



University of
New Haven

Policies for Short-term International Study Abroad and Domestic Study Away Programs

Health, Safety and Security Review

This Administrative Policy provides guidelines by which proposals submitted by faculty to lead short-term international programs, or domestic study away programs will be reviewed for approval. Policies for activities at the UNH Prato campus are addressed in a separate location-specific set of policies.

Policy Statement

The Office of Study Abroad is charged with the administration of all international and domestic study away programs offered to our undergraduate and graduate students. Any faculty member who wishes to direct a short-term program domestically, or overseas must work through the Office of Study Abroad to obtain approval of such activity.

Reason for the Policy

This policy has been established to ensure the consideration of activity-specific health/safety management issues that are unique for all faculty-led short-term international programs and study away courses.

Policy Section

Definitions

International Program:

Any university activity, credit-bearing, or non-credit-bearing, with an international dimension (examples, non-credit-bearing travel seminar, credit-bearing study abroad program).

Study Abroad:

A subtype of Off-Campus Study that takes place outside the United States and results in progress toward an academic degree.

Study Away:

A Subtype of Off-Campus Study that takes place within the United States and results in progress toward an academic degree.

Travel Seminar:

A non-credit bearing program in which students travel to many different cities, or countries and receive instruction in each location, often regarding a designated, unifying topic.

Faculty-Led-Program:

A study abroad program directed by a faculty member (or members) from the home campus (main campus) who accompanies students abroad. Usually, though not always, for a brief duration.

Short-Term Program:

A program lasting for a period of less than 90 days. Typically occurs during the Winter Intersession, or Summer Sessions.

Overview

A review of short-term international study abroad and domestic study away program proposals will occur twice per year. Submission dates will be established and published by the Office of Study Abroad. Special considerations for programs submitted after standard submission dates will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Director for International Study Opportunities. All short-term international/study-away program proposals will be reviewed whether they originate from the main campus (West Haven), or other established UNH branch locations (e.g. Prato).

The Office of Study Abroad will review completed program proposals with College Deans and the Risk Oversight team. The program proposal will be evaluated for overall proposal strength, feasibility of program logistics and cost, as well as health and safety concerns.

Risk Oversight Team

Membership

The Risk Oversight Team is comprised of six members

- Director of International Study Opportunities
- Associate Vice President of Student Accounts & Risk Management
- University of New Haven Chief of Police
- Associate Vice President of Public Safety & Administrative Services
- Vice President for Finance
- Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Risk Oversight Proposal Review Procedures

The Director of International Study Opportunities, the Associate Vice President of Student Accounts & Risk Management, and the university Chief of Police will conduct initial review of all program proposals for health and safety concerns.

If these three members of the team flag a program for concern, the proposal will be sent to all team members for review and discussion. In those cases, final decision will be made by the Associate Vice President of Public Safety & Administrative Services, the Vice President for Finance, and Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The university does not permit travel for programs involving undergraduate students to countries where a U.S. Department of State Travel Warning, or Center for Disease Control and Prevention Travel Notice Warning Level 3 (reconsider travel), or Level 4 (do not travel) is in effect.

Decisions will be made for each program based on information provided by the Faculty Leader in the proposal, health and safety information provided by the university's international health insurance provider (HTH Worldwide Insurance) as well as information obtainable via membership in the U.S. Department of State Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC).

The Risk Oversight team reserves the right to withdraw its approval at any time should in-country conditions substantially change, including cancellation of a program once it has begun.

The Director of International Study Opportunities, the university Chief of Police, and the Faculty Leader and students are responsible for monitoring conditions in approved travel locations. The Director of International Study Opportunities will communicate information and an assessment with affected individuals if there is a sudden change of condition. If there is a sudden change of condition, the Risk Oversight team will review new information, as it relates to student/faculty safety, and recommend whether, or not to suspend, modify, or cancel a previously approved program.

Proposal Review Decisions

Once a decision has been reached, the proposing Faculty Leader(s) will receive an email notification regarding the status:

- Approved
- Approved with changes.
- Approved for a later date.
- Denied

Faculty Leaders that receive a decision of, “approved with changes”, must submit those changes in accordance with the dates set by the Office of Study Abroad. Upon receiving approval, Faculty Leaders will work closely with the Office of Study Abroad to finalize program details in a timely manner.

Faculty that wishes to run a program for multiple years need to update and resubmit their proposal annually.

Post Approval Procedures

Once approved, programs must meet the minimum number of students indicated in the proposed program budget to run. If the minimum number of students is not met, the Faculty Leader(s) can resubmit a new budget to the Office of Study Abroad and College Dean demonstrating how the program can still run and what modifications can be made to the program to ensure financial feasibility. This should be submitted within one week of the student deposit deadline. If it is determined a program can run with modification to the budget, the revised budget reflecting those changes must be submitted to the Business Office for their approval. Any changes to the proposed program itinerary should be communicated to the Office of Study Abroad as soon as possible to assess any health/safety impacts.

Should a Travel Warning, or Notice be issued while a program is underway, the university will determine, in consultation with the Faculty Leader(s), appropriate internal department(s), peer institutions, other organizations that offer programs abroad and area of experts, whether conditions warrant suspension of the program and/or departure of faculty/students from the host country.

Onsite Responsibilities

The Faculty Leader(s) should fulfill the following duties onsite:

- Provide an initial onsite orientation to introduce the students to the host site and culture (when feasible in conjunction with onsite program organizer).
- Contact the Office of Study Abroad within 24 hours after arrival to confirm all participants are safe and accounted for.
- Notify the Office of Study Abroad immediately if any student leaves the program.
- Be responsible for the academic integrity of the course and coordinating class activities.
- Cooperate with other on-site faculty members, or staff regarding the program objectives.
- Act as a liaison between the students and any individuals, or entities providing services to the program.
- Ensure that on-site cooperating institution/organization delivers services according to the contract (a copy is provided to the Faculty Leader by the Office of Study Abroad prior to departure). If problems arise, the Faculty Leader(s) should contact the Office of Study Abroad immediately so any discrepancies can be resolved in a timely manner.
- Enforce the policy that non-program participants are not allowed to accompany the participants on program sponsored excursions, or activities.
- Communicate academic and disciplinary roles clearly to the students.
- Respond to an **emergency, or serious incidents which may arise** (e.g. student illness, accident, crime involving participant(s), severe behavioral issues, natural disaster, political uprising) and **notify the Office of Study Abroad as soon as possible by email, or phone.**
- Itemize usage of any fund advances and other necessary expenses and collect all receipts that will be turned into the Office of Study Abroad at the program's end. **Never loan students program, or personal funds unless it is an extreme emergency.** The Faculty Leader(s) will not be reimbursed by the University of New Haven for loaning money to participants unless authorized in advance by the Office of Study Abroad.
- Meet with students regularly throughout the program to discuss non-academic issues. Topics for discussion may include cross-cultural adjustments, personal activities, inappropriate behavior, etc. These sessions build group cohesiveness and alleviate possible divisions.
- Be aware of possible indicators or culture shock. They can include, but not limited to: Feelings of helplessness, loneliness, alienation, sleeping more than usual,

depression, getting angry easily, decline in flexibility, stereotyping of host culture, increase of physical ailments, eating problems, inability to concentrate, and uncontrollable crying. Most, but not all students experience some level of culture shock. The concrete indicators of culture shock vary greatly from individual to individual.

Safety and Security

Safety is a prime concern of all who are involved in the study abroad ventures. It is generally considered that study in a foreign country is no more dangerous than a study in the United States. However, there are risks that are unique to settings abroad. When incidents occur the impact on participants and their families is often more profound because of the unfamiliarity of the context and the distance that separates participants from their primary sources of consolations and support.

The provisions of the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act** (Buckley Amendment) often come into conflict with (a) the Office of Study Abroad and leaders' needs to have full information about the participants we serve, and (b) the desire of parents and the Office of Study Abroad/UNH to be briefed fully when something goes wrong. This conflict is not unique to Study Abroad Programs but does elevate sensitivities because of the distance away from the main campus.

If students, or parents inquire about how the University of New Haven deals with safety and security issues while traveling abroad the following information should be provided:

The University of New Haven 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, faculty, and staff. The University of New Haven 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 examples of how the University of New Haven strives to keep study abroad participants as safe as possible before and during all study abroad programs:

- The Office of Study Abroad regularly and responsibly monitors safety issues in each of our program's locations.

- A review of all study abroad programs is conducted in which safety, security, and overall quality are measured.
- All participants are required to attend one or more pre-departures orientation sessions that stress safety issues and understanding cultural differences.
- Emergency procedures are in place, including medical and general emergency evacuation procedures. In any emergency, the Office of Study Abroad will be in contact with faculty and students abroad as necessary.
- The University of New Haven provides international health insurance and emergency evacuation assistance plans to all students participating in the University of New Haven Study Abroad Programs.

Country specific information about where programs will visit is included in the program orientation packet. Additionally, the Office of Study Abroad enrolls all program participants in the U.S. State Department Smart Travel Enrollments Program (STEP) for the respective host country prior to departure. It is the Faculty Leader(s) responsibility to be familiar with the U. S. State Department website (<http://travel.state.gov>.) regarding safety and security updates pertaining to the program destination. The Office of Study Abroad will notify the Faculty Leader(s) of any updates occurring while programs are abroad. Students should be advised to avoid travel to or through any location where tensions exist, and travel may be dangerous.

The Faculty Leader(s) should check (<http://www.countrycodes.com>) to determine the international access code when calling from the host country. It is advisable to be familiar with and knowledge about how to place a call collect call or use a calling card from outside the United States.

Communication

The Faculty Leader(s) is responsible for communication applicable codes of conduct and the consequences of noncompliance to participants. In the event there are U.S. State Department public announcements, worldwide caution, travel alert or warnings, the Office of Study Abroad and/or the University of New Haven's Chief of Police will send emails (may also use Live-Safe) to Faculty Leaders abroad and program participants depending on the nature of the incident. Faculty Leaders should relay any applicable information to group participants. The Office of Study Abroad and/or the University of New Haven's Chief of Police may also communicate directly with students and at times, their emergency contacts.

In the event of a local, regional, or global crisis, Faculty Leaders should maintain contact with the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate for updated security information. If a crisis should occur, they must review precautions with participants so they can better secure their safety. **In an emergency the Faculty Leader(s) must contact the Office of Study Abroad as soon as possible to confirm the wellbeing status of the group.**

Faculty Leaders must also brief students on safe behavior, depending on the local situation and culture. This may include advising students to maintain a low profile, avoid crowds and protest groups, restaurants, and locations where Americans are known to frequent.

Students should keep up with local news through newspapers, radio, and television. In the event of a disturbance or protest students should not get involved. Students should be asked to use common sense and caution when divulging information to strangers about themselves, the program, and their fellow students.

Responding to Emergencies

In an emergency, the Faculty Leader's first responsibility is the safety and wellbeing of the program participants. Faculty Leader(s) should take reasonable steps to ensure the program participants safety by means of obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, U.S. Embassy intervention, or police assistance. The Office of Study Abroad should be notified as soon as possible to be fully informed about any situations (an email is sufficient if no further action is needed).

Faculty Leaders can reach the Office of Study Abroad staff members as well as the university Chief of Police through the University of New Haven's Campus Police (24 hours a day 7 days a week 203-932-7070). University Police have contact information for all abroad staff and other appropriate individuals on campus. During an ongoing crisis, Faculty Leaders must keep the Office of Study of Abroad informed on a regular basis through telephone or email until the crisis has passed.

In the unlikely event that participants will need to be evacuated from a site abroad, the Director of the International Study Opportunities, in connection with the universities insurance provider, Faculty Leader, the Risk Oversight Team, U.S. Embassy and State Department, would develop an evacuation plan for students, faculty and staff. The plan would be transmitted to the Faculty Leader in confidence, and officials on the University of New Haven's main campus would work closely with the Faculty Leader throughout the evacuation process.

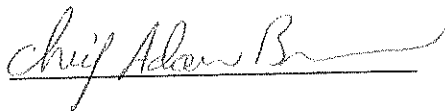
If the host country emergency services are not readily available and participants feel there is a threat to their personal safety, they should follow the following procedures:

- Dial the UNH Campus Police at 001-203-932-7070
- State their name.
- Identify themselves as a UNH study abroad student and give the country where they are currently located.
- Tell the Police Dispatcher what is wrong.
- Tell the Police Dispatcher how to contact them.
- Respond to questions and listen carefully to any instructions given.

Transportation and Vehicle Safety

Use of vehicles driven by faculty and students is generally not permitted in foreign settings. While risks may be managed with experience, obtaining valid and effective insurance in the countries being visited may be problematic.

When traveling on program related activities, participants should be transported via public transportation or in vehicles rented by the University of New Haven for that purpose and driven by professional (hired) drivers. The Risk Oversight Team will evaluate programs involving faculty driving on a case-by-case basis through the proposal process.

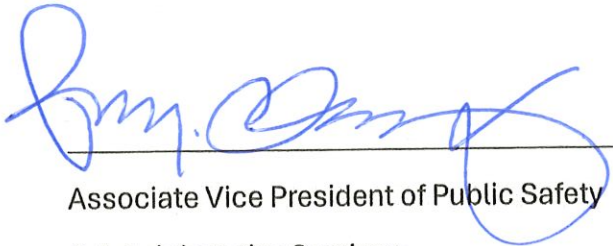
A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chief Adam Brown", written over a horizontal line.

Revised by: Adam Brown
Chief of Police
University of New Haven



University of
New Haven

Policy Approval:



Associate Vice President of Public Safety
& Administrative Services

1-24-24

Date



Vice President of Finance

2/7/2024

Date



Interim Provost and Vice President for
Academic Affairs

1-26-24

Date

