

Study Abroad Approval Process Advisory Notes for VSU's Faculty-Led Programs

Center for International Programs

Valdosta State University (VSU) is committed to the development of study abroad programs as a natural enhancement of the academic curriculum and a strategic factor for world class education. The Center for International Programs (CIP) has the responsibility for all University proposals of programs abroad. CIP also provides for the oversight, development, administration and fiscal management assistance of study abroad programs at VSU. The Study Abroad Approval Advisory for Faculty-Led Programs is intended to direct faculty through the academic and budget process to obtain official approval of their program.

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Sources used in the completion of this manual include documentation from the Standards of Good Practice for Short-Term Education Abroad Programs, The Forum of Education Abroad, NAFSA: Association for International Educators, The University of Alabama, The University of Georgia and USG.

CENTER for INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

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Memo

To: Current and Potential Study Abroad Program Directors
From: Center for International Programs
Subject: **Faculty-Led Study Abroad Program Request for Approval Process**

Thank you for your interest in leading a study abroad program at Valdosta State University (VSU). The VSU Center for International Programs (CIP) is committed to providing a wide range of programs that align with the academic mission of the University and increase access to study abroad opportunities for all students. International faculty-led programs provide a unique opportunity to enhance VSU's curricular offerings and fulfill a major strategic goal in the area of educating globally competent citizens. To assist with gaining formal approval, and in planning for your program, CIP has modeled the approval process on the recommendations of The Forum on Education Abroad *Standards of Good Practice for Short-Term Education Abroad Programs*. This process, once successfully completed, will not only enable your program to be approved, but will also serve as a tool in the on-going management of your program.

Updated Application Procedure

Existing Programs

- Existing faculty-led programs are required to complete the [Study Abroad Request for Approval Form](#) and [Budget](#) by May 1st of the previous year and submit the program to CIP for further processing and approval. Programs submitted later may experience delays due to changes in the review approval process .
- Existing faculty-led programs will have the opportunity to recruit for their program at the **Fall Study Abroad Fair**. Each program will have a designated location. More details will follow about the Fall and Spring Study Abroad Fairs.

New Study Abroad Program Proposals

- Program approvals are to be submitted **18 months in advance** to allow adequate time for the approval process, planning and recruitment of the program. The deadline to submit a **New Program Study Abroad Request for Approval** is November 1st of the current academic year in order to obtain approval for a program implemented the next academic year. All new programs will require to complete a due diligence process based on NAFSA recommendations and best practices. We will be happy to discuss details on the requirements.

Procedure

1. Read the [VSU Study Abroad Program Director's Guide](#)
2. Submit a **paper copy** of complete approval packet, signed by you, your Chair and your Dean to CIP
3. Email a scanned **electronic copy** of the complete packet to ibmccl@valdosta.edu .

A complete approval packet includes:

- o Completed [Study Abroad Request for Approval Form](#)
- o Completed [Budget](#)
- o Signed Academic Endorsements
 - o Programs with two faculty proposing from different department require signatures from both department chairs (if from different Colleges, the signatures of the respective Deans).
 - o If Honors designation, a signature is required by the Honors College Dean and the faculty member's home department and College.

After Program Approval

4. Participate in the Spring Faculty Director Workshop (Risk Management/Budget Training) in March.
5. Submit [Destination Description](#) (*updated 1 month prior to departure*).

Faculty-Led Study Abroad Program Approval Form Instructions

A. Program Details:

1. Proposed Program Name:
2. Program Director Name and Contact Information (address/phone/email/sponsoring department):
 - a. Co-Director/Faculty Contact Information (*if applicable*):
3. Provide a detailed narrative of the proposed program:
 - a. Include the program's curricular goals, educational objectives, and how this program fits within the mission of Valdosta State University.
 - b. Do not forget to include a title IX statement.
4. Cities and Country/Countries:
 - a. List Cities and Country/Countries you plan to visit with contact addresses and telephones;
 - b. At what academic institution abroad will the program take place, if any;
 - c. Describe the appropriateness of the program to the site chosen, and how it was evaluated.
5. Term and estimated dates for offering of this program.

B. Rationale

6. What is the academic rationale for conducting this program abroad? How the program will enrich the academic curriculum, service, and global exposure for your students?
7. What evidence is there of VSU student demand/need for this program?
8. What is the director's experience in this country or leading a study abroad program?

C. Academic Framework and Delivery

9. Anticipated courses you plan to offer (title/number/credit hours/instructor/prerequisites):
 - a. Is this a new course? If so, begin the new course approval process simultaneously through your department.
 - b. How many credits will be each participant required to take?
10. Academic requirements (minimum GPA/class standing/language level)?
 - a. Open to all VSU students? Students outside VSU?
11. Describe the course objectives and student learning outcomes. Describe how the program will bring VSU students in direct contact with the host culture in meaningful ways.
12. Briefly describe the overall instructional program and general itinerary including air/land/water schedule and major cultural sites/activities.
 - a. A final itinerary must be provided to CIP at least one month prior to departure. The itinerary should follow the guidelines listed here: [Destination Description](#).
13. Will any non-VSU faculty teach students? What are the qualifications of the non-VSU instructors?
14. Who will determine student's grade, and on what basis?
15. Outline the instructional schedule and provide the classroom contact hours and any excursions directly related to the curriculum.
16. Describe teaching or classroom facilities on site.
17. Student behavior expectations and requirements for program participants. Include the required VSU statement on Title IX and discipline in and after class.

D. Orientation Programming

All students are required to participate in program specific Pre-Departure Orientation.

18. Describe any pre-departure orientation sessions you will conduct specific to this program.
 - a. How many sessions; proposed dates; who will conduct them; content.
19. Describe the on-site orientation
 - a. Who will conduct them; content.
 - b. Differentiate between academic preparation and those orientations focused on logistics.

E. Health, Security and Safety

Review the Country Specific Information for the program's destination(s) on the [U.S. Department of State](#) website and the Traveler's Health information on the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website](#) and respond accordingly. CIP requires that all student participants be registered in the [Smart Traveler's Enrollment Program](#). ***Please note, programs involving travel in a country for which the U.S. State Department has issued a travel warning are not allowed.***

All faculty directors and instructors will be required to participate in risk management training, which is offered during the Spring semester (usually early March) and includes expert speakers from many units on campus who address academic dishonesty, health and safety, crime and security, legal matters, insurance, student behavior and other vital topics.

20. What safety and security consideration did you take into account when planning the program?
Note: Detailed information regarding medical facilities/providers and contact information for all overnight stays will be required to complete the [Destination Details](#). Destination details are to be submitted one month prior to departure.
21. Contingency. If only one faculty member is participating in the trip, outline a contingency plan in the event of an emergency (i.e. if program director is incapacitated who will cover her/his duties on the program?).

F. Logistics

22. List the names of any foreign host institutions, study abroad organizations, U.S. intuitions, or travel agencies that are affiliated with this program.
 - a. If no contract with a service provider, please provide evidence of agreed upon services that will be provided by any educational or logistical partner, costs, and relevant details.
 - b. Provide bank accounts for wire transfers to be verified by Financial Services. It is recommended to pay most of the bills via bank wire transfers to avoid carrying large cash amounts for your safety and better program accountability.
23. Who will be arranging a group flight, if so planned?
24. For students who will deviate from the return route to stay longer or visit other countries after the program require a signed itinerary deviation form.
25. What are local housing and meal arrangements?
 - a. If there are homestays, how and by whom are the hosts selected and screened? If planning on using homestays, plan to address expectations of students, related safety, etiquette, and other matters in detail in your orientation;
 - b. State the number and type of meals the students will receive within the program cost. Advise the amount of additional funds needed for food based on local cost of meals (lunch, dinner) and separately on souvenirs and extracurricular cultural events.
26. In case of students with disabilities attending the program, consult with the Access Office about support. Include a text related to logistical accessibility issues within the program that may cause a problem for a person with disabilities.
27. Hand each student a card with essential emergency telephone contacts: program director's, other program faculty, U.S. Consulate, etc.

G. Budget, Program Administration and Policies for Withdrawals and Cancellations

Students will apply to the study abroad program through CIP's on-line application system—Terra Dotta. Once students apply, the program director will review the applicants and accept or deny the applications. The student's account will be charged the program fee as determined by the budget.

28. Complete the [Study Abroad Budget](#). The multi-tabbed Excel budget file should accompany the Request for Approval Form. The budget details student costs, director/faculty expenses and program sustainability.
29. CIP will provide the required cost variance analysis for your program and financial carryover information.
We realize that it may be difficult to provide budget details many months in advance; however, provide your best estimates and we will work with you on budget specifics and modifications as the time for the program approaches.
30. Review program policies, including withdrawal and refund policy.
 - a. Payment dates, withdrawal and refund policy for the program at each stage;
 - b. Establish behavioral expectations including clear definition of behavior that warrants dismissal of a student from a program. If in doubt, consult with Student Affairs.

Destination Description

To be completed **one month** prior to departure

Name of Program: [*Official Name of Study Abroad Program*]

Location: [*Enter Cities/Countries*]

Program Dates: [*Program Dates*]

[Country] Specific Information	
U.S. State Department Travel Information for [Country]	Copy Country Specific Link
Current U.S. State Department Worldwide Cautions	http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings/worldwide-caution.html
Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Traveler's Health	http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel
Emergency Phone Numbers in [Country]	Police: Fire: Ambulance:
United States Embassy in [Country]	U.S. Embassy Address: Telephone dialing in country: Telephone dialing from U.S.: 011- Afterhours telephone number: Website:
U.S. State Department Student Smart Traveler Enrollment Program	Registration into the STEP program allows for the U.S. Embassy to contact American Citizens /U.S. nationals abroad in case of an emergency. Capstone International Academic Programs will register all students participating in a UA faculty-led program in the STEP program. https://step.state.gov/step/
Valdosta State University/Staff Information Overseas	
Contact Information for Program Director	Program Director: U.S. Address: U.S. Telephone: Email: While Abroad Address: Telephone dialing in country: Telephone dialing from U.S.: 011- Cellphone in country: Cellphone from U.S.: Email:
Contact Information for Faculty Member	Faculty: U.S. Address: U.S. Telephone: Email: While Abroad Address: Telephone dialing in country: Telephone dialing from U.S.: 011- Cellphone in country: Cellphone from U.S.: Email:
Contact Information for Teaching Assistant	Teaching Assistant:

	U.S. Address: U.S. Telephone: Email: While Abroad Address: Telephone dialing in country: Telephone dialing from U.S.: 011- Cellphone in country: Cellphone from U.S.: Email:
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[Location] Specific Information

Accommodations (Hotels, Hostels, etc.) <i>Contact information should be included for all overnight stays.</i>	Name: Address: Telephone dialing in country: Telephone dialing from U.S.: 011- Website: Arrival and departure dates: Name: Address: Telephone dialing in country: Telephone dialing from U.S.: 011- Website: Arrival and departure dates: Name: Address: Telephone dialing in country: Telephone dialing from U.S.: 011- Website: Arrival and departure dates: Name: Address: Telephone dialing in country: Telephone dialing from U.S.: 011- Website: Arrival and departure dates:
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Medical Facilities in [Country]	Name: English speaking Physician: Address: Telephone dialing in country: Telephone dialing from U.S.: 011- Website:
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Valdosta State University Center for International Programs

In the event of an emergency, and if a student is unable to contact their program director/faculty overseas, please contact the Center for International Academic Programs office. During office hours (M-F 8:00 am-4: 45 pm EST), call 01-229-333-7410 and request to speak to the Director or Assistant Director. If you need to reach the office after hours, please call the VSU 24-hour number at 01-229-333-7816 (VSU Police).