

Iowa State University (ISU) Guidelines for Submitting a Proposal for ISU Group Study Abroad Programs for Academic Credit

Introduction

A faculty member who wishes to lead a study abroad program for credit needs to complete a Group Study Abroad Planning and Approval Form and submit it to the Education Abroad Committee (EAC). More information about this committee is available at the end of this document.

Before beginning the form, the Program Director should check the list of countries that the U.S. State Department categorizes as being under a Travel Warning or Travel Alert. The list can change at any time, and it is available on the U.S. Department of State website:

<http://travel.state.gov/>.

Title page

On the first page of the Approval Form, indicate the U.S. State Department status of the country or countries of the proposed program.

ISU will not operate ISU undergraduate international travel and study abroad programs in countries for which the U.S. State Department has issued a Travel Warning unless approval is provided by the Study Abroad Risk Management Committee (SARMC) after a full review of the situation and finding compelling reasons to allow the program. The Education Abroad Committee (EAC), which reviews and approves ISU undergraduate group study abroad program proposals, will review but will not grant full approval to proposed programs in locations with a U.S. State Department Travel Warning or a U.S. State Department Travel Alert and will refer these program proposals to the SARMC for review and approval. More information about this committee is available at the end of this document. The complete ISU Undergraduate International Travel and Study Abroad Program Cancellation Policy can be found at <http://www.studyabroad.iastate.edu/EAC/home.html>

Signatures and Submission Deadlines

In order for an Approval Form to be considered by the EAC, it must be approved first by the department chair and the college sponsoring the program. The colleges have instituted a review process that must be completed prior to the deadlines noted in this document. In addition, all courses related to the program must be reviewed and approved by the Departmental Contact Person for Course Offerings. For a list of departmental contacts for course offerings, go to <http://www.iastate.edu~registrar/courses/deptcontacts.html>.

Please be aware that incomplete Approval Forms will not be approved. Programs may receive conditional approval if only minor deficiencies are found by the EAC, pending submission of requested materials. If a program is not approved by the EAC, a revised Approval Form will need to be submitted.

After all course offering, departmental, and college-level approvals are obtained, the entire proposal (including budget sheets) should be scanned and submitted to:

Susan Posch
scposch@iastate.edu

Alternatively, the unsigned electronic file should be sent via e-mail and the signed paper copy sent by campus mail to:

Susan Posch
Study Abroad Center
3224 Memorial Union

Application deadlines for programs earning academic credit are as follows:

Summer Programs	October 1
Academic Year Programs	January 1
Fall Programs	January 1
Spring Programs	May 1

Study Abroad Course Offering Form

The academic rigor of study abroad is an area of special concern to the EAC. The programs they review and approve are academic programs that take place in an international setting. Typically, credit earned on study abroad programs should not exceed more than one credit hour per week. All new courses must be reviewed by the relevant department or college committee.

Tours and travel, *per se*, are not eligible for ISU academic credit; however, the EAC recognizes that opportunities need to be made available for students to immerse themselves in the cultural richness and diversity of the host country. Whenever possible, these opportunities should be systematically integrated into the program and into the academic outcomes of the course.

Application and Selection

Following approval, all ISU study abroad programs are listed in ISUAbroad, ISU's on-line database and application system. Program Directors should consider their requirements for participation in the program and clearly state these in the Approval Form so that the information can be transferred to ISUAbroad. Such requirements could include a minimum GPA, an interview, prerequisites, or specific course enrollment.

All students applying for an ISU study abroad program must complete an on-line application on ISUAbroad (<http://isuabroad.iastate.edu>). Program Directors have access to ISUAbroad to review applications. Student non-selection must adhere to non-discriminatory practices and cannot be based on student disabilities or student health issues. Program Directors needing

assistance in dealing with this issue to ensure that they adhere to non-discriminatory practices should contact the Study Abroad Center.

Student Preparation

One of the greatest responsibilities that ISU and the Program Director bear in offering programs abroad is to ensure the adequate preparation of all program participants.

Student participants should receive at least two types of orientation prior to departure:

- General pre-departure orientation
- Site-specific orientation

General pre-departure orientation is provided every semester at ISU through the Study Abroad Center and provides students with basic safety, security, and health training. Students can register for the session through their application in ISUAbroad. Site-specific orientation is the responsibility of individual Program Directors.

Site-specific orientation must include site-specific information on safety, security, and health issues, and Program Directors must discuss with student participants the specific risks and issues outlined in the Risk Assessment section of the Approval Form.

Program Directors needing assistance in preparing this aspect of site-specific orientation should contact the Study Abroad Center or contact their EAC representative as listed on the Web at <http://www.studyabroad.iastate.edu/EAC/members.html>.

In addition to other academic requirements and expectations, Program Directors should also ensure that students receive adequate knowledge of the host culture, particularly where interaction with the host culture is a central component of the program.

Risks

Review of the Risk Assessment section of the Approval Form is a critical part of the EAC review process. Program Directors must be familiar with site-specific safety, security, and health issues and as such should be familiar with information on their program location from the following two web sites:

www.travel.state.gov

www.cdc.gov

Please also see the first section of these Guidelines concerning U.S. State Department Travel Warnings, U.S. State Department Travel Alerts, and the ISU program cancellation policy.

Program Directors need to be familiar with the information in the U.S. State Department Country Specific Information Sheet. In completing the Risk Assessment section of the Approval Form, Program Directors need to explain how their program will deal with the safety, security, and health issues that affect the program. Program Directors should not paste into the Approval Form sections from the websites listed above, but rather they should identify the specific issues that

could impact the program and discuss how the issues will be dealt with. Program Directors should also provide clarification when specific problems listed on the websites above will not affect a program. For example, if the U.S. State Department has listed a certain area of a country as problematic or has prohibited travel to that area, Program Directors should state that the program is not travelling to this area.

The Risk Assessment section of the Approval Form also requests that Program Directors identify all group activities associated with the program that are considered to be of heightened risk. These include activities that may not be part of the academic objectives of the program but that are group activities. Types of activities that are considered to be of heightened risk include water activities or travel on water, strenuous physical activity, exposure to dangerous plants and animals, extreme environmental conditions (e.g., high altitude), farm visits/working with animals, and homestays. Other extra-curricular activities should also be listed if they are in any way undertaken as a group or are using a mode of transportation provided by the program. These may include such activities as bungee jumping, tower jumping, rafting, sledding, skiing, rock climbing, and other extreme sports.

Complete Travel Itinerary

The EAC requires an itinerary with complete contact information. Program Directors need to be able to communicate with program participants and personnel at ISU at any time, 24/7. Additionally, Program Directors must be able to be reached by program participants and personnel at ISU at any time, 24/7. Program Directors are required to carry a cell phone or satellite phone. ISU generally recommends that all students abroad carry cell phones when feasible, but this is not required; in a short-term program with a Program Director on-site with the group for the duration of the program, this may not be necessary.

Program Directors may need to update itinerary information closer to the time of program departure and should send the updated itinerary to the Study Abroad Center and to their college's international programs office.

Program Budget

Program Directors must submit an itemized budget as part of the Approval Form indicating all their expenses as well as those incurred by their students. The goal is to keep costs reasonable without compromising quality or student safety. Program Director expenses are closely reviewed since they become part of the student program fee. Please keep in mind that, at the end of the program, no excess funds (if any) are refunded to students but rather remain in the program account.

Additional Fees:

Study Abroad Administrative Fee

In addition to the expenses involved in covering the costs of the program, all students earning ISU credit as part of a study abroad program are charged a \$105 Study Abroad Administrative Fee. This fee helps defray Center costs in administering programs.

Project Assist Fee

Students participating in programs that are administered by *Project Assist* are charged an additional \$75. For more information on this service, please see below or contact the Study Abroad Center.

Additional Issues to Consider

Accompanying Spouses/Domestic Partners and Minor Children and other program participants

ISU does not permit individuals to be included in, or to accompany, study abroad programs who are not considered “study abroad program participants” except for the spouse/domestic partner and/or minor children of a Program Director. ISU defines a “study abroad program participant” as a student enrolled in a study abroad program or a Program Director fulfilling specific administrative responsibilities for the study abroad program. The policy statement regarding program participants and the required forms for accompanying adults/children are found at <http://www.studyabroad.iastate.edu/Faculty/Faculty.html>

Large Groups

For groups in excess of 18, we suggest adding a second leader on the program. Ideally, a mixed group of students should have both male and female leaders accompanying them.

Summer programs offering fewer than three credits

Students must be registered for at least half-time status in order to receive summer financial aid; therefore, students taking fewer than two credits (if the program is four weeks or shorter in duration) or fewer than three credits (for programs over four weeks in length) in the summer would not qualify to receive financial aid. In this case, if a pre-departure orientation course is being offered for credit in the Spring as a means of preparing the students for their summer traveling, these credits could be awarded in the summer, thereby enabling participants to receive summer financial aid.

Graduating students and non-ISU students

To take part in an ISU study abroad program, students must be registered during the term the program takes place. Students graduating prior to their study abroad program need to either delay their graduation or process a *Curriculum Change Form*. This form allows them to return to ISU after graduation either as a degree-seeking student or as a non-degree-seeking student. Please keep in mind that non-degree-seeking students are not eligible to receive institutional financial aid.

Program Directors recruiting outside ISU need to inform those individuals that they need to apply as non-degree-seeking students through the Office of Admissions as well as applying for the program through ISUAbroad before they are allowed to participate in the program.

Using grant money

Study abroad programs are required to use 202- accounts for program costs. Danette Bontrager in the Study Abroad Center can assist Program Directors with this issue.

Program evaluation and final program report

Within 60 days of return from the program, Program Directors are required to submit a final report, preferably electronically, to Susan Posch in the Study Abroad Center (scposch@iastate.edu) for forwarding to the EAC members. The final report form is available on the EAC website at <http://www.studyabroad.iastate.edu/EAC/home.html> Programs reports need to be submitted in order for future Approval Forms to be considered for approval. Copies of the students' program evaluations are also appreciated and can be sent as above.

What to do if you need help

If you need help in preparing your approval form, contact the Study Abroad Center at 3224 Memorial Union, 294-6792, or contact your EAC representative as listed on the Web at <http://www.studyabroad.iastate.edu/EAC/members.html>.

Project Assist

With this optional service, the Study Abroad Center handles all logistics of the program, pays all service providers, establishes and maintains contracts, produces promotional materials, advertises, recruits students, handles student inquiries, and aids in other administrative functions. For more information on this option, contact the Study Abroad Center. An additional fee of \$75 per student is added to the Program Fee for this service.

Education Abroad Committee

The Education Abroad Committee (EAC) is charged by the Office of the Provost with the responsibility for approving ISU group undergraduate international travel and study abroad programs. The committee works collaboratively with academic colleges and departments to fulfill these responsibilities. The committee's goal is to ensure the academic integrity of these programs as well as the safety of the students participating in them. The committee also promotes such programs through consultation, review, evaluation, and advocacy.

Committee members, who represent the ISU colleges as well as the Study Abroad Center, are appointed by their respective Deans because of their experiences with issues and logistics of taking students abroad. See <http://www.studyabroad.iastate.edu/EAC/members.html>

Study Abroad Risk Management Committee

The Study Abroad Risk Management Committee (SARMC) is convened to determine the status of ISU undergraduate international travel and study abroad programs should a U.S. State Department Travel Warning or a U.S. State Department Travel Alert be issued for a country in which an ISU undergraduate international travel and study abroad program is proposed or where ISU undergraduate international travel and study abroad programs are in progress. This committee may be convened at any point in time prior to or during a program as circumstances warrant.

The SARMC is comprised of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs (Chair), the Vice President for Student Affairs or designee, the Director of the Study Abroad Center, the Travel Physician at the Thielen Student Health Center Travel Clinic, an attorney from the Office of University Counsel, and the Director of the Office of Risk Management.