



# University of New Haven

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES


### Health, Safety and Security Review Policies for Short-term International Study Abroad and Domestic Study Away Programs

Prepared by:  
The Office of Study Abroad  
Developed: July 2016


Policy Approval:

  
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8/18/2016  
Date

  
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Vice President for Finance

8/23/2016  
Date

  
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Provost and Senior Vice President for  
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8/23/16  
Date

**Policy Title:**

**Health, Safety and Security**

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**Review Policies for**

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**Short-term International Study Abroad  
and Domestic Study Away Programs**

**Responsible Office:** Office of Study Abroad

**Responsible Official:** Director of International Study Opportunities

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# ***Introduction:***

## **Scope**

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 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.

# ***The Policy Sections:***

## **0000.1 Definitions**

**International Program** – Any University activity, credit-bearing or non-credit-bearing, with an international dimension (for example, 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 who accompanies students abroad. Usually, though not always, brief in duration.

**Short-term Program** – A program lasting for a period of time less than 90 days. Typically occurs during the Winter Intersession or Summer Sessions.

## 0000.2 Overview

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 West Haven or other established UNH branch locations (e.g. Prato, Lyme)

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.

## 0000.3 Risk Oversight Team

### (a) Membership

The Risk Oversight team is comprised of six members:

- Director of International Study Opportunities
- Director of Student Accounts & Risk Management
- Executive Director of Public Safety & Global Security
- Associate Vice President of Public Safety & Administrative Services,
- Vice President for Finance
- Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

### (b) Risk Oversight Proposal Review Procedures

The Director of International Study Opportunities, the Director of Student Accounts & Risk Management, and the Executive Director of Public Safety & Global Security 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 the Provost and 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 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Travel Notice Warning Level 3: Avoid Nonessential 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 Executive Director of Public Safety & Global Security, 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 students safety, and recommend whether or not to suspend or cancel a previously approved program.

## 0000.4 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 or 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 wish to run a program for multiple years need to update and resubmit their proposal annually.

## 0000.5 Post Approval Procedures

Once approved, programs must meet the minimum number of students indicated in the proposed program budget in order 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 is able to 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 under way, the University will determine, in consultation with the Faculty Leader(s), appropriate internal departments, peer institutions, other organizations that offer programs abroad and area experts, whether conditions warrant suspension of the program and/or departure of the students from the host country.

## 0000.6 Onsite Responsibilities

The Faculty Leader(s) should fulfill the following duties on-site:

- Provide an initial onsite orientation to introduce the students to the host site and culture (may be 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 liaison between the students and any individuals or entities providing services to the program.
- Ensure the onsite cooperating institution/organization is delivering 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 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 any **emergency situations 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 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 of culture shock. These 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.

## 0000.7 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 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 consolation 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 the Study Abroad Program 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 maintain 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 any and all study abroad programs:

- The Office of Study Abroad regularly and responsibly monitors safety issues in each of our program 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-departure orientation sessions that stress safety issues and understanding cultural difference.
- 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 an international health insurance and emergency evacuation assistance plan to all students participating on University of New Haven Study Abroad Programs.

Country specific information 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 Traveler Enrollment 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 calling card or collect call from outside the United States.

## 0000.8 Communication

The Faculty Leader is responsible for communicating applicable codes of conduct and the consequences of noncompliance to participants. In the event there are U.S. State Department public announcements, worldwide cautions, travel alerts or warnings, the Office of Study Abroad and/or the Executive Director of Public Safety & Global Security will send e-mails to Faculty Leaders abroad and or 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 Executive Director of Public Safety & Global Security 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 situation the Faculty Leader 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, or protest groups, restaurants, and locations where Americans are known to frequent.

Students should keep up with local news through newspapers, radio, and television. In an event of a disturbance or protests **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.

## 0000.9 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 the situation (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 Executive Director of Public Safety & and Global Security 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 study abroad staff and other appropriate individuals on campus. During an ongoing crises, Faculty Leaders must keep the Office of Study Abroad informed on a regular basis through telephone or email until the crises 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 consultation with 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 follow 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

## 0000.10 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.**

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**This Policy's Contact Person:**

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