

Non-credit Faculty-Led International Experience:

Guidance for Faculty/Staff Leaders & Sponsoring Departments

Florida State University recognizes that international experiences of various kinds have the potential to enhance students' academic, social, and cultural development and that FSU faculty and staff (*hereafter faculty/staff leader*) who lead or organize non-credit international activities for students provide a valuable service to the FSU community. Florida State University also recognizes that the faculty/staff leader bears a great deal of responsibility for the safety and security of participants.

The Department/College of the faculty/staff leader is the sponsoring organization of the international experience. As such, the Department/College is ultimately responsible for approving the faculty member's request to lead or facilitate a non-credit international activity and ensuring the faculty member is aware of and follows FSU's [Student Travel Policy](#), which requires all students travelling internationally on a university-sponsored or affiliated program to be:

- registered in FSU's International Experience Database,
- in compliance with FSU's student health insurance requirements,
- registered with the U.S. Department of State prior to departing the U.S.

REQUIRED APPROVAL STEPS FOR FACULTY/STAFF LEADERS

1. The faculty/staff leader is responsible for reviewing and signing the [Faculty Leader Responsibility Form](#) and for ensuring that the Department Chair and College Dean have reviewed the travel plans and itinerary and sign the Faculty Responsibility Form.
2. The faculty/staff leader must submit the signed Faculty Leader Responsibility Form and itinerary to the [Program Director, Intercultural Programs and Exchanges](#) and complete the [Student International Experience Plan](#) (SIEP) to register students in the International Experience Database at least two weeks prior to departure. (Detailed information is available below). *NOTE: travel to countries on the U.S. Department of State Travel Warning or Alert List requires completion of an [Exemption Request](#) prior to having the SIEP approved. In these cases, please ensure plenty of time to complete both the Exemption Request and the SIEP process.*

OVERVIEW OF EXPECTATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY/STAFF LEADERS

Pre-departure

The faculty/staff leader traveling with the group is responsible for completing the following mandatory steps to ensure the group is in compliance with FSU's student travel policy:

- Registration of student names, emergency contact information and group travel information into FSU's International Experience Database through completion of the [Student International Experience Plan](#) (SIEP) for group experiences *at least two weeks prior to departure*.
- Ensure each student participant has purchased health insurance meeting FSU standards for international experiences and proof of purchase has been submitted to the Center for Global Engagement to be entered into the International Experience Database.



- Each student has signed the Acknowledgement of Risk, Verification of Insurance and General Release Form and the form has been returned to the Center for Global Engagement as part of the SIEP process.
- Each student has registered his/her travel with the with US Embassy, and
- Each student has a valid passport and visa (if required). The country(s) foreign entry requirements should be reviewed to determine how long a passport must be valid to avoid a participant being turned back at the border; a good rule of thumb is to ensure the passport is valid for at least six months prior to the end date of the international experience.
- If travel is to a country on the State Department warning or advisory list, the faculty/staff leader will additionally ensure that the required [Exemption to Travel](#) process has been completed *at least two weeks prior to departure*.
- Monitor the CDC and US Department of State website to verify it is safe to travel to the country and verify students have the required vaccinations. Monitor any potentially risky situations.
- Consult with the Department Chair and College Dean about potentially risky conditions as ultimate responsibility for students travelling abroad with a Faculty Member rests with the sponsoring Department and College.

Student Orientation (Required prior to travel)

The faculty/staff leader traveling with the group is responsible for preparing students for the experience. At minimum the orientation must include the following:

- Overview of culture and appropriate behavior.
- Review expectation for group travel to and from the program location. *If the program will allow independent travel to and from the program location or during weekends, students must be notified that they must complete an individual Student International Experience Plan (SIEP) for the independent travel component of the program. The faculty leader must monitor student completion and notify CGE which students will be completing independent SIEP forms in addition to the group SIEP form.*
- Overview of program rules and students' responsibility to follow FSU's Student Conduct Code and to follow the instructions provided by the faculty/staff leader.
- Review of Student Waiver which details student's responsibilities and consent for their participation in the non-credit program to be terminated for failure to maintain program rules as laid out by the leader and/or violation of FSU Student Conduct Code.
- Safety and security briefing for travel location(s).
- Emergency contact information for the US Embassy and for FSU and procedures for handling emergencies such as crime, accidents, natural disaster, political unrest, and arrest.
- Overview of meeting points in case the group is separated at the program site.

NOTE: The faculty/staff leader must keep attendance records to ensure students complete the orientation.

Travel to Program Location

The entire FSU group is expected to travel together to and from Tallahassee. The program formally begins and ends in the United States at the airport of departure and arrival. **It is not advisable to allow independent travel in conjunction with an FSU faculty-led international experience.**

NOTE: In exceptional circumstances, if one or more student participants receives permission by the faculty/staff leader, department chair and college dean to travel alone to the program location or to do

independent travel before, during, or immediately after the program ends, the student(s) must submit a separate SIEP form and proof of insurance covering the independent travel component. *The faculty/staff leader must apprise students of their responsibility to complete the SIEP for the independent travel component and monitor completion so that the group remains in compliance with FSU's student travel policy. The faculty/staff leader must also notify the Program Director, Intercultural Program and Exchanges of all planned, independent travel by students at least two weeks prior to departure.*

During the Program

The faculty/staff leader serves as the liaison between the FSU group and host institution or organization (if applicable) and ensure that all students represent Florida State University positively.

The faculty/staff leader is the responsible FSU employee throughout the entire program and should be available to group participants and to the sponsoring FSU department/college and the local host or organization.

The faculty/staff leader must be present and on duty during all program activities, as detailed in the program proposal and final itinerary. Rules and expectations for acceptable behavior and activities during free time must be clearly identified to participants.

- The faculty/staff leader and all FSU student participants must carry emergency contact information throughout the program.
- The faculty leader is responsible for the safety and security of the Florida State participants at all times and must ensure each participant knows what to do in an emergency. The faculty leader may place reasonable restrictions on travel to areas deemed unsafe or similar restrictions on means of travel, specific destinations, or activities undertaken by students both during planned activities and during free time. Students who fail to follow the instructions of the faculty leader are subject to immediate return to Tallahassee at their own expense and/or disciplinary action by Florida State University.

In case of an international incident in a program or transit location

In the event a natural disaster, terrorist attack or other internationally-reportable incident occurs in a program or transit location at any time during the program:

- The faculty/staff leader must take whatever measures and action considered reasonably necessary and warranted under the circumstances to protect, safeguard, and minimize exposure to harm.
- The faculty/staff leader must contact their sponsoring Department and Program Director, Intercultural Programs and Exchanges as soon as possible to provide an update regardless of whether any participants were affected by the incident. The sponsoring Department is responsible for notifying the College Dean and Dean of Students Office.

In case of accident, illness, injury, and/or medical emergency

- Take whatever measures and action considered reasonably necessary and warranted under the circumstances to protect, safeguard, and minimize further injury to the students' health and safety, including placing a student in a hospital within or outside the United States for medical services and treatment, or, if no hospital is readily available, to place a student in the care of a local physician for treatment. Accompany a student when medical attention is needed and involve the student's emergency contact before any major medical decisions are made. Ensure that an English-speaking interpreter is made available to the student if necessary. Also, ensure that a



responsible person is placed in charge of other participants to escort them to a safe place, such as a hotel, university campus, or public meeting place, when an emergency requires the faculty leader to become separated from the group.

- Make contact immediately with the student's insurance provider and emergency contact to ensure that they are involved in any medical decisions.
- The faculty/staff leader must contact the sponsoring Department as soon as possible. The sponsoring Department is responsible for notifying the Dean of Students Office.
- The leader should also contact the U.S. Embassy for guidance if appropriate.
- Any and all expenses incurred in rendering these services, whether placing the student in the hospital, in the care of a physician, or transporting back to the United States by commercial airline or otherwise, will be a debt and liability the student is responsible for.

In case of sexual assault

- Contact the U.S. Embassy for guidance and support before notifying local authorities and the host institution. The U.S. Embassy can provide guidance on local reporting requirements and privacy laws and how these may affect the reporting of the incident to FSU.
- Notify the Florida State University Police 850-644-1234 and the sponsoring Department. The Florida State University Police will then notify the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide support for student upon return to Tallahassee.
- Accompany a student when medical attention is needed and involve the student's emergency contact before any major medical decisions are made. Ensure that an English-speaking interpreter is made available to the student if necessary.

In case of death

- In the event of the death of a student; the faculty leader should immediately notify the Florida State University Police at 850-644-1234 and notify the sponsoring Department.
- The Florida State University Police will then notify the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will notify the family as per FSU procedure.

Terminating student participation

- Terminate a student's participation in the international group experience for failure to maintain University rules, regulations, instructions, and standards of conduct and behavior, or for any actions considered to be incompatible with the interest, harmony, comfort, and welfare of other students, faculty, University employees, or nationals of the host country. In the event a student's participation in the international group experience is terminated before the end of the regularly scheduled experience because of a violation on the student's part of one or more of said University rules, regulations, instructions, and/or standards of conduct and behavior, the student has consented to being sent home at his or her own expense with no refund of fees.

After the Program

The faculty/staff leader should debrief the department after the program ends and discuss what went well as well as any problems or difficulties experienced in order to troubleshoot in future. Departments should maintain written records of each program, the final debriefing, any decisions arising from debriefing, and any incidents which took place during the program – in keeping with US privacy laws.



The Department should communicate with CGE, the College Dean's office, and the Dean of Students Office as appropriate so that lessons learned can be acted upon in future, ensure that appropriate offices are able to provide support for students affected by any incidents that took place during the experience, and ensure that disciplinary measures are carried out if a student committed a disciplinary-worthy offense during the program.