Important Information

In the United States
University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center
230 Heller Hall
271 19th Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55455-0430
Phone: 612.626.9000
Fax: 612.626.8009
Toll Free: 888.700.UOFM
Email: UMabroad@umn.edu
Website: UMabroad.umn.edu

Emergencies
Monday–Friday: 612.626.9000
After hours: 612.301.2255

Cultural Insurance Services
International (CISI)
Phone: 800.872.1414 (24 hours)
From outside the US, call collect: (01) 609.986.1234
medservices@assistamerica.com
Plan ID: 01-AA-CIS-01133

Global Campus Partner Team
Brook Blahnik, Associate Director
blahnik@umn.edu
612.625.9383
Tim Dohmen, Program Director
tedohmen@umn.edu
612.625.5182
Eric Leinen, Program Director
lein0032@umn.edu
612.625.9008
Jill Reister, Program Director
jreister@umn.edu
612.625.0195
Ryan McCarthy, Associate Program Director
mccar313@umn.edu
612.626.9373
Vanessa Walton, Associate Program Director
vwalton@umn.edu
612.626.7561
Molly Stern, Enrollment Specialist
mstern@umn.edu
612.621.1571

Other University Partners
The Aurora Center
24-Hour Helpline: 612.626.9111
Phone: 612.626.2929
Toll Free: 612.626.4279
aurora@umn.edu

Boynton Health Service
612.625.8400

Student Counseling Services (SCS)
612.624.3323

Gender and Sexuality Center for Queer and Trans Life
612.625.0537
gcs@umn.edu

Disability Resource Center
612.626.1333
drc@umn.edu

Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence (MCAE)
612.624.6386
mcae@umn.edu

General Program Health & Safety
Official University information on program health and safety is available at global.umn.edu/gosafe/index.html.

Program Health & Safety
Program health and safety information is available at global.umn.edu/gosafe/index.html.
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General Responsibilities

Education abroad is central to the University of Minnesota’s mission and goals. The University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center (LAC) provides a wide variety of programs in countries all over the world that meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff. The structure of learning abroad programs varies greatly in terms of length, destination, sponsor, academics, and organization. Collaborative partnerships between academic units and the Learning Abroad Center are critical to the University of Minnesota’s efforts to internationalize the campus.

Short-term programs fill a niche in the University’s overall offerings. Programs led by faculty and instructors enrich the curriculum, open new doors for students, and provide assurances to other faculty, to the administration, and to parents that the program will be of quality comparable to on-campus academic courses. Faculty and staff who lead such programs usually return to the campus with deepened convictions about the value of international study as an essential component of education and many are eager to do it again.

Global Campus Partner Programs

This handbook focuses specifically on the Global Campus Partner (GCP) programs, if you are working with the learning abroad center under a different program model the information in this handbook will not be accurately reflect procedures or duty assignments, seek out the proper handbook for your program model instead. GCP programs have a program leader that accompanies the group of students abroad. The programs can be credit-bearing or non-credit bearing. The programs is administered out of a college, school, or department (sponsoring units) with assistance by the Learning Abroad Center. Approved by the Department Chair, they frequently fulfill specific curricular objectives and allow the program leaders to specialize course pedagogy in an international setting. Programs can be open to UofM undergrads and/or grad/professional students -- sometimes the sponsoring unit will open the program to non-UofM students as well according to departmental needs and prerequisites. Programs for undergraduate students must work with the Learning Abroad Center, programs for grad/professional students may choose (but are not required) to work with the Learning Abroad Center. More information on the different kinds of instructor led programs can be found in the Quickstart guide.

Roles & Responsibilities

The Learning Abroad Center is available to meet with interested colleges/schools/departments to discuss program proposals and services. In addition, Learning Abroad Center staff can serve as a resource to the program leaders on pedagogy, travel advisories, cultural information, program promotion, pre-departure preparation, and overseas arrangements.

Sample of Learning Abroad Center Responsibilities

- Program design advice and handbook resource
- Student registration
- Student billing
- Financial aid services
- Basic web page creation
- Online application and forms collection
- Online pre-departure orientation (students)
- International insurance (students and leaders)
- Facilitation of university compliance
- Guidance on legal liability, health, and safety
- Program leader workshop(s)
- Registration of students and program leaders with U.S. State Department Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

Sample of College/School/Department Responsibilities

- Program design and budget
- Departmental communication for approvals
- International travel arrangements and contracting
- On-site arrangements, including travel, housing, and meals
- Program promotion and recruitment
- Application review and student acceptance
- Program-specific pre-departure orientation
- On-site health, safety, and emergency planning
- Academic content design and delivery
- Grade posting

Health & Safety

Safety is a serious concern for everyone involved in study abroad—the students, their families, faculty/staff leaders, partners abroad, and the Learning Abroad Center. Health and safety issues are important throughout the program processes from planning through re-entry and health and safety issues are addressed throughout the sections in this handbook. While evidence suggests that in general students abroad are as safe as or safer than they are on U.S. campuses, there are particular risks that may occur overseas. Since students are far from home and in an unfamiliar culture, any issue that does arise often feels more traumatic than it would have if the same event had occurred while in the US.
By following the recommendations and procedures in this handbook, program leaders can avoid many issues before they arise and learn how to handle an overseas emergency should one occur. Leaders attend a mandatory Health & Safety Training hosted by International Health, Safety, and Compliance to help leaders prepare for unexpected situations while abroad. Leaders should contact Learning Abroad Center Staff any time there is an incident or emergency. The staff of the Learning Abroad Center wish all participants and program leaders a safe learning experience abroad, and we stand ready to assist if any problems arise.

University Policies

Program leaders should familiarize themselves with the University of Minnesota policy: “Student Travel and Education Abroad: Health and Safety” at policy.umn.edu/policies/education/student/edabroad.html. Though the Learning Abroad Center will facilitate compliance with the students’ requirements under the policy, GCP programs are sponsored by the relevant College or Department and as such, the college or department is responsible for compliance with the sponsoring unit requirements included in university policy. Participants on GCP programs are also required by the University to complete a Release and Waiver form and a Student Health Information form. Both forms facilitate pre-departure planning and the educational process. When handling an emergency overseas, these forms are essential from both a legal and a safety standpoint. Particularly for time-sensitive decision-making in an emergency, it is important for program leaders to have the appropriate background information on the student as well as the power to act in their best interests. Students participating GCP programs will complete the forms as part of the application process. The Learning Abroad Center will synthesize and make recommendations on the contents of student health information forms, but it is the college or department’s responsibility to follow up on health information form contents as necessary with students.

Program Leader Workshops

Leader Health and Safety Workshop

Prior to the departure of their program, all program leaders must attend a mandatory program leader health and safety workshop. The meeting will primarily cover important health, safety, and liability information, such as FERPA guidelines, legal considerations, emergency planning, and crisis management. Program leaders in past workshops have also enjoyed the opportunity to meet with other leaders to discuss creative program designs, managing group dynamics, and best practices for handling student challenges.

Your LAC contact will notify you of these workshop dates. Depending on the time of year, upcoming Workshop dates can be found on the LAC website: UMabroad.umn.edu/professionals/faculty/uled/leader-development.

Excellence in Leading Learning Abroad Series (ELLAS)

ELLAS is a series of optional workshops taught primarily by experienced faculty who have experience leading programs abroad. Topics covered may include: marketing, creating a syllabus for learning abroad, and intercultural learning best practices. The schedule for these optional workshops can be found on the LAC website: https://umabroad.umn.edu/professionals/faculty/uled/leader-development

Advising, Placement, Academic, & Administrative Costs (APAAC)

The Learning Abroad Center is a ‘cost recovery unit’. It does not receive general tuition dollars from the University. Instead, there is an APAAC (advising, placement, academic and administrative costs) included within every program fee which covers the cost of LAC operations as listed in the responsibility matrix. For Global Campus Partner programs, program ownership is with the sponsoring unit (College or Department). In these instances the LAC charges the APAAC to the sponsoring unit along with the cost of mandatory CISI insurance. The sponsoring unit is responsible for including these costs in the overall program budget and including them in the program fee that is charged to student participants. Full details can be found in the Letter of Understanding.

Letter of Understanding (LOU)

The Letter of Understanding (LOU) serves as an intra-UoFM contract between the LAC and your unit. It lists the terms and conditions to which both parties agree and provides important details about what will happen under particular circumstances, most especially detailing financial
implications and procedures for program and student cancellation. It lists costs for APAAC (Advising, Placement, Academic and Administrative Costs) and insurance costs and provides details about the LAC’s financial model as a whole. The LOU must be signed by all parties before LAC staff can engage in substantial work for your program as the LAC is a ‘cost recovery unit’ funded only through program enrollments. You can think of the LAC as one of the sub-contractors you will be employing to do a portion of your program administration. You’ll also be contracting with outside organizations/businesses abroad to pull your program together.

The Concourse System

Concourse is a web based tool the Learning Abroad Center uses to collect information from you about your program and also to share with you information we are collecting from students. It is the portal by which we’ll exchange information and keep each other informed on the current status of events and items that need to be done. Training and details on the system can be provided by LAC staff, but we hope you find it for the most part self explanatory.

Other Systems

There are lots of other systems the LAC uses for student application, enrollment management and reporting. They include peoplesoft, datawarehouse, Tableau, UM Reports and many others. We don’t ask program leaders to know about or interact with these other systems - Concourse should pull together all the information necessary.

Planning the Program

If you’re like most, you’ve been mentally planning your program for quite some time already. You may have done bits and pieces from the Responsibility Matrix or at least have ideas sketched out somewhere. Faculty and staff members are encouraged to contact the Learning Abroad Center to discuss program ideas at least a year in advance. LAC staff can help you assess the viability of your program idea if you desire. GCP programs do not need approval from the LAC, and we will work on any GCP program that has gained the proper signatures/approval from the sponsoring unit. It’s best practice to first seek out and obtain approval from your unit leadership (often a Dean or Chair of a department) and then approach the Learning Abroad Center about signing a Letter of Understanding (LOU). Once the LOU is signed, LAC staff will commence work on your program and you must be ready to begin planning and preparation work as well. Planning, creating and recruiting for a program takes much longer than many first time program leaders expect, beginning a year in advance of program departure is definitely recommended.

New Programs

When creating a new program there are several things to keep in mind. Below are a list of questions to consider when planning your program:

- When and where will your program take place?
  - Traveling to multiple countries/cities typically costs more than being in a single country/city. Depending on your destinations, accommodations and food might be more expensive if it is high travel season.

- What is the academic theme or content for your program?

- What types of academic excursions will be included? Make sure to account for any ticket fees or transportation costs associated.

Repeating Programs

Paperwork for repeating GCP programs, including an updated LOU, must be submitted to the Learning Abroad Center each time the program is to be run. Please notify your LAC contact as soon as you receive sponsoring unit approval and we will notify you of any significant changes in the LOU or to the LAC processes or procedures. Any new promotional materials/content must be received by May 1 the year prior to the program to be included in the LAC catalog.

Visa Considerations

Whether creating a new program or repeating one that has already run, it is important that leaders consider visa requirements and timelines as a part of their program planning. Timing surrounding application for visas can have an impact on program application and confirmation deadlines. The visa application process for the country you are considering might be time consuming, expensive, or difficult for US/non-US citizens. What leaders learn during their research might impact their location choice.

ITRAAC Approval

Programs planning to travel to a country with a travel warning issued by the U.S. Department of State must first apply to do so through the UofM’s ITRAAC (International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory) committee. To learn more about this committee and its role and responsibility at the University visit: global.umn.edu/travel/approval/#who-tab.

On-Site Logistics Providers

UofM policy requires either that instructor led programs travel with two program leaders, or that they have capable onsite partner staff willing and able to take over program logistics should an emergency render the program leader unable to do so. A least one of the program leaders
must be a University staff or faculty member. The second program leader, where reasonable, need not be University staff or faculty and many programs contract with at least one onsite logistics provider who agrees to fill this role as second leader. Having an organization/company/university partner abroad to assist you in booking accommodations, transportation, museum entrances and the like can be very valuable and allow you to focus on the creation of the course curriculum and content. While partnering in this manner may increase program costs, it is important to have additional support in situations where a leader may be incapacitated or where one leader needs to deal with a student emergency. One strategy to keep costs down is to base the program out of one location and limit the number of excursions. It is important to balance time spent on courses with transportation for other reasons; extensive travel can fatigue students and over complicate program planning. Excessive group travel can also raise the costs, which in turn increases the difficulty in recruiting students.

The Learning Abroad Center recommends program leaders work with their departmental staff to contract with a reputable on-site vendor/provider to provide all logistical and administrative support for the program for a fee. Some providers will arrange everything from the international flights to the final dinner before returning to the U.S., while others may arrange only certain components of a program. Therefore, you should think carefully about what logistical and administrative assistance will enhance your program while keeping the costs as low as possible for the students. Note that University policy (www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Student/EDABROAD_PROC03.html) requires units organizing or promoting student travel abroad complete a due diligence review of all programs before promoting them to students and ensure appropriate contracting with partners.

Contact the Learning Abroad Center or visit the website for a list of LAC-approved program providers available to assist program leaders with on-site logistics. The LAC would do the referral for you in the event we have a promising lead, but contract negotiation etc. would be between yourself/your unit and the organization abroad - this process is not facilitated by the LAC. Some contract assistance and final contract approval is done through the IHSC (International Health, Safety, and Compliance) team - which is a part of the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance, the LAC parent office. If you plan to contract with a partner that the UoFM has not previously worked with, you may need to complete a due diligence review. This process and what it entails is also the purview of the IHSC team. In some cases, you, or a representative from your college/school/department, will need to complete the bidding procedure steps established by University of Minnesota Purchasing Services (http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Purchasing.pdf) before any arrangements can be confirmed. In other cases, you may contract with a provider that has been pre-approved and therefore qualify for an exemption from the bidding process.

University Purchasing Requirements

University Policy (regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Purchasing.pdf) requires that vendors shall be selected by a competitive process for purchases above a dollar threshold determined by the administration. The Learning Abroad Center has obtained an exemption from the bid process for many education abroad opportunities, but the completion of appropriate paperwork is still required. If you will be using several different vendors (e.g., one for travel arrangements, one for hotel, one for ground transportation, etc.), you are subject to the “Professional Services” requirements for Vendor Selection and may be required to take bids if costs exceed $50,000. If you will be using one provider for all services, you are subject to the “Professional Services” requirements. In most cases, you may file a Study Abroad Exception Letter (available from the GPS Alliance Finance Director) with the Requisition and do not have to complete the bid process.

Contracts for Services

The Learning Abroad Center recommends you work with an LAC-approved program provider for all logistical and administrative support for the program. All LAC-approved program providers have been extensively vetted and evaluated. In addition, the contracting process is often much faster and easier with approved providers because the University will have already completed part of the contract negotiation process. If you do not choose to work with an LAC-approved program provider, the college or department must ensure appropriate vetting and contracting with a program provider (www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Student/EDABROAD_PROC03.html), including working with the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance, Purchasing/Travel Services, and the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) to prepare a Contract for Professional Services. Contracts for Professional Services are required when working with vendors to provide services whether the vendor is an individual or a business/organization. Once the college or department has chosen and vetted an appropriate provider, the Learning Abroad Center can provide a standard University Contract for Services template. The college or department must fill in the purchasing details, draft a scope of work including required services and total costs, ensure the contractor agrees to the standard terms and conditions, and obtain the contractor signature. Program leaders must submit their contract draft to the Learning Abroad Center for review prior to obtaining signatures. Individuals who have been given Delegation of Authority signature must sign on behalf of the department or college. The contract is then forwarded to Purchasing Services with the appropriate forms and cover memo requesting exemption. The program provider, the OGC, and the LAC should also receive a copy of the fully executed contract for their files. It is imperative that you plan ahead because contract approval from Purchasing Services can take up to
four to six weeks, before which no program should begin and no payments can be made. When a contract will exceed $1 million, Regents approval is required.

Evaluative Site Visits

Sometimes when developing a new program it can be helpful to conduct a site visit in advance without students to evaluate host country services and on-site logistics providers, as well as research ideas for possible excursions. During your site visit, a primary focus should be on evaluating the on-site providers’ student services with regard to students’ health and safety abroad, transportation, and housing. A partial list to help you get started in what to think about includes:

- International flight arrangements
- Entry/exit requirements (visas, passports, or exit fees)
- Arrival/departure assistance (transportation, pick-up/drop-off)
- Academic support services
- Local experts/guest lecturers
- Relevant field trips and excursions
- Student facilities and services
- Email/internet access
- Computer lab
- Classroom space
- Library

Related Support Services

- On-site orientation
- Location
- Content
- Health and safety
- Housing
- Meals
- Transportation
- Classes
- Excursions
- Additional fees (excursions, activities)

As part of the evaluation you should review information from the Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT, asirt.org) and the US Department of State (state.gov). As a rule, night transportation should be avoided. It is also equally important to evaluate the relative safety of the potential program housing in terms of its location, secure entrance/access, and fire safety. A site visit can also be a great opportunity to collect materials for marketing and the Program-Specific Pre-Departure Orientation. Postcards, photos, brochures, clothing, and souvenirs can help bring the program to life for the students and help them to set more realistic expectations. The funding for a site visit must come from the individual college/school/department; however, the Learning Abroad Center will assist program leaders by providing international contacts and travel suggestions when possible. Travel grants may also be available from the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance at the University of Minnesota (global.umn.edu).

Creating the Program

Program Design

Designing short-term instructor led programs takes finesse due to the inherent time restraints, quick pace, and special dynamics of group travel. It is important to have clearly defined curricular goals, academic standards, and on-site logistics planned long before departure. Strong dedication to the program by the program leader and the academic college/school/department is necessary from the earliest proposal stages through post-program assessment for success.

Curriculum Components

Study abroad programs provide the unique opportunity for UofM faculty to teach students outside of their normal environment. Program leaders should capitalize on this opportunity by carefully developing a program curriculum that integrates the benefits of an international experience, while maintaining the academic rigor of the University. The Learning Abroad Center recommends that program leaders develop their course syllabus and program itinerary jointly, to integrate the course materials with the daily activities planned on-site to the greatest extent possible.
Experiential Education

Experiential education does not mean simply having experiences and learning from them. Carefully organizing excursions and field assignments is only half of the equation. Fully integrating experiential education is pedagogically challenging and requires real effort on the part of the instructor and student alike.

Guiding principles:
Experiential learning is structured. The instructor helps prepare students for the experience and should assure that they understand its intended learning outcomes (e.g., through advance discussion of what to look for in the field); the experience itself is often planned; and systematic processing occurs afterward. Experience is brought into constant dialogue with theory.

• Classroom discussions are not divorced from more experiential components.
• Faculty consistently help students establish bridges between academic knowledge and their experiences.
• Students try out theories as tools for understanding what they observe in the field; they use their field experiences to challenge theory when it does not seem to work; and they develop new hypotheses to explain what they see or hear. This is easy to say but hard to do. Achieving a theory-practice dialogue is perhaps the central challenge of experiential education.
• Learning is documented and assessed.
• Just as with more traditional classroom learning, experiential education includes vehicles for students to demonstrate what they have learned, and for faculty to assess the quality of that learning. Vehicles for doing so can include writing assignments, oral reports, class discussion, one-on-one conversations, etc. Because academic credit is involved, the program, individual classes, and assignments must be structured in a way that permits faculty to assign grades with some degree of comfort. A great way to find out more about these is to attend the optional ELLAS (Excellence in Leading Learning Abroad Series) workshops.

Contact Hours

UofM learning abroad programs must have the same academic rigor as courses on campus. The University of Minnesota states, “45 hours of total effort is expected of the student per credit, and 15 of these must be direct contact hours.” Contact hours include any time the students are engaged in achieving course objectives such as attending lectures, participating in tours, or visiting museums and the like. Readings and other work assigned should be comparable to that assigned for an on-campus course of similar credit value. Pre-departure sessions should be orientations that focus on health & safety, culture learning, and local context. Official coursework for the program must be done within course dates. Be creative with limited time and resources. Plan a short quiz on the plane, assign pre-departure readings, have students report on sections of a textbook, or ask students to lead a researched site visit.

Program Syllabus & Itinerary

The program leader should create a syllabus for the program abroad. This should be a combination of syllabus and itinerary. A well-planned program will successfully wed academic content with daily or weekly excursions, lectures, and visits. Although the amount of work required of students must correspond to what would be expected of students on campus, keep in mind there may be limited access to computers or research facilities. The syllabus should clearly explain the course and material expectations, how students will be evaluated, and when they should expect their grades. The pace of short-term programs can be exhausting for students and leaders. Schedule some free time as well as frequent opportunities for students to debrief their observations and reactions to the cultures they are experiencing. Mindfully plan your site visits and the time needed to reach each destination. Avoid burnout by minimizing long days and balancing activities; for example, do not plan three museum visits in one day.

Excursions

All GCP programs should include some excursions related to the academic content of the program. Excursions may range in length from one or two hours to several days. Faculty leaders should keep in mind the budget and safety of the students when planning any excursion. Some common excursion examples include:

• Academic excursions: Most excursions take this form. They should be related to themes of the course and have a clear academic purpose, which should be communicated to students. The program leaders should accompany students to facilitate learning.
• Orientation excursions: These usually occur during the first days of the program and are designed to help students adapt to their new surroundings. Examples would be; a guided walk around the immediate neighborhood of the program; a chartered bus trip to show students the location of clinics, post offices, internet cafés, etc.; or a guided small-group trip on public buses to different zones of the city.
• Recreational group excursions: These may be for tourism or for recreation purposes. Inexpensive day or side trips that fit into the itinerary may be built into the program budget; however, longer or more expensive options should generally be optional and at the student’s expense. It is recommended that the program budget reflect the required academic excursions only.
Field Assignments

In addition to excursions, program leaders should incorporate structured field assignments into their courses. Such assignments are one important variety of active learning, and therefore are pedagogically in keeping with what is known about effective teaching. The scale of the activity need not be the scale of the analysis. For example, each student might be asked to write an individual report on the same class excursion; or a team of students might write a report on patterns that emerge on the use of space in each of their host families' homes. Similarly, the analysis of the experience may be individual (a written report), team (an oral report to the class), or by the class as a whole (group discussion, or a written report to which each student contributes one part).

Field assignments may be structured in many different ways:

- Observation: Visiting a neighborhood and trying to understand through simply looking and listening
- Informal or structured conversation: Asking a local resident about child-rearing practices
- Listening to an explanation: Being guided through a local business by its manager
- Administering a survey questionnaire: Going door to door and asking about personal car vs. public transportation usage
- Trying out a skill: Haggling at a market using Chinese
- Structured field research: Classifying species in an Ecuadorian rainforest

Course Creation & Registration

Collegiate/Departmental program course creation and student registration, like admission and acceptance, require partnership between the school/college/department and the Learning Abroad Center. Course approval and designation is the responsibility of the school/college/department, whereas the Learning Abroad Center is responsible for requesting the course section number and managing student registration.

Course Creation

Each GCP program must have a departmental course number attached to it. You should work with your school/college/department to determine the most appropriate course title and number. The Office of Undergraduate Education requires departments to create unique course numbers for their programs, even if there is an existing number for a similar on-campus course. The same policies regarding repetition and Liberal Education fulfillment apply to Topics courses taught both on-campus and abroad.

The Learning Abroad Center will request a special learning abroad section for the course using the departmental course number. Your school/college/department should not request a section number for the course, and it should not be included in your course listing. The learning abroad section of your course is a special section that does not generate on-campus tuition because the students will be charged a program fee in place of tuition.

University Tuition & Fees

Programs running through the Learning Abroad Center will be charged a comprehensive program fee that covers educational expenses in lieu of tuition. Students will register for a special study abroad section of your course that does not generate tuition, and participants are granted a waiver from student service fees. Instructional costs should be incorporated by the school/college/department into the study abroad program fee.

Financial Responsibility & Oversight

Program leaders should be diligent in working with their departmental finance officer to track revenue and expenses and reconcile all documents internally. The school/college/department will be responsible for completing procedures established by Purchasing for bids and contracts; processing all program-related payments; and handling all overseas budget matters, including but not limited to on-site instructional costs, on-site contracts and program expenses, all payroll documents for program leaders and any other persons receiving compensation from the program, travel documents, University of Minnesota fees, and Learning Abroad Center fees. The Learning Abroad Center does not assume any responsibility for any debt or emergency expenses on behalf of the program. The financial arrangements are a critical part of the success of a Collegiate/Departmental program. It is extremely important to work with the department or college financial officer to assure that contracts, payments, etc. are all in compliance with the University of Minnesota audit requirements.

Budgeting & Building a Cost of Participation

Creating a budget for your program is a critical step in planning. The program leader, in consultation with the department/school/college, are responsible for creating a program budget and assume all financial risk associated with the Collegiate/Departmental program. A Financial Officer must sign the LOU and submit an EFS string at the time of signature.

The budget process will help you determine the financial viability of the program and will determine the student program fee. The program fee must cover all the expenses of the program. To determine the financial feasibility of your program, you should experiment with the Program Fee Budget Worksheet template (found within Concourse) to determine the expenses per-student and ultimately enter the numbers into Concourse on the “Finance” tab. The LAC staff
You're finished. Upload your completed Worksheet to Concourse when you're finished.

The Worksheet from Concourse, then read on below for the worksheet to create the Cost of Participation. Download estimate and calculate the expenses. The LAC will then use the Program Fee Budget Worksheet Template to universal across programs on the LAC website.

We use the Program Fee Budget Worksheet Template to compare costs, the line item names and the terminology of aid for the combined total of both sections. To help students participate on the program, especially first-time programs. For first-time programs, we recommend you project conservatively (8-10). If you overestimate your participation (e.g., plan on 15 but only get 10), you will not have charged enough to cover program expenses and will have to ask your department or college to pay the difference. If you have an average, you can elect how to use it (e.g., have an extra lunch on site, return the money directly to students). Setting a fee that is too low (either by overestimating the number of students or under estimating the total expenses) in an effort to make the program look more attractive to students will lead to financial hardships for your department. Short term programming is by its nature the most expense program type offered to students.

The Cost of Participation (CoP) is the form the Office of Student Finance uses to determine the cost of attendance for the student and thus the amount of aid for which they are eligible. Students must turn in the CoP when requesting aid for the combined total of both sections. To help students participate on the program, especially first-time programs. For first-time programs, we recommend you project conservatively (8-10). If you overestimate your participation (e.g., plan on 15 but only get 10), you will not have charged enough to cover program expenses and will have to ask your department or college to pay the difference. If you have an average, you can elect how to use it (e.g., have an extra lunch on site, return the money directly to students). Setting a fee that is too low (either by overestimating the number of students or under estimating the total expenses) in an effort to make the program look more attractive to students will lead to financial hardships for your department. Short term programming is by its nature the most expense program type offered to students.

The Cost of Participation (CoP) is the form the Office of Student Finance uses to determine the cost of attendance for the student and thus the amount of aid for which they are eligible. Students must turn in the CoP when requesting the Office of Student Finance to make an adjustment to their cost of attendance. Once you’ve entered your program’s CoP numbers into Concourse, Learning Abroad Center (LAC) staff will create the CoP document and post it to the program webpage.

In order to create the Cost of Participation, you must have a finalized program budget and closely estimated total program expenses. You will then divide all your expenses by the number of anticipated program participants. You must determine the amount to charge each student who will participate on the program, and that amount should cover the total program costs.

There are two parts to the CoP form: a “Program Fees” section—this total plus the program deposit is the amount that the student account will be charged for the program; and an “Estimated Additional Expenses” section—this total is comprised of the other costs, not charged by the University, that the student can reasonably expect to additionally spend to participate on the program. Accurate estimates in both sections are imperative since students can receive financial aid for the combined total of both sections. To help students compare costs, the line item names and the terminology of the two sections match other on-campus documents and is universal across programs on the LAC website.

We use the Program Fee Budget Worksheet Template to estimate and calculate the expenses. The LAC will then use the worksheet to create the Cost of Participation. Download the Worksheet from Concourse, then read on below for additional information that will assist you in filling it out. Upload your completed Worksheet to Concourse when you’re finished.

The “Program Fees” section covers both the Program Leader and Per Student costs. With your school/college/department, you must determine your salary for leading the program and whether this salary will be funded through the student program fee or absorbed by your college or department. In most cases, the leader salary is passed on to the students and therefore, the Learning Abroad Center recommends $4,000–$6,000 for a three week program, especially if on-site support is utilized to absorb some of the administrative burden and/or the academic content.

This section should include the following:

1. Program Leader(s) & Coordinator/TA Salaries
2. Program Leader(s) & Coordinator/TA Fringe and administrative assessment
3. Program Leader(s) & Coordinator/TA on-site expenses (e.g., housing, meals, international travel)
4. Learning Abroad Center Advising, Placement, Application, and Coordination cost (APAAC). Consult the Letter of Understanding (LOU) for full details. There is a program base and cap with a per-participant charge of $400 between the base/cap.
5. College or department administrative cost (if applicable)

Subtract the amount you’ll want to charge as a Program Deposit.

International Health Insurance
All student participants as well as Program Leader(s) & Coordinator/TAs are required to have CISI insurance while abroad for University purposes.

Housing and/or Meals
This should be the total amount included in the program fee for student housing (e.g., lodging, hotels, hostels) as well as any meals included in the program. Many programs include a few group meals (e.g., a welcome/orientation breakfast, a farewell dinner).

Transportation (if required and included in program fee)
This should be the total amount for any included transportation costs. Some programs package a group flight to and from the country into the program fee. Some programs include only ground transportation (e.g., buses, vans, trains).

Program Discount for UofM and CIC SPA Students (if applicable)
This section does not typically apply to instructor-led program types. Leave blank.

The “Estimated Additional Expenses” section is comprised of the other costs, not charged by the University, that the student can reasonably expect to additionally spend to participate on the program. Examples of additional expenses are as follows:
Transportation to and from Program Site
Include an estimate for any transportation costs not included in the program fee. Average flight costs and any non-included ground transportation costs and airport transfers.

Passport/Photos
Estimate costs associated with securing a passport for the first time. The LAC typically estimates $150 for this cost.

Visa/Required Documents
Estimate costs associated with obtaining a visa or other required documents. This will vary based on location.

Travel Clinic/Immunizations
Estimate costs associated with obtaining any necessary vaccinations/immunizations. This varies based on location, requirements, and the student's insurance coverage. Costs are usually low and rarely exceed $200.

Texts/Materials
Estimate for any required course materials. Often for instructor-led programs this is minimal.

Housing and/or Meals Not Included in Program Fee
This should be the total estimated amount for any housing or meals not included in the program fee. Students may pay directly for some of their housing costs. They may also be expected to purchase or provide their own breakfasts, snacks, lunches, and dinners.

Essential Daily Living Expenses
Estimate any personal item expenses that the student may need. For short programs in which students bring most items and live out of their suitcase, this cost usually minimal.

Spending Money & Personal Travel (not included in financial aid calculation)
Estimate any personal expenses or travel outside of the program (before or after). For short programs in which students are with an Instructor, this is often not needed.

Accurate estimates in all sections are imperative since students can receive financial aid for the combined total of both sections and to help students accurately compare program costs. The LAC does recommend a slight padding to one or more of your costs above what you think you’ll actually incur. It’s good to be a little conservative when budgeting for unexpected currency exchange fluctuations and/or unexpected emergencies or opportunities while onsite. It’s nice to know you have a little bit of reserve funding in case a last minute excursion presents itself, or if an accident means delays or changes to the plan that cost money.

On-Site Partner Organizations
In finalizing your onsite itinerary and building a program cost you’ll be working with the overseas entity and staff in the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance to finalize contracts and arrangements. You will also need to be thinking about flight itineraries and travel logistics. You may want to work with a travel agent at this point to review options and costs and you’ll want to communicate and coordinate these logistics with your on-site partner as well.

Partners & Family
Generally speaking, the University discourages spouses, partners, or dependents accompanying leaders during the program. It increases risk to the University and can be distracting to program participants. If your spouse, partner, or dependent is traveling with you, all expenses related to spouses/partners/dependents (airfare, meals, housing, excursions, etc.) will be your personal financial responsibility. Additionally, you should inform the Learning Abroad Center, department, and on-site provider so that the necessary on-site arrangements, including insurance coverage, can be made.

Program Deposit
You will decide on whether to require a program deposit and the amount of that deposit. The deposit is simply a small amount of the total program cost paid early, not an additional cost. The LAC recommends a deposit of $400. Charging a deposit ensures that the students who confirm their spots on your program are serious about participation and eliminates a need for a waitlist.

Student Cancellation/Refund Policy
The department is responsible for establishing a refund and cancellation policy. When creating the program it’s also time to create some policies for your program surrounding what happens if/when a student applies, is accepted but later drops out. Students who cancel can and do affect your program budget and ability to pay your program costs, for instance, insurance once purchased can not be refunded. Typically the program leader makes the confirmation deposit for the program non-refundable and other “non-recoverable” costs. The program leader guarantees space on the program for the participant upon receipt of the confirmation deposit. From this point forward, you will likely be incurring costs and/or putting down deposits in turn for accommodations or travel arrangements on behalf of the student. If the student cancels, you run the risk of being ‘on the hook’ for these costs, hence the need for a student cancellation policy. The LAC as one of your ‘sub-contractors’ also has non-recoverable costs - consult the LOU to see
what these are. Consulting the LOU should help you form your policy. We include a sample of a refund/cancellation policy below to get you started:

**Sample Refund Policy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cancellation Period</th>
<th>Minimum Penalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60 days or more before start of program</td>
<td>$400 plus program deposit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–59 days before start of program</td>
<td>25% of full program fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–44 days before start of program</td>
<td>50% of full program fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-29 days before start of program</td>
<td>75% of full program fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 days or less before start of program</td>
<td>Full program fee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any participant who cancels at any time after the confirmation deposit has been received will be responsible for the program deposit in addition to the minimum penalties upon cancellation from the program. These penalties are the minimum amounts due. Participants will be held financially liable for all non-recoverable costs that exceed these amounts. The information contained in this Cancellation and Refund Policy supersedes any verbal or other written information that participants may have received regarding this policy.

**Impacts of Student Cancellation**

The department must notify the Learning Abroad Center of all student cancellations, and whether a partial or full refund will be processed, since registration must also be adjusted. The Learning Abroad Center will adjust student billings according to your refund policy as well.

The Learning Abroad Center and/or the school/college/department must adjust any scholarships awarded by them due to student withdrawal from the program. The Office of Financial Aid does not automatically adjust scholarships. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office of any changes in their status.

**Program Cancellation Policy**

You should have a minimum participation number needed to proceed with the program. Should you not reach that number and you need to cancel the program there will be non-recoverable costs that will still be charged by the LAC and possibly by your overseas partners/logistics providers. It is a best practice for the unit sponsoring these kinds of programs abroad to have contingency funds available to cover costs associated with cancelled programs or students cancelling for reasons for which you would not want to charge them (death in the family for instance). The LOU contains additional details about what happens when units must cancel programs.

**Emergency Planning & Contacts**

University policy dictates that the programs sponsoring unit needs to develop an emergency protocol and plan and have a U.S. based 24-7 emergency contact based in the U.S. Form and ideas can be found here: UMabroad.umn.edu/professionals/faculty/uled/departmentalprograms/forms

While the Learning Abroad Center will have a general knowledge of your program, the purpose of a department/college based emergency contact is to have someone willing and able to assist in a detailed way at a moment’s notice and have up to date information on the program itinerary and plan. Both the emergency protocol and the sponsoring unit emergency contact information will be entered into Concourse.

**Promoting the Program**

The majority of promotion will be the responsibility of the program leader. The LAC will create a basic webpage for the program with content information sent by the program leader. If any program details change, program leaders must contact the LAC as soon as possible so the webpage can present accurate information. The program web page will appear in the LAC website search and the program will also be available to apply for through the student application portal. LAC advisers will meet and discuss your program with students in one on one advising, however, there are literally hundreds of programs on offer and unless the student comes to us with an established interest in your program, there is no guarantee our advisers will
specifically/actively promote your program. LAC advisers will often direct students back to the program leader for more information since we don’t typically have all of the itinerary/program details.

Effective promotion of your program usually requires that it has a set fee, itinerary of activities, program title etc. Students are reluctant to apply or commit without knowing that the core details for the program are set. One of the most important factors for students deciding to study abroad is total program cost. Students look for this information early on, and it is important to be as accurate as possible in the cost estimates.

This is a common paradox - program leaders want as much time as possible to finish program creation, course arrangements, and budgeting - but waiting too long to complete these activities doesn’t leave ample time to promote/recruit for the program. Planning the perfect program doesn’t pay off if you must cancel it due to low enrollment.

The program leader should be actively recruiting for the program as soon as possible and all the way through the application deadline. There are many ways to promote on campus. Successful program promotion targets specific students through a variety of channels. In addition to contacting students directly, it is equally important that you connect with other faculty who might be teaching courses that relate to your program as well as Academic Advisors of students enrolled in relevant degree programs.

Below is a list of activities/ideas for promotion:

• Create flyers (compilation flyer and individual flyer)
• Create short promotional blurbs
• Social media promotion
• Promotional email blasts - pull relevant student email addresses, create content, and send
• Conduct classroom promotional visits (especially in your own classes and those of colleagues in the department).
• Present Information Sessions (schedule rooms, promote, gather materials)
• Work with program alumni
• Integrate materials into college or department websites
• Program brochures and handouts
• Photos
• Pamphlets and brochures from the host country
• Share slideshows or video footage
• Participate in the Fall Learning Abroad Center Fair
• Conduct evening information sessions/alumni panel
• Classroom and student group visits
• Faculty and Department meetings
• Targeted emails

Advising Interested Students

At this point you will have planned and created your program and be actively promoting it. It is an exciting time as you monitor applications coming in for your program and get to meet prospective participants. You will be reviewing applications through the Concourse system, getting information from the LAC on individual student applicants and following up on that information if necessary. If you’re lucky you also might be maintaining an application wait list for your program. Students will be contacting you with questions and you’ll be responding to them with details about program cost, travel arrangements, visa requirements and so forth. We encourage advising students while thinking about fit for that individual student - will your program meet their academic and personal needs? Separating your participation requirements while putting the student first can sometimes be difficult but we recommend a ‘student first’ mentality.

LAC Advising

The LAC staff will do basic advising for your program but will not know the program in as much detail as you do so will often refer students back to you for detailed program questions. LAC advisers will advise students on the basic mechanics of study abroad including; applying for your program, applying for scholarships, registering for the proper class for your program etc.

Student Accommodations

The University of Minnesota adheres to the policy that it will do its best to provide reasonable academic accommodations to program participants with disabilities. The Learning Abroad Center sends over 100 students with disabilities abroad every year and continues to see successful accommodations being made on all program types.

Some common disability requests may include:

• Extra time on tests
• Regular medical visits (with an appropriate English speaking physician)
• Access to a psychiatrist or psychologist
• Readings in Braille or large print
• Sign language interpreter
• Personal assistant to help with mobility

Not every education abroad site or program itinerary can accommodate all types of needs. Program participants are required to disclose their accommodation needs well in advance so that the program leaders, the Learning Abroad Center, and the College/Department can work with
overseas staff to determine what kinds of accommodation are possible. The LAC will collect and distribute Accommodation Request Forms as necessary from students, however it is the program leader’s responsibility to follow up with student and liaise with Disability Resource Center and LAC as necessary. If a student discloses a previously unknown disability once on site, the program leader should consult with the Learning Abroad Center. If it is evident that the accommodation cannot be made without a significant change to the program structure or facilities, the program leader should consider whether the student can remain on the program. Additional information on types of disabilities and typical accommodation arrangements can be found at: UMasbroad.umn.edu/professionals/accessabroad.

Managing Pre-Departure Student Logistics

At this point you will have students applying and confirming their participation on your program. A successful experience abroad depends on adequate preparation and proper information distributed to student participants prior to departure. Program leaders should plan on meeting with their student participants once if not multiple times during the weeks leading up to the program start date. These meetings allow the leader to cover important academic and logistical information related to the program, and give students the opportunity to meet other program participants and ask questions, gain insights and set realistic expectations for themselves and for the program. If a program is open to Non-UMN students, program leaders should have a plan for allowing those students to participate in meetings and engaging with others on the program. All Non-UMN students will be set-up as CCE non-degree seeking students by the Learning Abroad Center.

Passports, Visas, & Exit Taxes

All students studying abroad will need a passport. It is important to notify/remind students of this during the application process, so they have adequate time to obtain their passport before departure. Passport processing can take anywhere from six to eight weeks. Existing passports should be valid six months beyond the anticipated return date. Passport forms can be obtained in the Learning Abroad Center, and photos can be taken and printed for a small fee.

In addition to a passport, some countries may have additional visa requirements or exit taxes. Visa regulations should be researched by the program leader well in advance of the program start date to allow adequate processing time. It is important to determine if the program will organize the visa process or if students will be responsible for purchasing and obtaining visas on their own. Even if students are responsible for obtaining their own visas, the issuing consulate may require a letter of enrollment or other proof of student status. It is the program leader’s responsibility to research what is required for both US and non-US citizens, and to write any individual letters of enrollment required. Any additional costs associated with a student visa should be factored into the student budgets.

Visa requirements differ by country of citizenship, and requirements for non-US citizens are often different than for US citizens, something to keep in mind if you have international student participants on your program. You should also keep any visa requirements and timelines in mind (for both US and non-US citizens) as you set your application deadlines. The Visa Specialist in the Learning Abroad Center is available to provide visa recommendations and basic advising for students and program leaders, however this person will not be assembling, reviewing or sending visa packets on behalf of you or your program. It is critical that international student participants consult with the International Student and Scholar Services office (www.isss.umn.edu) prior to departure to ensure they are able to re-enter the U.S. without difficulty upon completion of the program.

Student Applications & Forms

By now you’re well aware that there are a number of required documents and forms students must complete and submit before participating in a learning abroad program. The Learning Abroad Center will collect and share relevant documents with the program leader, and consult with the leader on if and how to follow up with students on particular issues. The follow up and resolution of issues is the program leaders responsibility. As students complete documents, the Learning Abroad Center updates student’s application statuses. The program leaders are then responsible for making acceptance decisions. Students will access the online application and required forms through your program’s web page on the LAC website. Student applicant information is information available to you through Concourse. The Learning Abroad Center will provide additional updates if necessary on individual applicants. The following forms are part of the application and admissions process:

Required Forms

- Learning Abroad Center Online Application form: This form pulls information from the central student information system and contains general information including student’s major, contact information, GPA, etc.
- Confirmation Payment Agreement form: This form authorizes the Learning Abroad Center to bill the student’s account for the program deposit and fee. In addition, the form serves as the student’s written commitment to participate and pay for their study abroad program and acknowledges that they have read and understand the Cancellation Policy.
• Release and Waiver form: The University requires that all students who participate on learning abroad programs sign a Release and Waiver form approved by the Office of the General Counsel.

• Student Health Information form: This form asks students to disclose information about physical and mental health, including current prescriptions. Although most health issues will not preclude students from participating in a learning abroad program, some students with medication or students requiring accommodation will require follow-up.

Additional Forms
• Academic Planning form (University of Minnesota students only): Students may wish to complete this form before applying for a program if their program selection depends heavily on meeting degree requirements while abroad.
• Transcript Request form (non-University of Minnesota students only): Students are required to submit this form as part of their program confirmation materials, indicating the address to which their transcript should be sent at their home institution. After the program leader has posted grades, the University of Minnesota provides one official transcript per student upon completion of a study abroad program. Additional transcripts can be requested from the Office of the Registrar for a fee.

Acceptance of Applicants
The program leader makes the final acceptance decisions on applicants and notifies LAC staff about all approved participants approximately three months before the start of the program. Students must be in good academic and disciplinary standing at the University to participate. LAC staff will notify the program leader if any of the program applicants have any significant pre-existing records with the university. Individual schools/colleges/departments may set additional requirements to fit the specific needs of their program. This could include academic level, course pre-requisites, additional application materials, or higher GPA requirements. The LAC should be notified of any cancellations or changes to your participation roster as financial aid, registration and insurance coverage will need to be adjusted.

Confirmation Paperwork/Forms
Once students have been accepted by you, they will have 2 weeks to respond to the LAC about if they’ll accept the offer of admission to the program. If they proceed, they become a confirmed participant on your program. After that point the Learning Abroad Center will collect several other pieces of required information from the student through a variety of Confirmation forms.

A Health Information Form will be collected for each student. On this form students are asked to self-disclose any medical, physical, or mental health issue they are currently being treated for or have experienced in the past. This may also include an Accommodations Request Form from the UMN Disability Resource Center if students have documented disability accommodations here on campus. These forms will be shared with program leaders, along with recommendations for if and how to follow up with students. It is the program leader’s responsibility to follow up as necessary with students, as well as to work with on-site partners to provide requested on-site accommodation (within reason).

The Learning Abroad Center will also work with the Office for Community Standards (OCS) and Housing & Residential Life (HRL) to collect information about any academic dishonesty, residential life, or behavioral incidents on students’ records. This information will be shared with the program leader, and it is the responsibility of the leader to follow up with students as necessary.

Registration for Coursework
The Learning Abroad Center provides students with instructions on how to register themselves for the learning abroad course assigned to your program. Being properly registered ensures that students maintain their student status and financial aid eligibility. In cases where a registration hold is preventing a student from registering, the LAC will work with those students as needed to help resolve the hold. Ultimately it is each student’s responsibility to resolve any hold on their student account, and if holds are not resolved before program departure students may not be able to participate on their program abroad. If your program accepts non-UMN or UMN students from other campuses (Duluth, Morris, Crookston, Rochester), the LAC will work
with those students to properly register them at UMTC for their program participation. When appropriate, notify the Learning Abroad Center of any course registration changes via email within five days after the program begins. Any changes made after this time will be the responsibility of the student and the department to implement.

Student Invoicing
The Learning Abroad Center will bill the program deposit to the student’s “term account” once it has received the Confirmation and Payment Agreement form from the student. The Learning Abroad Center bills the remainder of the program fee (as set by the program leader) to the student’s account in late April for May/Summer and Fall semester programs, and in early December for Spring Semester (including spring break) programs. See “Payments” below for due date information. The revenue from the program fees is reflected in the department’s account string within one week after each billing has occurred, not when the student actually pays the University. All adjustments are reflected in the same manner. The Learning Abroad Center will make adjustments when necessary to a student’s account upon formal written notification from the department or faculty leader following the Cancellation/Refund and Appeal process established by the program leader/department. What a student is charged is up to the program leader/department, what the LAC retains is by contract and found in the LOU.

Payments
All students must be billed in the student finance billing system for their deposits and program fees. No checks or cash are to be received by the department(s) directly from the students. Payment by the student is usually due within two to three weeks. Student payments to the University are due according to the published schedule on One Stop: http://onestop.umn.edu/finances/pay/where_when_how/index.html.

Financial Aid
Financial aid is available to current University of Minnesota students enrolled in a degree-seeking or eligible certificate program and who are otherwise eligible for financial aid. However, it is important to know that for May or summer programs, undergraduate students must be registered for a minimum of 6 credits to be eligible for financial aid. Often times that means they need to register for a second class back on campus before or after their program abroad to be financial aid eligible. Students wishing to use financial aid should request and obtain a Study Abroad Cost Estimate (SACE) from the Learning Abroad Center and then work with the Office of Student Finance to adjust their financial aid award. The program deposit may be due before financial aid is released, depending on the departure date of your program. Financial aid disbursement dates are federally mandated and aid cannot be released early. If students have concerns about participation on the program due to financial reasons, they may request a Financial Aid Preview meeting with the Office of Student Finance to discuss their financial aid options prior to submitting their non-refundable deposit. Students will be reminded that aid is disbursed according to the regular University calendar regardless of their program and they need to budget accordingly for up-front program cost related to the program.

Student Cancellation
Students must notify the program leader in writing (email from student account is sufficient) of their intent to withdraw from the program. If the Learning Abroad Center has received the student’s signed Confirmation and Payment Agreement, the program leader must determine the financial penalty and the student’s account will be adjusted.

US Department of State Registration
The Learning Abroad Center will register program leaders and the entire student group with the U.S. Department of State through its Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). In order to do so, we need passport information for the program leader(s) and each participant submitted by the communicated deadlines. By registering with the STEP, the U.S. State Department is better able to assist U.S. citizens in an emergency.

Insurance
University policy requires that all students and program leaders travelling for university purposes are covered by the University’s international travel, health, and security insurance. Insurance coverage will be provided for the entire length of the program, plus two days before and after the official program dates. All students and program leaders on GCP programs are insured through the same policy, which includes evacuation benefits and a 24-hour international emergency service phone number. Current costs can be found on the Program Fee Budget Worksheet or in the LOU. Be sure the LAC staff member assigned to your program knows about ALL program leaders, teaching assistants as well as any family members that will be accompanying the group, so that everyone who needs the insurance receives it. We have had situations where the group is being evacuated on a charter flight but one member of the group or spouse is unable to board the plane because of lack of security insurance coverage. It is important that you and your students understand how the travel, health, and security insurance operates so that you are familiar with how to handle a medical emergency or program site evacuation. Policy details and procedures can be reviewed at: global.umn.edu/travel/insurance/index.html.
On-Site Partners & Vendors

If you are working with third-party organizations or vendors -- US-based travel agencies, overseas on-site suppliers of student programming, transportation, housing, meals, academic support and services, etc. -- it is your responsibility to communicate all required student information to such parties. This may include final student rosters and personal information (age, gender, passport numbers, etc), participant contact and emergency contact information, flight and travel itineraries, health concerns or disability accommodation requirements, and any other requested information.

Online Pre-Departure Health & Safety Orientation

University policy requires that all students studying abroad through the University of Minnesota complete an online health and safety pre-departure orientation as part of their study abroad checklist. The Learning Abroad Center will manage and track student completion of this requirement and notify program leaders if a student does not complete it after multiple warnings. Your LAC contact will provide you with a copy of the online orientation content as well so that you know what has been covered and be able to supplement that material during your in-person sessions to specifically address realities of the host country and culture to which you will be travelling.

Program-Specific Pre-Departure Orientation

Program leaders should meet with the participants several weeks prior to departure to provide them with essential pre-departure and program information so that students can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation, and behavior while they are on the program.

Leaders should be ready to distribute the on-site emergency plans they have developed and distribute details about what to do in an emergency to student participants before departure. Handing out emergency contact information as a part of discussing these plans is a good idea. Emergency plans should take into consideration the numerous potential issues that may arise while abroad -- natural disasters, political demonstrations, terrorist attacks, power outages, and loss of cell phone service are just some of the issues leaders have faced in the past. Leaders should develop plans for how to quickly and safely contact students in each scenario.

If you have coordinated the visa process for students, handing back passports/visas at the orientation is a good idea since you’ve got them all in the same room.

Finally think about how to handle distributing the orientation information to students who aren’t able to attend. Consider conducting the orientation in a “smart” classroom and recording the session so you have a video you can share with these students.

Below is a list of other topics commonly covered by program leaders at their pre-departure orientation:

Academics
• Expectations—participation, attendance, and syllabus
• Materials—textbooks, course packets
• Course registration

Basics
• Flight and arrival information
• Passport and visa reminders
• Getting acquainted with the host country
• Communication—telephone, internet, mail, and local transportation
• Housing and meals
• Program leader and student roles—program policies, office hours, and student meetings

Culture
• Description of host country culture—local drinking culture, food, traditions, beliefs, and values
• Culture shock
• Major areas of cultural difference—etiquette, discrimination, sex, and religion
• Advice on how to blend in with the host culture and keep a low profile
• Language resources (where applicable)

Packing
• Appropriate attire—modesty, blending in, weather, outerwear, and dress attire for special events
• Medication—doctor’s notes, prescription drugs, regulations
• What not to pack—immigration, customs, luggage size and weight restrictions

Health & Safety
• Health care, hospitals, emergency procedures, and insurance
• Emergency action/contingency plan
• Personal safety in the host country—locations to avoid, demonstrations, driving, traveling in pairs, etc.
• Night clubs and drinking—increased danger in late/evening/early morning, and buddy system
Legal
• Overview of host country’s major laws
• Laws for illegal substances and substance abuse
• The University of Minnesota’s and Learning Abroad Center’s student codes of conduct

Finances
• Safe handling of money and valuables—ATMs, backup plans, banking, exchange rates, and bringing money from home

Managing Pre-Departure Leader Logistics

Your program is a partnership between yourself and the Learning Abroad Center. Both parties have a role to play in managing your own preparation prior to departure.

LAC staff will check to be sure that you have completed all of the requirements required by policy, most especially that you have attended a leader health and safety training prior to departure. This training does need to be attended each and every time you run a program as policies and procedures change from year to year.

LAC staff will also make sure you have registered for the University’s international health insurance and that you are entered in the U’s travel registry system. Beyond compliance, LAC staff see their role as helping to support the program leader in creating and managing a safe, successful program abroad. LAC staff create support materials, including this handbook and the workshops, which outline and provide information for program leaders. We send updates on policies and procedures as we learn of them from the University and we address and advocate for positive policies and changes on campus when they impact this type of programming.

Of course, the program leader her/himself is primarily responsible for managing their own pre-departure logistics. Most of your work in preparing a successful program will be focused on the program, student, and class logistics, but it is important to take care of your own needs as well.

Steps to take include:
• Disclose in an email or in person to LAC staff and to the Disability Resource Center (if necessary) any issues that could possibly impact your ability to actively lead the program while abroad. Potential health concerns don’t preclude you from leading a program abroad, but additional support or precautions may be necessary or desirable. It’s important to plan in advance for any issues that may arise.
• Attend one of the Health and Safety Workshops provided to program leaders and any of the additional, supplemental leader trainings provided. Attending a health and safety workshop each time you lead a program abroad is required by University policy.

The workshop is led by the University’s International Health, Safety, and Compliance team and provides an environment where you can meet other program leaders and ask and have answered questions surrounding keeping yourself, and your student participants safe and healthy while abroad. Details on when and where the workshops are will be emailed to you, and LAC staff will follow up with you if you do not proactively register. Details on additional supplemental workshops in the ‘Excellence in Leading Learning Abroad Series’ will also be sent to you via email.

• Submit all leader and program information forms to the LAC by the deadlines listed in the Responsibility Matrix. LAC staff has given as much time as possible for each item on the Matrix, but there is a reason for each step in the process and for the deadlines we set. Often leaders feel they’d like more time or that the deadlines are earlier than ideal. It’s normal to want to have the maximum amount of time/opportunity to set things like the program itinerary and your class schedule, however, there are lots of moving pieces that depend on this information being set by the deadline stated. For instance, without a finalized itinerary the program budget can’t be built - without a program budget or a schedule of activities - programs don’t tend to recruit very many students. Following the deadlines on the responsibility matrix doesn’t guarantee a successful program, but with the experience of assisting with several hundred of these programs over the last 10 years, we can’t say it enough, completing tasks on the Matrix early or on schedule is crucial to running a successful program!

• It’s really important for you to inform the LAC whenever a student has registration issues or there are programmatic changes of any kind (dates, fees, course number etc.). Often the LAC needs to reflect these changes in our own education abroad peoplesoft tables and there may be other follow up activities we need to engage in depending on the issue. When in doubt just send your LAC program contact an email, don’t worry about over-communicating with us about your program—if we don’t know about an issue, we can’t assist you.

While Abroad

As a GCP program leader, your responsibilities extend far beyond teaching. You will find yourself wearing many hats while abroad with the group including mediator, counselor, health care advisor, mentor, disciplinarian, travel agent, cultural informant, and many more. Program leaders working with on-site providers should have a clear understanding of the delineation of responsibilities between themselves and the onsite staff they are working with. Commonly the program leader role includes: teaching, providing and shaping course content, grading, ensuring and monitoring class participation, monitoring and
On-Site Orientation

The first impressions that students make abroad can skew their future experiences and are often long-lasting. Students can be especially sensitive when they first arrive abroad because they are usually tired, are outside of their comfort zone, and may be experiencing some level of culture shock. The on-site orientation therefore is an integral part of a successful study abroad program. If you are working with an on-site provider, they should organize part or all of your orientation; however, it is also important that the program leaders talk with the students about their personal expectations as well as those of the University. Emergency procedures, contingency plans, and contact information should be reinforced at this time. See the list below for more guidance on the kinds of topics we recommend are covered at the on-site orientation.

Academics
- Facilities—classroom, computer labs, library (if applicable)
- Expectations—academics and participation

Basics
- General introduction to the community and the surrounding environment
- Communication—telephone, internet, mail, and local transportation
- Housing information—explanation of policies governing housing
- Introduction of local program staff, key host institution administrators, and faculty
- Program leader and student roles—program policies, office hours, and student meetings

Culture
- Culture shock and adjustment issues
- Drinking and pub culture
- Food
- Personal hygiene—differing cultural notions of hygiene
- Appropriate attire—modesty, blending in, weather, outerwear, and dress attire for special events
- Common language phrases (where applicable)
- Attitudes in the host country regarding discrimination against certain populations (where applicable)
- Photography issues—restrictions, respectful use of photography

Health & Safety
- Medical and health facilities—doctors, hospitals, local “911”
- Emergency Action/Contingency Plan and how to communicate in an emergency
- National healthcare system (where applicable)
- Procedures for dealing with illness—insurance
- Personal safety in the host country—locations to avoid, traveling in pairs, etc.
- Reminder to avoid driving cars, mopeds, motorcycles, or any other type of vehicle abroad
- Directions to US consulate or other appropriate consulates

Legal
- Explanation of major host country laws, especially those differing from the U.S. laws
- The University of Minnesota’s and Learning Abroad Center’s student codes of conduct
- Regulations related to illegal substances, political activism by foreigners, etc.
- Safely storing and handling money—pickpockets, concealing valuables and large amounts of cash
- Arrangements for accessing money—backup plan

Cultural Adjustment, or “That’s Weird!”

As the program leader, one of your roles is to facilitate the intercultural growth of your students by incorporating cultural understanding when looking at local practices. You can help students cultivate their understanding of the culture and the class topic at hand by encouraging questions and personal investigation throughout the program. Remember that all students do not come with the same flexibility toward diversity or difference and some may be hesitant to accept cultural differences or quick to justify their actions with stereotypes. For some students, participation on your program might be their first time outside of the U.S.; other students might be seasoned travelers. Utilizing your own knowledge as well as relying on that of the locals you interact with can help students work through frustrations and stereotypes. Having access to cultural informants during the program is important for students’ intercultural development. Cultural informants could be on-site staff, academic counterparts, or yourself if you have intimate knowledge of the country. The results of addressing cultural difference not only benefit the students, but also help you as the faculty leader to assess the outcomes of your program.
Teaching & Group Dynamics

Teaching a course abroad is very different than teaching it on campus. Not only are your students learning together, they are also living together and sharing an intense international experience with one another. Instructor-led programs are unique within study abroad programs because of the strong emphasis on the group. It is common for participants to form strong bonds and make lifelong friendships in a few short weeks. Working together and relying on each other can lead to a positive and successful study abroad experience. Many instructor-led groups organize reunions long after the program has ended.

The program leader encourages and supports the interaction of the participants. Good groups find the strengths in each person and encourage them to use these strengths to complete tasks, support each other in difficult moments, and overcome challenges.

**Keys to maintaining healthy group dynamics:**
- Ask program participants to be flexible, respectful, and open to the host country and each other
- Keep lines of communication open with the participants
- Work to fix problems as soon as possible
- Be proactive in managing group dynamics
- Clearly explain your expectations and those outlined in the University of Minnesota Student Code of Conduct, as well as the Learning Abroad Center policies

Conduct

While on your program, students are subject to the University of Minnesota Student Code of Conduct, as well as Learning Abroad Center policies, because the program is considered a continuation of their University degree. Any violations of the Codes may have impacts back on campus. We ask you to remind your students that University policies apply to them, while they are abroad. These policies can be found at [https://umabroad.umn.edu/students/policies/rightsresponsibilities](https://umabroad.umn.edu/students/policies/rightsresponsibilities). During the application process, LAC staff will obtain any pre-existing records in the Office for Community Standards (OCS) and Housing & Residential Life (HRL). If any of your applicants have a behavioral incident on file that has potential to impact their success on the program, LAC staff will forward the information to you. Generally the program leader will contact students with pre-existing records for follow-up questions or additional requirements prior to acceptance or program participation, so you’ll be aware of any pre-existing issues.

Mental Health

In recent years, students with conditions impacting their mental health have entered colleges and universities in unprecedented numbers, and it’s possible there will be students on your program who have or who will develop mental health conditions while your program is abroad. For general information or student referrals, the University of Minnesota has developed web resources at [mentalhealth.umn.edu](http://mentalhealth.umn.edu).

As with cases of physical illnesses or disabilities, if any of your applicants disclose a mental health condition on their Health Information form that has potential to impact their success on the program, LAC staff will forward the information to you prior to your departure. Once onsite, CISI international insurance will assist with unforeseen medical costs related to student mental health including, if necessary, a student’s early return to the US.

Diversity

Program participants bring a wide variety of personal, cultural, ethnic, and social dimensions to their education abroad experience. As a result, they may engage in very personal struggles or challenges during their education abroad experience and may feel that they do not fit in with the other program participants or with the country host culture. It is helpful to meet with program participants who may appear distant, frustrated, or depressed to see if they are facing unique adjustment challenges and help them adjust to the realities of the host culture.

Communication

Maintaining good communication between program leaders and students is a key component to promoting on-site safety. As a program leader, you should have a cell phone that works in your program country. The LAC advises renting or purchasing a local cell phone for use during the duration of your program. This has the advantage of a local phone number making it easier for students in country as well as
logistics providers to communicate with you without placing international calls. Ensure that students also understand how to operate local phones to make both local and international calls - these things should be covered in your on-site orientation. Inform the students as well as the housing management personnel where the students are staying that they are required to notify you immediately if there is an emergency involving a student, and make sure that they have your contact information. Provide your students with the following contact information in advance on a small card or in a format easy for them to slip into a pocket:

- Program leader(s) names and local phone number(s)
- On-site provider(s) names and phone number(s)
- Local equivalent of “911”
- Local US embassy or consulate contact information

If you will be away from the program site at any time during the program, you should provide students with a way to contact you. Additionally, if students will be traveling independently during the program, they must inform you of their plans and provide you with a copy of their itinerary and a way for you to reach them.

On-Site Incident Management

The Program Leader should contact the LAC and report any onsite incidents that affect the health and safety of the student participants, even if they seem insignificant to you at the time. While the program leader and onsite staff will be the primary people responding to incidents, University staff are available for consultation and support. Each College/Department will have established their own 24/7 emergency contact who will remain in Minnesota through the duration of the program. That emergency contact will serve as the point person on campus, and can coordinate with the Director of International, Health, Safety, and Compliance and LAC staff if necessary. The LAC will maintain program records and will report/submit data to state and federal compliance agencies when required.

Is This an Emergency?

Emergencies can be both real or perceived. As a program leader, you must be prepared to handle both while abroad. Sometimes a perceived emergency, such as the loss or theft of personal property, if not properly handled can be almost as detrimental to a student’s experience as a real emergency. It is important for program leaders to take students’ concerns seriously and take steps to address them.

A true emergency on a program is any event that poses a genuine risk to, or has already endangered, the safety and/or well-being of a program participant(s) and/or the program leader. This includes (but is not limited to) the following types of incidents:

- Serious accident or injury
- Serious illness, whether physical or emotional
- Hospitalization for any reason
- Physical assault
- Sexual assault or rape
- Robbery or mugging
- Disappearance of a student
- Local or national political crisis that could threaten the group’s safety/well-being
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Arrest or questioning by police or other local security force
- Any legal action (lawsuit, trial, etc.) involving a student/program leader

For any of the above situations or any other situation you deem to be an emergency, consult with your 24–7 unit emergency contact back on campus and have them inform the Director of International, Health, Safety and Compliance and your LAC contact.

Emergency Response

In the event of an emergency or an immediate health or safety risk to you or your students, use the following response protocol:

1. Safeguard the program participants: You must do whatever is necessary to assure this, whether it involves obtaining prompt medical attention, police protection, or seeking the intervention of the U.S. Embassy.
2. Keep everyone (including yourself) calm: Students count on you to take charge and get them through the crisis, and they take their behavioral cues from you.
3. When you’re safely able, contact the on-site provider, your school/college/department unit emergency contact, the Director of International, Health, Safety and Compliance and your LAC contact: The resources of the University will be activated to assist you and the unit emergency contact will then be able to notify the students’ stateside emergency contacts if necessary, in accordance with FERPA guidelines.
4. Contact the insurance provider (CISI): If you are dealing with a medical emergency or in a variety of other circumstances they will help coordinate necessary arrangements. You and your students are given insurance cards with a worldwide, 24-7, toll-free number to call for assistance.
5. Notify local police: If you are dealing with a non-medical emergency, follow procedures that may be required by local law. NOTE: In the case of a sexual assault, University policy requires that the victim/survivor make the choice whether police will be contacted. No student will be required to report a sexual assault to police.
6. Create and maintain a log of events: If possible, program leaders should maintain a log of events and share this information with the appropriate local authorities.

7. Maintain communication with the University: It is important to keep your unit contact informed of the emergency and subsequent activities. They in turn can liaise with those on campus. If there is a political or health crisis and the U.S. Department of State (USDOS) issues a public announcement, worldwide caution, or a specific travel warning for the country of your program, the University’s International, Health, Safety and Compliance (IHSC) team will proactively contact program leaders with this information. In the case of an issuance of a USDOS travel warning or other indicators of a serious health or safety threat, the situation will also be reviewed by the International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee (ITRAAC), which will then make a determination whether a program can continue and what additional steps must be taken to ensure the safety of students and faculty. For more information about this committee and its responsibilities, visit http://global.umn.edu/travel/approval/index.html. It is unlikely that you would need to evacuate program participants from a site abroad, however, if a deteriorating situation were to make this necessary, the LAC and IHSC staff would work with your unit emergency contact, CISI insurance staff, and the relevant U.S. embassy to facilitate a safe return of students and faculty.

**Emergency Communication**

As program leader, you should carry all of the student’s names and phone numbers in print form with you at all times in case of emergency. Each program participant must give the name of a person for a stateside emergency contact at the time he/she fills out the LAC online application. The LAC will provide program leaders with this information and they should carry student’s home emergency contact information as well as leave copies with their department or college 24–7 emergency contact.

**Emergency Response Protocol**

Program leaders and their colleges/departments must be prepared to handle emergencies, either perceived or real, while the program is on-site. As part of the program planning process, the University requires that all program leaders complete and submit the “Emergency Planning Form—GCP Programs” to their sponsoring unit and to the Learning Abroad Center prior to departure. This form can be found within Concourse. Designate two meeting points where members of your group can meet up in case of an emergency if access to normal communication channels is obstructed or unavailable. One place is typically the students’ housing or school location and the other should be a well-known location in a different part of the city in case the first location is unsafe or unreachable. These should be decided on and discussed at the on-site orientation.

**Making Payments Abroad**

You must work with the financial officer in your college or department to determine how program expenses can be paid on site. There are legal implications for how a program is setup and individuals are paid in country, including the faculty leader or any other staff participating in the delivery of the program on site. Check with the University’s Tax Management Office (http://tax.umn.edu) before making any payments on site.

As noted previously in this handbook, the Learning Abroad Center recommends contracting with a single reputable vendor/provider that has met all the in-country business requirements and can provide the level of service needed for your particular program. You can proceed with a Contract for Services and subsequently assume that they will make all the appropriate payments to their local government and subcontractors since the responsibility will rest with them under these arrangements.

**Travel Advances**

Although the University discourages large travel advances, there are locations and instances when the only option to make miscellaneous small payments (i.e. museum entrances) is for the faculty leader to carry the funds. If a travel advance is granted, the person is required to thoroughly document all expenses and submit a travel reimbursement form within 15 days of the end of travel. Most faculty will find this very cumbersome and time consuming. Therefore, we strongly suggest that all arrangements be made with and through a local provider, which would include a fund for miscellaneous expenses as part of the agreement. Program leaders may still be given a smaller travel advance for personal expenses. In all cases, work with your department’s financial officer to determine the best course of action for payment of program related expenses while on site.

**Re-Entry**

As program leaders, you play an important role in your student’s re-entry experience. The same care that went into pre-departure orientations should go into devising a return orientation once back in the US. It is also important to continue to maintain some contact with program alumni as they serve as strong ambassadors for your program and for study abroad on campus generally.
Reverse Culture Shock

Many students find their return to the US is as challenging as their initial adjustment to the host country. “Reverse culture shock” refers to the feelings of frustration and longing that many students feel upon returning home after their time abroad. Reverse culture shock is often not anticipated by students returning home and is therefore all the more disruptive and disturbing to them. Prior to the end of the program, it is valuable to engage students in some reflective activities that can help them prepare for their re-entry. Also encouraging your students to attend an LAC ‘Welcome Back’ or ‘Market Your International Experience’ event can help them to transition back to the U.S. and meet other students with similar experiences. You may wish to organize a program reunion to share pictures and stories. Reentry resources and example activities are available on the Learning Abroad Center website.

Program Evaluation

The sponsoring unit and program leader are responsible for evaluating the success of the course and the program as a whole. You have flexibility as to what and how you’d like to evaluate your program. Your LAC contact can provide a list of questions used in past evaluations if desired.

Learning Abroad Center Evaluation

In addition to a program evaluation, the Learning Abroad Center periodically sends a general evaluation to all participants to gauge the effectiveness of our application, enrollment, billing and other processes.

Reimbursements

The Program Leader should solicit an invoice from the on-site partner/affiliate for any outstanding charges, verify it for accuracy, and send it to the appropriate unit finance office for processing. If the Program Leader has personal expenses related to the program, s/he should submit all appropriate paperwork, along with receipts if necessary, to the appropriate unit finance office for processing. The Learning Abroad Center is not involved in individual program payments or reimbursements.

Compliance & Reporting

The Learning Abroad Center handles requests for 1098-T tax forms whereby parents can deduct a portion of the program’s fees from their taxes. The LAC also maintains participation, incident and other records and submits data to appropriate state and federal agencies in accordance with Clery Act, Title IX and other statutes.

Grades/Transcripts

Upon completion of the program, the Program Leader should submit grades to the department as instructed by the registrar, and notify the LAC when this has been done. The LAC will post a transcript memo to each participant’s UMN transcript indicating the course number(s), program title, and location for easy recognition that the course was completed abroad. The LAC will also determine which students need specific Liberal Education Requirements fulfilled and will send a list to the APAS office to have approved Lib Eds linked to classes taken by those students. Notify the Learning Abroad Center when grades have been submitted. When applicable, the LAC will process transcript and transcript request forms for non-UMN student participants, and will send an official UMN transcript to the student’s home institution. While the LAC will serve as the main point of reference for students and staff on academic records related to GCP courses, the program leader is responsible for responding to questions from students, parents, and advisers regarding grades.

Compliance & Reporting

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Course Evaluation

Departments are required by University policy to use the Student Rating of Teaching (http://oms.umn.edu/srt) in order to assess instructional performance. The SRT will have to be set up and administered by the unit. Once the data from the completed SRTs has been received by the unit, the Program Leader should review the evaluations and address any issues/concerns that were raised by the participants. The results of the SRTs should be shared with the onsite provider/affiliate partner when appropriate.