



**+ Faculty-Led Programs Handbook**



## FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD

We, at The Study Abroad Office, are committed and excited to help you plan a program that is as culturally enriching and academically meaningful as possible. This handbook contains important information that will assist you as you plan your program.

We look forward to working with you!





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# INTRODUCTION

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In the Tennessee Tech University's Tech Tomorrow strategic plan, international activities are emphasized in order to better prepare students to solve real-world problems and encourage studying abroad. The Study Abroad Office supports this by partnering with academic units to effectively meet institutional goals to internationalize the curriculum. Faculty-led programs allow the opportunity for those students who may not be able to go on long-term programs to have a learning experience in an international setting. In addition, faculty-led programs promote learning cultural sensitivity, building relationships, communication skills, research, and reflection.

## DEFINITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Faculty Leader-** Must hold the rank of tenure-track faculty. Must be familiar with the location, culture and language abroad. Must complete all requirements for the Study Abroad Office, arrange all details of the trip, and take responsibility for the group for the full duration of the program.

**Co-leader-** Must hold a rank of faculty (includes lecturers who are under contract for the duration of the trip). Must be able to teach and lead the class abroad in the absence of the Faculty-Leader. No Graduate Assistants, Teacher Assistants, or temporary staff will be approved.

### Roles & Responsibilities

The Study Abroad Office staff is available to meet with interested departments to discuss program proposals and services. In addition, the Study Abroad Office can serve as a resource to the Faculty Leader on pedagogy, travel advisories, cultural information, program promotion, pre-departure preparation and overseas arrangements. The Provost's Office, however, must approve all programs and funding requests.

The principal drive and responsibility for a faculty-led program should originate from the Faculty Leader and the department; however, the Study Abroad Office staff administrate the policies and procedures for all TTU study abroad programs. A general outline of the roles and responsibilities in respect to faculty-led program management is included in this handbook.

### Faculty Leader Responsibilities

- Create syllabus, itinerary, [complete Faculty-Led Program Proposal Form, and Budget Form](#)
- Secure approval from Department Chair, Dean and Provost's office
- Set up account with Business Office so students can make payments
- Consult with the Purchasing Office for any signatures for contracts or bidding
- Make international flight arrangements
- On-site arrangements, including travel, housing and meals (Faculty Leaders are required to stay in the same housing as the students, request for exceptions must be made on the initial [Proposal Form](#)).
- Program promotion and recruitment
- Application review and acceptance
- International Health Insurance (all participants must have)
- Sign up group for the [STEP program](#) online
- Conduct country-specific pre-departure orientation
- Conduct on-site health and safety orientation
- Academic content delivery
- Grade posting

### Study Abroad Office Responsibilities:

- Collect applications and emergency info
- Pre-departure orientation (all participants)
- Enroll group for International Insurance
- Provide all participants with Emergency Wallet Cards
- Serves as university communications contact when faculty and students are abroad





# APPROVAL PROCESS

## PRE-PLANNING

### Determine the viability of the program:

[Travel Advisories, Alerts and Warnings](#): The State Department issues travel advisories for each country of the world. The new advisories are listed as levels 1-4 regarding safety. Information about conditions are listed that may pose risks to the safety of U.S. citizens. If the country you wish to take students to is at a level one or two, then the TTU group can travel. If the country is at a level 3, then the program will have to be reviewed closely by the Provost and the Study Abroad Office before a decision can be made. Faculty who choose to propose a country with a level 3 advisory must also propose an alternate location for their program. Faculty may not, under any circumstances, take TTU students to a country with an advisory level of 4. Please search the status of the country before submitting a proposal.

The [U.S. Centers for Disease Control](#) issues travel health warnings to alert citizens to widespread, serious outbreaks of a disease or to other public health concerns. A decision to cancel or proceed with a particular program in the face of a State Department announcement of any kind will be made by College officials based upon a thorough examination of the situation at hand and comprehensive gathering of information from all government and non-governmental sources.

### Discuss program ideas with Department Chair and Dean, and develop the course:

- What is the academic content?
- When would the program be?
- How will the course be enhanced by being taught abroad?
- How many credits will be offered? Which term would students register?
- Are field trips, site visits, and other cultural activities integrated into the course material?

Will there be opportunities for students to interact with local residents?

- Are there physical requirements and how will such requirements be accommodated, if necessary?
- Does the Faculty Leader have sufficient language and cultural ability sufficient to function effectively in the country? If not, will someone from the country assist the group with the language barriers?
- Does the Faculty Leader have sufficient cultural and country knowledge to provide an orientation program, including preparing the students adequately for living and studying there?

## **APPROVAL PROCEDURES**

1. Faculty Leaders must complete the [Proposal Form and Budget Form](#) online and include the following information: syllabus, location, dates, general itinerary, and funding request information. The Budget Form requires more detail about specific costs and upon submission is copied to the Business Office.
2. Faculty Leaders must print the Proposal Form and supporting documents and obtain approval and signatures from the Department Chair and College Dean.
3. Faculty must make an appointment with the Senior Associate Provost to present Proposal Form for approval and signature then submit form and documents to the Study Abroad Office.

**NOTE: For continuing programs, there are no automatic approvals. Faculty must request approvals and submit paperwork for repeating faculty-led programs as described in this handbook each year.**

## **General requirements for group:**

1. Faculty Leaders must recruit between 10–20 students in order to go on the trip. The Senior Associate Provost must approve any exceptions.
  2. Students must be currently enrolled in the course at the time of departure.
  3. Students must be taking the course for credit (not auditing).
  4. In order to qualify for the airfare reimbursement, students must be enrolled in at least 6 credit hours.
  5. If more than 20 students apply, the Faculty Leader may apply academic criteria to limit participation.
  6. Each trip requires a Co-Leader who is capable of taking over the class/group activities in case of an emergency. While this may increase the program costs, it is important to have additional support in situations where a leader may be incapacitated or where one leader needs to address a student emergency.
  7. **FACULTY ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ALLOW OTHERS TO ACCOMPANY THE GROUP. ONLY TWO FACULTY LEADERS AND STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE CLASS ARE ALLOWED TO GO ON THE TRIP.** (Spouses of the Faculty Leaders are permitted to go at their own expense).
- Children of faculty leaders, under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an additional legal guardian.

**NOTE: EMPLOYEES OF TTU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO SOLICIT STUDENTS TO GO ON TRIPS ABROAD THAT HAVE NOT BEEN APPROVED BY THE PROVOST OFFICE AND THE SA OFFICE.**

Any changes to the initial Proposal Form must be approved by the Senior Associate Provost and reported to the Study Abroad Office.



## AFTER APPROVAL

After obtaining all approvals and signatures on the Proposal Form, Faculty Leaders may begin recruiting students. Also, Faculty Leaders must follow up with the Business Office to set up a Marketplace Account for students to make payments.

Tennessee Tech has designated the following general eligibility requirements for study abroad programs:

- must be full time Tennessee Tech University students and be in good standing.
- additional academic requirements may be used to fit the needs of the specific program including course prerequisites, additional application materials or higher GPA requirements.

**Students selected to participate in the program must:**

1. Fill out a [Student Application](#) and submit copy of passport
2. Make initial deposit toward program fee upon signup
3. Make remaining payments until paid in full by the deadlines assigned
4. Attend classes/orientation sessions given by Faculty Leaders
5. Complete General Orientation Session

**Faculty Leaders must initially:**

1. Fill out [Faculty Application](#) (if spouse is going, he/she must also complete application)

2. Check that all students meet requirements, fill out appropriate documents and apply for passport
3. Check Marketplace account to ensure deposits are made
4. Ensure that students have completed all pre-departure orientation requirements

**NOTE:** After students complete the online application and make appropriate deposits, then the Faculty Leader may proceed with making the travel arrangements and reservations.

**FINAL STEPS:**

1. [Emergency Information Form](#)- Provide final emergency information.
2. Sign up entire group for the [STEP program](#) with the U.S. Department of State
3. Submit a [Memo to Request Out-Of-Country Travel](#) (sample)- Use department letterhead. Must be signed by the President and other officials.
4. Check out International cell phones (if needed) in the Study Abroad Office. These phones are to be used for business purposes and emergencies only. The cell phones are not for personal or student use.
5. Pick up Emergency Wallet Cards and distribute them to the group at the airport. The Study Abroad Staff prepares Emergency Wallet Cards for each participant to take abroad with all emergency addresses and phone numbers listed.





**PLANNING DETAILS**



## THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS

Before researching any travel agencies or third-party vendors, your faculty-led program must be approved by the Provost Office and the Study Abroad Office.

Tennessee Tech University Purchasing Services have policies regarding vendors and contracts. Therefore, all contracts using third-party providers must be pre-approved and reviewed by the Purchasing Office. There is a list of current pre-approved travel vendors on the study abroad website.

Many travel companies arrange everything from airfare, dinners, company visits, ground transport and museum visits (start to finish) while others may arrange only certain components of a program.

Therefore, Faculty Leaders should think carefully about what arrangements will enhance the program while keeping the costs as low as possible for the students. Please contact the Director of the Purchasing Office, for additional information.

### **FACULTY ARE NOT PERMITTED TO SIGN CONTRACTS ON BEHALF OF TENNESSEE TECH UNIVERSITY.**

Some faculty elect to arrange their own trips. As long as this is allowable by the Chair/Dean/Provost, a bid is needed whenever any portion of the trip is \$25,000 or more, i.e. airfare, ground travel, hotel. This amount is calculated as to who will receive the payment. If one provider arranges ground travel and hotel, then those two items would be summed to arrive at the bid threshold







## FINANCES

### **Program Budgets**

The Study Abroad Office has created a simple [Budget Form](#) to be filled out online and will be copied to the appropriate staff in the Business Office who will be setting up a Marketplace account for your program. Faculty Leaders must follow up with the Business Office to complete the process. The budget must cover ALL the expenses of the program.

**Faculty Leader Expenses:** Faculty leaders will need to determine what the leader expenses will be such as housing costs, per diem meal allowance and transportation. Generally speaking, Tennessee Tech University discourages spouses and dependents accompanying leaders during the program. It increases risk to Tennessee Tech University and can be distracting to program participants. If a spouse, partner or dependent is traveling with a Faculty Leader, all reservations for them must be done separately from the group. Expenses related to spouses or dependents (airfare, meals, housing, excursions, insurance, etc.) will be the Faculty Leader's financial responsibility and must be paid directly to the travel companies.



**On –site per student costs:** Typically, on-site costs include housing, some meals, ground transportation from the airport to the program site, excursions and on-site administrative costs. If Faculty Leaders are working with a third-party provider, the per-student program fee will be provided by the company.

**Estimated additional expenses:** are costs that a student might incur in addition to the program fee, and might include additional meals, ground transportation, etc.

**International health insurance:** Faculty Leaders must calculate international health insurance fees into the cost of the program for all participants. Information regarding the costs are on the Budget Form.

### **Marketplace Account**

The Business Office will provide the Faculty Leader and an assigned Bookkeeper a link to a designated Marketplace account. This link must then be sent to the students in the group so each student can make payments online.

Faculty Leaders must require students to pay a non-refundable deposit (approximately half of the program fee or more) in order to guarantee space on the program. Deadline dates are set on the Proposal Form for the payments of the program fees.

The Marketplace accounts are **for student transactions only** (deposits and payments for expenses abroad). Students must not make payments of any kind directly to the department(s).

Faculty Leaders may use student funds to either prepay student expenses or use it to pay for expenses on-site (receipts required).

Faculty Leaders must collect receipts for every purchase related to the student costs and present them to the bookkeeper of their particular

college in order to complete a reconciliation report on the account (copying the Financial Analyst of the Provost office and the Study Abroad Office) and refund any remaining money back to the students after each program.

If there is any balance leftover (over \$100) in the account at the end of the program, the Faculty Leader must complete a refund form so that students can be refunded the money. The accounts must be emptied after each trip so that other groups can use them.

**If the Faculty Leader is paying for their spouse to go on the trip, monies toward the trip must be kept separate from the student group account. All reservations and payments must be done separately from the group and paid directly to the travel company. Faculty may NOT go through TTU to pay for spouse or dependent expenses. In addition, any other funding such as grant funding or departmental funding must be kept separated from the student Marketplace account.**

### **Airfare Reimbursement**

Tennessee Tech generally covers the airfare of the students up to \$1,000 per student. The only requirement is that the students are full-time Tennessee Tech students in good standing. In exchange for the airfare, students must do an approved promotional project for study abroad programs within the academic department. The Faculty Leaders must supervise the promotional projects.

**NOTE:** Even if students plan to graduate immediately upon return, students must participate in the project.

## **Student Cancellation**

Students must notify the Faculty Leader in writing of the student's intent to withdraw from the program, who will then notify the Study Abroad Office. Program deposits will be used for any non-recoverable costs. The Study Abroad Office and the Faculty Leader will determine the financial penalty based on non-recoverable costs. If the participant cancels after the airfare ticket is purchased then that person will be responsible for the remainder of the cost of the ticket not covered by the deposit. The remaining costs will be put on the student's account.

If due to extreme circumstances the Faculty Leaders and Study Abroad Office decide to cancel the program, all funds paid by the students will be refunded. The Senior Associate Provost may make exceptions to this requirement in extenuating circumstances.

## **Reimbursement**

Tennessee Tech will not reimburse any expenses that were not previously approved on the Budget Form by the Senior Associate Provost. In extenuating and unforeseeable circumstances, the Senior Associate Provost may make exceptions

## **Leader Expense Reconciliation**

The Faculty Leader and Co-Leader should submit the Leader expense receipts together to the Provost's Office no later than two weeks after return from the trip. Receipts for Faculty leader's expenses and student expenses will have to be separated and organized in chronological order. The Provost's Office will complete and process the Travel Expense Forms.





## Course Creation and Registration

Faculty-led program course creation and student registration are the responsibility of the Faculty Leaders and the department. Each faculty-led program must have a departmental course number attached to it. Faculty Leaders must work with the academic department to determine the most appropriate course title and number as well as attach a departmental permit.

### Registration

Students who have been approved to participate must be given a permit and be registered for the course at the time of departure. If the student has graduated at the time of departure, he/she may NOT travel with the group due to the fact that he/she is no longer a TTU student.

### Grades

Faculty Leaders are required to submit grades for the program course(s) online as instructed by the Office of the Registrar.

### Curriculum Components

Faculty-led programs provide the unique opportunity for Faculty Leaders to teach students outside of the normal environment. Faculty Leaders should capitalize on this opportunity by carefully developing a program curriculum that integrates the benefits of an international experience while maintaining the academic rigor of the university. Faculty Leaders should develop the course syllabus and program itinerary jointly to integrate the course materials with the daily activities as much as possible.



## Program Syllabus and Itinerary

A well-planned program will successfully combine academic content with daily or weekly excursions, lecturers, and visits. Although the amount of work required of students must correspond to what would be expected of students on campus, a Faculty Leader should keep in mind there may be limited access to computers or research facilities. The syllabus should also clearly explain the course and material expectations, describe precisely how students will be evaluated and when the students should expect grades to be posted.

The pace of faculty-led programs can be exhausting for students and leaders. Schedule free time as well as frequent opportunities for students to reflect and express their observations and reactions to the culture. Avoid student burnout by not planning overly long days, and balance activities: for example, do not plan three museums in one day.

### Excursions

All faculty-led programs should include some excursions related to the academic content of the program. Faculty Leaders should keep in mind the budget and safety of the students when planning any excursion.

Some common excursions include:

- Orientation excursions: These usually occur during the first days of the program and are designed to help students adapt to the new surroundings. Examples include a guided walk around the immediate neighborhood of the program; a chartered bus trip to show students the location of clinics, restaurants, markets, etc.; or guided small-group trips on public buses to different zones of the city.
- Academic excursions: Excursions should have a clear academic purpose that should be communicated to students. Ideally, academic excursions should relate to the course. The Faculty Leader must accompany the students to facilitate students' learning.

### Field Assignments

In addition to excursions, Faculty Leaders should incorporate structured field assignments into the course. For example, each student might be asked to write an individual report on the same class excursion.

Field assignments may be structured in many different ways:

- Observation: Visiting a neighborhood and trying to understand simply through looking and listening
- Informal or structured conversation: Asking a local resident about celebrated holidays.
- Listening to an explanation: Being guided through a local business by its manager.
- Trying out a skill: Negotiation at a market using the language of the host country.
- Structured field research: Classifying species in a unique environmental location.

### Exploratory Site Visit

When developing a new faculty-led program, it can be helpful to conduct an exploratory site visit to evaluate host country services and on-site providers, as well as research ideas for possible excursions and international agreements. During this site visit, the primary focus should be on evaluating the student services in regards to students' health and safety abroad, transportation, and housing. As part of the evaluation, the Faculty Leader must review transportation options with the [Association for International Safe Road Travel \(ASIRT\)](#) and the [U.S. Department of State](#) website. As a rule, night transportation should be avoided. It is also equally important to evaluate the relative safety of the program housing in terms of its location, secure entrance/ access, and fire safety.

A site visit can also be a great opportunity to collect materials for marketing. Postcards, photos, brochures, clothing, and souvenirs can help bring the program to life for the students and help to set more realistic expectations.



# BEFORE YOU GO

Students must be well-aware of safety precautions, what to expect when they go abroad and how to handle situations that may arise. This chapter will address important things to consider prior to your departure.



## PRE-DEPARTURE PREPARATION

A successful experience abroad depends on adequate preparation prior to departure, starting with information disseminated during the application process. In addition, Faculty Leaders should plan on meeting with program participants several times during the weeks leading up to the official program start date. These meetings allow the leader to cover important academic and logistical information related to the program, and students have the opportunity to meet other program participants.

## PASSPORTS, VISAS & EXIT TAXES

All students studying abroad will need a passport. It is important to notify students during the application process so the students have adequate time to obtain a passport before departure. Passport processing can take anywhere from four-six weeks. Information about how to get a passport may be found at [U.S. Passports & International Travel](#). Passport photos can be obtained in the Awesome Mail and Print office in the RUC as well as in local stores that have photo printing services.

In addition to a passport, some countries may have additional visa fees or exit taxes. Faculty Leaders must research visa regulations well in advance of the program start date to allow adequate processing time. It is important to determine if a program provider will organize the visa process, or if students will be responsible for applying for and purchasing visas on their own. Please note that visa requirements differ by country of citizenship. In addition, international students must speak with the Immigration Specialist to ensure that reentry into the U.S. will not be a problem.

## PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION

Faculty Leaders must meet with all participants as a group three to five times prior to departure to provide the students with essential information. It is necessary for the group to meet together to not only form group dynamics and discuss expectations but also to reduce anxiety.

Faculty Leaders must reinforce the message that study abroad is an academic experience and that academic responsibilities take priority over personal interests. Also, Faculty Leaders should refrain from referring to the experience as a “trip” and instead use the word “program,” as it denotes a

difference between study abroad and a vacation. Students need to be reminded that while the consequences of poor behavior while at Tennessee Tech University reflect solely on each student, misconduct abroad will be attributed to the entire group and could lead to the discontinuation of the program in the future.

Tennessee Tech students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the [Student Disciplinary Policies \(No. 302\)](#) while participating in any Tennessee Tech Faculty-Led Program abroad.

Faculty Leaders should be prepared to discuss the following items with students: the course outline; academic expectations; program itinerary; political, environmental, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country; potential health and safety risks; and appropriate emergency response measures.

## MANDATORY GENERAL ORIENTATION

Tennessee Tech University requires that **ALL** participants studying abroad complete a general orientation online and complete the assessment before departure. All participants will receive an Emergency Wallet Card before departure to carry at all times during the program.

Although it may seem like common sense, students may need to be regularly reminded to:

- Be polite and listen to one another.
- Respect each other, leaders, and local people affiliated with the program.
- Honor diversity and differences within the group.
- When there is a problem, address it as adults and find a reasonable solution.
- Look for compromises.

These sessions build group cohesiveness and alleviate possible divisions.



## **ON-SITE ORIENTATION**

Students can be especially sensitive upon arrival abroad because students are usually tired, outside of their comfort zone, and may be experiencing culture shock. Therefore, the on-site orientation is an integral part of a successful study abroad program. It is important that Faculty Leaders talk with the students about the faculty's personal expectations as well as those of the university. Emergency procedures, contingency plans, and contact information should also be re-iterated at this time.

During faculty-led study abroad programs, students are required to attend all classes and all excursions that are a part of the program itinerary. Faculty Leaders should take attendance at all classes and excursions, and are encouraged to reduce the grade of a student who is late or absent, without good cause, from a class or required excursion.

Faculty Leaders should explain to the students that everyone is required to inform the Faculty Leaders about any serious incident or emergency and the Faculty Leader will in turn contact the Study Abroad Office as soon as possible in order to report the emergency. Faculty Leaders should assure students that this information will be treated in as confidential manner as possible, and that it will be shared only on a "need to know" basis. Participants should also be informed that if a crisis involving a student is serious enough to jeopardize his or her safety or well-being, the emergency contact provided on the affected student's application will be informed.

Faculty Leaders should discuss preventable accidents with participants, such as traffic patterns, drinking culture, and personal safety when walking alone in an unfamiliar place. The Faculty Leader should be very specific about safe and unsafe behavior to avoid unwanted attention as well as prepare them to guard against pickpocket thieves.

## **GROUP DYNAMICS**

Teaching a course abroad is very different than teaching it on-campus. Not only are the students learning together, but students are also living together and sharing an intense international experience with each other. Working together and relying on each other can lead to positive and successful study abroad experiences.

Keys to maintaining healthy group dynamics are:

- Ask program participants to be flexible, respectful and open to the host country and each other.
- Keep open lines of communication with the participants and let them know they can talk to Faculty Leaders.
- Work to fix problems as soon as possible.
- Notify the Study Abroad Office of any issues as soon as possible.
- Be proactive in managing group dynamics.
- Clearly explain the program expectations.

Program participants today bring a variety of personal, cultural, ethnic and social dimensions to their education abroad experience.

## **RE-ENTRY**

A Faculty Leader plays an important role in the students' re-entry experience. The same care that went into pre-departure orientations should also go into returning to the U.S. It is important to continue to maintain contact with program alumni, as all participants serve as strong ambassadors for the program and study abroad on campus.

## **PROGRAM SUMMARY**

All Faculty Leaders must submit a written summary explaining activities done while abroad and provide any student feedback within one month of return. The Study Abroad Office also requests Faculty Leaders to provide at least two photos for promotional purposes.



## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety is a serious concern for Tennessee Tech and everyone involved in study abroad. There are particular risks that may occur overseas, and the fact that students are far from home and in an unfamiliar culture may make any safety issue that arises more traumatic than it would be in the U.S.

If students or parents should inquire about how Tennessee Tech deals with safety and security issues, the following information should be provided:

- Tennessee Tech is dedicated to offering a wide variety of study abroad opportunities to meet the needs of a diverse student population and is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for its students.
- Tennessee Tech recognizes the importance of establishing policies and procedures in the effort to protect the safety and well-being of study abroad participants, while acknowledging that no single plan can address all contingencies. Listed below are a few of the ways Tennessee Tech strives to keep study abroad students as safe as possible:

- ✓ The Study Abroad Office regularly and responsibly monitors safety issues in each of Tennessee Tech's program locations.
- ✓ All participants are required to attend a pre-departure orientation session that stresses safety issues and cultural differences.
- ✓ Emergency procedures are in place, including medical and general emergency procedures. In any emergency, the Study Abroad Office will be in contact with faculty and students abroad as necessary.
- ✓ Tennessee Tech requires that all participants enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) online.
- ✓ Tennessee Tech requires that all participants purchase designated international health insurance including emergency evacuation and repatriation for all Tennessee Tech Study Abroad Programs.







## UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

Participants on faculty-led programs are also required by the university to complete a Liability Release form and a Student Health Information form. Participants going to countries in the European Union will also be asked to sign a [Protection of Personal Data Consent](#) based on the new GDPR law. When handling an emergency overseas, these forms are essential from both a legal and safety standpoint. With time sensitive decisions, it is important for Faculty Leaders to have the appropriate background information on the student as well as the power to act in the student's best interest. Students participating on faculty-led programs will complete the forms as part of the application process. Faculty Leaders should review the student health information within the Student Application carefully and discuss any concerns with the Study Abroad Office staff.

## U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT REGISTRATION

Each Faculty Leader must register the group with the U.S. Department of State through its [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). By registering with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, the U.S. Department of State is better able to

assist U.S. citizens in an emergency. Faculty Leaders may register the entire group, and will need passport information for each participant. It is a simple process that is available online by following these steps:

1. Go to the U.S. Department of State Smart Travel Enrollment Program page:

<https://step.state.gov/step>

2. Click on "Create Account."

3. Click on "Create Organization Account" (under "Select Account Type") to create a user name and password.

4. Fill out personal/business information.

5. Click on "Add a Trip" and add itinerary information as well as information about faculty, staff and students. It is necessary to have travel details and detailed personal information (including passport information) about each participant.

6. Once completed, give account information to Study Abroad Coordinator to verify.

## INSURANCE

Tennessee Tech requires that every student who participates on a study abroad program have international health insurance. To support a healthy and safe experience, Tennessee Tech students, faculty,



and any other participants must purchase the designated international health insurance. This is not optional. Information on coverage and prices will be provided by the Study Abroad Office as well as application support. All participants must carry insurance cards at all times during the program.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Maintaining good communication between the Faculty Leaders and students is a key component to promoting on-site safety.

### **International Cell Phone Check-Out**

The Study Abroad Office provides international cell phones for the duration of the programs. This makes it possible to communicate at times when the Faculty Leader may not have access to a public phone. Be certain that students understand how to operate local phones to make both local and international calls. Inform the students that it is required to notify the Faculty Leader immediately if there is an emergency involving a student. Make sure that students have all emergency contact information, including the Faculty Leader's information.

Provide the students with the address and phone number of the Faculty Leaders and the on-site provider (if applicable).

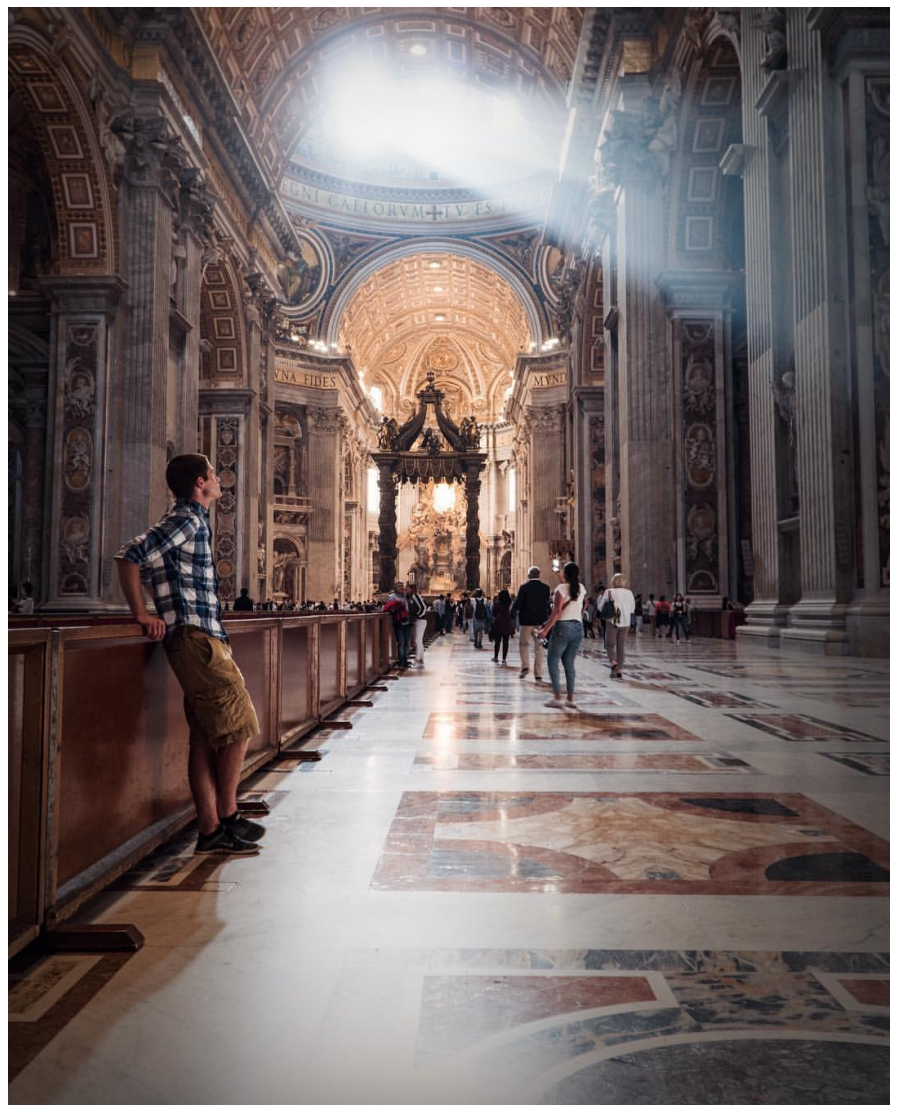
### **Emergency Wallet Cards**

The Study Abroad Office will provide Emergency Wallet Cards for each participant before departure. It will include the following information:

- Participant name
- Location
- School/Hotel Name, Address, Phone Number, and Emergency Phone Number (if applicable)
- Local 911 Number
- US Embassy Address and Phone Number

## **ACCESSIBILITY REQUESTS**

Not every study abroad site can accommodate all types of needs. Program participants are encouraged to contact the Study Abroad Coordinator to discuss accommodation related matters. If a student discloses a disability once on site, the Faculty Leader should consult with the Study Abroad Office.





# EMERGENCY

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROTOCOL

### EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

It is very important that the Faculty Leader carry all of the necessary contact information in case of an emergency. Each program participant must give two emergency contacts at the time he/she fills out the Study Abroad Application. The Faculty Leaders must leave a copy of the students' emergency numbers with the Faculty Leader's department or college also. Faculty Leaders must always have access to the following emergency contact information:

- Students' emergency contact
- Department contact
- Study Abroad Office
- Third-party provider

It is also important to set up an "emergency plan" with students in case of an emergency where access to normal communication channels is obstructed or unavailable. Designate two meeting points where members of the group can meet up in case of an emergency. One should include the students' housing or school location and the other should be a well-known location in a different part of the city.

Faculty Leaders must be prepared to handle any emergency, either perceived or real, before leaving the U.S. As part of this process, Tennessee Tech University requires that all Faculty Leaders complete and submit an [Emergency Information Form](#) to the Study Abroad Office prior to departure.

Emergencies can be both perceived and real. Faculty Leaders need to be prepared to handle both while abroad. Sometimes a perceived emergency that is ignored can be as detrimental to a student's experience as a real emergency. It is important for Faculty Leaders to take students' concerns seriously and take steps to address the concerns. An emergency on a study abroad program is any event that poses a genuine risk to, or has already endangered, the safety and well-being of program participants and/or the leader. This includes (but is not limited to) the following types of incidents:

- Serious accident or injury
- Serious illness, whether physical or emotional
- Hospitalization for any reason
- Physical assault
- Sexual assault or rape
- Robbery or mugging
- Disappearance of a student
- Local or national political crisis that could threaten the students' safety/well being
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Arrest or questioning by police or other local security force
- Any legal action (lawsuit, trial, etc.) involving a student





## *EMERGENCY RESPONSE*

If the Faculty Leaders believe there is a health or safety risk to the students, the Faculty Leaders must contact the Study Abroad Office within 24 hours to decide upon the appropriate action. The Study Abroad Office has experience dealing with crises and is ready to assist during and after any event.

In the event of an emergency, the Faculty Leaders must follow this emergency response protocol:

1. **Safeguard the program participants:** Faculty Leaders must do whatever is necessary to assure this, whether it involves obtaining prompt medical attention, police protection, or seeking the intervention of the U.S. Embassy.
2. **Keep calm:** Students count on the Faculty Leaders to take charge and get everyone through the crisis. Students take behavioral cues from the Faculty Leaders.
3. **Contact the On-site Provider (if using one), and the Study Abroad Office immediately:** The Study Abroad Office will then notify the students' emergency contacts in accordance with FERPA and GDPR guidelines.
4. **Contact the insurance provider:** If Faculty Leaders are dealing with a medical emergency, the insurance provider will help coordinate the necessary arrangements. Faculty Leaders and students are given insurance cards with a worldwide, 24-hour, toll-free number to call for assistance. This card must be on the program participant at all times while abroad.
5. **Notify the local police:** If the Faculty Leaders are dealing with a police emergency, the Faculty Leaders must follow the procedures that may be required by local law.
6. **Create a log:** Faculty Leaders should maintain a log of events and share this information with the appropriate authorities. Faculty Leaders will need to complete an Incident Report and turn it into the Study Abroad Office one week after return.
7. **Maintain communication with Tennessee Tech University:** The Faculty Leader must keep the Study Abroad Office informed of the emergency and subsequent activities.

## **8. File incident report.**

If there is a political or health crisis and the U.S. State Department issues a public announcement, worldwide caution or a specific travel warning for the country of a program, the Study Abroad Office will contact Faculty Leaders with this information. In the case of a travel warning or other indicators of a serious health or safety threat, the Study Abroad Office will advise the Faculty Leaders as to whether a program will continue and what steps need to be taken to ensure the safety of students and faculty.

It is unlikely that a Faculty Leader would need to evacuate program participants from a site abroad. However, if a deteriorating situation were to make this necessary, the Study Abroad Office will work with the U.S. embassy and insurance company to facilitate a safe return of students and faculty.



# RESOURCES

## CHECKLIST

### Obtaining Approval

- Determine the viability of the program.
- Discuss program ideas with Department Chair and Dean; develop the course.
- Complete [Proposal Form](#) and [Budget Form](#) and obtain signatures from the Department Chair and Dean.
- Make an appointment with the Senior Associate Provost for approval and signature, then submit original form to the Study Abroad Office.

### Recruitment and Application Procedures

- Recruit 10-20 currently enrolled TTU students in good standing. Note: Students must be currently enrolled in the course at the time of departure and for the duration of the trip.
- Follow-up with the Business Office to set up a Marketplace Account so that students can make payments online.
- Submit a roster of the participants to the Study Abroad Office including name, T# and email
- Check group for passports and make copies
- Have students complete online [Student Application](#) and make initial deposit (once applications are complete and appropriate deposits are made, travel may be arranged)
- Participants must also complete a [Protection of Personal Data Consent](#) (only for groups traveling to the European Union)
- Faculty Leaders and Spouses (if traveling with the group) must each complete the online [Faculty/Spouse Application](#)
- Make sure that students are registered for the corresponding course
- Study Abroad Office if student or another participant leaves the group.
- Provide initial on-site orientation upon arrival.
- Collect receipts in an organized manner and itemize usage of any student funds, fund advances and other necessary expenses. These

- Meet with all study abroad participants together 3–5 times before departure to prepare the group for the program, culture and to develop group dynamics, etc.

### Final Steps

- Arrange the MANDATORY orientation meeting that must be one month before departure with the Study Abroad Office
- Submit passport copies/scans to Study Abroad Office
- Complete the online [Emergency Information Form](#)
- Register the group in the [STEP Program](#) with the U.S. Department of State and provide verification to the Study Abroad Office
- Submit the Request to Travel Abroad Memo-Use department letterhead. Must be signed by the President and other officials
- Check out international cell phones from the Study Abroad Office before departure, if necessary.
- The Study Abroad Office will enroll the group for the [International Health Insurance](#) and email the cards to students and Faculty Leaders
- Emergency Wallet Cards will be distributed at the General Orientation session unless the hotels are not confirmed, then they will be given to the Faculty Leaders before departure.

### On-Site

- Contact the Study Abroad Office within 24 hours after arrival to confirm all participants are safe and accounted for.
- Contact Study Abroad Office immediately if an incident or emergency occurs, then submit an [Incident Report](#) will be submitted to the Provost's Office two weeks after return. Never loan students funds unless it is an extreme emergency. Faculty Leaders will not be reimbursed by Tennessee Tech University for any expenses that have



not been pre-approved or for loaning money to participants.

- If using contracted services, ensure the Third-Party Provider is delivering services according to the contract.

### **After Return**

- Contact Study Abroad Office to report safe return of all participants
- Present the program/travel expense report with receipts to the Provost's Office within two weeks after return

- Return the international phones to the Study Abroad Office within one week after return.
- Submit a written summary explaining activities done, and any feedback to the Study Abroad Office with two photos one month after return. This will be used for promotional purposes. If you submitted an article for the TTU news or a local newspaper, please send a link.
- Follow-up on Incident Report(s) within one week after return
- Award grades for the course and post on Banner





## SITE-SPECIFIC ORIENTATION TOPICS

### Basics

- Flight and arrival information
- Passport and visa reminders
- Getting acquainted with the host country
- Communication—cell phones, data usage, chat apps
- Using local transportation
- Housing and meals

### Academics

- Expectations—participation, attendance, syllabus
- Materials—textbooks, course packets
- Course registration

### Health & Safety

- Health care, hospitals, emergency procedures, and health insurance
- Where to meet if communications are lost
- Personal safety in the host country—locations to avoid, demonstrations, driving, traveling in pairs, etc.
- Increased danger in late evening/early morning
- Discuss potential scenarios and proper ways to respond

### Culture

- Culture shock
- Major areas of cultural difference
- Language resources (dictionaries, phone apps)
- Packing
- Appropriate attire—best shoes, blending in, weather, outerwear, and dress attire for special events
- Medication—prescription and non-prescription
- What not to pack—customs, luggage size and weight restrictions

### Finances

- Safe handling of money and valuables—ATMs, backup plan, banking, exchange rates, and bringing money from home
- Leave expensive items at home, jewelry, purses, new cell phone (take old one)

## IN-COUNTRY ORIENTATION TOPICS

### Basics

- General introduction to the community and the surrounding environment
- Communication—cell phones, data usage, chat apps
- Housing information—explanation of house rules
- Introduction of local program staff, key host institution administrators and faculty (if applicable)

### Health & Safety

- Medical and health facilities—doctors, hospitals, local “911”
- Emergency Action / Contingency Plan
- National healthcare system (where applicable)
- Procedures for dealing with illness—health insurance
- Locations to avoid, traveling in pairs, etc.
- Driving cars, mopeds, motorcycles, or any other type of vehicle abroad is prohibited
- Directions to U.S. consulate or another appropriate consulate (on Emergency Wallet Card)

### Culture

- Culture shock and adjustment issues
- Food and drinks (good things to try as well as things to avoid)
- Appropriate attire—best shoes, blending in, weather, outerwear, and dress attire for special events
- Common language phrases (where applicable)
- Photography issues—restrictions, respectful use of camera, photo and video

### Finances

- Safely storing and handling money—pickpockets, concealing valuables and cash
- Explain how to access money—nearest ATM
- Backup plan

### Academics

- Facilities—classroom, computer labs
- Expectations—academics and participation



# Tennessee Technological University

## Study Abroad Office

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