



Terms of Participation for Study Abroad Programs

Please save pages 1-7 as a reference during program preparation and actual program

STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University student rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at West Texas A&M University but also as a citizen of this country.

Students participating in a West Texas A&M University Study Abroad Program are responsible for complying with all of the terms and conditions of student conduct as outlined in the [West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life](http://www.wtamu.edu/administrative/ss/code/index.htm). A copy of these student rules may be found on the Internet at <http://www.wtamu.edu/administrative/ss/code/index.htm>.

It should be noted that study abroad programs are considered university-sponsored activities and, as such, participating students are responsible for observing the same rules as students attending classes on campus.

Students' Rights

Article I

A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no university rule or regulation or administrative policy that in any way abridges rights of freedom, speech, expression, petition, and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.

Article II

Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the university, free from any form of illegal discrimination and without regard to any subgroup, classification or stereotype.

Article III

A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.

Article IV

Each student shall be free from disciplinary action by university officials for violations of civil and criminal law off-campus, except when such a violation is determined also to be a violation of the provision regarding off-campus conduct in the [West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life](http://www.wtamu.edu/administrative/ss/code/index.htm).

Article V

Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university regulations shall be assured procedural due process. At all judicial hearings, an accused student shall be assumed innocent until proven guilty, and in initial judicial hearings, the burden of proof shall rest with those bringing the charges. In all proceedings, the student shall be guaranteed substantive and procedural due process.

Students' Responsibilities

Article I

A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and administration.

Article II

A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University regulations and to comply with them and the laws of the land.

Article III

A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire university community.

Article IV

A student has the responsibility to recognize the university's obligation to provide an environment for learning.

Article V

By accepting admission to a West Texas A&M University Study Abroad Program, you agree to be responsible for your own health, safety and behavior while participating in the program. In addition, you are committed to observe and obey [West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life](#), the laws of the State of Texas and the United States of America, as well as the laws of the host country and the host institution.

DUE PROCESS AND DISMISSAL FROM A PROGRAM

Violations of any of the conditions set forth by the West Texas A&M University Study Abroad Program may result in expulsion from the program and forfeiture of program fees. You may be dismissed from the program for a violation of the *Terms of Participation*, [West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life](#) and/or the laws of the United States and your host country/institution. If for just reason the faculty coordinators in-country or program coordinators consider you to be disruptive, in violation of university rules and regulations, as listed in [West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life](#), or otherwise unfit for continuation in the program disciplinary action will be taken (as appropriate) and you may be dismissed from the program. In accordance with [West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life](#), you will be afforded due process, which includes an opportunity to respond to charges against you. The Office of Study Abroad will notify your guardian, in accordance with FERPA guidelines (Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act), if you are dismissed from the program.

Prior to taking action which adversely impacts a student's participation or status in the Study Abroad Program:

- The faculty member must provide notice to the student about the nature of the problem;
- Give the student an opportunity to respond (explain) and correct the problem;
- Communicate the consequences of failing to correct the problem, i.e. dismissal from the program.

Arrests for violations of host country laws may result in your immediate dismissal from the program. West Texas A&M will assume no responsibility for obtaining the student legal counsel. The faculty coordinator should contact West Texas A&M University so the family may be contacted. They should also alert the U. S. Embassy and the student's family of the unrest, in accordance with FERPA guidelines.

HEALTH

Please visit the U.S. Department of Health – Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Travelers' Health Webpage to find country specific health information and inoculations suggestions. –

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/destinat.htm> .

Before you travel, you should check with your doctor for recommendations concerning inoculations (vaccines) that may be necessary or just suggested for any countries you may visit. If you are taking prescription medication, be sure you have an ample supply for your entire stay and make sure that all medication (including over the counter drugs) is clearly labeled and in its original container. It is also wise to carry a copy of the original prescription with you if you are on prescription medication.

If you have any chronic medical conditions such as *allergies, eating disorders, hypo-glycemia, asthma, motion or altitude sickness, migraines, diabetes, physical limitations such as visual or hearing impairments, etc.*, which require special medication or continuing medical treatment, you need to check with your doctor to ensure that

your special needs can be met while you are away. You should submit to your program coordinator a letter from your doctor stating that your needs can be met, and how.

If you have any psychological or emotional concerns which might affect your or others' well-being during the trip, it is your responsibility to inform the involved parties (roommates, faculty members, program coordinators) before you depart on the program to prevent any interference with the group's plans. You should also consult the Office of Study Abroad regarding the feasibility of your needs being met while on a Study Abroad Program.

SEXUAL CONDUCT

As always, you must be aware of your risk of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. Complete abstinence from high-risk behavior is of course your best protection and is recommended, but as an adult it is your responsibility to protect yourself in whatever activities you choose. If you might for any reason need condoms or other products, purchase them before you leave the U.S. Availability and quality vary from country to country.

Be aware that some persons suddenly living in a new environment such as a study abroad experience may feel freer to experiment with their sexuality in a variety of avenues. Your morals and values are up to you to determine. However, remember that the program will eventually be over and you will need to cope with whatever decisions you have made upon your return. You should also remember that you are responsible to the Student Conduct Code, [West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life](#), which includes individual paragraphs on sexual misconduct.

Some host countries require medical testing, including an AIDS test, upon arrival in the country. By applying for this program and signing this form, you agree to comply with these requirements should they be required. The Medical Services staff is happy to provide brochures, counseling, and informational services on AIDS, HIV, and other STDs. You are strongly urged to take advantage of this resource.

UNWANTED SEXUAL BEHAVIOR/CONDUCT

Unwanted sexual behavior/conduct may include, but is not limited to, inappropriate touching or fondling, against the person's will. Don't allow cultural differences to dictate what is acceptable to you. Regardless of the country or culture you are in, when you are not comfortable with an activity, you have the right to say so and end the activity.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Rape and other forms of sexual assault are non-consensual sexual acts involving force, manipulation or coercion. The use of alcohol or other drugs to sedate a victim are considered criminal offenses in many countries, including the U.S. Both men and women can be victims and perpetrators of sexual assault. Students should refer to [West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life](#), section 39, for information on rules related to sexual assault and sexual abuse.

DISCRIMINATION and HARASSMENT

It is inherent in almost any change of culture, such as you are approaching, that you will be noticed as different and foreign, and perhaps singled out and possibly derided by local persons. The color of your skin, hair, and the way you dress, or any variety of things will draw such attention. Harassment in the classroom or in any way related to your West Texas A&M Study Abroad Program is prohibited. Harassment includes conduct (physical, verbal, graphic, written or electronic) that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to threaten an individual or limit the ability of an individual to work, study, or participate in the activities of the university which includes study abroad. Such conduct also includes but is not limited to sexual harassment, racial and ethnic harassment, stalking and retaliation. **It is important to remember that expectations for your behavior, and the behavior of Study Abroad faculty, are based on [West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life](#) and policies, not the practices of your host country.** In the event you are experiencing harassment, you may report it to the faculty coordinator or you can contact the Director of Student Services at (806) 651-2050.

ALCOHOL

Students who choose to drink alcohol should be aware that laws about the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages vary in different countries and in some, such as Muslim countries, alcoholic beverages are illegal. You should also be aware that public intoxication is not understood or tolerated in most cultures. Remember, if you are arrested, you may be subject to dismissal from the program. Furthermore, any alcohol-related disruptive behavior could result in dismissal from the Study Abroad Program. Please remember that you are an ambassador of the United States and West Texas A&M University and the impressions you make will be lasting. Last, and most important, inebriation can seriously compromise your personal safety by making you seem open to unwanted intimate advances and an easy target for theft or physical assault.

ILLEGAL DRUGS

NEVER travel with marijuana or any other illegal drug. West Texas A&M University can assume NO responsibility for any student apprehended for possession of drugs. Bear in mind that laws concerning drugs are much more severe in many other countries than in the United States, and even though you are a U.S. citizen, you are still subject to the laws of your host country. WTAMU will not tolerate use or possession of illegal drugs. Any student caught with illegal drugs may be subject to **immediate** dismissal from the Study Abroad Program.

PERSONAL SAFETY

The most important rule to remember is to **USE YOUR COMMON SENSE**. If you wouldn't camp out in a park in inner city, USA, then be cautious about doing it elsewhere. In general, the best way for you to learn what is or isn't safe is to watch and learn what the "natives" of a particular area are doing. When you are uncertain, ask questions of resource persons such as personnel at the host institutions, travel agencies, tourist offices, etc.

Be watchful and careful of your personal belongings. Pickpockets can be extremely subtle--they even use dancing children to distract you. Some have been known to use chloroform on tourists sleeping in trains, so beware at all times. Don't ever carry large amounts of cash, and be careful where you put your passport and airline ticket. There are passport and travelers check holders available which you can wear on your body around your neck or waist; these are a good investment. It is a good idea to photocopy the important pages of your passport and keep them in a safe place (perhaps exchange with another traveler) should you need to replace your passport.

Generally, you want to do your best not to look like an unaware tourist. Those people who are blatantly confused-looking or lost are likely candidates for pickpockets. It is a good idea, then, to be familiar with the major streets of a city before you set out. Then you can keep your bearings in relation to those major thoroughfares.

Perhaps the best safeguard is not to have any valuables showing. If you wear expensive jewelry, not only does it become a target for theft, but pickpockets assume that you will carry lots of cash if you can afford expensive jewelry. Even though robbery is not rampant abroad, the chances of your losing something to a pickpocket are increased overseas because you are the best target for thieves--you are unfamiliar with the geography, customs, and people abroad. So if you don't feel you want to have a personal item stolen, do not bring it along if at all possible.

To prepare you for international travel, we request that you visit and read the U.S. Department of State International Travel Website: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_1168.html

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Students are required to obtain a U.S. Passport and a host country Visa (as applicable). A passport is an internationally recognized travel document that verifies the identity and nationality of the bearer. A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and leave most foreign countries. Only the U.S. Department of State has the authority to grant, issue or verify United States passports. Some foreign countries also require a Visa for the duration of your travel. Please check the U.S. Department of State Foreign Entry Requirements – http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1229.html

Passports – General Information – http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

Passports – Where to Apply – <http://iafdb.travel.state.gov/>

CUSTOMS

Before you leave, check to be sure that you are not violating any customs regulations. There are often limits to how much currency you can bring into and out of a country, and to the dollar value of undeclared goods you can bring home. Also, it's illegal to transport certain items (plants, food) across borders. It is your responsibility to be sure you are in keeping with customs rulings in each country you that visit.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Students who are on academic probation are welcome to apply for study abroad programs. It is, however, your responsibility in this situation to discuss your study abroad plans with your academic advisor. You must be in good standing with the University, meeting all conditions of your academic probation, or have special, *written* permission from your advisor to participate, two months prior to your departure on the program.

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS

Before you plan any side trips on your spare time, you should check with someone knowledgeable to be sure that you take all necessary safety precautions. It is always best to travel with at least one companion. Be sure you let the faculty coordinator know where you plan to be and when you will return. Above all, remember that **YOU ARE A RESPONSIBLE ADULT** and will be expected to behave as such. We do not suggest that you rent and drive an automobile in a foreign country. If you do, please know that West Texas A&M University will not assume any liability for damage or injury with regard to accidents while driving.

PROGRAM COST

The cost of the program will vary according to the specifications and uniqueness of each program. It is the responsibility of the student to pay all debts to West Texas A&M University **BEFORE** the departure of the program. All students participating in programs through the WTAMU Office of Study Abroad are required to establish an emergency contingency plan in case of unforeseen financial responsibilities, due to medical or unanticipated circumstances. WTAMU OSA is not responsible for these costs, and cannot pay on behalf of a student in the event of an emergency.

The easiest way to to prepare yourself for an unexpected expense is to obtain a credit card for emergency use before leaving the country. Other options for managing money overseas are provided in the WTAMU OSA pre-departure orientation manual and may be discussed with the OSA before departure. The OSA takes no responsibility for student financial management.

While the OSA ensures that all students carry international medical insurance, many foreign medical treatment centers will require payment before service & require the patient to follow up with the insurance company for reimbursement. Please refer to your policy for details. WTAMU program leaders cannot pay for student medical expenses.

TRAVEL WARNINGS

1. Note that if a travel warning is issued for your host country, your Study Abroad program will be canceled. Students are prohibited by West Texas A&M travel policy to travel on West Texas A&M study abroad programs to countries under a travel warning.
2. If you are in your host country when a travel warning for that country is issued, you will be required to leave the country as soon as feasibly possible.
3. Study Abroad advisors will attempt to keep you informed of any travel warnings and/or public announcements for your country. You also have the responsibility to contact the US State Department (888-407-4747) or access website http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html to check on the status of your destination country.

PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL

When registering for a Study Abroad Program, you are required to submit a **NON-REFUNDABLE** deposit to the program in which you will participate. If you withdraw from the program, any additional funds expended (beyond the deposit) will remain in either a study abroad program or a field trip account, this money may be divided equally and returned to the student. If a Study Abroad Program is cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e. natural disasters, war or civil unrest, posting of U.S. Travel Advisory warning against travel, etc.), all efforts will be made to retrieve any funds already expended to secure the study abroad program. All funds that are retrieved will be divided equally among and returned to the participating students. Students may want to consider purchase of travel insurance if they are concerned about the possibility of program cancellation. Such policies range in price from approximately \$100 to \$500. Additional information about

these policies is available through any Travel Agency. Such policies should be read closely, as not all provide the same benefits or amounts of coverage.

If you are awarded a International Education Fee scholarship, please know that this money is specifically to be utilized for Study Abroad Programs. If you fail to participate fully in the project or if you fail to pay your required share of the project costs, the scholarship will be withdrawn or must be returned. In addition, it is your responsibility to drop the study abroad course in which you are enrolled.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Please be aware that foreign countries are not required to comply to the United States' Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have any special concerns or needs, please contact the faculty coordinator before registering for a Study Abroad Program.

HEALTH & PROPERTY INSURANCE

West Texas A&M University requires all students studying abroad to have: 1) Adequate health and accident coverage and 2) Repatriation of Remains and Emergency medical evacuation.

West Texas A&M University, the Texas A&M University System, its Board of Regents, all system officers, agents, and employees do not maintain any insurance policy covering any circumstances arising from my participation in this activity or any event related to that participation. You will assume full responsibility for your own safety and the safety of your property at all times while participating in study abroad. Individual students traveling abroad need to find out the specific insurance requirements relevant to the rules for entrance to the host country, any country they are transferring through, the specific program provider, and host institution.

It is important to realize that most U.S. health insurance coverage is not recognized overseas. You will normally have to pay for medical service, and fill out a claim form to be returned to the home company for reimbursement. It is imperative for you to know the limits of your coverage, and carry at least one claim form to be signed by appropriate medical persons abroad to facilitate reimbursement.

It is strongly advised that you communicate with the OSA, program provider, or host liaison prior to departure and provide confidential information of special conditions and/or needs such as, but not limited to, allergies, medication, treatment programs, or other medical concerns, so that if problems arise, they are not a surprise.

You should consider purchasing insurance to cover loss of personal possessions while abroad. It is possible that you may be covered under your homeowners policy, so investigate this prior to departure.

MEDICAL RELEASE STATEMENT

By signing the Terms of Participation Acceptance Form you are authorizing a representative of West Texas A&M University, at your own expense, to secure necessary treatment, including administration of anesthetic and surgery, and such medications as may be prescribed. It is further agreed that, if your condition so requires, you may be returned to the United States at your expense. Any payments made on your behalf by West Texas A&M University will require reimbursement by you.

EMERGENCY PROTOCOL DURING TRAVEL

Students are required to notify the program director about any medical emergency. This information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality, and will be shared by the program director on a "need to know" basis only. If the crisis involving a student is grave enough to jeopardize his or her safety or well being, the emergency contact he/she has provided at the time of registration will be informed.

During a political crisis or some other emergency during which foreigners in general or U.S. citizens in particular may be at risk, students should keep a low profile; avoid demonstrations, confrontations or situations where they could be in danger; avoid behavior that could call attention to themselves; avoid locales where foreigners or Americans are known to congregate; and take down signs, avoid using luggage tags and wearing clothes that would label them as Americans.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION FEE SCHOLARSHIP

If you have been awarded an International Education Fee scholarship, please know that this money is specifically to be utilized for Study Abroad Programs. If you fail to participate fully in the project or do not meet the passing academic standards outlined in the course syllabus, determined by the Academic Program Leader(s) and supported by the Study Abroad Program and Policy Committee, or if you fail to pay your required share of the project costs, the scholarship will be withdrawn or must be returned. In addition, if you fail your study abroad course(s) you will not be eligible to receive IEFS funding in the future.

Revised 10.20.10

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN

Terms of Participation Acceptance Form

I am above the age of 18 years and I have read and agree to abide by the contents of the Terms of Participation. I understand that I am responsible for my own health, safety, welfare and behavior on this program as well as some meals and personal expenses. **I acknowledge that I am required to apply for a US Passport if I do not have a current one. I have read and understand the rules and recommendations described on the US State Department website. I am aware of the Withdrawal Policy. I am further aware that my program fees and/or my WTAMU tuition and fees must be paid BEFORE I depart on this program.** I hereby **ACCEPT** admission to the WTAMU Study Abroad Program. In so doing, I release, quitclaim, discharge, and waive any and all claims I might have arising out of participation in this program against West Texas A&M University, its officers, agents, or employees. I understand that by accepting admission to this program I am making a commitment to observe and obey the rules, regulations, and laws of the **West Texas A&M University Code of Student Life**, the laws of the State of Texas and the United States of America, as well as the laws of the host country and/or institution. I also understand that any violation of the above may result in immediate expulsion from the program and forfeiture of program fees.

Student Name (print or type)

Program name

Student signature

Date

FERPA Waiver (Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act)

I authorize West Texas A&M University to contact and provide information, including educational records, to my parents or spouse. In the case that my emergency contact is not a family member, I authorize West Texas A&M University to contact and provide information to my emergency contacts.

Student Name

Emergency Contact Name (relationship to above named student)

Emergency Contact Number

Emergency Contact Name (relationship to above named student)

Emergency Contact Number

Student signature

Date

Program Name: _____

State of Texas

WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

I recognize and acknowledge that certain risks are inherent in the various activities which I will participate in during this Study Abroad Program. Some examples, though not exhaustive examples, of possible risks might be injuries received by falling, because of bad weather while on land, in the air, or at sea, or because of action of others. I acknowledge there may be physically strenuous activities. I know of no medical reason why I should not participate. I understand that The Texas A&M University System and West Texas A&M University faculty and staff who are sponsoring this program have no control over these risks and are not responsible for my personal welfare.

In recognition of these facts, I, _____, hereby **RELEASE, WAIVE, DISCHARGE, AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE, AND AGREE TO HOLD HARMLESS** for any and all purposes West Texas A&M University, The Texas A&M University System, the Board of Regents for the Texas A&M University System, and their officers, servants, agents, volunteers, or employees **FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITIES, CLAIMS, DEMANDS, OR INJURY, INCLUDING DEATH**, that may be sustained by me while participating in the study abroad activity. I have read and have willingly signed this document with a full understanding of its purpose. I am participating voluntarily in this program, am above the age of 18 years, and am otherwise competent to sign this agreement.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Signature of participant

Signature of witness

printed name of witness

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION FEE SCHOLARSHIP

I understand the requirements for receiving and retaining International Education Fee funding. Failure to meet these requirements may result in repayment of IEFS funding.

Signature of participant

Date

****Please return completed pages 8 and 9 of the Terms of Participation****

Mail: Office of Study Abroad, Attn: Desirae Norton, WTAMU Box 60868, Canyon, TX 79016
Email: studyabroad@wtamu.edu, **Office:** Office of Study Abroad, 115A
Phone: 806.651.5309, **Fax:** 806.651.5274