic outbreak, a natural disaster, or in the case that a travel advisory rises to a level 3 or 4 after program approval and/or departure—it may be necessary to cancel or significantly alter a program for the safety of all program participants. The Director of Study Abroad Programs will make a recommendation to the Associate Provost for International Initiatives, who will update the Provost on the situation. The Provost is the decision-maker on the continuation or cancellation of Study Abroad Programs.

14. **Mandatory Insurance**: Georgia State University Study Abroad Insurance is mandatory for all faculty, staff and students participating in Georgia State study abroad programs and all study abroad programs approved by Georgia State University. For faculty-led GSU programs, the cost of this insurance must be built into the program cost. For GSU
exchange programs and non-GSU programs, Study Abroad Programs will enroll all study abroad participants in the mandatory insurance.

15. **Health Clearance Form**: Each student participating in a study abroad program must complete the Health Clearance Form and submit this form to Study Abroad Programs at least 15 days before departure. Health Clearance Forms must be signed by a US-licensed physician, not by a nurse or a physician’s assistant. The SAP team will review health clearance forms for participation in study abroad programs. The Program Director will review health clearance forms before departure and have immediate access to the Health Clearance Form in Terra Dotta while abroad. Health clearance forms are valid for one year from the date of the US-licensed physician’s signature. If any medical incidents occur while abroad, students may be required to have a doctor or physician complete an on-site version of the Physician’s Certificate in order to approve continued participation in the study abroad program.

16. **Incident Report Form**: In the event of a student incident involving excessive or illegal alcohol consumption, drug use, theft, assault, injury, illness, arrest, a behavior problem, or other serious situations, the Program Director will complete the Incident Report Form and email/text it as soon as possible to the Director of Study Abroad Programs. This will inform the Director of Study Abroad Programs and allow SAP to follow up and provide support if necessary. If applicable, Study Abroad Programs will provide the completed Incident Report to the Office of the Dean of Students and/or other University administrators.

17. **Program Director Emergency on-site and Contact Information**: Program Directors are required to submit their final program itinerary to Study Abroad Programs 15 days before departure and include emergency contact information (name, email, and phone number) and on-site emergency contact information for the students. Emergency information must be submitted 15 days before departure. Exceptions may be made for Program Directors acquiring a cell phone once in-country.

18. **In-Country Cell Phones**: All Program Directors are required to carry a functioning cell phone for the duration of the program. The reasonable cost of a cell phone abroad can be included in the program budget.

19. **Emergency Pocket Brochure**: The Emergency Pocket Brochure includes country-specific information and a list of pertinent GSU numbers. Program Directors must complete an emergency pocket brochure template and submit it to SAP no later than 30 days prior to program departure. If Emergency Pocket Brochure templates are not submitted 30 days prior to departure, Program Directors will be responsible for producing a brochure themselves.

20. **Pre-Departure Orientation**: Program Directors are required to present a program country-specific orientation to all participants with an emphasis on safety issues in advance of their program departure. SAP provides a general mandatory pre-departure for all study abroad participants focusing on GSU policies and procedures, international
travel and safety, as well as other practical aspects of study abroad. SAP will provide staff to assist with pre-departure orientations upon request from the Program Director.

21. **In-Country Orientation**: Program Directors are required to present an in-country orientation within 48 hours of arrival in-country. It is recommended Program Directors include the following information in their orientation: a general introduction to the local community and physical surroundings, details about housing arrangements and local transportation to avoid any student surprises, set expectations for student conduct and remind students of their role as ambassadors to GSU and the U.S while abroad, explain options and any barriers to managing money on-site, highlight the importance of sharing any independent travel (if permitted), highlight the importance of using the buddy system, and review information included in the emergency pocket brochure.

22. **Program Summary and Evaluations**: Study Abroad Programs staff will send program evaluations directly to students upon their return from abroad. Once collected, these responses will be shared with the Program Director.

**Business Management**

All study abroad programs will have the support of a Study Abroad Account Manager for their programs from the Office of International Initiatives (as of fall 2022, this role will no longer lie with college Business Managers). This assigned person will assist the program director in making payments on behalf of the program, charging students for programs, pull budget reports for the program director as requested, and help troubleshoot any financial issues that may arise. Please note that the responsibility of study abroad accounts remains with the Program Director, and as such, any deficits in a Study Abroad account are the responsibility of the program director and their college. All payments and changes to study abroad accounts must be made through the individual assigned by the study abroad office. For additional information on USG Study Abroad accounting procedures, please visit: [https://www.usg.edu/business_procedures_manual/section21/C1608](https://www.usg.edu/business_procedures_manual/section21/C1608)

Please note there is a dedicated email address for all study abroad financial matters which is monitored by the Study Abroad Programs office. Please contact StudyAbroadFinance@gsu.edu for all study abroad business inquiries.

1. **Vendor Setup**: Immediately after the approval or renewal of a study abroad program the Program Director should inform the SAP Business Manager of any potential vendors who will provide a good or service for the program so that vendors can be added to our payment system. Please note that adding a vendor to our payment system can take up to 30 days, and can seriously delay program payments if not completed early. There are no risks involved if you do not end up using a vendor we add to Panthermart, so feel free to send requests for vendors even if you are not sure you will use them in the end.
2. **Contract/Contract Routing Form:** As soon as possible, the Program Director should inform the SAP Business Manager of what contracts may be necessary for the Program. Program Directors must comply with University requirements for contracts with service providers (transportation, tour company packages, and arrangements with foreign universities, and/or individuals), and contracts should be submitted as soon as possible. Failure to timely or properly submit contracts could result in delays in payment. A formal contract is mandatory for any vendor whose goods or services will exceed $5000 USD. All contracts are processed through Georgia State University’s Office of Legal Affairs. Program Directors do not have the authority to sign contracts on behalf of the University. A list of authorized signatories can be found at the “Contracts” tab at the Legal Affairs website. Please note: U.S. companies will have to register for E-verify, under Georgia law. This law requires that a company use the Department of Homeland Security system to verify their eligibility to conduct business in the U.S. If applicable, the Purchasing Department will confirm E-verify status as part of the approval.

3. **Student Universe:** SAP has a contract with this program provider, and they can provide optional support for your programs. The largest benefit of using Student Universe is the fact that we have a line of credit with them, and they can make some of your pre-bookings for you, and issue our office an invoice to process, which we will facilitate for you. This eliminates some of the stress of getting prepayments processed on time for your programs. They can offer as much or as little support as you would like. For example, they can help you book accommodations and flights, and you can book excursions on your own if you wish. If you would like to speak with someone at Student Universe to see if you would be interested in using their services, please contact Rosina Pfister at (rosina.pfister@studentuniverse.com) and please copy (StudyAbroadFinance@gsu.edu).

4. **Program Payments:** All program payments must be made with one of the two following options. **IMPORTANT:** We are moving away from processing reimbursement requests for Study Abroad Pre-purchases, as that financial burden should not fall on the Program Director.
   - **Wire Transfers** – All payments made ahead of time must be paid using wire transfers. Please send all wire transfer requests to StudyAbroadFinance@gsu.edu at least 30 days prior to payment due date. If a wire transfer request is received less than 30 days prior to payment due date, we will process, but cannot guarantee payment to the vendor in time which will affect your program, so please submit these early. **REMINDER:** In order to process a wire transfer, they must be set up as vendors for your program, which should be done shortly after program approval.

   **If the vendor you are trying to pay is domestic, we send a check in lieu of a wire transfer unless the domestic vendor specifically requests a wire transfer.**

   - **Cash Advances:** Cash advances are available for any payments that cannot be made ahead of time, or cannot be paid via wire transfer. Íf a cash advance is
needed, program directors must inform the Business Manager 30 days prior to departure. Cash advances must be closed out within 30 days of returning from the program. Failure to close out cash advances in a timely manner may impact the Program Director’s ability to lead a program in the future.

5. **Accommodations:** When booking hotels, please send payment schedule, official invoice, and contact information for the hotel to the SAP Business Manager within 60 days of payment deadline. Hotels are not required to go through the contract process, unless specifically requested by the vendor. In the event they require your signature, we will need to route as a contract, so that the Office of Legal Affairs can sign off on your behalf.

6. **Group Flights:** The Study Abroad Office can facilitate purchasing group flights for any Program Director; however, flights must be purchased through Student Universe. The only exception to this is if you are using a different Program Provider that includes airfare. Final group lists must be submitted to the SAP Office 60 days in advance of departure. The SAP Business Manager can assist in flight cancellations and changes in case of program change and/or cancellation.

Please note, that in order for the Study Abroad Business Manager to book your flights for you, you must be purchasing at least 10 tickets. If you are booking fewer than 10 tickets, your students will need to book on their own, and we will remove the cost of airfare from your student’s accounts. Student Universe does offer a portal you can use where you can give Student Universe your program flight information, and they will set up an online link that your students can access that will help them book those flights for your program, while also offering them the student rates for ticket prices. Please reach out to StudyAbroadFinance@gsu.edu for further information.

7. **Final Expense Statement:** Upon returning from your program, it is the responsibility of the program director to fill out a complete and accurate Travel Expense Statement and organize all receipts and expenses that took place while abroad and combine them into a single document for review by Disbursements. This packet must be turned in within 30 days of return to StudyAbroadFinance@gsu.edu. This Expense Statement will also serve to closeout any Cash Advances you took before the program as well. Please contact the Study Abroad Business Manager at this email address for any questions related to what is needed, and we are happy to assist.

8. **Closing Study Abroad agency accounts after completion of program:** When a program ends, it is at the program director’s discretion on what to do with remaining funds in the account, and there are two viable options.
   - Funds can be divided and returned to students that participated in the program, or to students that withdrew from the program with short notice that were still charged for all or part of the program, or a combination of the two.
• Funds can be rolled over to the following year’s program account, if the program director is planning on running the same program again. The total rollover amount cannot exceed $3,000.00 in the first year, $4,000.00 in the second consecutive year and $5,000.00 in the third consecutive year. A program can never have more than $5,000.00 rolled over at any point. Any funding left in an account in excess of this limit must be returned to students or be transferred to the Program Director’s college.

In the event a program has rollover funding in it, but does not plan to run in the following year, or if the program is changing (i.e. going to a new destination) in the following year, all accumulated rollover funding will be transferred to the respective college. This will include any scenario in which a new Program Proposal is required instead of a Renewal when submitted to the Study Abroad Office.

**Crisis Management**

1. **Pre-Departure Steps:**
   • All students are required to complete their study abroad Health Clearance Form, sign the Study Abroad Programs waiver and complete all documents and requirements to be able to participate in the study abroad program.
   • All students and Program Directors are enrolled in GSU’s mandatory study abroad insurance for the duration of the study abroad program.
   • All students receive an Emergency Pocket Brochure from their Program Director, which includes important emergency phone numbers for the program.
   • Students participate in at least one pre-departure meeting for their program and have the option to participate in one of several pre-departure meetings offered by Study Abroad Programs.

2. **Program Director Steps to Take in the Event of Emergency on Faculty-led Program:**
   • Program Director is responsible for assessing the emergency and ensuring the safety of all students on program.
   • When faced with an emergency abroad, the Program Director is responsible for contacting Study Abroad Programs by calling the Study Abroad Emergency Line at 470-825-3986 with a detailed report of the emergency.
   • Program Director should report the incident using the incident reporting form and keep a log of events. It is critical that information is shared accurately and completely, as soon as possible.

3. **Questions for Program Director to Consider in an Emergency:**
   • Are all students accounted for and safe?
   • Where are they all now? How can they be reached?
   • Describe the local conditions. What is the local response to the situation?
• Does anyone need medical attention?
• Have students been in touch with their families?
• Has Study Abroad Programs been notified of the developing emergency?

4. **Responsibilities of Study Abroad Programs in an Emergency:**
   • Keep a detailed log of the emergency and provide immediate assistance as needed to the Program Director and students.
   • Report the incident to the Senior Director for International Initiatives and the Associate Provost for International Initiatives to discuss next steps.
   • The Associate Provost for International Affairs will communicate with the Provost, the Vice President for Student Engagement and other members of senior leadership at GSU, as needed.
   • Study Abroad Programs will contact CISI insurance for assistance and the emergency contacts for students in the program, as needed.
   • Facilitate communication and implement an action plan with the Program Director and insurance provider.
   • If any student in the program is not a GSU student, SAP will inform their home institution regarding the situation.
   • If needed, OII will facilitate the immediate departure of SAP staff to support a study abroad program abroad in response to an emergency.

5. **Emergency Notification System:**
   In the event of an emergency or crisis abroad, the Program Director should contact the Director of Study Abroad Programs by calling the emergency phone line. The Director of Study Abroad Programs will contact appropriate members of the Crisis Team. If the Program Director cannot reach the Director of Study Abroad Programs, s/he should contact the University Police at 404-413-3333. This number is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by GSU Police. All known information about the emergency should be given, together with contact information for the Program Director. University Police will then contact the Director of Study Abroad Programs, the Chief of University Police and the Dean of Students who will then contact the remaining persons, as appropriate, identified on the contact list set forth below.
   • Associate Provost for International Initiatives
   • Senior Director for International Initiatives
   • Director, Safety and Risk Management
   • Dean of the College sponsoring study abroad program
   • Department Chair sponsoring study abroad program
   • Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students
   • University Attorney or Associate General Counsel