



Health and Emergency Plan

The health and safety of all participants in study abroad programs are always our first priority. Faculty leaders should determine which of the recommendations listed below are appropriate and practical for your trip, and inform participants at the related trip orientation session. The participants must comply with all applicable recommendations.

Faculty Pre-departure Orientation

All faculty who will be teaching on study abroad programs will attend a pre-departure orientation led by the GEO, which includes the following:

- Procedures for communicating with the home campus and contact information
- Insurance coverage overview and carrier contact information
- Review of potential emergency circumstances and proper responses
- Harassment and discrimination training refresher
- Incident and accident reporting procedures and required documentation

Faculty Leaders will be required to:

- Review information about “U.S. Citizen Services” on the website of each U.S. Embassy pertinent to trip.
- Require that any participants traveling independently during the program schedule dates provide you a copy of their itinerary and contact information.
- Carry an international cell phone or a satellite phone (e.g., for field studies in remote areas with no cell or landline service), as applicable, to facilitate both normal and emergency communications to the extent reasonably possible.
- Provide participants your cell or satellite phone number.

Crisis Communications

Internal Communication

Faculty should notify students in classrooms of emergency and to where they should proceed. Make sure students not in class are notified of any emergency and evacuation orders. Keep participants informed as much as possible about what is happening and what you are doing. Make sure they understand that you are addressing the problems and that you have the college’s support. Give them as much information as you think they need to know. Do not speculate about things you do not know or pass unsubstantiated rumors.

When you have done all you reasonably can to ensure everyone’s well-being, immediately contact CNM Security at (505) 224-4000 (24 hours a day/7 days a week) and ask them to put you in touch with the appropriate CNM office or official. The Security Department has emergency numbers for emergency contact personnel. Try to provide the university official with as much information as possible about the situation. As soon as possible, complete the CNM Study Abroad Incident Report Form and submit it according to the instructions. Set up a method to keep in close contact with the appropriate college official until the emergency is resolved.

If appropriate, contact the U.S. Embassy or closest U.S. Consulate or U.S. Consular Agency about the crisis and follow whatever procedures they require.

Useful phone numbers for Trip Leaders:

- CNM Security John Corvino (24/7; can reach key CNM personnel at work or home)

- Jennifer Brower as backup
- Dean of Student's Office (505) 224-4342

Keeping CNM Informed

- Report any incidents as necessary according to the CNM Study Abroad Incident Report form.

External Communication

The Director of Communications will handle all media inquiries with a series of prepared responses and/or press conferences. The communications office will utilize the website to notify the public about the emergency, when appropriate. The Director of Communications is responsible for preparing a written summary of the crisis that can be used to communicate with the media as well as other audiences, and for keeping the information updated.

Do not:

- Release names of injured or deceased parties to any media. Communication with the Board is handled by the President's office.
- Discuss the specifics of criminal activity. Refer all questions about illegal activity to law enforcement.
- Give the media access to the families of anyone injured or killed unless the family gives permission.
- Give out contact information for students without their permission. Doing so is a violation of FERPA.
- Answer hypothetical questions or questions that cannot be confirmed with accurate information.

Employing the Emergency Operations Plan

All faculty should have:

Contact Information

- Up-to-date contact information for all students and other faculty on the trip
- Details about other faculty or students with special needs

Manuals and Documents

- Copies of this Health and Emergency Plan

Equipment

- Cell phone
- Computer with access to email, Internet, and college servers

Protocol for Variable Emergencies

- Explain to students the procedures they should follow for reporting and responding to emergencies and the types of incidents that qualify as emergencies.
- Inform any individuals or companies providing housing to participants that they must notify you immediately of any emergency affecting a participant.
- Designate your co-Leader as your on-site "back-up" person in case of emergency, and instruct that person accordingly (e.g., what to do if you are hospitalized and thus temporarily unable to lead the group).
- In an emergency, you must first attend to the well-being of participants and yourself (e.g., by getting prompt and appropriate medical attention, local police protection, U.S. Embassy intervention, or taking refuge in a safe place, etc.).

- Stay calm and try to keep the participants calm. Don't overreact. Others will look to you for guidance and follow your example.
- Try to keep group members together as much as possible. If you need to leave the group, e.g., to be with a hospitalized student or deal with the police, stay in contact with the group.
- During a political crisis or other emergency during which foreigners in general or U.S. citizens in particular may be at risk, tell the participants to keep a low profile. They should avoid demonstrations, confrontations, or any situations that could become dangerous. They should avoid behavior that calls attention to themselves, locations that foreigners or Americans are known to frequent, and clothing, luggage tags, or other things that might identify them by nationality.

Hospitalization

Some conditions will be severe enough to warrant hospitalization, which can occur voluntarily or involuntarily. If the student is deemed to be a danger to him- or herself or others, or is in a delusional state, the police and emergency services can be contacted for assistance in hospitalization.

Once a student is hospitalized, faculty must decide if he or she must leave the program and how he or she will return home. Review the following questions to determine how to get the student home:

- Under what conditions will the hospital release the student? And to whom?
- How will the student get home? Does the student already have a ticket?
- If not, how will the ticket be purchased?
- Will medical personnel need to accompany the student? How will you identify such a person?
- Will the student need to be medicated?
- How long is the international flight?
- How many airport transfers will there be?
- Will the student need to be transferred to a medical facility once he or she lands or can he or she go home?
- Who will pack the student's belongings and send them to the home address?

Infectious Disease

Threats to the general health of a community and an outbreak of an infectious disease can range from a virulent strain of the flu to a larger pandemic.

- Assess health threat or infectious disease outbreak to determine degree of response
- Implement the Crisis Communication Plan to advise community of situation and provide instruction on further steps
- Report outbreak to proper authorities
- Cancel classes if necessary

Grief and loss

Many students first encounter the death of a loved one—a parent, family member, or friend—during their college years. Students also endure significant losses due to a wide range of life-changing circumstances such as parental separations or divorce, personal rejections, and physical injuries. Being far from home during such events poses additional challenges and further complicates the grieving process.

Some students who lose a loved one while abroad will choose to return home and not complete their program. Inform the student of the repercussions of this decision in discussion with the Dean and the Assistant Dean on campus. Other students who experience the loss of a loved one will decide to finish their study abroad program.

Suicide Prevention Protocol

The College recognizes that times arise when students experience extreme distress. Provide students with a confidential or anonymous method of reporting concerning behavior of other students. Students often are the first to notice signs of emotional and mental distress in their peers, and giving them the means of reporting this information confidentially could help you intervene before a problem reaches a crisis level.

If a suicide occurs abroad, the police will be called in to determine the cause of death. The faculty leader will work with the appropriate police department to secure the student's personal property. The U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs follows established procedures to handle the death of a U.S. citizen. It will contact the U.S.-based family and work with faculty and the student's insurance carrier to take over the case. For non-U.S. citizens on a U.S. education abroad program, check with a representative from the country of origin as well as the family.

The faculty leader will inform staff back on campus of the details of the event and where you are in the process. Those on the home campus will follow established procedures to contact the next of kin, legal guardian, or parent of the deceased. The body will be repatriated. If a tragedy occurs abroad, faculty will need to implement the insurance provided for the student.

The family will need to receive death certificates for repatriation and other purposes. Foreign death certificates are issued by the local registrar of deaths. In the United States, a "Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad" issued by the U.S. consular officer is generally used as proof of death in lieu of a foreign death certificate.

If needed, designate space for "safe rooms" where students and faculty can receive comfort and counseling and talk about events during the crisis. Another approach is to call everyone together and provide them with a structured time to receive accurate information and be able to express their feelings. If possible, it is best to have a mental health professional present.

Practical matters will include packing up the deceased student's belongings, supporting the deceased's roommate (if applicable), credit and grade resolution.

Program Evacuation

In the unlikely event that participants must be evacuated from a study abroad site, you will need to work with College officials and U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate/Consular Agency personnel to develop and carry out an evacuation plan.

Air flights should preferably be on international carriers (e.g. Lufthansa, Alitalia, Air France, Air Canada) to reduce the risk of threat that may be present on American airlines. Direct flights should be the first option whenever possible.

Decision Making in Time of International Crisis

In deciding whether to close this program and evacuate students, the physical safety and well-being of the students and faculty must be the paramount issue. The decision to terminate a program or evacuate students will be made by the Dean or other designated senior official, in consultation with the Faculty Leader, who normally will have the best understanding of the local conditions.

In the event of a crisis at or near the location of the program site, the Faculty Leader should be prepared to report on the following:

- The safety and welfare of the student participants
- The geographic proximity of the program to the crisis

- The target of the unrest
- The impact of the crisis on access to food, water, shelter, medical assistance, protection under civil law and authorities
- The intensity of police or military presence in the area of the program
- The continuation of activities at the program site

The faculty leader should contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate to discuss the need for evacuation and any measures that the U.S. is taking to protect or evacuate American citizens. The GEO will contact the State Department to likewise ascertain the situation and will contact other institutions with programs in that vicinity to review what action they are taking.

When a crisis is such that it is impossible to contact and consult with the school, the Faculty Leader has the authority to close a program and evacuate the students.

Once a decision has been made to evacuate students, any student who fails or refuses to comply with the evacuation procedures arranged by the school will be solely responsible for his or her safety, security, and transportation out of the country.

A decision to resume or reopen a program that has been closed as the result of a crisis will be made by the Travel Advisory Committee and the Faculty Leader.

Determining Whether or Not a Student Should Return Home

A student may be involuntarily withdrawn from the college if, as a result of a medical or psychological condition, the student:

- Significantly disrupts or interferes with the academic environment;
- Is not qualified to participate in the college's academic program;
- Poses a significant danger to health or safety; or
- Refuses to cooperate with efforts to address the student's behavior in accordance with this policy.

If on-site faculty are considering the involuntary withdrawal of a student, the on-site faculty leader will notify the student and arrange for a conference with the student to discuss the student's condition and status. The faculty leader may then require that the student undergo an evaluation by an appropriate licensed medical or mental health provider within a specified time period. The student may be asked to sign an Ownership Contract outlining next steps and consequences if next steps are not met.

Determining whether or not a student should return from the program will be done with faculty on site in consultation with the Dean and Assistant Dean on the student's home campus. The following items should be considered when determining whether or not a study abroad student should return home:

- Level of disruption of behavior to the program (e.g., peers, classroom structure, and host family, if applicable)
- Danger to self or others
- Length of return flight; number of airport transfers to get home
- Timing: crises often do not occur during business hours. Make sure that U.S. and overseas faculty know how to contact each other and additional colleagues upon whom they rely for advice, 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Crisis Recovery and Assessment

Once the scene of the crisis is under control and all on-site faculty have been apprised of the situation, Faculty Leaders will need to:

- Notify students of the occurrence and provide immediate next steps
- Coordinate with housing to establish and implement long-term housing options in the event of longer-term evacuations
- Coordinate vehicle transport and loading areas for student transport
- Coordinate medical support as needed
- Coordinate emergency food service for students
- After declaration of any type of evacuation, assist in headcounts
- Coordinate and implement temporary computer and telephone connections if necessary
- Coordinate insurance response and claims
- Track number, type, and severity of physical and mental health emergencies associated with the emergency
- Continue to communicate with responding agencies to get up-to-date information

Immediately following a crisis, the needs of faculty and students personally affected should be met with all available counseling resources. If appropriate, a public forum can be called or announcements made through which details of the emergency can be relayed. In the wake of a crisis, rumors can linger and feed an already anxious atmosphere. Public forums, mass announcements, and other kinds of communication can help soothe the community.

When dealing with a crisis, it is important to document who, what, when, where, and how the crisis happened and what your crisis response has been. If there are limited staff resources available during the actual crisis, record your data into a voice recorder or cell phone so that you can create a full report after the crisis has passed. This report will go to the GEO, and possibly on to authorities or emergency contacts of students. The Faculty Leader should prepare a final after-incident report that includes answers to the following questions:

- Do we know the whereabouts of all students?
- Were there injuries? Who was injured? What were their injuries? Have they been treated? Were there fatalities?
- What is the extent of property damage to the property of students and others (e.g. home stay family)?
- Who provided assistance at the emergency site (police, fire personnel, school officials, consular staff)?
- Are there special circumstances associated with the emergency that continue to indicate a clear and present danger?

Appendices

Assisting Disabled Persons in an Emergency

Assisting Visually Impaired Persons

Inform visually impaired persons about the emergency and offer to act as a sighted guide during the evacuation. Offer your arm and make sure to speak clearly and keep the person oriented to your location. Point out where any obstacles are located. When you reach the assembly location, ask if you can be of further assistance.

Assisting Hearing-Impaired Persons

Individuals with impaired hearing may not be able to hear the audible signal of a fire alarm or emergency announcement. To alert them to an emergency evacuation, use an alternative warning system, i.e. writing a note to the person.

Assisting Ambulatory Persons Using Walking Aids

In evacuations, individuals with crutches, canes, or walkers may need assistance. If a person requires assistance—please ask; assistance will not be of use to everyone using a walking aid—they can be moved using a two-person, lock-arm position or by having the individual sit in a sturdy chair, preferably one with arms, to be lifted and carried.

Assisting Non-Ambulatory Persons

When assisting a non-ambulatory person ask to be certain that they want assistance. Be aware that lifting them might be dangerous, as some individuals have reduced upper-trunk and neck strength. If the person has respiratory problems, immediately remove them from areas with smoke or vapors; if they use an electrical respirator they should be given priority assistance. Non-ambulatory people's needs and preferences for assistance vary. Always consult with the person.

Maintaining Student Health

Tips for dealing with a manifested drug or alcohol problem

- Give the student honest feedback. Confront the student in a nonjudgmental way about your feelings concerning his or her drinking or drug use and the specific ways you see it linked to negative outcomes. Show concern and be supportive. Encourage the student to seek a consultation with a health or mental health professional.
- If the student minimizes or denies that he or she has a drinking or drug problem, let the student know that he or she has a choice to discontinue use or not. Be clear about the specific consequences, including dismissal from the program, if the student's problematic behaviors continue.

Tips for dealing with Anxiety

Common symptoms of anxiety include

- Unrealistic fears and worries,
- Physical complaints (such as upset stomach or rapid heart rate), and
- The avoidance of those situations that are associated with an anxious experience.

With the right treatment, most students can expect to feel better within a few weeks or sooner. Some students can manage anxiety disorders themselves, particularly with the assistance of self-help tools. Others benefit from psychotherapy, medication, or a combination of both. Individuals respond differently to different treatments depending on the type of anxiety and their personal circumstances. Some students will come into the program

with anxiety, which may be exacerbated by the stresses of study abroad. Others may manifest new symptoms with the change in environment. In each case, there is no need for the student to suffer through it.

Tips for dealing with Eating disorders

Anorexia, bulimia, and binge-eating disorder are three serious eating disorders that frequently affect college students. Early recognition and referral for treatment improve a student's chances for a full recovery.

When and How to Refer a Student to Counseling¹

You will be in a unique position to help and guide the student. The following information provides some options for intervention and for referral to local resources. Consult with mental health professionals sooner rather than later, when it may be more difficult to treat a condition.

Refer a student to professional counseling when:

- Signs of emotional distress seem to be impairing the student's personal life, happiness, or work.
- There are concerns about the student's or others' safety.
- The problem is more serious than faculty feel comfortable handling.
- The student's problem is beyond faculty's level of understanding or training.
- The student admits a problem but does not want to talk to anyone else about it.

How to Suggest Counseling

- Set aside a private time to talk with the student so that the concern can be discussed in a caring and honest way.
- Share concerns. Concentrate on instances of concrete behavior. For example, say: "I notice that you have been missing a lot of classes lately."
- Ask the student to explore these concerns. Explain to the student that many students experience some difficulty during undergraduate school, and that counseling is a safe place where they can talk openly about their concerns with a professional counselor.
- Avoid power struggles/battles of the wills. If the student is resistant about obtaining counseling, restate your feelings and concerns.
- Avoid being judgmental and/or analyzing a student's problems. State your concern in a nonjudgmental manner. Instead of saying, "You're not taking your academic work seriously," it's better to say: "I understand you are having difficulty getting your assignments done, and I'm concerned about you."
- Bring up the idea of counseling. For example: "You seem very upset; perhaps it might be useful to speak to someone. There are counselors available who can help you with this. Have you thought about talking with a counselor?"

¹ Adapted from *Toolbox for Advisors*, University of California-Berkeley.

What to do when a student is reluctant to seek counseling

- Normalize the process of seeking help. Remind student that successful students seek support and use resources to help them succeed. Problems need not reach crisis proportions in order to require counseling. Suggest that it is easier to make progress on a problem before it gets too big
- Clarify any costs for treatment. Help the student assess the insurance plan's coverage for treatment. IAU staff can help you with this. Work together to determine how best to meet the student's needs within the constraints of the insurance coverage.
- Remind students of their rights to confidentiality. Their counseling sessions will not be disclosed to parents, faculty back home, or other university personnel.
- Describe the options.

How to Make a Referral

- Faculty need to be knowledgeable—or become knowledgeable—about counseling services that are available to students abroad and learn how students can access them.
- If the concern is urgent or the student seems unsure or anxious, walk the student to the counseling appointment.
- Inform the student that counseling is confidential and that he or she will see a therapist in a private office.

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