

STUDY ABROAD/AWAY FACULTY-LED PROGRAM LEADER HANDBOOK



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I. THE TU STUDY ABROAD & AWAY OFFICE

The Study Abroad & Away Office at Towson University believes a student's study abroad or study away experience can be one of the most enriching and inspiring experiences of their life, and we are pleased you have decided to join them on this journey. Leading a TU study abroad or study away program will give you the opportunity to reach students in a way you never could here on campus. You will be spending much more time with your students, both inside and out of class, than you ever would at home, and will likely serve as an adviser and mentor among other things! By sharing this experience with your students, you will see their perspectives broadened and their minds extended. The effect you will have on our students will last throughout their lifetime and will change the way they think forever.

The Study Abroad & Away Office is charged with the administration of all faculty-led programs offered to our students abroad and within the U.S. for academic credit. Any faculty or staff member who wishes to direct a study abroad or study away program that carries academic credit must work through the Study Abroad & Away Office.

The Study Abroad & Away Office manages all administrative matters pertaining to TU faculty-led academic programs. It provides guidance, training, and support to TU students and faculty who wish to participate in or lead credit-bearing programs abroad or within the U.S. The office also provides pre-departure orientation programming and support services for program participants.

This handbook is intended for Program Directors and Program Assistants who teach and accompany students on an international or domestic academic program. It is designed to provide you with general assistance as you propose, develop, and lead a Towson University faculty-led study program. In it you will find information outlining the responsibilities of both the program leaders and the Study Abroad & Away Office, travel guidelines, suggestions for dealing with behavioral problems, procedures to follow in the event of an emergency, and other important topics.

Important Contact Numbers at the Study Abroad & Away Office:

Telephone: 410-704-2451
E-mail: studyabroad@towson.edu

24 Hour Emergency Contact Number:

TU Police Department: 410-704-4444

Towson University Study Abroad & Away Office Staff:

Liz Shearer - Director for Study Abroad & Away, lshearer@towson.edu
Jacklyn Fisher – Associate Director for Study Abroad & Away, jfisher@towson.edu
Lyndsi Jones – Assistant Director for Study Abroad & Away, lbjones@towson.edu
Brooke Pawlak - Study Abroad & Away Specialist, bpawlak@towson.edu

II. GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAMS

The following guidelines apply to all TU faculty-led study abroad and study away programs. These guidelines and procedures are designed to ensure the academic integrity and thoroughness of preparation for all study abroad/away courses. All TU study abroad/away forms, guidelines, and procedures are authorized by the Faculty Committee on Study Abroad/Study Away and sanctioned by the Provost's Office. No study abroad or study away program will have the approval of the University unless all procedures have been followed and the responsible faculty or staff member has been informed that the proposed program has been approved by the Faculty-Led Programs Subcommittee of the Faculty Committee on Study Abroad/Study Away.

Faculty-led study abroad and study away is a group experience involving considerable travel to a location(s) away from the campus either domestically or outside the United States. Such experiences may constitute the whole or part of a credit-bearing course. Whatever the case, study abroad and study away is a university-sanctioned activity and requires completion of the forms, tasks, and procedures as outlined in this guide.

STUDY ABROAD/AWAY FORMS

Faculty-Led Study Abroad/Study Away Program Proposal

To lead a short-term study abroad or study away program, a TU Faculty-Led Study Abroad/Study Away Program Proposal Form must be submitted to the Towson University Study Abroad & Away Office along with supporting documentation **by the following deadlines:**

Minimester/Spring/Spring Break: NOVEMBER 1 of the year before the dates of the proposed program

Summer/Fall: APRIL 1 of the year before the dates of the proposed program

The form and proposal guidelines are available online at

<http://www.towson.edu/academics/international/abroad/faculty/programs/index.html>.

Faculty Contract for TU Study Abroad/Study Away Programs

This online form, initiated by the TU Study Abroad & Away Office, confirms the faculty or staff member's appointment as the instructor for the study abroad/away program and outlines the terms for compensation.

Faculty-Led Study Abroad/Study Away Program Accompanying Family Member/Companion Agreement

Any accompanying non-participant family members or companions *and* the faculty/staff member are required to complete and submit this form to the Study Abroad & Away Office prior to departure.

Statement of Responsibilities and Obligations

This declaration has the approval of TU's Legal Counsel. It is part of the application procedure for students to complete in order to be admitted to the study abroad/away program. No student will be permitted to participate in the program that has not reviewed and agreed to the declaration.

Medical Self-Evaluation

This form has the approval of TU's Legal Counsel. It must be completed by all program participants in case of possible accident or injury while abroad. The form is made available online to students upon admission into the program and

must be completed by the appointed deadline. The information can be viewed by the Program Director in the TU study abroad web-based management system once submitted by the student. Copies of the form will be given to the Program Director who should have them readily available throughout the duration of the program.

Agreement and Waiver of Claims

This declaration has the approval of TU's Legal Counsel. It is made available online to students upon admission into the program and must be reviewed and agreed to by the appointed deadline.

Study Abroad/Away Program Report

All faculty/staff members leading a short-term study abroad or away program must submit a program report according to the stated guidelines (see Appendix) **no later than 30 days after the end of the program.**

Expense Reconciliation

Program Leader travel expenses must be reconciled in STRATUS in coordination with the Study Abroad & Away Office after the program ends. Guidelines will be provided by the Study Abroad & Away Office.

Study Abroad/Away Evaluation

Students will be instructed to complete an online evaluation shortly after the program concludes. Results will be shared with the Program Director(s), their department chairperson(s), and college dean(s) to aid in the planning of future programs.

Please keep in mind:

Participants must pay all fees for the program directly to Towson University. Program deposits are submitted to the Study Abroad & Away Office at the time of application. Program leaders should not collect monies from students.

TIMELINE FOR FACULTY-LED PROGRAMS

- Prospective Program Directors are encouraged to attend an information session facilitated by the Study Abroad & Away Office or to meet with the Director for Study Abroad & Away prior to submitting a program proposal.
- Primary Program Director submits the *TU Faculty-Led Study Abroad/Study Away Program Proposal Application through DocuSign*. **A complete proposal form with ALL required approvals and documentation must be received by the Study Abroad & Away Office by the deadline.** Proposals should be submitted in DocuSign by the primary Program Director *at least two weeks* prior to the deadline to allow time for review and approval by the academic department(s) and college(s). It is the faculty/staff member's responsibility to ensure the complete and fully approved proposal is received by the Study Abroad & Away Office by the deadline.
 - **Minimester/Spring/Spring Break:** November 1 a full year prior to the program term
 - **Summer:** April 1 a full year prior to the program term
- The Faculty-Led Programs Subcommittee of the Faculty Committee on Study Abroad/Study Away reviews proposals received by the submission deadline. The outcome is communicated to applicants **by December 1** for Minimester, spring, or Spring Break programs and **by May 1** for summer and fall programs.

- Program Director works with assigned Study Abroad/Away staff member to create tentative program itinerary based on the proposal by **the end of January** of the year before the program for Minimester, spring, or Spring Break programs and by **the end of May** of the year before the program for summer and fall programs.
- Program budget is finalized by the Study Abroad & Away Office by **the end of January** of the year before the program for Minimester, spring, or Spring Break programs and by **the end of August** of the year before the program for summer and fall programs.
- To the extent possible, program contract is signed by the Study Abroad & Away Office and Assistant Vice President for International Initiatives by **the end of May** of the year before the program for Minimester, spring, or Spring Break programs and by **the end of August** of the year before the program for summer and fall programs.
- TU Study Abroad & Away Office prepares marketing materials by **the beginning of the spring semester** for Minimester, spring, and Spring Break programs and by **the beginning of the fall semester** for summer and fall programs.
- TU Study Abroad & Away Office sets up courses in PeopleSoft and registers students in **late November** (for Minimester, spring or Spring Break programs) **or in April** (for summer and fall programs).
- Program leaders complete the Study Abroad/Away Program Leader Training **no later than November 1** (for Minimester, spring, and Spring Break programs) **or April 1** (for summer and fall programs). This training is mandatory for all program leaders. Recertification is required every three years.
- Student application deadlines are **October 15** for Minimester, spring, and Spring Break programs and **March 15** for summer and fall programs. Some exceptions may apply. Deadlines for programs in other terms will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Application deadlines may be extended in some cases.
- TU Study Abroad & Away Office holds a mandatory student pre-departure orientation session in **November** (for Minimester and Spring Break programs) or in **April** (for summer and fall programs). All program leaders are required to attend.
- Program Director submits receipts to the Study Abroad & Away Office (as applicable) **within one week of the program return date**. Study Abroad & Away Office completes Travel Expense Report in STRATUS.
- Study Abroad/Study Away Program Report due by primary Program Director to the TU Study Abroad & Away Office **within 30 days after the end of the program**.
- Student grades are to be submitted **within 30 days of the conclusion of the program**. The Program Director is responsible for submitting the grades directly through the TU online system. For programs that register participants in the INTL placeholder code, course designations are submitted by the Program Director to the Study Abroad & Away Office for roster creation prior to grades being posted. The process will be clarified with each Program Director prior to program departure.

FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAM PROPOSAL

All faculty-led credit-bearing programs are administered by the TU Study Abroad & Away Office in partnership with academic units and colleges. Any faculty/staff member who wishes to lead a program domestically or outside the U.S. that carries academic credit must submit a proposal and be approved by the TU Faculty Committee on Study Abroad/Away Faculty-Led Programs subcommittee and adhere to the policies and procedures regarding faculty-led study abroad/away programs.

Academic department(s) and college(s) are responsible for reviewing and endorsing all academic components of the proposed program including course designations, course content, instructional methods, the syllabus, and contact hour requirements (see below) prior to submission to the review committee. Department Chair/College Dean

Proposal Review Guidelines have been developed by the Faculty-Led Study Abroad/Away Programs Subcommittee to assist in this task. Department chairs and college deans must thoroughly review the proposal and sign the approval form in Docusign.

Multiple proposals can be submitted by faculty members within the same department and/or college. However, competition between programs and an assessment of student demand will be considered when selecting programs for each cycle. Department chairs and/or college deans are encouraged to consult with the Study Abroad & Away Office in advance of the deadline if multiple proposals are being submitted or to discuss departmental or college strategies for faculty-led programming.

Interdisciplinary programs are encouraged as they increase the learning outcomes for the students and the marketability of the program. Please note that if multiple departments are included, each department chair and corresponding college dean must sign the proposal.

Sample course syllabi, program itineraries, and student contact hours sheets are available online at <http://www.towson.edu/academics/international/abroad/faculty/programs/models.html> to assist you in the proposal process. Reviewing these documents prior to submitting your proposal may address some basic questions and provide examples of successful past proposals.

Given the time and resources required to develop faculty-led programs, programs must run in the same location at least twice before a different location can be proposed. Exceptions may be considered by the Faculty Committee on Study Abroad/Away Faculty-Led Programs subcommittee on a case-by-case basis.

Proposal Review and Selection

All proposals are reviewed by the TU Faculty-Led Study Abroad/Away Programs Subcommittee. Please review the Faculty-Led Program Proposal Review Considerations (Appendix A) for information on how proposals are reviewed and selected. Faculty members will be notified within one month of the submission deadline regarding the outcome of their proposal.

If your program is approved to run, the Study Abroad & Away Office will work with you to develop your program during which changes may be made as needed. Any changes to the academic content, course offerings, number of contact hours/credits, and/or Program Director(s)/assistant(s) must be made in consultation with the academic department(s) and college(s). Other changes may include (but are not limited to) program dates, program length, housing, and activities.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

A syllabus listing all courses associated with the program using the **Faculty-Led Program Course Syllabus Template** must be submitted as part of the program proposal. The syllabus will include a timeline or tentative program schedule, learning and cultural activities, and learning outcomes for the course(s) prior to, during, and after the program. See the syllabus template and accompanying **Faculty-Led Program Course Syllabus Guidelines** for details.

Credit/Contact Hours

TU courses offered on study abroad/away programs must be of comparable academic rigor to those offered on campus. **The number of credits associated with the program will be based on the number of contact hours.** Faculty-led programs are designated as practicum/travel study experiences for the purpose of credit hour regulations requiring a **minimum 37.5 contact hours per credit**. The *Student Contact Hours sheet* submitted as part of the

proposal serves as documentation of the projected contact hours involved. The total number of hours should not significantly exceed this minimum.

Contact hours may include class time, guest lectures, academic visits, field trips/excursions, group learning activities, general or program specific orientation meetings, research, service-learning activities, community projects, volunteer time, homework, research, academic assignments, other academic activities, and cultural activities or visits conducted prior to, during, and/or after the 'in location' program dates. Travel time and meals should NOT be included unless a specific instructional or learning activity (group discussion, lecture, group debrief, team-building activity) is being conducted during that time.

Note: The 4-credit maximum for on-campus Minimester courses does not apply to study abroad/away but programs may not exceed 6 credits total.

Learning Objectives

Courses being taught on faculty-led programs must relate to the host country/region, be taught in context, and meet the TU study abroad/away learning outcomes and the learning objectives indicated in the approved syllabus. For existing courses, adaptations to the course outline, learning activities, and assignments may be made with the approval of the department chair(s) and college dean(s) to reflect the context in which it will be taught and to ensure the content is applicable to the host country/region.

PROGRAM MODELS

Faculty-led study abroad/away programs vary widely in terms of program itineraries, disciplinary focus, duration, inclusions, and scope. The program might be a course(s) taught almost entirely 'in location' with just a small number of meetings or assignments prior to departure or upon return. It might feature a short study abroad or away component embedded in a regular course taught on the TU campus during a given term. Or it might be designed using a hybrid model with some class meetings taking place on the home campus leading up to a mid-length portion 'in location'.

Academic delivery can also take on many forms including faculty/staff member(s) teaching in a classroom space and/or on site (museum, cultural locale, etc.), lectures by guest speakers and local experts, class(es) taught by non-TU faculty (e.g. language institute, or host institution), service-learning components integrating community service with guided instruction and reflection by the program leader or contracted local instructor, research components or projects, and language acquisition.

Logistics for the program will be taken care of by the provider contracted by the Study Abroad & Away Office. The group may stay in one location for the duration of the program possibly with day or weekend trips further afield or travel within one or more cities or countries. Including multiple cities and/or countries should be considered carefully due to transportation costs. You may or may not arrive and depart from the same location.

Housing might include hotels, hostels, apartments, university housing, host families, or even camping. Most programs include only group welcome and farewell dinners but others may include most or all meals depending on the location. Transportation options range from public (metro, bus, train), to walking, and/or private (vans, coaches, flights). Programs typically include airport pick-up and drop-off (if applicable).

The courses associated with the program can range from existing TU course(s) with student learning goals and assignments adjusted to reflect and incorporate location (these could be specific courses, special topics, or travel study designations) to the development of new courses approved through the University Curriculum Committee. Whichever designations are utilized, courses offered on the program must be of comparable academic rigor to those offered on campus.

Leading a study abroad or away program allows you to explore alternate teaching pedagogies and practices so don't be afraid to think outside the box!

PROGRAM LEADERS

A program will typically have one Program Director. If the program is associated with more than one course (taught by TU faculty/staff) and participants will earn a total of 6 credits, a second Program Director may be considered. The second Program Director will have equal teaching duties, receive a full salary, and their program expenses will be covered. The Program Directors may choose to split one full salary or take a reduced salary should the cost of two full salaries be prohibitive to the program budget.

If the program is associated with more than one course (taught by TU faculty/staff) and participants will earn a total of 3 credits, rationale must be provided for a second Program Director and, if approved, one full salary will be split between the two Program Directors while program expenses will be covered for both.

Alternatively, dependent on participation numbers, a second faculty/staff member may accompany the Program Director in a supportive role as a Program Assistant if the budget allows. The Program Assistant will NOT receive a salary and will NOT have teaching duties but their program expenses will be covered. Rationale must be provided for the Program Assistant and should be discussed with the assigned Study Abroad & Away staff member.

Alternate Program Director

An alternate faculty or staff member must be identified to lead the group if the primary Program Director cannot perform their designated duties (unless there is a second Program Director who can conduct these duties). Should it appear likely or evident that the Program Director will not be able to fulfill their duties as program leader, the alternate Program Director will be activated, if feasible, per the following guidelines:

- The Director for Study Abroad & Away (or other designated staff member), primary Program Director, and alternate Program Director will meet as early as possible prior to program departure or communicate via phone and/or email if the program has already begun. The following items should be addressed (as applicable):
 - Is the alternate Program Director still available for the duration of the program?
 - Is the alternate Program Director able to travel to the destination location (citizenship, destination visa entry requirements, legal considerations returning to the U.S., etc.)?
 - Does the program schedule need to be revised to better accommodate the alternate Program Director's academic strengths, scheduling issues, etc.?
 - Who will cover any additional costs that will be incurred?
- The Director for Study Abroad & Away (or other designated staff member), primary Program Director, and alternate Program Director will decide upon an action plan specifically stating steps to be taken and who will be responsible for each action item.
- The Director for Study Abroad & Away (or other designated staff member) will share the action plan with the primary Program Director, alternate Program Director, relevant academic department chair(s), and relevant college dean(s).
- The alternate Program Director will:
 - Review the [Study Abroad/Away Program Leader Handbook](#)
 - Complete the *Study Abroad/Away Program Leader Training*
 - Meet with the Director for Study Abroad & Away (or other designated staff member) and primary Program Director to review the program schedule, academic content, syllabi, etc.
- Should the designated alternate Program Director not be able to fulfill their commitment to lead the program, the Director for Study Abroad & Away (or other designated staff member) will work with the primary Program Director, academic department chair(s), and college dean(s) to identify another TU faculty

and/or staff member OR local personnel in the host country to teach the course(s) associated with the program.

- Every effort will be made to continue the program while ensuring the academic integrity of the associated course(s). If appropriate arrangements cannot be made the program may be cancelled.

PARTICIPANT NUMBERS

Target minimum and maximum enrollment numbers will be determined during the program development phase. One Program Director is typically expected to lead a group of up to 18 students (without the addition of a Program Assistant) but this may vary depending on the nature of the program. Programs will typically not exceed 25 participants.

III. FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAM BUDGETS

All Towson University faculty-led study abroad/study away programs are self-supporting. This means that all costs of offering the program, including leader salaries and expenses, are included in the program fee charged to the students. Regular TU tuition and fees are NOT charged for faculty-led study abroad/away programs; instead, a unique fee is set for each individual program. Efforts must be made to keep costs to a minimum without jeopardizing the quality of the program. Financial support through grant funds or the academic department/college for scholarships, subsidies, or to otherwise reduce student costs is encouraged.

Program budgets are developed by the Study Abroad & Away Office. The budget is based on a minimum target enrollment number. Should the minimum target enrollment not be met, every effort will be made to run the program if financially feasible.

For programs that exceed their minimum target enrollment, *significant* 'surplus' funds generated beyond the original budget may be used to benefit the students in the form of extra activities/meals, the addition of a Program Assistant or other on-site support, and/or a reduction of the program fee at the discretion of the Study Abroad & Away Office.

The Study Abroad & Away Office handles the coordination of the program fees, registration, and billing with the Registrar's and Student University and Billing Offices.

PROGRAM LEADER COMPENSATION

See the *Program leaders* section above for policies regarding the number of faculty members associated with a program.

Salary

Program Directors are paid a fixed rate for leading a study abroad/away program (\$4,000 plus 8% fringe benefits) and are not paid per course. Program Director salaries are calculated into the program budget. Compensation is not tied to participant numbers. Note: Faculty leading a study abroad/away as a component of a semester-long TU course that counts toward their regular teaching load will not receive additional compensation. Program Assistants do not receive a salary.

If the program is associated with more than one course (taught by TU faculty/staff), participants will earn a total of 6 credits, and a second Program Director is approved by the subcommittee, the second Program Director will have equal teaching duties and receive a full salary. *Note:* Program Directors may choose to split one full salary or take a reduced salary should the cost of two full salaries be prohibitive to the program budget.

If the program is associated with more than one course (taught by TU faculty/staff), participants will earn a total of 3 credits, and a second Program Director is approved by the subcommittee, one full salary will be split between the two Program Directors.

If a Program Assistant is approved by the subcommittee, they will NOT have teaching duties and will NOT receive a salary.

Travel and living Expenses

The following travel and living expenses are paid by the program for all program leaders and calculated into the program budget:

- Roundtrip flight, train, or coach - Baltimore/Washington/Philadelphia area to and from destination site.
 - For programs involving flights:
 - The Program Director (or one of the program leaders if there are two) must travel on the outgoing leg of the designated flight or group flight.
 - Program leaders are not required to travel on the return leg of the designated or group flight but must ensure any students traveling on that flight get to the airport on departure day.
 - Program leaders planning not to travel on the return leg of the designated or group flight must provide details (date, time, flight #, cost) for their alternate return leg to the Study Abroad & Away Office immediately (within one day) once the program is confirmed to run to avoid administrative delays.
 - Program leaders choosing to deviate from any portion of the designated or group flight must reimburse the Study Abroad & Away Office for any additional expense beyond the cost of the designated or group flight.
 - If there are two Program leaders and one program leader chooses not to travel on the designated or group flight, they will be responsible for booking and paying for their own flight and will be reimbursed up to the cost of the designated or group flight after the program ends.
 - For programs involving ground transportation:
 - The Program Director (or one of the program leaders if more than one) must travel with the group to the program location from Baltimore/TU.
 - Program leaders are not required to travel back to Baltimore/TU with the group but must ensure any students traveling on the arranged program ground transportation get to the train station/meet the bus on departure day.
 - Program leaders who do not travel on the arranged program ground transportation back to Baltimore/TU will be responsible for booking and paying for their own travel arrangements after the program ends. Reimbursement (if any) will depend on the type of arranged ground transportation for the program.
 - If there are two program leaders and one program leader chooses not to travel on the arranged program ground transportation, they will be responsible for booking and paying for their own transportation. Reimbursement (if any) will depend on the type of arranged ground transportation for the program.
- Roundtrip ground transportation to and from the U.S. departure airport, train station, or coach departure point. Allowed amounts vary by program and faculty must select a cost-effective transport option per TU Business Travel Office guidelines.

- All ground expenses related to the program as identified in the program budget. This does not include personal travel expenses during free time or non-program activities.
- Housing per the program budget and/or provider. It is understood that to minimize expenses, housing will be comfortable but modest.
- Meal stipends are based on the host location and length of the program. To minimize expenses, the stipend for study abroad programs and study away programs in a U.S. territory is calculated as 50% of the U.S. Department of State foreign meal per diem rate in the host city(ies). The stipend for study away programs in the contiguous U.S. is calculated based on the full TU domestic travel meal per diem rate in the host city(ies). Any meals included in the program (e.g., welcome and farewell dinners, daily breakfast if provided at a hotel, meals provided by a host family, etc.) will be excluded from the stipend.
- Reimbursements cannot be made for any costs incurred for accompanying family members or any other persons not enrolled in the study abroad or study away program.

PROGRAM EXPENSES

Program expenses can be defined as either fixed or variable. Fixed costs do not change based on the number of participants – for example, the payments to the program leaders. Variable costs are dependent on the number of participants – for example, housing and transportation costs. It is important to be aware of which operational costs are fixed and which are variable, because the fixed costs determine the minimum funding necessary to run the program and will thus determine the number of participants needed.

Typical program expenses may include, but are not limited to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ▪ Honoraria to lecturers, guides | ▪ Meals for students and faculty |
| ▪ Classroom rental | ▪ Faculty salary and airfare |
| ▪ Ground transportation costs | ▪ Faculty participation in program activities |
| ▪ Guides at museums and sites | ▪ Local program related cell phone costs for faculty |
| ▪ Admission costs at museums and sites | ▪ Health insurance |
| ▪ Tips to drivers, guides and for meals | ▪ Study Abroad/Away administrative fee |
| ▪ Housing for students and faculty | |

The Study Abroad & Away Office determines the final program budget based on consultation of program details with the program provider and the primary Program Director. All program budgets must be finalized with and approved by the Director of the Study Abroad & Away Office. Once finalized, the budget cannot be changed except with the specific approval of the Director. Any expenses incurred by the program leaders which have not received prior approval (unless in case of emergency) will not be reimbursed.

Upon return, the program leaders must submit receipts to the Study Abroad & Away Office for all expenses other than those paid for in advance as part of the group or for the authorized meals stipend. All other expenses incurred for which there are no receipts may not be reimbursed.

IV. PLANNING THE STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAM

Once the study abroad/away program proposal is approved, the primary Program Director will be assigned a Study Abroad & Away Office staff member and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the planning and implementation of the program. Program development takes place during the year prior to the program taking place. By agreeing to direct a study abroad/away program, program leaders will have the opportunity to enjoy many of the benefits of travel, but along with these are responsibilities that are not usually a part of regular teaching duties on campus. The

following highlights the responsibilities of the Program Director of a study abroad/away program as well as the administrative services the Study Abroad & Away Office provides to support these efforts.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Program Design

- Identify appropriate course(s) and corresponding number of credits with the academic department(s) and college(s).
- Set admissions criteria in consultation with the Study Abroad & Away Office.
- Work with the Study Abroad & Away Office to determine host institution/provider and provide contacts (if any).
- Work with the Study Abroad & Away Office to determine program excursions and field trips, including possible experiential learning opportunities.

Recruiting

A minimum number of participants (per the program budget) must be enrolled for the program to run. **Recruiting participants for the program is one of the key responsibilities of the primary Program Director.** Faculty and academic departments agree to promote their program to students and peers, conduct classroom visits and information sessions to promote the program, as well as market to colleagues and groups outside of Towson University as appropriate.

The Study Abroad & Away Office will create an online program information page in our web-based management system and produce materials for marketing purposes. Any other marketing materials must be approved by the Study Abroad & Away Office. Study Abroad/Away Peer Advisors (student returnees who work in our office) and Study Abroad & Away staff are available to assist you with recruitment efforts upon request and based on availability.

The primary Program Director will:

- Recruit participants on-campus through in-class presentations, information sessions, and colleagues.
- Recruit participants off-campus through contacts at other institutions or organizations.
- Refer to the [Program Director Study Abroad/Away Program Marketing Guide](#) for recommended methods and a timeline for recruitment.
- Utilize marketing materials created by Study Abroad & Away Office and refer students to the program page.
- Monitor applications and student information in the web-based management system and communicate with prospective and admitted students in the lead up to the program.
- Respond to admission-related questions from the Study Abroad & Away Office in a timely fashion (if applicable).
- The primary Program Director must submit a recruitment plan to the Study Abroad and Away Office during the program development process.

NOTE: Due to the critical role the Program Director plays in recruitment for the program, faculty who will be absent from campus (sabbatical, extended leave, etc.) for any part of the academic year prior to the proposed program may not be eligible to apply. Please contact the Study Abroad & Away Office for more information prior to submitting a proposal.

Pre-Departure Planning

- Distribute any course or program specific pre-departure materials with the program participants.
- Prepare students for the cultural experience in the host location.
- Read and be familiar with the contents of the [Study Abroad/Away Program Leader Handbook](#).

- Complete the *Study Abroad/Away Program Leader Training* prior to leading a program. Recertification is required every three years. Program leaders may also request an individual meeting with Study Abroad & Away staff in preparation for their program.
- Participate in the pre-departure student orientation arranged by the Study Abroad & Away Office at a predetermined date, time, and location.
- Make arrangements for academic (e.g. note takers, recording devices, etc.) and/or other accommodations prior to departure if requested by students (see Academic and Other Accommodations section below) in consultation with ADS, and the Study Abroad & Away Office.
- Assign the designated Study Abroad & Away staff member as a delegate in STRATUS Travel for authorization and expense reconciliation purposes.
- Complete the online Faculty Contract prepared by the Study Abroad & Away Office.

While Abroad

- **Confirm the group's safe arrival with the Study Abroad & Away Office by email or phone within the first 24 hours.**
- Accompany students, participating in all scheduled activities.
- Teach/coordinate with any on-site faculty/lecturers/staff.
- Act as Resident Director in charge of the overall wellbeing of students.
- Resolve any housing or other issues that may arise on-site.
- Supervise excursions, coordinating with on-site staff if applicable.
- Hold regular office hours/meeting times with students.
- Ensure the onsite cooperating institution/organization is delivering services according to the contract (a copy is provided to the Program Director by the Study Abroad & Away Office prior to departure). If problems arise, the Program Director should alert the Study Abroad & Away Office immediately so any discrepancies can be resolved in a timely manner.
- Facilitate intercultural learning and reflection on site.
- Evaluate the students' work.
- Communicate with the Study Abroad & Away Office regarding any incidents, necessary changes to the program, etc. throughout the program.
- Report any incidents or issues in accordance with Title IX regulations.
- Report any crimes in accordance with the Clery Act (in their capacity as temporary designated Campus Security Authorities for the duration of the program).

Upon Return

- Submit grades within 30 days of the conclusion of the program.
- Submit receipts for authorized expenses to the Study Abroad & Away Office within one week of the program end date.
- Submit a written report of the program to the Study Abroad & Away Office within 30 days of return.

STUDY ABROAD & AWAY OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Program Design

- Investigate and evaluate program location, proposed activities, security situation, service provider.
- Serve as a resource for program leaders on all issues relating to study abroad/away.
- Consult on risk issues such as student health, insurance, and safety.
- Prepare the program budget.
- Negotiate the contract with the third party provider.
- Commit to running the program if at all financially feasible, even if enrollment targets are not met.
- Set up course sections in PeopleSoft and corresponding Blackboard sites.

- Register and bill students for study abroad/away programs under the term in which program takes place.
- Facilitate training for all program leaders.

Recruiting

- Create program page in the TU web-based management system.
- Provide print and digital marketing materials to the primary Program Director.
- Supplement student recruiting through typical Study Abroad & Away Office recruiting mechanisms online and in print.
- Prepare financial aid budgets for students as requested.
- Collect and evaluate online student applications based on established admission criteria.
- Collect program deposits from students.
- Send out admission emails to students (the primary Program Director is copied on all admission emails).
- Collect medical information and accommodations requests from students and share with the primary Program Director.

Pre-Departure Planning

- Meet with the primary Program Director to aid and prepare them for their program.
- Finalize arrangements at the host site regarding logistics such as housing, meals, ground transport, etc. (often in coordination with the on-site agency/organization or third-party provider and primary Program Director).
- Identify a designated flight, group flight, or other transportation to the program destination in consultation with the primary Program Director.
- Share travel itinerary and arrival information with admitted students.
- Arrange a mandatory pre-departure orientation session at a predetermined date, time, and location.
- Assist with arrangements for academic (e.g. note takers, recording devices, etc.) and/or other accommodations as needed prior to departure if requested by students (see Academic and Other Accommodations section below) in consultation with ADS, and the primary Program Director.
- Recommend all students and program leaders enroll in U.S. State Department Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (registering with the local U.S. embassy).
- Enroll students and program leaders in the TU Study Abroad health insurance policy.
- Arrange for all program payments to the host institution/provider.
- Complete a Travel Authorization in STRATUS Travel on the program leader's behalf.

While Abroad or Away

- Serves as University communications contact while students and program leaders are abroad or away. Study Abroad & Away Office staff can be reached through the TU Police emergency number at all times.
- Report any sexual harassment complaints in accordance with Title IX regulations and university policy.
- Report any crimes in accordance with the Clery Act (in their capacity as permanent designated Campus Security Authorities) and university policy.

Upon Return

- Collect, collate, and distribute evaluation data from students.
- Complete a Travel Expense Report in STRATUS Travel on the program leader's behalf.

V. APPLICATION AND ADMISSION PROCESS

APPLICATIONS

- The Study Abroad & Away Office has a standard on-line application form for all faculty-led programs. A complete online application includes the following:
 - Current transcript (unofficial or official for TU students, official for non-TU students).
 - Personal statement of interest in the program.
 - Copy of the information page of student's passport for study abroad programs (if unavailable at time of application students must agree to submit one prior to departure).
 - \$250 deposit. *Experience has shown that this requirement reduces the likelihood of withdrawals. The deposit is non-refundable except in the case of program cancellation or extenuating documented circumstances as determined by the Study Abroad & Away Office.*
- If the primary Program Director wishes to supplement this data or establish specific eligibility requirements (e.g. specific pre-requisites, GPA higher than 2.5, etc.) it should be indicated in the program proposal, and they should discuss it with their study abroad staff member when developing the program. All requests must be approved by the Director for Study Abroad & Away.
- The primary Program Director may not require in-person meetings with applicants as part of the admission process unless there are extenuating circumstances. All requests must be discussed with the study abroad/away staff member when developing the program and be approved by the Director for Study Abroad & Away.
- Applications must be submitted through the TU Study Abroad/Away web-based management system.
- The primary Program Director may view applications and communicate with students through the TU Study Abroad/Away web-based management system (see the *Study Abroad/Away Program Director User Guide* for instructions) and are expected to check the number and status of applications for their program frequently.

ADMISSION PROCESS

- Applications are processed by the Study Abroad & Away Office.
- Applications are often initiated by a student but not completed. Students with incomplete applications will be contacted by the Study Abroad & Away Office periodically. The primary Program Director should also reach out directly to students with incomplete applications frequently throughout the application period.
- Applications will not be processed until all items are received. Spaces cannot be 'held' for students.
- Admission is made on a rolling basis. If a waitlist becomes necessary, students will be admitted on a first come, first serve basis provided they meet the eligibility criteria for the program.
- Complete applications will be reviewed by the Study Abroad & Away Office based on the admission criteria agreed upon at the time of program development and approved by the Director for Study Abroad & Away. Any eligibility requirements or preferences must be stated on the program page. Student applications not meeting the stated eligibility criteria will be referred to the primary Program Director for an admission decision.
- The Study Abroad & Away Office will send out admission decisions to students via email and copy the primary Program Director. Program Directors are encouraged to email each student to welcome them to the group.
- Should a student wish to withdraw from the program for any reason after admission, only recoverable expenses may be refunded (see section above). Towson University standard withdrawal/drop/add deadlines do not apply. The student must submit their intention to withdraw via email to the Study Abroad & Away Office immediately. **If a student indicates possible intention to withdraw from the program at any time, please notify the Study Abroad & Away Office immediately.**

REGISTRATION

- Students accepted into Minimester and Spring Break programs will normally be registered by November 15, and students accepted into summer programs will normally be registered by April 15.

- Upon registration, the student will be billed for the full balance of the program fee by Towson University. Payment schedules and deadlines follow the University billing schedule for that term.

VI. FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAMS

Federal financial aid is not available for Minimester programs per se. However, students may request an increase in their award for the subsequent spring term to help them cover the program fee and related costs. Students may apply for additional federal financial aid for a summer program if the student completes a minimum of 6 credit hours over the course of the summer (can include non-study abroad/away courses).

Students who wish to apply for aid for study abroad/away must request a Study Abroad/Away Budget from the Study Abroad & Away Office and consult the TU Financial Aid Office.

The Study Abroad & Away Office has scholarship funds available for students participating in faculty-led study abroad/away programs. Students should submit applications through the TU Study Abroad/Away web-based management system by October 15 for Minimester/Spring Break, and March 15 for summer. Students may also be eligible to apply for additional scholarship funds from outside sources. Information on scholarships and aid is available on the Study Abroad & Away Office [website](#).

VII. PROGRAM DIRECTOR PRE-DEPARTURE RESPONSIBILITIES

Program orientation begins when students first see the program flyer or visit the program page and continues throughout the pre-departure process. Because of this – and also because all materials and oral presentations can constitute contractual agreements – all distributed information about the program needs to be clear and accurate. **Program leaders should not develop their own flyers.**

HOW TO PREPARE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS FOR THEIR EXPERIENCE

All Towson University students participating in a study abroad or away program are required to complete the TU study abroad/away pre-departure orientation. The orientation includes an in-person meeting and an online component.

The in-person pre-departure orientation session will be held in conjunction with the Study Abroad & Away Office after the participants for programs have been selected. The date, time, and location will be determined in advance by the Study Abroad & Away Office. The 2-hour session follows an interactive format focusing on health and safety, expectations regarding student conduct, cultural adjustment, and social identity. In addition, all program participants are required to complete an online pre-departure orientation which covers a wide variety of topics including logistical and administrative matters such as billing, registration, insurance, money, travel arrangements, modes for communication, health and safety, and cultural adjustment issues.

The primary Program Director must facilitate at least one additional pre-departure meeting with their group (either immediately after the in-person session or at a separate time) and should be prepared to discuss program specific details including the course syllabus and assignments; academic and behavioral expectations; program itinerary; packing (what to bring and what not to bring); safety, health, legal, environmental, cultural, and religious conditions in the host region/country; potential health and safety risks in the host region/country; and appropriate emergency response measures.

The Study Abroad & Away Office will provide each student (and Program Leader) pre-departure orientation materials and resources providing general information on these issues. The primary Program Director should give additional materials specific to their program and/or program location to their students directly.

The primary Program Director is strongly encouraged to hold **additional group meetings** with students prior to departure. This will allow the students to get to know them and each other. It will also provide more time to discuss expectations and motivations for participating in the program. In their evaluations, students express a desire for more of these types of meetings.

SETTING ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS FOR THE GROUP

On faculty-led study abroad/away programs, students are required to attend all classes and all activities which are a part of the program itinerary. The only acceptable excuse for missing a class or an excursion is illness. Program Directors should take attendance at all classes and program activities and should reduce the grade of any student who is late or absent from any program activity.

Participants are expected to serve as ambassadors for TU, for study abroad/away programs, Maryland, and the United States. It is often difficult for students to understand what is expected of them in this regard, so it is important for Program Directors to stress these issues in the pre-departure meeting(s) and again upon arrival. Students need to be aware that behaviors with minimal or no consequences at Towson may have major implications on the study abroad/away program. Students are bound by the TU Student Code of Conduct and the TU Study Abroad/Away Student Conduct and Accountability framework while participating in the program domestically or abroad and any breach of the code or framework may result in ramifications upon return to campus.

These topics should be presented repeatedly to students – not just at the pre-departure orientation but also after arrival in the host region/country. Topics include:

- ✓ Appropriate dress
- ✓ Local laws and customs
- ✓ Local mobility (which neighborhoods in the area are safe)
- ✓ Group dynamics
- ✓ Gender dynamics
- ✓ Youth/elder relationships
- ✓ Food and meal etiquette
- ✓ How to recognize signs of displeasure on the part of host country nationals (if applicable)
- ✓ Safe behavior

ACADEMIC AND OTHER STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Students are asked to self-disclose any disability (chronic medical or psychological condition, learning disability, ADHD, an autism spectrum disorder, or a mobility, vision or hearing disability, etc.) to the Study Abroad & Away Office as early as possible after admission to their program. This information is collected in the 'Post-Acceptance' section of their application in the TU Study Abroad/Away web-based management system and can be viewed by the Program Director once submitted by the student. Our office will also share this information with the Program Director and provider prior to the program.

Sometimes students are reluctant to disclose information formally to our office or may feel more comfortable self-reporting to you, their program leader. If a student approaches you to discuss special needs or accommodations related to their study abroad/away experience, please notify your assigned Study Abroad & Away staff member so you can work together to address their needs. Our office does not meet with most faculty-led program applicants in person so if you have any concerns or questions pertaining to a participant, please let us know.

To request accommodations for study abroad/away, students must obtain an Accommodations Summary from Accessibility and Disability Services and submit a copy to you AND our office. Appropriate arrangements will be made by the Study Abroad & Away Office and the primary Program Director to the extent possible including, but not limited to, housing, transportation, field trips, excursions, cultural activities, and classroom or test accommodations. If a student does not provide an ADS Accommodations Summary, accommodations cannot be provided on the basis of a disability.

Arrangements for most **academic accommodations** (note taking services, recording devices, smart pens, extended testing time, etc.) should be made by the primary Program Director just as if you were teaching a course on campus. If special circumstances unique to the study abroad/away program make providing these accommodations difficult, please let us know so we can consult ADS regarding possible alternate arrangements. Accommodations pertaining to non-academic components of the program (housing, transportation, additional on-site support) will be assessed and organized by the Study Abroad & Away Office in consultation with ADS, the student, the primary Program Director, and the on-site provider (if applicable).

Don't forget! Information related to a student's disability is confidential and protected under FERPA. The student should be given the opportunity to meet with you and/or our office privately to discuss disability-related matters.

For more general information please see the *Faculty Guide for Teaching and Accommodating Students with Disabilities* at <https://www.towson.edu/accessibility-disability-services/faculty.html>.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

Health Insurance

To support a healthy and safe experience, all participants are required to have health and accident insurance while participating in a study abroad/away program.

For TU administered faculty-led STUDY AWAY experiences (within the U.S.), students and faculty should maintain their existing U.S. insurance policy and ensure it provides coverage in the program destination.

For TU administered faculty-led STUDY ABROAD experiences (outside the U.S.), Towson University provides a comprehensive health insurance plan to all students as well as program leaders. This is not an optional benefit and the cost is included in the program fee. Every participant on a TU administered study abroad program will be automatically enrolled in the TU Study Abroad Health Insurance policy and have access to an individual ID card that includes contact information for plan services. Program leaders and students are strongly advised to become familiar with the TU plan benefits and features available online at <http://www.towson.edu/academics/international/abroad/current/healthsafety.html>.

Safe Behavior

Certain behaviors and activities cannot be condoned or implicitly supported by Towson University because they carry potential unacceptable risk both to the individual and to the University. Participants need to be alerted to the dangers of such activities during orientation and as necessary throughout the program. Because neither the University nor the program leaders can control the actions of any individual, the primary Program Director must ask students who intend to engage in any risky activities to sign a statement to the effect that they are doing so outside the auspices of the Towson University study abroad/away program. The signed statement thus documents that the student was informed of the potential risks of his/her behavior. Such activities include, but are not limited to:

- Bungee jumping
- Participating in political demonstrations

- Scuba diving
- Renting and operating motor vehicles of any type
- Solitary travel
- Other 'extreme sports'

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Seasoned Study Abroad/Away Program Directors report that their biggest challenges while away are not public transportation strikes, fluctuating currencies, or language barriers, but **student behavior problems**. Those who have successfully traveled with students for many years advocate discussing appropriate student conduct and behavior-related problems prior to departure as well as upon arrival.

To begin, program leaders should reinforce the message that study abroad/away is an **academic experience** and that academic responsibilities take priority over personal interests. Planting this idea helps to combat the occasional notion that study abroad/away is simply a travel opportunity. Also, Program Directors should refrain from referring to the experience as a "trip" and instead use the word "program," as it denotes a difference between study abroad/away and a vacation. The concept of students as "**cultural ambassadors**" should be discussed, emphasizing that their conduct will be seen as representative of the United States (if studying abroad) as well as the state of Maryland and Towson University. Students need to be reminded that while the consequences of poor behavior at TU reflect solely on themselves, their misconduct on the program will be attributed to the entire group. In addition, violations of the TU Student Code of Conduct and/or the TU Study Abroad/Away Student Conduct and Accountability framework, may also have ramifications when they return to campus.

In addition, be honest with students about how their **behavior** reflects on the Program Director to their local colleagues. Most importantly, participants need to understand that the viability of a program rests in their hands. Offensive or indifferent behavior resulting in negative evaluations by colleagues at the host site could lead to the discontinuation of a program in the future.

The primary Program Director might consider creating a "**student-faculty**" **contract**, specifically tailored to their program. This can be created in advance or employed by a method of community building similar to that used in residence halls. Ask students to identify acceptable and unacceptable behaviors from which the group can agree upon and create a "contract" that the students sign prior to departure or on-site. In addition to the expected, "don't be late for bus departures," ask students to decide on actions to avoid such situations. For example, students can agree to check that everyone is awake at a certain time. The students may also agree upon consequences and/or group response to repeated offenses. Likewise, students should be informed of the procedure to follow if they experience the consequences (for instance, if they are left behind because they missed an activity departure time). There is no need for complete agreement – a majority vote should be the desired goal. A sample student-faculty agreement can be found at

<http://www.towson.edu/academics/international/abroad/faculty/programs/models.html>.

It may be more important to emphasize what the students should *do*, rather than what they should *not* do. This applies to bystanders. For instance, if one student sees another student displaying inappropriate behavior, that student should step forward to stop it. Program Directors should encourage this type of response, as well as the peer influence that students with leadership skills can provide.

If program leaders experience excessive **complaining**, the group could set specific times during the day when all complaining is allowed – then none is allowed throughout the rest of the day. This may seem like an extreme action, but it has been proven to work.

Program leaders can ask students to discuss how **personality conflicts** can undermine the atmosphere of the program. Program Directors should require students to determine procedures and methods for dealing with personality conflicts. Although it may seem like common sense, students may need to be regularly reminded to:

- ✓ Be polite and listen to one another
- ✓ Respect each other, leaders, and local people affiliated with the program
- ✓ Honor diversity and differences within the group
- ✓ Fight fair and attack the problem, not people
- ✓ Look for compromises

It can also be advisable to address **sex and dating** among program participants as well as with locals. Pre-departure discussion regarding the local culture's receptivity to public displays of affection, individuals who identify as LGBTQ+, and other issues may help to alleviate misunderstandings.

Program leaders should address any concerns about **alcohol misuse and abuse** up front. In addition to posing a health and safety risk, alcohol abuse can lead to behavioral problems and personality conflicts between group members. By addressing this issue in advance, program leaders not only inform students of their concerns, but also alert them to possible past problems that have had a negative effect on programs. Many study abroad/away Program Directors state that this proactive approach has been successful in reducing the number of alcohol-related problems.

To begin this discussion, it is helpful to ask students to discuss the consequences of alcohol misuse, such as the following:

- Tardiness or poor attendance at classes and activities.
- Negative student interactions as a result of alcohol-induced "bad" behavior.
- Animosity/break down of community among members due to such behavior.
- Poor reflection of group to local community/faculty/contacts.
- Undue stress to for the Program Director/local coordinator that requires excessive attention and time.

For study abroad programs, it can be useful to brainstorm with students on their **perception of alcohol use in the host culture**, comparing and/or contrasting with alcohol use in the United States, then sharing knowledge of alcohol use in the host culture, comparing and/or contrasting this with the students' perceptions. In addition, students should be reminded of the difference between **alcohol use** and **alcohol misuse/abuse**. Excessive drunkenness is not tolerated in any culture, and is, in fact, considered an illness/addiction in most.

Lastly, this conversation should be reviewed **before and after arrival** on-site. Program leaders should be alert to group dynamics and address any concerns they may perceive. Don't make light of incidents of abuse (such as joking about hangovers). Make sure stated consequences are followed up on. Follow previously stated guidelines if students violate agreed-upon rules.

PROGRAM FINANCES

Travel Authorization

The Study Abroad & Away Office will complete a Travel Authorization in STRATUS for all expenses related to the program as determined by the program budget. Program leaders must assign their designated Study Abroad & Away staff member as a delegate in STRATUS Travel for this purpose in a timely fashion when requested to do so.

Program Expenses

Program expenses and program leader allowances, including the meal stipend (if any), are determined by the program budget. Program leaders cannot be compensated for any monies spent that were not previously authorized in the program budget except in case of emergency with prior approval by the Study Abroad & Away Office.

Program leaders will receive a breakdown of allowable program expenses prior to departure from the Study Abroad & Away Office.

NOTE: All program leaders are required to carry a Towson University Business Travel Group Credit Card with them abroad or away to pay for expenses in case of emergency. The card will be requested by the TU Study Abroad & Away Office on the Program Leader's behalf in advance of the program and the cardholder will be contacted by the Business Travel Office to complete an online training and pick up their card. It is the responsibility of the Program leaders to ensure they obtain their card prior to the program. Please note that group cards are linked to a university cost center (budget) and are NOT associated with an individual's credit record or bank account.

IMPORTANT: The card should only be used in an emergency for program related expenses while abroad or away **in consultation** with the TU Study Abroad & Away office. The group card cannot be used to pay for program leader meals, taxis, etc. Your authorized meal stipend, transportation costs to and from the US airport, cell phone expenses, and other pre-authorized expenses (if any), will be reimbursed to you upon your return through the STRATUS expense report process (also facilitated by our office).

Expense Reconciliation

The Study Abroad & Away Office will complete a Travel Authorization in STRATUS for all authorized expenses. Program leaders must assign their designated Study Abroad & Away staff member as a delegate in STRATUS Travel for this purpose in a timely fashion when requested to do so.

Program leaders must submit receipts for ALL expenses paid in cash, personal credit card, etc. (or emergency related expenses using the TU Business Travel Group Credit Card) EXCEPT for the authorized personal meal stipend, ideally within 5 days of the program end date. Non-receipted expenses (other than the authorized personal meals stipend) cannot be reimbursed. Please be aware that most credit cards charge foreign transaction fees. A fee of 2% will be applied to all charges made outside the U.S. using the Towson University Business Travel Group Credit Card. To receive reimbursement for these fees, program leaders should submit a copy of their Towson University Business Travel Credit Card statement (available on the Diners Club website) along with their other receipts to the Study Abroad & Away Office. Foreign transaction fees are not reimbursed for any other credit cards.

VIII. GUIDELINES FOR ACCOMPANYING FAMILY MEMBERS

Program leaders of a study abroad/away program wear many hats: professor, chaperone, academic advisor, counselor, nurse/doctor, money manager, tour guide and even, at times, parent. The workload for study abroad/away leaders is thus much different, and often more demanding, than teaching a similar course on the TU campus. For this reason, we strongly encourage you to carefully weigh the pros and cons of having family members or other companions accompany you during the time the program is in session. A good alternative is to have them join you at the conclusion of the program when you can spend time together free of your responsibilities to the group. Program leaders must remember that their first priority is to be available to the students in any potential emergency (or perceived emergency) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the duration of the program. Non-involved visitors and/or the demands of family responsibilities can be a distraction and an unwelcome source of additional stress for the program leader, causing conflicts that can be to the serious detriment of the program.

Program leaders intending to have accompanying persons on the program must inform the Study Abroad & Away Office during the development phase to verify feasibility. All accompanying non-participants and the faculty member are required to sign and submit the *Faculty-Led Study Abroad/Away Program Accompanying Family Member/Companion Agreement* to the Study Abroad & Away Office as early as possible and must agree to adhere to the relevant policies outlined in this section of the handbook.

Accompanying family members or companions, if not enrolled as full participants in the program, are not considered in any way to be affiliated with the program or representatives of Towson University. Accordingly, the following issues must be considered prior to the program.

MINOR CHILDREN

Children under the age of 18 must always be under the supervision of an adult other than the program leaders. Supervision of minor children is the sole responsibility of the parent(s). At no time should a program participant be asked to care for or supervise a child of a faculty/staff member.

FAMILY MEMBERS/COMPANIONS' PREPARATIONS

Family members/companions will not be reflected on the program participant list and therefore will not receive program communication or be invited to the program orientations or meetings. Program leaders are encouraged to share information with their family members/companions about the country, anticipated activities, and the risks involved. In whatever way possible, family members/companions should investigate the safety issues related to the experience.

PROGRAM RESTRICTIONS

Although family members/companions are not participants in the program, they are expected to abide by the program policies and restrictions that are imposed for safety and liability reasons. Family members/companions should be aware that their personal behavior must not in any way affect the quality of the program or the experience of the participants, and that their involvement in group activities will typically not be permitted by the Study Abroad & Away Office or on-site provider.

FEES AND EXPENSES

Family members/companions are responsible for paying all fees and expenses incurred according to conditions pre-arranged by the Study Abroad & Away Office. If a family member/companion attends a class or excursion with the program participants, he/she must pay any fees or expenses involved. Family members/companions may only attend classes or excursions on a space-available basis, and with the permission of the instructor, local coordinating agency/organization, and the Study Abroad & Away Office.

TRAVEL EXPENSES

It is the policy of the University System of Maryland that program leaders will not be reimbursed for any travel expenses incurred on behalf of family members/companions. Careful records must be maintained by the program leader to ensure separation of expenses of any family members/companions from the reimbursable expenses of official travelers. Any additional costs incurred due to stopovers, route modifications, or mode of transport made for the convenience of the family members/companions will be borne entirely by the program leader.

PROGRAM-RELATED DUTIES

Family members/companions may not have any official duties (chaperone, driver, assistant, etc.). Family members/companions are not protected by Towson University liability insurance for any actions taken abroad/away and are urged to discuss applicable liability protection with an insurance agent to ensure that adequate coverage is in place for their activities.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Family members/companions must have their own medical insurance coverage that includes comprehensive coverage at the destination for the period of the program.

IX. ON-SITE RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary Program Director should fulfill the following duties on-site:

- Provide an initial on-site orientation to introduce the students to the host site and culture (can be in conjunction with on-site program organizer).
- **Contact the Study Abroad & Away Office within 24 hours after arrival to confirm all participants are safe and accounted for.**
- Notify the Study Abroad & Away Office immediately if any student leaves the program or is unaccounted for .
- Be responsible for the academic integrity of the course and coordinating class activities.
- Cooperate with other on-site faculty members or staff regarding the program objectives.
- Act as liaison between the students and any individuals or entities providing services to the program.
- Ensure the onsite cooperating institution/organization is delivering services according to the contract (a copy is provided to the primary Program Director by the Study Abroad & Away Office prior to departure). If problems arise, the primary Program Director should alert the Study Abroad & Away Office immediately so any discrepancies can be resolved in a timely manner.
- Enforce the policy that non-program participants are not allowed to accompany the participants on program-sponsored excursions or activities.
- Communicate academic and disciplinary roles clearly to the students.
- Respond to any **emergency situations or serious incidents** which may arise (e.g., illness, accident, crime involving participant(s), severe behavioral issues, natural disaster, political uprising) and **notify the Study Abroad & Away Office as soon as possible by email or phone** (see section on Emergencies).
- Report any sexual harassment complaints in accordance with Title IX regulations and university policy.
- Report any crimes in accordance with the Clery Act (in their capacity as permanent designated Campus Security Authorities) and university policy.
- **If a sexual harassment, crime, or other health and safety incident should occur, faculty must complete a TU Study Abroad/Away Incident Report form** (see Appendix).
- Itemize usage of any program expenses and collect receipts which will be submitted for reconciliation upon return. **Never loan students program or personal funds unless it is an extreme emergency.** Program leaders will not be reimbursed by the University for loaning money to participants unless authorized in advance by the Study Abroad & Away Office.
- Meet with students regularly throughout the program to discuss non-academic issues. Topics for discussion may include cross-cultural adjustment, personal activities, inappropriate behavior, group dynamics, etc. These sessions build group cohesiveness and alleviate possible divisions.
- Be aware of possible indicators of culture shock and/or home sickness. These can include feelings of helplessness, loneliness, alienation, sleeping more than usual, depression, getting angry easily, decline in flexibility, stereotyping of host culture; increase of physical ailments, eating problems, inability to concentrate, and uncontrollable crying.

Most, though not all, students experience some level of culture shock or home sickness. The concrete indicators can vary greatly from individual to individual.

SAFETY AND SECURITY ISSUES

Safety is a prime concern of all who are involved in study abroad/away ventures – participants, their families, advisers, TU, the host institutions, program leaders, Study Abroad & Away Office staff, and any other TU personnel associated with our programs.

It is generally considered that study abroad and away experiences are no more dangerous than study on the student's home campus. On the other hand, there may be risks that are unique to settings abroad and in other locations within the U.S. When incidents occur, the impact on participants and their families is often more profound because of the unfamiliarity of the context and the distance that separates participants from their primary sources of consolation and support.

The provisions of the Family Rights and Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment) sometimes come into conflict with (a) the Study Abroad & Away Office and leaders' needs to have full information about the participants we serve, and (b) the desire of parents and the Study Abroad & Away Office/TU to be briefed fully when something goes wrong. This conflict is not unique to study abroad/away – the issue is faced continually on campus – but it does pose a more delicate challenge in study abroad/away situations because of the heightened sensitivities and the distance involved.

If students or parents should inquire about **how TU deals with safety and security issues**, the following information should be provided:

“TU is dedicated to offering a wide variety of study abroad/away opportunities to meet the needs of a diverse student population and is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for its students. TU recognizes the importance of establishing policies and procedures in the effort to protect the safety and well-being of study abroad and away participants, while acknowledging that no single plan can address all contingencies. Listed below are a few of the ways TU strives to keep study abroad/away, before and during participation, as safe as possible:

- The Study Abroad & Away Office regularly and responsibly monitors safety issues in each of our program locations. A review of all study abroad/away programs is conducted in which safety, security, and overall quality are measured.
- All participants are required to attend one or more pre-departure meetings that stress safety issues and understanding cultural differences.
- Emergency procedures are in place, including medical and general emergency evacuation procedures. In any emergency, the Study Abroad & Away Office will be in contact with program participants and leaders as necessary.
- Towson University provides an international health insurance and travel assistance plan to all students participating in Towson University STUDY ABROAD programs.

Country/location specific information where programs will visit should be provided to participants by the primary Program Director. All students are strongly encouraged to enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). STEP is a free service for U.S. citizens traveling or living abroad to receive safety and security updates and alerts by email from the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. In the event of an emergency, STEP makes it easier for the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate to contact you with recommended actions. The Study Abroad & Away Office will notify the program leaders and participants of any relevant updates once programs have begun.

Students should be advised to avoid travel to or through any location where tensions exist and travel may be dangerous. Travel to countries (or areas within countries) with Level 3 or 4 U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories

by TU faculty or staff leading or assisting with a faculty-led study abroad program and students enrolled in TU faculty-led programs is prohibited unless specific pre-authorization has been granted by the appropriate university oversight committee. Study Abroad program participants will be required to sign a waiver confirming they have reviewed the U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory for the host country(ies) as a component of the online application.

On-Site Safety

The primary Program Director is responsible for communicating applicable codes of conduct and the consequences of non-compliance to participants. If there are U.S. State Department public announcements, worldwide cautions, changes in travel advisories, or advisories by local authorities within the U.S., the Study Abroad & Away Office will communicate with program leaders, program participants, and emergency contacts (if appropriate). Program leaders should relay any applicable information to group participants and the on-site provider.

In the event of a local, regional or global crisis, program leaders should maintain contact with the local U.S. embassy or consulate and/or local U.S. authorities for updated security information. If a crisis should occur, they must review precautions with participants so they can better secure their safety. Also, **in emergency situations the primary Program Director must contact the Study Abroad & Away Office as soon as possible to confirm the wellbeing of the group and discuss appropriate actions as needed.**

The primary Program Director must also brief students on safe behavior, depending on the local situation and culture. This may include advising students to maintain a low profile, avoid crowds and protest groups, restaurants, and if abroad, locations where Americans are known to frequent.

Students should keep up with local news through online media outlets, radio, and television and, in the event of disturbances or protests, NOT get involved. Students should be asked to use common sense and caution when divulging information to strangers about themselves, the program, and their fellow students.

In cases of serious health problems, injury, or other significant health and safety circumstances, Program Directors must follow the emergency procedures as indicated in this handbook. To review TU's student conduct policies including the Drug and Alcohol Policy, the Policy on Sexual Harassment, and the Statement on Sexual Assault, go to <http://www.towson.edu/studentaffairs/policies>.

Sexual Harassment and Title IX

In accordance with university policy and Title IX regulations, Study Abroad/Away Program leaders are required to report any sexual harassment complaints.

Clery Act Crime Reporting Requirements

In accordance with university policy and the Clery Act, Study Abroad/Away Program leaders are required to report any crimes that occur during the course of the program.

Due to the unique responsibilities associated with leading a study abroad/away program, it has been determined that all Study Abroad/Away Program leaders meet the criteria for 'Campus Security Authorities' (per Clery Act regulations) for the duration of the study abroad/away program. The function of a Campus Security Authority is *"to report to the Towson University Police Department allegations of Clery Act crimes that he or she receives."* All program leaders will be automatically enrolled in the TU CSA community in Blackboard and will receive an email from the TUPD with instructions on how to complete the mandatory training.

Note: If a sexual harassment, crime, or other health and safety incident should occur, the primary Program Director must complete a TU Study Abroad/Away Incident Report form (see Appendix).

EMERGENCIES ABROAD/AWAY

The safety and wellbeing of students and faculty participating in a Towson University study abroad/away program is of utmost concern. Program leaders of a study abroad/away program may find themselves facing an emergency involving one of more of the students who are in their care, or an emergency of their own. Participants can and do become ill, suffer accidents, are the victims of muggings, thefts, and assaults, find themselves caught up in potentially violent political situations, or fail to return on time to programs after a weekend away. While it is impossible to plan for all contingencies, the Study Abroad & Away Office needs to follow procedures that will allow for reaction in a responsible and levelheaded way when emergencies do arise. We need to provide, in a consistent and predictable way, for the safety and well-being of our students. We also need to take reasonable and prudent measures to limit the University's legal liabilities.

The Study Abroad & Away Office is responsible for coordinating the University's management of emergencies affecting participants in Towson University Study Abroad/Away Programs. **It is the responsibility of the program leaders of a Towson University program to follow the procedures outlined below and to inform students about these procedures upon arrival on-site.**

What is an Emergency?

For study abroad/away purposes, an emergency is any circumstance that poses a genuine risk to, or that has already disturbed, the safety and well-being of the program participants. Emergencies include, though are not limited to, the following:

- Physical assault
- Disappearance or kidnapping of a student
- Robbery
- Sexual assault or rape
- Serious illness, physical or emotional
- Significant accident and/or injury
- Hospitalization for any reason
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Local political crisis that could affect the students' safety and well being
- Arrests or questioning by police or other security forces
- Any legal action involving a student

How to Prepare for Emergencies

The Study Abroad & Away Office recommends all participants enroll in the [U.S. State Department Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#).

Health and medical care are important topics to be discussed with students and should be incorporated into program specific pre-departure meetings and discussed at other points throughout the program. Students should be reminded to notify the Program Director immediately about any health problems that may arise. The need for hospitalization can often be prevented by prompt treatment. The program's location is a major factor in health risks and available medical care. Program Directors are responsible for doing appropriate research to compile a list of reputable local medical clinics or hospitals, in consultation with local program coordinators (if applicable).

If the students are to be housed with local families, the families should be informed that they are required to notify the Program Director and/or provider or host institution immediately of any emergency involving the student(s) in their care. If the students are housed in a residence system or other rented facility, the local housing supervisor must be similarly informed. If the program leaders are not being housed with the students, the students must be given the address of where they are staying and a phone number they can be reached on 24/7. Students should carry this information with them at all times.

REMINDER: All program leaders are required to obtain and carry a Towson University Business Travel Credit Card for the duration of the program in case of emergency.

On-Site Briefing for Students

The primary Program Director should explain to the students that they are required to inform them about any emergency, and they will in turn contact the Study Abroad & Away Office as soon as possible to report the emergency. Program leaders should assure students that this information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality, and that it will be shared only on a “need to know” basis. Participants should also be informed that if a crisis involving a student is serious enough to jeopardize his or her safety or wellbeing, the emergency contact and/or Authorized Individual indicated on the affected student’s application will be informed.

The primary Program Director should discuss preventable accidents with participants, such as traffic patterns, pub and drinking culture, drug laws, unsafe swimming, and the type of things that can happen when walking down a street alone at night in a city. It’s helpful to get very specific about safe and unsafe behavior, such as certain types of sexual behavior and how to dress and behave to avoid unwanted attention.

Participants should be instructed where to go in case of a terrorist attack. Unless movement will jeopardize their safety, it is suggested that all students meet at their place of residence to be accounted for and to receive further instructions.

The primary Program Director, in conjunction with local program coordinators (if applicable), must provide students with a list of names and phone numbers for:

1. 24-hour emergency contact
2. Nearest U.S. Embassy (if abroad)
3. Law enforcement/police department
4. Nearest hospital/emergency facility and English-speaking doctors and/or health care providers

Responding to Emergencies

Emergencies range from the irritating but benign (a lost or stolen passport or train ticket, for example) to the imminently dangerous (motor vehicle accidents; political coups). Each situation must be assessed in its own context. In all cases, **program leaders must complete a TU Study Abroad/Away Incident Report Form for each occurrence** (see Appendix). The primary Program Director must maintain daily contact with the Study Abroad & Away Office and with host country informants. Members of the host culture/on-site representatives may be best able to assess the seriousness of any given situation and provide excellent advice.

In an emergency, the program leader’s first responsibility is to safeguard the safety and wellbeing of the program participants. They should do whatever is necessary to ensure this, whether this means obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, U.S. Embassy intervention (if abroad), or police protection. All expenses relating to the management of a reported emergency will be covered or reimbursed.

When all has been done to reasonably ensure the students' well-being, the Study Abroad & Away Office should be notified as soon as possible to be fully informed about the situation (an e-mail is sufficient if no further action is needed). Outside of regular office hours or during university closings, program leaders can reach a Study Abroad & Away Office staff member through the University Police 24-hours a day, 7 days a week at 410-704-4444. University Police have contact information for all Study Abroad & Away Office staff and other appropriate individuals on campus. During an ongoing crisis, program leaders must keep the Study Abroad & Away Office informed on a regular basis through phone, email, WhatsApp, etc. until the crisis has passed.

The Program Director should notify the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate or local U.S. authorities about the crisis and follow whatever procedures they may require. If there is a continuing risk to the students (during a terrorist threat, for example), they should ask the appropriate official to advise on a regular basis about the evolution of the crisis, and about how the program leaders and the students should respond.

In any other sort of emergency, the Program Director should notify the local police about the situation, if they feel it is appropriate; then follow the procedures the police may require of them and/or the student.

During a political crisis or some other emergency abroad during which foreigners in general or U.S. citizens may be at risk, students should be told to keep a low profile. They should avoid demonstrations, avoid behavior that could call attention to themselves, avoid places where Americans are known to congregate, and avoid using luggage tags and wearing clothing which identifies them as Americans.

It is highly unlikely that participants will need to be evacuated from a study abroad/away site. In many situations, it is much safer to lie low than to draw attention to the group through an evacuation process. The Study Abroad & Away Office will, however, relocate or bring students and program leaders home if a situation was to deteriorate to the point where the degree of potential risk to participants was deemed unacceptable. If this unlikely event were to happen, the Director of the Study Abroad & Away Office, in consultation with the insurance company, Program Director, the U.S. Embassy and State Department (if applicable), and the TU Study Abroad/Away Crisis Management Team, would develop an evacuation plan in as much detail as possible. The plan would be transmitted to the Program Director in confidence, and officials on the home campus would work closely with the program leaders throughout the evacuation process.

In general, program leaders must follow these guidelines when communicating with the students during an emergency situation:

- **Share information:** Give students as much, and as accurate, information as possible. Document the situation and communicate with the Study Abroad & Away Office on an ongoing basis.
- **Assess the situation:** How long will it last? Is it an inconvenience or a threat?
- **Keep calm and keep others calm:** Do not panic. Discourage students from gossiping and thus escalating the situation.
- **Give participants choices:** In an emergency, allow students when possible, to make their own informed decisions about whether to leave the program or to stay. Remember that this option is only ethical when students have enough information to make a reasonable choice. In a serious emergency, the TU Study Abroad/Away Crisis Management Team will determine whether the program will continue and possible evacuation procedures.

If the host destination emergency services are not readily available and participants feel there is a threat to their personal safety, they should follow these procedures:

1. Dial the TU Police at 001-410-704-4444.
2. Identify themselves as a TU study abroad/away student and give their current location.
3. State their name.

4. Tell the person what is wrong.
5. Tell the person how to contact them.
6. Respond to questions and listen carefully to any instructions.

Medical Emergencies Abroad

If case of a medical emergency on a study abroad program, if the program leaders or provider representative are not available, participants should be instructed to call the AXA Travel Assistance Services Center, as soon as (or even prior to) a student seeks medical treatment. In addition to assisting with treatment, they may be able to arrange direct payment.

Emergency Assistance: AXA Travel Assistance Services Center

- Toll Free from within the U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands, and Bermuda at 1-855-327-1414
- Email: medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us

The following services are included in the travel assistance program: referral to the nearest, most appropriate medical facility and/or provider; medical monitoring by board-certified emergency doctors in the home country; urgent message relay between family, friends, personal doctor, school, and insured; guarantee of payment to provider and assistance in coordinating insurance benefits; arranging and coordinating emergency medical evacuations, emergency reunions and repatriation of remains; emergency travel arrangements for disrupted travel as the consequence of a medical emergency; referral to legal assistance; assistance in locating lost or stolen items including lost ticket application processing.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Alcohol Use Guidelines

- **Consumption of alcohol is not permitted during any scheduled program activities** (including group meals facilitated as part of the program) by students or program leaders.
- If studying abroad, students should be educated about legally and culturally appropriate behavior regarding alcohol. Laws concerning alcoholic beverages vary from country to country. In many countries it is legal for university students to purchase and consume alcohol but they may not do so during scheduled activities including group meals facilitated as part of the program.
- Students should be made aware of the consequences of inappropriate behavior involving alcohol.
- Be aware that alcohol abuse is not tolerated anywhere in the world and will not be tolerated on TU Study Abroad/Away programs. Violation of local laws and/or TU policy may result in immediate dismissal from the program.
- Responsible use of alcohol is required on the part of the program leaders as well as each program participant.

Responsible use of alcohol includes the following:

- Abiding by the laws of the country/state/territory visited.
- Not missing scheduled events because of the effects of alcohol consumption.
- Not becoming ill because of alcohol consumption.
- Being respectful of others sharing the same housing, and avoid congregating in loud groups for social purposes.
- Not engaging in inappropriate behavior towards others because of alcohol consumption.
- Not engaging in behavior that is destructive of property because of alcohol consumption.

- Not engaging in behavior that causes embarrassment to the other members of the group and the country/region hosts because of alcohol consumption.
- Not facilitating, encouraging, or ignoring a fellow participant who is abusing alcohol.
- Not transporting quantities of alcohol to program sites with the intent of sharing it with the other members of the group.

Disciplinary Problems

If the Program Director encounters disciplinary or behavior problems with students, they should be dealt with immediately. If allowed to continue, they may adversely affect the atmosphere and morale of the entire group. Depending on the circumstances, the Program Director may wish to discuss the problem individually with the student(s) concerned or discuss it openly during a general non-academic meeting with the group. If the behavior persists after discussion, put into writing the expected change and the consequences if the behavior does not change. Have the students sign this and email a copy to the Study Abroad & Away Office.

The Study Abroad & Away Office should be notified immediately about any significant disciplinary problems with any student on the program. Mediation by the Study Abroad & Away Office may be appropriate and can be helpful (e.g. Zoom or phone call). In extreme cases and/or if the inappropriate behavior persists despite warnings and intervention, the Study Abroad & Away Office (in consultation with the Program Director and other units on campus) may decide to dismiss the student(s) from the program with no credit awarded and no refund. Damage control may be necessary at the host site and within the local community. The primary Program Director should make amends for inappropriate behavior in a culturally appropriate way.

In case of arrest, TU assumes no financial responsibility for legal aid to students. However, it is appropriate for the primary Program Director, with the Study Abroad & Away Office, to assist students in contacting their families and appropriate government offices.

Study Abroad/Away Student Conduct and Accountability Framework

All students participating in Towson University faculty-led study abroad/away programs remain subject to the [TU Code of Student Accountability](#) and all relevant academic policies. Violations of the TU Code of Student Accountability may result in actions including but not limited to reductions in course grades, removal from the study abroad/away program, referral to the TU Office of Student Conduct and Civility Education, and/or disciplinary action upon return to TU. The Program Director, in consultation with the Towson University Study Abroad & Away Office and other university representatives as appropriate, has the right and responsibility to suspend or remove from the program any participant if it is deemed such action will be in the best interest of the individual and/or group. In such instances, no refund or credit will be awarded to the suspended participant. Any breaches of the code must be reported to the TU Study Abroad & Away Office by the Program Director immediately.

The following framework is a program-level process designed to address concerns promptly while ensuring appropriate referral to university units when required. The levels indicated may or may not be implemented sequentially.

Level 1: Formal Warning – Academic/Behavioral Correction

Minor misconduct, unprofessional behavior, missed obligations, or failure to follow program rules.

Actions:

- Meeting with the Program Director to review expectations.
- Verbal warning documented by the Program Director.
- Possible reduction in course grade (e.g., professionalism or participation).
- Other actions/sanctions as appropriate.

Level 2: Formal Warning – Program Participation at Risk

Repeated Level 1 behavior or a more serious incident affecting safety, learning, the host environment, other program participants, host staff or community members, or implementation of the program.

Actions:

- Required Zoom meeting with the Program Director and Study Abroad & Away Office to review actions that must be taken by the student to remain in the program.
- Written warning and agreement signed by the student, Program Director, and the Study Abroad & Away Office acknowledging expected behavior and actions that must be taken by the student to remain in the program and repercussions for failure to comply.
- Consultation by the Study Abroad & Away Office with the Office of Student Accountability & Restorative Practices and/or other units on campus as appropriate.
- Possible reduction in course grade, and/or inability to participate in specific program activities, and/or placement in alternate housing at student's expense (as applicable).
- Other actions/sanctions as appropriate.

Level 3: University-Level Disciplinary Action

Serious misconduct, legal violations, harassment or discrimination, endangerment, or any behavior explicitly prohibited by the TU Code of Student Accountability.

Actions:

- Notification to the Study Abroad & Away Office, AVP for International Initiatives, Provost's Office, and other units/university officials as appropriate.
- Official referral to the Office of Student Accountability & Restorative Practices for university disciplinary proceedings.
- Possible removal from the program with no academic credit or program fee refund. Student will be responsible for all program costs and any additional expenses associated with their removal from the program.
- Other actions/sanctions as appropriate.

This system operates in conjunction with, not in place of, the TU Code of Student Accountability. All students retain the rights and responsibilities outlined in TU policies, including due process, notice, and the opportunity to participate in accountability procedures. Program-level actions supplement TU's formal processes to ensure student safety, academic integrity, and responsible conduct while participating in study abroad or away programs.

Sending Students Home

Severely problematic students (threatening the safety of themselves or other participants or causing significant disruption to the group and program operations) may need to depart the program early or be dismissed from the program. Towson University may decide to send individual students home early and/or dismiss them from a program in response to:

- Criminal activity on the part of the individual: arrest, drug use, physical or sexual assault, etc.
- Repeated inappropriate behavior on the part of the individual which does not improve with advising/intervention and endangers the program's relationship with the host institution/provider/community; is insensitive to other group members; negatively impacts the program group's morale; and/or is significantly disruptive to implementation of the program.
- An emotional crisis which greatly affects the individual such as death of a program participant, or death or serious illness in the family.
- Serious illness, either physical or psychological.

Towson University may decide to cancel the program in response to:

- Death of a program participant
- Kidnapping of a program participant
- An outbreak of highly infectious disease at the host site
- A natural disaster
- A political or civil emergency
- A terrorist attack or significant threat

The decision to send students home or cancel a program, even when made for the best reasons, may result in negative responses, including lawsuits instigated by the students or their families and difficulty in re-establishing the program in future. It is therefore essential to consult immediately with the Study Abroad & Away Office when issues arise, who will, in turn, consult with other appropriate units at TU including but not limited to the Office of International Initiatives, the Office of the Provost, the office of Student Accountability & Restorative Practices, Student Outreach & Support, Accessibility and Disability Services, the Counseling Center, the Health Center, and the academic department and/or college.

In the case of serious illness, injury, or another emergency incurred by a Program Director, the designated alternate Program Director may be called upon to take their place. This will be determined in discussion with the Study Abroad & Away Office, the alternate Program Director, and, if possible, the original Program Director.

FERPA/Buckley Amendment

FERPA (the Buckley Amendment) regarding the privacy of student records may conflict with the desire of parents and others to be fully briefed on both student progress and on-site emergencies. Students participating in TU programs are given the opportunity to sign a release form which recognizes that program staff will disclose information to their families in the case of a medical emergency. If the Program Director believes that certain information must be disclosed for a participant's wellbeing without his/her consent, they should first contact the Study Abroad/Away Director who will seek the advice of University Counsel. In rare cases when that is not possible – in cases of a serious and urgent medical emergency, for example – the best guideline is to act in the way which will be of most benefit to the student. Remember to document all emergencies thoroughly on the Study Abroad/Away Incident Report form (in Appendix) and to communicate with the Study Abroad & Away Office about the situation as soon as possible.

It is inappropriate to communicate with parents about a particular student's grades, personal relationships, or cultural adaptation without prior permission from the student.

X. POST-PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The Program Director(s) should post the grades within 30 days of the program's conclusion (see section II.B).

Program leaders are responsible for submitting receipts to the TU Study Abroad & Away Office within one week after the program return date for reconciliation of all program related expenses in STRATUS (guidelines provided by the Study Abroad & Away Office). The primary Program Director must also submit a program report to the Study Abroad & Away Office within 30 days after the program ends (see Appendix for report guidelines). This program report is critical to the program process, as insights, suggestions and lessons learned are incorporated into the planning for future programs.

Finally, the primary Program Director is encouraged to organize a meeting with program participants after returning to campus to discuss the program in hindsight. Collecting student comments and responses is very helpful for planning future study abroad/away programs, as well as provides closure for program participants.

Many program leaders maintain contact with their students following the program. This can help to assist them with their readjustment and possible reverse culture shock. Reassure them that it can be just as difficult to adjust to returning home as it was adapting to a new culture/location. Remind them to take time to re-acclimatize. They can also be asked to help recruit for future study abroad/away programs – remember they can be the best advocates!

XI. APPENDIX

- A. TU FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAM PROPOSAL REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS
- B. HORIZONS STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAM DIRECTOR USER GUIDE
- C. STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS
- D. TU STUDY ABROAD/AWAY INCIDENT REPORT
- E. GUIDELINES FOR THE STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAM REPORT

A. TU FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAM PROPOSAL REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

General

- How many programs, disciplines, and locations are needed for each term?
- How many programs (repeat and new) can be managed based on Study Abroad staff resources for each term?

Appeal/Demand

- What is the anticipated student interest/demand in the course(s)?
- What is the anticipated student interest/demand in the location/region?
- How many students are enrolled in the majors and/or minors relevant to this program?
- Is the program open to students from a wide variety of disciplines or does it satisfy a specific need?
- Which students will this program appeal to?

Academics

- Does the course(s) fulfill specific requirements (major, minor, core)?
- Does the course(s) have prerequisites? If so, will this limit the applicant pool?
- Is the program cross listed across disciplines?
- Is the program being initiated jointly with another department, another college within TU and / or another university (if this benefits the department and/or students)?
- Is the program designed to develop and facilitate inter-cultural learning?
- What types of learning activities are featured in the course(s)?
- How does the location enhance the academic and cultural content of the course(s)?
- Does the program include opportunities for cultural immersion/exposure to the local culture/community?
- Does the program meet the recommended guidelines for the # credits being awarded?

Location

- Is the proposed location 'safe' according to TU institutional travel policies and as determined by U.S. State Department/CDC guidelines (if applicable)?
- Is this a non-traditional destination and/or priority country for study abroad?
- Are adequate medical services available in the host location?
- What housing options are available?
- What support services are available?
- Will the group have access to public transportation?
- Does the faculty member have previous experience or expertise in the region/country?
- How many other study abroad options are available in this region/country?

Feasibility

- Is the program itinerary feasible/realistic?
- Do program providers operate in this location?
- Will the program be affordable?
- Will the program budget support more than one Program Director or a faculty assistant?
- Are there other sources of funding to support the program (grant, subsidy, scholarships)?
- Is the program sustainable (one-time program or plans to repeat)?
- What were the previous enrollment numbers for the program (repeat programs only)?
- Does the faculty member have ideas for promoting the program and recruiting students?

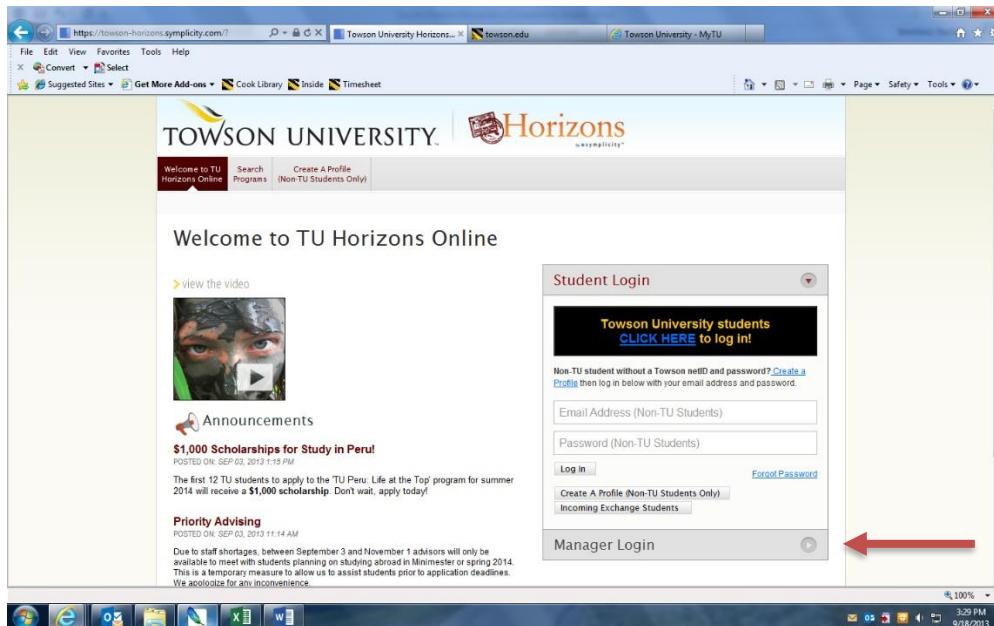
Horizons Study Abroad/Away Program Director User Guide



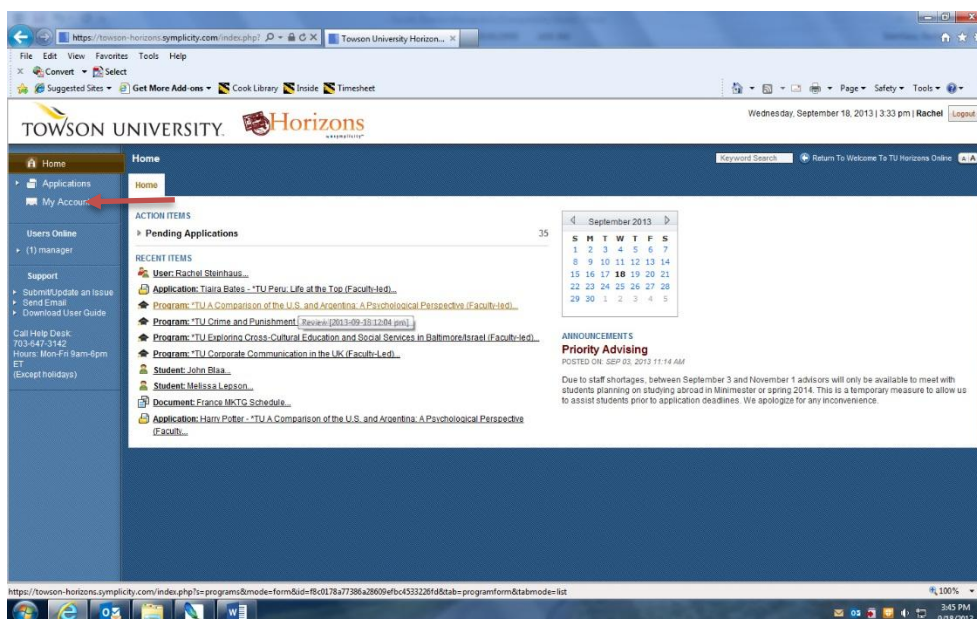
Horizons

Logging On and Set Up

- Go to <https://towson-horizons.symlicity.com/>. This is the Horizons welcome screen.
- Click the 'Manager Login' tab and enter your Towson email address. Your password is currently your last name, all one word (no hyphens or spaces) and all lowercase.



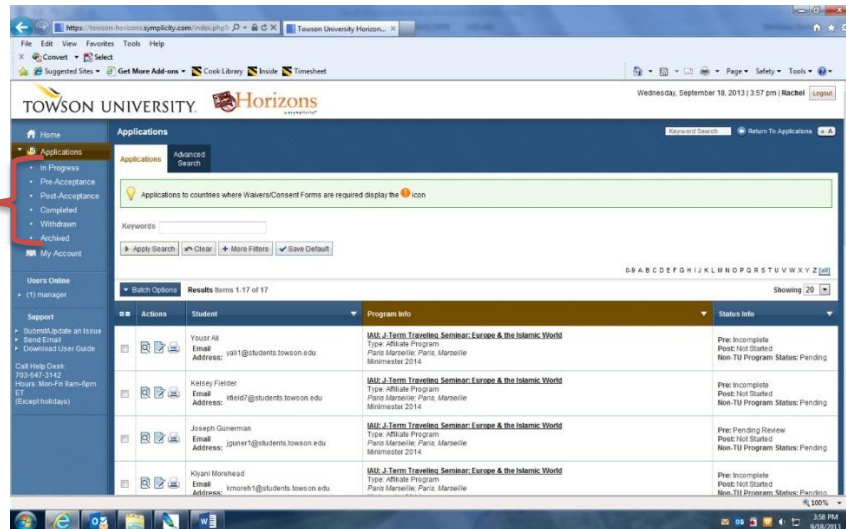
- Once you arrive at the manager home screen, you can change your password by going to the 'My Account' link from the navigation bar on the left.



- Select the 'My Account' tab and enter your new password.

Navigating the Applications Tab

- Click the 'Applications' link from the navigation bar on the left.
- This screen will list all of the applications that have been initiated for your program. You can narrow the selection by what stage in the application process each application is in using the subfolders under 'Applications.'

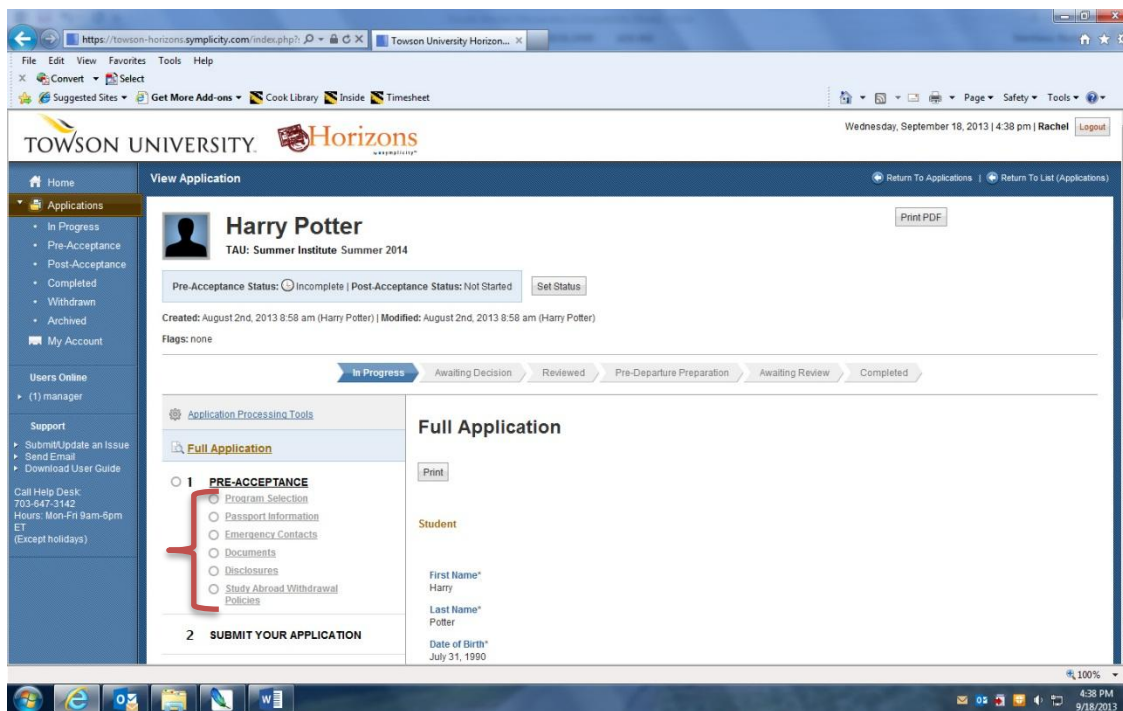


- **Application Subfolders:**
 - **In Progress** – The student has initiated the application, but has not yet submitted it for review i.e. the application is incomplete.
 - **Pre-Acceptance** – The student has submitted their application for review. Of the several tabs across the top, the only two that will be used for faculty-led programs will be 'Pending Review' and 'Approved.' When a student's application is 'Approved,' they have been officially accepted into the program. They will receive an email from the Programs Assistant outlining their next steps at this time.
 - **Note:** Applicants will be approved and admitted in the system by the TU Study Abroad & Away Office
 - **Post-Acceptance** – The student has submitted all required Post Acceptance (medical self-assessment, flight itinerary, etc.) materials for review.
 - **Completed** – The student has finished all necessary paperwork for participating in the study abroad/away program.
 - **Withdrawn** – In the event that a student withdraws their application, it will appear here. This will include any withdrawn application that was initiated, even if the student did not submit their application for review.
 - **Archived** – N/A
- You cannot use the back button on your browser to navigate within Horizons. Instead, use the 'Return to Applications' or 'Return to List (Applications)' links in the top right corner, below the log out button. Both will return you to the full list of Applications.

Keyword Search [Return To Applications](#) [A A](#)

Viewing a Single Application

- You can search for a specific student's application by entering their name or TU ID into the keyword box.
- You can view  or print  a student's application from here. Your permissions will not allow you to edit  an application.
- When you view a record, it will automatically bring up the full application. You can limit it to specific sections using the checklist on the left. There will be a green circle with a check mark next to all completed sections of the application.



To Send an Email to a Student from Horizons

- Check the box next to each of the students you would like to email. If you are sending the message to multiple students, you can keep track of how many you have selected in red.

0-9 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z [\[all\]](#)

Batch Options Results Items 1-17 of 17 (1 items selected) Showing 20

Actions	Student	Program Info	Status Info
☒  	Yours Ali Email: yali1@students.towson.edu Address:	IAU: J-Term Traveling Seminar: Europe & the Islamic World Type: Affiliate Program Paris Marseille; Paris, Marseille Minimester 2014	Pre: Incomplete Post: Not Started Non-TU Program Status: Pending

- Click 'Batch Options' and hover over 'Mail'
- Select the first option, '[new message],' so that you can draft your message and click OK.
 - This will **not** automatically send the email
- Add information to the required fields: Subject, From (your TU email should be automatically entered), and Message Body. Click 'Next' when you are finished.
 - We recommend clicking "Yes" to HTML and pasting your text in both the HTML and Plain Text fields. This will allow you to manipulate the text in greater detail (bold, italics, bullets, hyperlinks) in the HTML screen, though students who can only receive Plain Text emails will not see this formatting.
 - Leave the Message Options on the default of 'Do Not Save'
 - You may also attach any documents you wish to send the students at this point.
- Review the list of recipients and click 'Send Messages.'
- Any responses to emails sent from with Horizons will appear in the Outlook mailbox of the address you choose for the 'From' field. You will not need to log in to Horizons to continue correspondence with individual students.

C. STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS

1. The program deposit is due upon application and is non-refundable if admitted to the program except in the case of program cancellation.
2. After admission into the program, the student is responsible for the full program fee. Should the student wish to withdraw from the program for any reason after admission, only recoverable expenses may be refunded. Non-recoverable expenses may include but are not limited to costs paid to a study abroad/away provider, travel agency, or other third-party organization by TU on the student's behalf; housing; transportation; non-refundable deposits; activity fees; honorariums; guest lecture fees. **Towson University withdrawal/drop/add deadlines do not apply. The student must submit their intention to withdraw in writing.**
3. Students participating in faculty-led programs requiring air travel will typically be responsible for making their own travel arrangements to the program location to arrive by the designated date and time. The Study Abroad & Away Office will identify an optional flight which participants may purchase independently. Students are advised to purchase refundable tickets and travel insurance in case of program itinerary changes or cancellation. Students should not purchase a flight until instructed to do so by the TU Study Abroad & Away Office.

If a group flight or other group transportation is included in the program fee, all participants will be required to travel on the group flight or other arranged transportation. Exceptions may be requested to the Study Abroad & Away Office if the participant's home address is located more than 200 miles from Towson University. If approved, the cost of the group flight or other arranged transportation will be deducted from the program cost.
4. Students will be registered at Towson University by the TU Study Abroad & Away Office prior to the beginning of the program.
5. The director(s) has the right and responsibility to suspend from the program any member if the director(s) deems such action to be in the best interest of the group. In such instances, no refund or credit will be awarded to the member so suspended.
6. Attendance at all scheduled activities is required. It is expected that students will be punctual at all scheduled activities. Lateness and absences will result in reduced grades.
7. If a student becomes ill or injured, they should inform the program director(s) immediately.
8. If, during free time, a student wishes to go somewhere alone, they must let someone, preferably the director(s), know exactly where they are going and when they plan to return. Students are advised not to go out alone.
9. All facilities reserved for the group are to be used solely by members of the group.
10. Participants will be held financially responsible for any damages to accommodations or facilities utilized during the program. If in case of an emergency students borrow funds from the Program Director or faculty assistant for any reason, said funds must be repaid no later than one week following the conclusion of the program.
11. Towson University, its director(s) and instructor(s) accept no responsibility in whole or in part for any delays, delayed departure or arrival; missed train or other carrier connections; loss, damage, or injury to any person or property; or mechanical defect or failure of any nature, howsoever caused; or for any substitution of hotels or of common carriers. Rates are quoted based on tariffs and exchange rates (where applicable) current at the time of printing and are subject to changes therein at or before the time of final payment. No revision of the printed itinerary or of its included features is anticipated; however, the right is reserved to make any changes that may become necessary with or without notice and with the mutual understanding that any additional expenses will be paid by the individual. The right is reserved to reject applications and to dismiss any person as a member of the program at any time.



I agree to the Statement of Responsibilities and Obligations

D. TU STUDY ABROAD/AWAY INCIDENT REPORT

Towson University
Study Abroad/Away Incident Report

Please fill out this form as completely as possible. In the event of any legal action this form will serve as the official college record of what transpired and what actions were taken by responsible college officials at the scene of the incident. Attach extra sheets as necessary and any documentary evidence. **Email a copy of your report to studyabroad@towson.edu as soon as possible.** Submit the complete original report and all supporting materials to the Towson University Study Abroad & Away Office upon your return to the United States.

Name of person completing this form: _____

Date of incident: _____ Location of incident: _____

Time of incident: _____ Were you present? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of student involved (*please use a separate form for each student*): _____

Name(s) of other individuals(s) involved: _____

Brief description of what happened: _____

Who provided this description if you were not a witness (*please list all names*): _____

If you were not present, when were you informed? _____

What actions did you take? _____

If the student was transported to a hospital or clinic, provide complete name of the facility, phone #, and address: _____

Names and phone numbers of all physicians who examined or treated the student:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Exact names of any medications prescribed to the student (*please keep all packaging/inserts*):

Rx: _____

Rx: _____

Rx: _____

Rx: _____

Was the student conscious and capable of making informed judgments about his or her medical treatment?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If the student was not capable of making medical decisions, who made any decisions?

What, if any, follow-up care was recommended? _____

Were the police or legal authorities notified of the incident or present at the scene? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Names and phone numbers of responsible legal authorities in charge of the case:

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Case #: _____

Was the U.S. or relevant embassy notified? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Name and number of responsible consular official involved in this incident (if applicable):

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Dates/times of contact with Towson University Study Abroad & Away Office and/or parents:

Signature

Date

Time

E. GUIDELINES FOR THE STUDY ABROAD/AWAY PROGRAM REPORT

The information you provide is important not only in terms of maintaining and improving program quality, but also for helping inform and prepare colleagues who are now, or will be in the future, involved in your program. **These reports are due 30 days after the end of your program.** In writing your end-of-program report, please address the following topics. In each instance please describe:

- ☐ What you did this year
- ☐ What worked/didn't work
- ☐ What suggestions you have for your next program

1. Recruitment and publicity procedures

2. Program Preparations Pre-departure orientation, student arrival and orientation, on-site preparations etc.

3. Academic Program Courses offered, number of credits, collaboration with host institutions and faculty/presenters, field trips, etc.; please include a statement about the integration of the study abroad/away program into the departmental/college curriculum.

4. Assessment of on-site logistics and support Student housing, classroom space and equipment, housing staff, meals, transportation, excursions, special events, etc.

5. Health and safety issues What, if any, preventive safety measures do you recommend? Were there any health-related incidents such as accidents, serious illness, and mental health issues? Were there any crimes committed against faculty or students? Were health care facilities satisfactory? What, if any, steps need to be taken to make program sites safer? What political, social, cultural, environmental developments on-site warrant special attention for the next program?

6. Student issues Could satisfactory solutions be found to most student problems? How could such problems be avoided/minimized in the future? What could be done in the future to enhance the cross-cultural learning component of the program? Which aspects of the culture did students react to negatively/ positively? Were issues of cultural adjustment and re-adjustment discussed with students? Was there a special event marking the end of the program? Could a student with a disability have easily participated on the program? If not, what changes would you make for the future?

7. Program Benefits How has being involved in this program enhanced your professional development; for instance, through research and teaching collaboration with host institution faculty? How does the program enhance participating students' academic/intellectual, personal, professional, and cross-cultural learning?

8. Finances/Budget What, if any, adjustments need to be made to the budget to improve the program and/or to reflect cost realities in the host country/countries?

Please submit copies of the report to the Study Abroad & Away Office at studyabroad@towson.edu.