



# USF WORLD INTERNATIONAL SECURITY & RISK FIELDBOOK

For Leaders and Associate Travelers

Spring 2021

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UNIVERSITY of  
**SOUTH FLORIDA**  
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# INTRODUCTION

USF Policy #10-507 designates that all student international travel must be registered with the USF World Education Abroad Office (EAO) or USF Health International and must be authorized by USF World. Enrollment in USF's International Health and Evacuation coverage is mandatory.

Student travel is defined as any undergraduate or graduate student or University recognized student group, and the associated University and University Direct Support Organization (DSO) employees and University appointed volunteers engaged in any international travel conducted as part of an USF program requirement, elective, research project, service learning or any international activity tied to an individual's status as an active USF student, regardless of the source of funding for the travel.

The safety of all participants on any USF international travel is of the utmost importance. Concern for participants' safety informs all our decision-making, from the choice of a group flight carrier to the location of the program. Any circumstance that disrupts the travel experience or puts at risk the life, health, or well-being of a student or associate traveler is a reportable incident. All participants can expect to receive whatever assistance is possible from USF World and the International Risk and Security Office. Reportable incidents also include any health concerns, behavior issues, logistical changes, as well as any question you may have that USF World can assist with.

## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document was created to offer guidance for the designated on-site program leader, faculty or staff who may experience a need for assistance. Several common categories of incidents are covered, however, since the unexpected is, by definition, unexpected, we may have not anticipated everything.

An effective response to any incident involves getting the facts, knowing our policies, developing options, communicating effectively and making decisions collaboratively. A calm and professional response will instill confidence in the group and lead to the best possible outcome.

In order to be relevant over time, this handbook must be a "living document" that is updated based upon input from you, changes in the field of study abroad, and shifts in the global context.

Actions to take prior to traveling abroad include:

- Familiarize yourself with this document.
- Attend the mandatory International Risk and Security Orientation, The Clery Act CSA Training & Title IX Orientation.
- Create a strong Emergency Action Plan that evaluates health and safety risks and provides steps to be taken in the event of incidents occurring abroad, including the designation of a primary and secondary emergency meeting place.
- Program leaders must create and conduct at least one in-person orientation on the USF campus within a month of program departing for all of the students participating in the international travel. This should include country-specific information, safety and risk information specific to your location, cross-cultural and personal preparation for the program. Attendance should be mandatory for your students, and in many instances should be a requirement for successful completion of the international experience.
- Give your overseas cell phone number to all participants of your international experience and USF World.

Ensure that everyone on the international travel knows the local emergency ("911") numbers as well as the USF World 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815). You can find local "911" numbers here: [http://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911\\_ABROAD.pdf](http://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf) (Links to External Site). Everyone will be given a laminated emergency card with these numbers.

- Ask students for their cell phone numbers and create a student phone tree.
- Conduct or assist on-site providers with an on-site program orientation once you and students arrive in-country. Local safety precautions should be addressed.

In the event of a reportable incident, the designated program leader, faculty, staff or other associate traveler should **call the USF World 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815), immediately. In any difficult situation, always make sure to do the following:**

- Keep a detailed log of all conversations, correspondence and details of circumstances regarding what happened.
- Keep in contact with the USF World.
- Get facts from as many resources as possible.
- Keep track of all related expenses.
- Direct all inquiries from family members, media and others not on the program to the USF World.

## CHECKLIST

### PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

- Read this document thoroughly.
- Provide USF World and EAO with student contact information.
- Remind students to complete their application.
- Attend International Risk and Security Orientation.
- Make sure that all necessary contact, safety and medical information is completed.
- Remind students that all university rules and regulations still apply while traveling abroad.
- Make sure to give students important emergency phone number cards.
- Make arrangements to obtain an on-site cell phone.
- Share faculty leader(s) cell phone number with students.
- Create an Emergency Action Plan.
- Advise students of known risks, including transportation risks.
- Conduct a mandatory pre-departure orientation specific to your program. Consider assigning academic credit to ensure 100% compliance.



Alonzo, David. USF In Russia. 2009.

### UPON ARRIVAL

- Contact the 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815) immediately if a student does not arrive.
- Test your cell phones thoroughly.
- Obtain student cell phone numbers. (if applicable)
- Create communication tree for students.
- Implement the “Buddy System.”
- Remind students of known risks, including transportation risks.

### IN CASE OF A REAL OR PERCEIVED THREAT TO LIFE

- Activate your Emergency Action Plan.
- Secure a safe location.
- Get in contact with local authorities. See: [http://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911\\_ABROAD.pdf](http://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf). (Links to External Site)
- Call the 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815).

### IN CASE OF A REAL OR PERCEIVED NEED FOR MEDICAL CARE

- Seek appropriate care.
- Call 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815).

## GETTING HELP ABROAD

### Threat to Life Abroad

Know the “911” Equivalent in your Destination: If you or someone you know is experiencing a life-threatening emergency abroad, call the “911 equivalent” phone number for the country they are in. Most countries do not use 911! Here is a list of “911 Equivalent” emergency numbers from around the world.

### USF World 24/7 International Assistance

While abroad, if you need to speak to a representative from USF for any reason, call the USF 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317- 5815. You may call direct or collect. USF World also maintains a special email address to report incidents abroad EAassist@usf.edu.

24/7 International Assistance Line .....+1-813-317-5815  
You can call direct/collect, text or use WhatsApp with this number.

## International Assistance Line – Dialing Direct:

1. Dial the international access code for the U.S. (Usually 001 – Check here [www.howtocallabroad.com](http://www.howtocallabroad.com), Links to External Site)
2. Then dial 813-317-5815.
3. Identify yourself as a USF international traveler and give the country where you are currently located in.
4. State your name and tell the person what the situation is.
5. Tell the person the best number to contact you.
6. Respond to questions and listen carefully to any instructions.

International Assistance Email .....[EAassist@usf.edu](mailto:EAassist@usf.edu)

## International Health and Evacuation Coverage

USF World can always contact the insurance company on your behalf. If you want to directly contact our insurance company United Health Care Global (UHCG), call them at +1-410-453-6330 (direct or collect). You will need to identify yourself and provide them with our policy # 9022591831. You can also email them at Global Assistance - Operations [Assistance@uhcglobal.com](mailto:Assistance@uhcglobal.com).

## United HealthCare Global Insurance (UHCG)

In the event of medical emergency, call.....+1-410-453-6330  
Questions regarding your insurance.....+1-410-453-6330  
Email.....[assistance@uhcglobal.com](mailto:assistance@uhcglobal.com)  
USF UHCG ID#.....9022591831

## How to Make a Long-Distance International Call

To learn the international access codes for calling to and from the U.S. visit the How to Call Abroad website. US State Department Emergency Office of Overseas Citizens Services in US.....+1-202-647-5225

**\*\*USF 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815\*\***

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## POLICY AND DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are derived from USF Policy Number: 10-507 Title: USF International Travel Authority: <https://usf.app.box.com/v/usfpolicy10-507> (Links to External Site).

All international student related travel must follow the procedures maintained by USF World. For USF Health students, the additional or complementary process steps/procedures of the USF Health International Office which can be accessed here: <http://health.usf.edu/international/travel-processes.htm> (Links to External Site).

All international business travel must obtain approval and authorization at the collegiate/ departmental level. Comprehensive guidelines can be found here: <https://www.usf.edu/world/for-global-travelers/index.aspx> (Links to External Site) and for USF Health business travelers here: <https://health.usf.edu/international/travel-processes> (Links to External Site).

Terms used in Policy #10-507 should be understood to have the same meanings used in University business processes, unless explicitly defined in this section.

**Associate Traveler:** Any University and University Direct Support Organization (“DSO”) employees and University appointed volunteers or other non-students associated with any international travel activity tied to a participating individual’s status as an active USF student.

- These travelers are most commonly referred to as faculty, staff, or volunteer. This term is applicable to those in a leadership role or support function.
- This traveler is any non-student individual traveling with a group that could be perceived as an individual that a student might look to for assistance or authority.
- This traveler does not need to follow the exact same itinerary as a student traveler. But it is typically a similar or related itinerary.

**Business Travel:** All other non-student related international travelers which include University and DSO employees, persons of interest, members as defined by University insurance policies, and University appointed volunteers on university business in support of a specific program of instruction, research, site visit or public service, or more general programs of professional development, international conferences or University operations, regardless of funding source.

**Business Traveler:** Any non-student international traveler on university business regardless of funding source.

- This travel is not tied in any way to the status of an active USF student.
- These travelers are typically not Graduate Assistants, Teaching Assistants or Research Assistants.
- These travelers typically include University employees, DSO employees, persons of interest, members as defined by University insurance policies, and University appointed volunteers.

**Group:** A group is 2 more travelers, with at least one traveler being an active student. The travelers must be on an international activity that is directly tied to the status of any of the student travelers regardless of funding source.

**Group Leader:** This is usually an Associate Student Traveler who has taken the responsibility for organizing the group travel.

- This traveler may be an active student if the international travel is only being attended by active students.

**Guest:** Non-Student travelers who have been invited to travel with the program but have no affiliation to USF and are likely spouses, partners, children, family members or other dependents of a traveler.

- They have received permission of the Group Leader and the Education Abroad Office.
- They must be insured under the USF international health and evacuation policy.
- They should not disrupt or alter the study abroad program in any way.
- Minor children must be adequately supervised at all times.

**Individual Student Traveler:** Any undergraduate or graduate student engaged in any international travel activity tied to an individual's status as an active USF student who is traveling alone and/or not accompanied by another USF student or non-student traveler.

- This traveler may be participating on a USF international experience alone such as a research experience, internship, site visit, or conference.
- This traveler may be participating on an experience run by a third-party provider, exchange provider, or other entity that may not have an agreement with USF.
- This traveler may be traveling alone or may be participating in an experience with others. However, the other students and non-students in the international experience are not affiliated in anyway with USF and do not fit the definition of a student traveler or non-student traveler.

**Non-student:** Anyone that is not an active USF student.

**Personal Travel:** This is any travel before, during or after a USF international travel experience that is not a formal part of the USF international activity.

- Travel occurring during registered program dates is generally covered by the USF international health and evacuation coverage.
- Travel Warning policy applies to travel during registered program dates.
- Other restrictions may apply.

**Proposal:** A proposal is the electronic registration in the Education Abroad database of a group international student related activity.

- A proposal may be created by a student or a non-student traveler.
- Generally, the proposal creator is considered the leader of the group or is the leader's designee.
  - Sometimes an Education Abroad Program Manager may create the proposal on behalf of the leader.
- This process is generally for USF faculty, staff and student organizations planning to create or propose a new international experience for students.
  - These experiences may include a new faculty led program, a service-learning experience, a group of students traveling to a conference, or any other travel were more than one student is traveling together on a similar itinerary.

**Requirements:** The tasks that must be accomplished before one is permitted to travel internationally on a USF student related or business-related activity.

**Student Related Travel:** For purposes of this Policy, student travel is any undergraduate or graduate student or University recognized student group, and the associated University and University Direct Support Organization ("DSO") employees and University appointed volunteers engaged in any international travel conducted as part of a USF program requirement, elective, research project, service learning or any international activity tied to an individual's status as an active USF student, regardless of the source of funding for the travel.

**Student Traveler:** Any undergraduate or graduate student engaged in any international travel activity tied to an individual's status as an active USF student regardless of funding source.

- These travelers typically include Graduate Assistants, Teaching Assistants or Research Assistants since their role is generally tied to their status as an active USF student.



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## GROUP TRAVELER REQUIREMENTS

The following international student related traveler requirements are managed by the International Risk and Security Office of USF World. Please contact the International Risk and Security Office if you have any questions about the process or result of any of these requirements:

1. Group Leader Requirements
2. Associate Traveler Requirements
3. Student Traveler Requirements
4. Guest Requirements

### Group Leader Requirements

Besides the following Group Leader Requirements, all requirements for an Associate Traveler apply to the Group Leader.

**Determine Risk Level:** Determine the risk level of the destination you are traveling to. You can do this easily by following this link to our [Tier Chart](#) (Links to External Site).

- If the country is a Level 1 or 2, you may continue to the next requirement. (Unless the specific location is Level 3 or 4)
- If the country is a Level 3 or 4 country, contact the International Risk and Security Office to determine if the location may require a review by the Global Risk Assessment Committee.
- If the country is a Level 3 or 4 country, follow the directions for obtaining approval for travel from the [Global Risk Assessment Committee](#) (Page 12).

**Proposal Creation Process:** If this is a new experience, complete the processes as outlined in Proposal Creation Process

- If this is an experience that has already been registered with the Education Abroad Office, contact the office and speak to the Program Manager who supported the travel before. In most situations, the previous proposal can be electronically copied and updated with minimal effort.

**Emergency Card:** Work with your Education Abroad Program Manager to create an Emergency Card and distribute it to all participants on the travel experience before departure.

**Travel Specific Pre-Departure Orientations:** Organize at least one or more travel specific pre-departure orientations to be held before departure. Also schedule a travel specific orientation on the first day of the program to review all necessary travel specific and risk & security information.

### Post Travel Recommendations

- Associate Traveler Evaluation: Travelers are asked to complete a short on-line Evaluation Form upon return from the program. For all first-time travel, Group Leaders should meet with the Education Abroad Program Manager post-travel to have an in-depth conversation about the program.
- Student Re-entry Event: It is best practice to hold a reentry meeting or event with students following their return from the international experience in most cases. Group Leaders or Associate Travelers may also create an on-line reentry program to help students reflect on their experiences.

## ASSOCIATE TRAVELER REQUIREMENTS

All requirements for an Associate Traveler apply to the Group Leader as well.

**Associate Traveler Registration Process:** Once a proposal is created, all Associate Travelers will be required to complete an AssociateTraveler Application to register their participation with the international activity.

**Associate Traveler Field Book:** Attain and review a copy of the Associate Student Traveler Field Book. Generally, you will be introduced to this during the mandatory Associate Student Traveler Pre-Departure Orientation.

**Associate Traveler Risk and Security Orientation:** All Group Leaders and Associate Travelers must complete this face-to-face orientation once every 2 years and complete an online refresher on off years. See Orientation Registration Process: <https://www.usf.edu/world/for-global-travelers/for-faculty-staff/travel-associated-with-students.aspx> (Links to External Site) for further details.

**Clery Act and Title IX Orientation:** All Group Leaders and Associate Travelers must complete the Title IX face to face orientation once every 2 years and complete an online CSA Orientation once only. See Orientation Registration Process: <https://www.usf.edu/world/for-global-travelers/for-faculty-staff/travel-associated-with-students.aspx> (Links to External Site) for further details.

**International Health and Evacuation Insurance:** All Group Leaders and Associate travelers must be enrolled in the USF's required International Health and Evacuation Insurance. This is a mandatory condition of travel. You can learn more on the main page of International Health and Evacuation Insurance Coverage. (Link to main site here [Health Matters INFO SECTION TITLE 4: International Health and Evacuation Insurance Coverage](#))

**Personal Travel:** Personal travel may be conducted prior to or after the international activity. The additional purchase of international health and evacuation coverage for personal travel is strongly encouraged.

- Group leaders and Associate Travelers are expected to be in residence with the students during the entire international experience when practical.
- Group leaders and Associate Travelers should always be available to immediately respond in-person 24/7 to a student in distress.
- Registered travel dates may differ with the registered travel dates of students, as warranted.

## STUDENT TRAVELER REQUIREMENTS

These requirements apply to all participating student travelers. A student who is also a group leader will generally follow the Group Leader Requirements but will also need to follow student requirements.

**Registration Process:** Once a proposal is created, all Student Travelers will be required to complete an application to register their participation with the international activity. Follow all processes as instructed by the Travel For Students page: <https://www.usf.edu/world/for-global-travelers/for-students/index.aspx> (Links to External Site).

**High Risk Travel Waiver (Depends upon destination):** You will be asked to sign this waiver if you are going to country under a U.S. Department of State Level 3 or 4 or your location has been designated as high-risk travel. Your Group Leader will inform you if you need to sign this document. You can read about high-risk travel and the [Global Risk Assessment Committee](#) (Page 12) that reviews and approves such travel.

**General Pre-departure Online Orientation in CANVAS:** After you have started the electronic registration process by beginning your application, you will receive an invitation to participate in a General Pre-departure Online Orientation in CANVAS. You must complete this orientation at least once within a calendar year of your proposed student related international travel.

**Student Traveler Field Book:** Within the CANVAS pre-departure orientation, you will be given access to the Student Program Guide in the Resources page of the course. We recommend that you download it, read it and keep it hand for reference. It provides vital information that applies to both pre-departure planning; the international travel experience and support for your return.

**International Health and Evacuation Insurance:** After you have been accepted into the international travel experience of your choice, you will immediately be enrolled in the USF's required international health and evacuation insurance. This is a mandatory condition of travel. You can learn more on the main page of International Health and Evacuation Insurance Coverage.

**Medical Information Health Questionnaire:** Please complete this questionnaire thoroughly and disclose all relevant medications you may be taking and any health conditions, both temporary and chronic. We also recommend that you make an appointment with Student Health Services to discuss the health conditions and how you can best prepare for them. Contact Student Health Services Travel Clinic for an appointment.

- Individuals who require disability accommodations for travel should request such accommodations through the appropriate USF process. For USF employees, follow the accommodations request procedure outlined by Human Resources. For USF students (including USF Health Students) consult with Students Accessibility Services.

**Emergency Card:** Generally, an Emergency Card that contains important phone numbers will be provided to you for group experiences. You can also create your own Emergency Card through the Resources section of the online orientation for independent experiences. Note the emergency phone number as well as those of your in-country and home emergency contacts in your cell phone which you will have in use while abroad.

## GUEST REQUIREMENTS

**Associate Traveler Family Members and Guests:** Group Leaders and Associate Travelers may decide to bring accompanying family members with them on the international experience. USF reserves the right to impose limits and/or conditions on the roles, activities and presence of family members or guests who accompany Group Leaders and Associate Travelers. Such limits or conditions derive from programmatic concerns: health, safety, risk, academic and other concerns. In some cases, accompanying family members or guests may not be permitted to join some or all activities.

**Liability:** USF assumes no responsibility for accompanying family members or guests. It is the responsibility of all family members (including spouse/partner and dependent children) of the Associate Travelers to read the US State Department information sheets if they participate in any group travel by land, sea or air. The family members and guests are responsible for their own safety.

**Excursions:** Accompanying family members and guests may participate in program excursions and field trips, provided that such participation does not create increases in costs that would be transferred to student travelers AND that their participation in the program in no way interferes with the academic nature of an experience. Program excursions are planned to accommodate all students plus the Group Leaders and Associate Travelers. If there are empty seats on the bus, boat, or other arranged travel, accompanying family members and guests may travel with the group at no extra cost. However, at no time will a bigger or additional bus, boat or other mode of transportation be arranged in order to accommodate accompanying family members and guests and thus pass on additional costs to the student travelers.

**Excursion Expenses:** If participating in group excursions, accompanying family members and guests must separately pay all per person expenses (i.e., entrances to parks or museums, theatre tickets, etc.). In no case is program money to be used to fund family member and guest participation in special events. If the cost for the family member and guests is included on the group receipt, it must be deducted before the receipt is submitted for reimbursement to the university.

**Group Meals:** If participating in group meals, the Associate Traveler must reimburse the program for any expenses incurred by accompanying family members and guests if a separate bill cannot be obtained. Program money should not be used to buy meals for accompanying family members and guests. The exception to this policy is entertainment of host institution guests to which a couple is invited for a meal. The Group Leaders and Associate Travelers may bring his/her spouse/partner/guest to such an event and receive reimbursement for the meal.

**Minor Children:** Minor children accompanying Group Leaders and Associate Travelers must be adequately supervised at all times. The presence of minor children or other family members and guests should not disrupt or alter the international experience in any way.

**International Health and Evacuation Coverage:** Guests must be insured under the USF policy and the costs must be paid for personally.

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## ORIENTATION REGISTRATION PROCESS

**Associate Traveler Risk and Security Orientation (EAO Risk and Security Orientation):** All Group Leaders and Associate Travelers must complete this face-to-face orientation once every 2 years and complete an online refresher on off years. The Education Abroad Office business office cannot book flights or issue meal allowances until the Associate traveler has completed a current Associate Traveler Pre- Departure Orientation. All Associate Travelers are required to participate regardless of regular appointment status on campus.

This course is administered by the USF World International Risk and Security Office. You must register through GEMs Self Service to participate in an orientation. If you do not have GEMs access, please contact the International Risk and Security Office.

**Orientation Registration Process:** Log into <https://my.usf.edu> (Links to External Site). Under **Business Systems**, select **GEMS Self-Service**. At the Main Menu (top left of screen) select Self Service > Learning and Development > Request Training Enrollment. Search by Course Name: **EAO Risk and Security Orientation** and **View Available Sessions**.

**Clery Act and Title IX Orientation:** All Group Leaders and Associate Travelers must complete the Title IX (RE) face to face orientation once every 2 years and complete an online Clery Act CSA one time. It must be reflected in your GEMs account. The Education Abroad Office business office cannot book flights or issue meal allowances until the Associate traveler has completed a current USF CSA and Title IX Orientation. All Associate Travelers are required to participate regardless of regular appointment status on campus.

These courses ARE NOT run by the USF World Education Abroad Office. Title IX training is administered by the Title IX Office within the office of Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Opportunity. Clery (CSA) training is provided by the University Police Department. You must register through GEMs Self Service to participate in an orientation. If you do not have GEMs access and are an Associate Traveler, please contact the International Risk and Security Office.

**Orientation Registration Process:** Log into <https://my.usf.edu> (Links to External Site). Under **Business Systems**, select **GEMS Self-Service**. At the Main Menu (top left of screen) select Self Service> Learning and Development> Request Training Enrollment. Search by Course Name: **Title IX or CSA** and View Available Sessions.

## THE GLOBAL RISK ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE – SUPPORTING GLOBAL MOBILITY

On September 28, 2015, the Global Risk Assessment Committee met for the first time after being charged into existence by former USF President Judy Genshaft. The Global Risk Assessment Committee will analyze risk and security conditions of proposed or existing international travel and programs in order to assess whether the risks inherent in the program or at the locations are unacceptable for participants and the University. In making the determination, the committee will consider:

- the safety of the faculty, staff and students,
- the University's ethical responsibilities to participants, in the spirit of academic freedom,

- the University's exposure to legal liabilities,
- the public relations issues relating to problematic program sites.

The Global Risk Assessment Committee will review all planned international travel involving students from the USF to countries with a USF World Risk Level Three or Four [risk designation](#) (Links to External Site). Student travel to a Risk Level Three or Four location is by default not permitted and programs are suspended. Supervising faculty may apply for consideration of a waiver to this policy. Exceptions to this travel policy must be endorsed by the Global Risk Assessment Committee and approved by the Senior Academic Officer.

The Global Risk Assessment Committee may review other planned international travel involving students from the USF that involve significant levels of risk either because of the program design or because the location is in a country with a USF World Risk Level Two risk designation. Some program designs, as well as travel to some Risk Level Two countries, have significant risks due to health, safety, or security concerns. These risks may be identified by the U.S. Department of State, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Geological Survey or other reputable bodies or individuals that express a valid concern about the program or the program location. Student travel on a program designed with significant risk or to a Tier Two location is considered on a case-by-case basis and reviewed by the Global Risk Assessment Committee at the request of the Director of Education Abroad. If a review of the travel experience is requested by the Director of Education Abroad the program is suspended. Supervising faculty may apply for consideration of a waiver to this policy. Exceptions to this travel policy must be endorsed by the Global Risk Assessment Committee and approved by the Senior Academic Officer.

When conditions warrant, the Global Risk Assessment Committee may recommend to the Senior Academic Officer that a USF international experience or program at a particular location be suspended or altered prior to departure, or that a USF international experience or program already underway be abbreviated or diverted and the participants removed from the country to a safe location or otherwise brought back to the United States. An appeal for a waiver of the Global Risk Assessment Committee's recommendation to the Senior Academic Officer may be made to the Senior Academic Officer by any faculty member, administrator or program leader for an international experience or program that has not departed. For an international experience or program already underway, the decision of the Global Risk Assessment Committee is final.

# TRAVEL MATTERS

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS AND MONEY

In the Pre-Departure orientation, we provide the students information about passports and visas. It is their responsibility to acquire them. This information may also prove useful to associate travelers.

### PASSPORT

Applying for a passport takes up to 8 weeks if you do not have one. Visit the link at [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov) (Links to External Site) for information on how to apply for a passport.

If you already have a passport, it must be valid. To view passport validity requirements for your destination(s), you need to visit the country information sheet at [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov) (Links to External Site) and look up the destination country. In addition to passport validity, make sure that your passport has enough blank pages. You can find this information there as well.

For example, for any travel to France, U.S. passports must be valid for at least three months beyond your planned date of departure from the Schengen area.

If you have a passport, take it out and look at it. What is the Expiration Date?

Look up your intended destination country. What are the Passport Validity Requirements? Does your passport comply? If not, you need to apply for a new one!

#### Not a U.S. Citizen?

For Non-U.S. Citizens, countries have different requirements for passport validity based upon your country of citizenship. All non-US citizens must determine the passport validity requirements for the country they are going to. Check with USF International Services if you have any questions.

### VISA

Not all countries require a visa. And if you are not a U.S. citizen, visa requirements can be very different for you than a U.S. citizen.

**The Education Abroad Office generally does not provide assistance for the study abroad group to apply for visas. It is normally the student's responsibility. If you wish to help your students, please coordinate with the EAO Program Manager.**

**If you need a confirmation letter from UHCG for your visa application, contact the International Risk and Security Office at: [GlobalTravel@usf.edu](mailto:GlobalTravel@usf.edu).**

For U.S. citizens to find out if a visa is required for a particular destination, visit [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov), just like you did for Passport Validity. A visa is an entry/residency permit granted by the authorities of a country. A visa allows you to enter and remain in that country. You will need a passport prior to applying for a visa. Applying for a visa can be a very long and complicated process. It is much more difficult than applying for a passport. Whether or not you need a visa depends on your citizenship and where you are traveling. You can apply for a visa through the country's Embassy/Consulate. A visit to an Embassy/Consulate may be required in-person to apply for a visa. To find the appropriate Embassy/Consulate for your destination country, visit <http://embassy.goabroad.com> (Links to External Site).

#### Not a U.S. Citizen?

All Non-U.S. citizens will need to check with Consulates or the Embassy of your destination to see if a visa is required for you. International students studying on a visa at USF must see an International Student Advisor at USF before departing the U.S. You can make an appointment on the USF International Services website.

### MONEY

We always stress to students to call their financial institution to let them know that they will be travelling abroad. Their bank may freeze their account if they are unaware of the international travel. Additionally, students are encouraged to carry a source of emergency funds. They may need money to cover a visit to the ER. They may also have their wallet stolen. We recommend at least \$100 in the local currency and to never carry it in their wallet or purse.



Briggs, Jacqueline. American College of Thessaloniki. 2010.

If a student runs out of money, they will be responsible to get more sent to cover their daily needs. It is not recommended for program leaders or associate travelers to personally loan money to students. Before you do this, always consult first with EAO as there may be alternatives.

## PERSONAL DOCUMENT SAFETY

One of the most common incidents when traveling abroad is a lost or stolen passport, wallet or purse. The following should be stressed with all travelers.

When preparing for the international experience, all extra credit cards, house or car keys, driver's license, social security card, USF ID, birth certificate and any other items not needed abroad should remain at home. Always leave a hardcopy and a digital copy of valuable documents that are being brought along with someone trusted at home. Items to leave copies of include: flight itinerary, in-country travel itinerary, contact information, passport, credit and debit cards (front and back), etc.

We recommend passports, credit cards and/or debit cards, and money should be worn in a pouch or a money belt as close to the body as possible when traveling abroad. When possible, we recommend leaving passports in a locked safe at your accommodation and carrying a copy on you. Only in rare circumstances do you need to carry it with you daily.

**We are clear with students to NEVER pack their passport or any other important documents in their checked-in luggage or carry-on luggage.** It does to hurt to reinforce this.

## FISCAL ISSUES

*(The following applies if the Education Abroad Office is managing your program and handling the financial aspects of your travel. Otherwise, please adhere to your college or departments accounting systems).*

Any adjustment of in-country costs should be communicated directly to the Education Abroad Office (not to the students). As budgets are developed, the Fiscal & Business Manager and the Education Abroad Advisors are the main points of contact with regard to all financial matters.

If you anticipate that you will need to make purchases while abroad, a P-Card and/or cash advance may be issued to you for this purpose. Arrangements for a P-Card can take at least 6 weeks depending upon the scheduling of P-Card training which is mandatory.



Spring Break in China. 2012. JPEG

Faculty may be given a modest meal allowance to assist in covering the cost of being abroad. Once the program budget is set (months prior to the program leaving) meal allowances cannot be changed. Faculty do not need to keep receipts associated with their personal meal allowance. In addition, faculty are permitted to partake of group meals budgeted and paid for with their program cash advance. Receipts for these meals must be itemized, translated (if necessary), and turned into the EA Business Office staff after the program ends. The number of faculty and students applicable to the receipt should be clearly recorded. Remember NO ALCOHOL and tip may not exceed 18%.

Faculty directors are responsible for staying within the program budget. If faculty have failed to inform the EAO of program expenses prior to the establishment of the advertised Program Cost, they cannot be added after the fact. Emergency expenses may be added but must have a clear purpose and have arisen from an unexpected event or situation. In the event that additional funds or services are needed, faculty must first get approval from the Director of Education Abroad, from the Fiscal and Business Manager or from the International Risk and Security Office. At times, in the regular course of a program, group expenses will exceed the amount of the program cash advance, leading faculty directors to use personal funds to cover the costs. Receipts for these expenses should be turned in along with all of the other receipts for the program cash advance. All of the receipts will be reviewed by EAO Fiscal and Education Abroad Director, and receipts for approved purchases will be submitted for reimbursement.

In the event that the program cash advance is greater than the amount required to spend during the course of the program, the faculty director must submit payment back to the University for the difference.

**Failure to do so may result in financial penalty to the Faculty Director.**

Faculty must keep all student-related receipts; even with pre-paid expenses, such as hotels. If the EA Business Office staff arranged for a pre-payment of one or more of your expenses, you will be provided with a copy of the receipt. Zero-balance receipts for hotel stays must be submitted upon return. Faculty are responsible for bringing back appropriate receipts related to the program cash advance. **Note: receipts will have to be translated into English.** This will be the faculty member's responsibility. We strongly recommend that you make notes on receipts as you go along.

**Please remember that alcoholic beverages are NOT reimbursable.**

The Education Abroad Office will process your TER upon return from your program. In order to do this, we kindly ask that receipts be emailed or presented in person to the Fiscal and Business Office in EAO, no later than 10 business days following the conclusion of the program. If you stay in country beyond the program termination, the due date remains in place: E-Mail your receipts and supporting documentation to the Fiscal and Business Office: ([EA-Business@usf.edu](mailto:EA-Business@usf.edu)).

Failure to submit this information may result in payroll off-set procedures. Expenses itemized in your travel advance are final. *Expenses that exceed, or are not included in the original budget, will not be reimbursed (with the exception of emergency purchases).*

To help understand costs, take time out to learn the foreign currency BEFORE you go abroad. The buying power of any country's currency is always updated and should be reviewed. One such guide to help you understand purchasing power is the Big Mac Index: [www.economist.com/content/big-mac-index](http://www.economist.com/content/big-mac-index) (Links to External Site). Though a seemingly silly idea, comparing the cost of a Big Mac in different countries can give you a benchmark to plan for your daily expenses.

## RISK ASSESSMENTS

USF World has categorized countries into four tiers that each have specific restrictions ([See Tier Chart](#), Links to External Site). Tier Four Countries (or locations) have the most significant risk. By USF World definition, a Tier Four country has been issued a [Travel Alert by the U.S. Department of State](#) (Links to External Site) advising US citizens to avoid traveling to the country or portion of the country. Student travel to a Tier Four location is not permitted by definition unless a waiver is granted (See GRAC Process). Travel to a Tier Three or Two countries may also not be permitted. It is your responsibility to review the risk factors and follow USF World policies, procedures and restrictions before traveling to any county.

The purpose of a risk assessment, whether it be a [Risk Level 1, 2, 3, or 4](#) (Links to External Site) location is not to screen out programs. Risk Level 3 or 4 is a location that the [U.S. Department of State](#) (Links to External Site) indicates has significant risk. Level 2 is considered a location with unique travel concerns and Level 1 are locations with no significant threats that are known or expected to occur. It is to support programming by providing a timely review of risk and security issues.

To get very objective and balanced information, we strongly encourage you to visit the U.S. Department of State's website and read the Country Information Sheets prepared by the U.S. Department of State. This is the same place where you discovered Passport Validity [U.S. Department of State Country Information](#) (Links to External Site). Also, you can check out the [CIA World Factbook](#) (Links to External Site) for more information about your destination.

For a student perspective on traveling, also sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, is a site created by students for students: <https://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en.html> (Links to External Site).

Visit the U.S. Embassy's own website for the location you are going to. They often have a lot of information about activities you may find relevant. They also keep a list of all special advisories, security messages and emergency messages. <https://www.usembassy.gov/> (Links to External Site)

If you are a program leader, you will be required to complete the Safety Information questionnaire. With this questionnaire, you will be asked to provide the following:

- Specific health and safety risks for your program location(s),
- Risk mitigation strategies that you plan to incorporate,
- Transportation methods such as day to day and to/from the airport,
- Addresses and Contact Information for your program.

The information provided in this questionnaire is used to educate all participants (including yourself) and to best prepare everyone for all concerns in your program location(s). If you are planning on traveling to a Risk Level 3 or 4 or a unique high-risk Risk Level 2 location, you will need to request a petition with the Global Risk Assessment Committee. In Fall 2015, the Global Risk Assessment Committee was created by former USF President Genshaft to analyze risk and security conditions of proposed or existing international travel and programs in order to assess whether the risk inherent in the program or at the locations are unacceptable for participants and the University.

## EXPORT CONTROLS

The USF Office of Export Controls (OEC) provides regulatory advice and support, being sensitive to the need to notify faculty as early as possible in the project should there emerge a contingency or issue that would deem pursuing the project not viable.

The Office of Export Controls monitors all registered international travel. We strongly recommend that you reach out to OEC in advance. To find a list of countries at the OEC website, click on this link.

Please contact the Office of Export Controls, 974-5638 or [exportcontrol@usf.edu](mailto:exportcontrol@usf.edu) for detailed information regarding the restrictions and sanctions on the countries listed below and/or for an export control review of your collaborative or travel plans.

## EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

Emergency action plans are necessary before traveling abroad. Even in countries that appear to have a low level of risk, bad things can happen. Take a moment to consider the emergency action plan that would best support your program. Emergency action plans would include communication strategies, consolidation points, shelter in place and evacuation methods. Do not depend upon the US Embassy for a safe haven or evacuation location because if you are evacuating, chances are they are too. In preparing to respond to an emergency that has impacted your program, the country or community you are in, develop an Emergency Action Plan as follows:

- Identify the likely risks you may face in country. You can get direction from here: <http://travel.state.gov> (Links to External Site)
- Contact the primary facilities, or third-party providers, where you and your students will be spending the majority of your time. This will probably include housing locations, as well as the facilities for classroom space and/or research. Many places on your itinerary will already have emergency action plans in place. Be sure to thoroughly review the information contained in these plans.
- Create a phone tree that includes your cell phone, provider phones, and all student phones.
- Include contact information for all local resources:
  - a. The name of a high-quality hospital or clinic in each travel location. If the location is secluded, identify medical evacuation strategies and resources. Include availability of mental health resources as well as services for victims of sexual assault.
  - b. The name, street address, city, country, office and cell phone, fax, and email for a chief contact of your third-party provider, non-governmental organization, institution of higher education, or local tour guide you are working with.
  - c. The locations equivalent to 911.
  - d. The nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate in each program location.
- Because during a large crisis it is common for cell phones and other methods of communication to be inoperable, a primary and a secondary predefined safe meeting place should be established. Agree on when and where to meet. Shelter-in-Place (or Place of Refuge) refers to a designated area of safety when it is not safe to go outside, usually an interior room. Nearly every hotel, shopping center, public building, or school will have security procedures that have already identified a shelter-in-place.
- Your evacuation plan should include the address and specific location of your pre-arranged meeting places, both primary and secondary, as well as your identified shelter-in-place room. Describe how you would safely get to this location.
- Sometimes, but not always, evacuations are coordinated from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate, so you should still indicate the address of that location.
- Talk about alternative methods of communication if a physical meeting does not or cannot take place.
- Identify a student leader in case the faculty leader is unavailable.
- Think of where you could go to be accessible for evacuation services. Identify the name of the nearest airport if you needed to be airlifted.

Make sure to determine how emergency and non-emergency medical needs will be handled as part of your Emergency Action Plan. This should be discussed prior to departure and again onsite. Inform students of the procedures for obtaining emergency health and law services in the program location.

***Regardless of whatever happens when an emergency occurs, contact our 24/7 International Assistance Line +1- 813-317-5815***

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## SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM – STEP

Once you have registered your international experience with the USF Education Abroad, our office recommends that you enroll all your international travel with the US Department of State into the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. The benefit is twofold. On one hand enrollment lets the local embassy know you are there and how to contact you. On the other hand, enrollment means you get notices and information that is sent out by the local embassy. This information can be invaluable to you when security or safety issues arise.

Below are the types of messages/alerts that could be sent to you while abroad:

- **Emergency Messages** are issued to inform U.S. citizens about imminent events or threats that can affect their personal security and that may require immediate action by U.S. citizens on their behalf, or by others, to ensure their safety.
- **Security Messages** are issued to communicate information about personal security threats of a general or systemic nature, or events/threats where local law-enforcement has taken measures to address or provide enhanced security to the general public.
- **Travel Alerts** are issued to quickly inform you about relatively short-term conditions posing imminent risks to the security of U.S. citizens/nationals. Examples of events that might prompt a Travel Alert include terrorist attacks, coups, election-related demonstrations or violence, or demonstrations related to an international conference or sporting event.



- Messages about U.S. embassy events and services, such as town hall meetings, voting information, federal benefits, and U.S. citizens' legal obligations (taxes, selective service registration, etc.).

You can create your own account and use it anytime you travel internationally. Just go to this site and follow the instructions: <https://step.state.gov/step>. You will get notices during the dates of travel that you add to your itinerary.

**Overseas Citizen Services:** The Overseas Citizens Services of the Bureau of Consular Affairs is responsible for the welfare and whereabouts of U.S. citizens traveling and residing abroad. American Citizens Services and Crisis Management (ACS), a branch of OCS, assists in all matters involving protective services for Americans abroad, including arrests, death cases, financial or medical emergencies, and welfare and whereabouts inquiries. The OCS toll-free hotline is (888) 407-4747. From overseas, call (202) 501-4444. An OCS duty officer is available for after-hours emergencies and during Sundays and holidays at (202) 647-4000.

#### Research Tools (Links to External Site):

- View travel warnings and area information: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>
- Traveler's Health from the Center for Disease and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- Emergency Notifications and On-site contacts: <https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>
- U.S. Embassy and Consulate Abroad: [www.usembassy.state.gov](http://www.usembassy.state.gov)
- UHCG Insurance: <http://www.unitedhealthcareglobal.com>
- Hillsborough County Health Department: [www.hillscountyhealth.org](http://www.hillscountyhealth.org)
- Different Cultures: <http://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides>
- Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo>
- Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada: [http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries\\_pays/menu-eng.asp#C](http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp#C)
- US Customs: <https://www.cbp.gov/travel>
- Links to Foreign Embassies: <http://www.embassy.org/embassies>
- Global Scholar: <http://www.globalscholar.us>

## STUDENT PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATIONS

All students are required to complete the general online CANVAS pre-departure orientation before students will be:

1. Registered in their USF study abroad courses (if applicable), and
2. Cleared to travel.

The Education Abroad Office will monitor students' completion of this pre-departure requirement and contact students as needed to follow up about its completion. This online orientation is very comprehensive, but it does not replace the need for your face-to-face orientation. This orientation is available on CANVAS and is graded. Students must pass each quiz with at least 80% in order to proceed to the next section. In this course, students are provided general information pertaining to but not limited to:

- Emergency Plans
- Health and Safety Concerns
- Discipline Issues
- Academic Policies
- Risk Mitigating Strategies



SummerLab: Architecture in London. 2014. JPEG

## GLOBULL AMBASSADORS

A unique resource for you is the EAO GloBull Ambassadors. These are students who have recently studied abroad with USF. They would welcome the opportunity to help market for your program. They can also help you with a student's perspective if you are traveling with students for the first time. For a list of ambassadors and their contact information, you can visit the [GloBull Ambassadors!](https://www.usf.edu/world/education-abroad/for-students/globull-ambassadors.aspx) <https://www.usf.edu/world/education-abroad/for-students/globull-ambassadors.aspx> (Links to External Site)

## HOUSING CONSIDERATIONS

### STUDENT HOUSING WHILE TRAVELING INTERNATIONALLY

Living in an apartment, hotel, hostel, homestay or any other facility while on an international activity registered with the Education Abroad Office is the same as living on the campus of USF in the eyes of many jurisdictions. International travel is a unique opportunity to experience life abroad. Students may likely be sharing facilities with other USF students, but possibly with citizens of a different country. In such a community, students are afforded rights, but at the same time, students have responsibilities to uphold under not just the rules of USF but with the country they are residing in. Please be aware that students are responsible for knowing **USF Housing Policy**, and will be held accountable to, local law, the **USF Student Code of Conduct**, Federal and State Law, and USF World and the Education Abroad Office policies and procedures.

Students are expected to be aware of and adhere to these rules for their own well-being as well as that of the others they will be sharing this experience with. The rules and regulations of the University and the residence halls are clearly explained in the Resident Handbook <https://www.usf.edu/housing/resources/policies.asp> (Links to External Site). We follow these policies within the context of local law in the international experience authorized by USF World. Students are responsible for knowing these policies and for adhering to them at all times. Remember that due to the local customs, local laws or specific requirements and needs of your international travel program, further restrictions may be imposed. Violating these rules and/or additional restrictions may result in a violation of the Student Code of Conduct (SCC).

### CONDUCT PROCESS

Please visit the USF Student Conduct and Ethical Development website for information: <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct-ethical-development/> (Links to External Site)

### ROOMMATES AND GUESTS FOR STUDENTS

All housing on a USF international travel experience is subject to **Education Abroad Office Resident Handbook (See Addendum)**. Housing is segregated between male and female. There are no co-ed sleeping arrangements. Students who are transitioning may select the gender that they identify with.

No overnight guests are permitted in USF housing while on a USF International experience. It is important to understand that many countries specifically ban guests who are not registered with the hotel or housing facility. It can get our students thrown out.

Guests are also not permitted during most USF international programming. Generally, they cannot ride the bus, go to class, go to group dinners, or otherwise spend any time with the program. Exceptions can be arranged, but that is up to the discretion of the leader.

### HOUSING

Housing may be pre-selected for the student or the student may be traveling independently where they will need to select their own housing. There is no such thing as a 100% "safe" location. If you want, the International Risk and Security Office can look into the relative safety of neighborhoods you may be contemplating. Sometimes the U.S. Department of State has information about crime in certain locations. You want to avoid locations in a part of town known to have high crime rates, frequent demonstrations, ethnic or political tensions or any other issues which could lead to violence against the hotel or hotel guests.

Avoid hotels located adjacent to high-profile targets such as foreign embassies, government offices, landmarks, train stations, bus stations, stadiums, etc. These often-crowded locations are also usually a place of high crime, especially pick-pocketing, robbery and assaults.

Preference should be given to housing with 24/7 reception. When you have a receptionist 24/7, you can sleep better knowing that unwanted guests are being greeted at the door and turned away.

If you ever feel unsafe or threatened, make sure to immediately notify the International Risk and Security Office.

**USF is not responsible for lost or stolen items. We do encourage travelers to investigate Renters Insurance.** It can sometimes offer compensation for items lost or stolen.

### ROOM SAFETY CHECKS

Suggestions for you and the students.

- When you first enter your room, check it out.
  - Check windows, doors & locks. Doors should have a solid deadbolt & peephole
  - Select rooms with a solid door chain
  - Read hotel information regarding security concerns and limits to liability against theft of guest valuables, in-room safes
  - Avoid rooms on the ground floor when possible
  - Check for a working telephone with emergency information
- Think Fire Safety!!

- Look for posted fire protection and evacuation information in guest rooms
- Check fire extinguisher/detectors
- Check for a fire sprinkler protection
- Avoid rooms above the 7th floor
- Identify emergency exits and fire escape routes in the event of a fire
- Do not give out your room number
- Do not open the door unless you expect the person

## ACCOMPANYING FACULTY AND GUESTS

**Associate Traveler Family Members and Guests:** Group Leaders and Associate Travelers may decide to bring accompanying family members with them on the international experience. USF reserves the right to impose limits and/or conditions on the roles, activities and presence of family members or guests who accompany Group Leaders and Associate Travelers. Such limits or conditions derive from programmatic concerns: health, safety, risk, academic and other concerns. In some cases, accompanying family members or guests may not be permitted to join some or all activities.

**Liability:** USF assumes no responsibility for accompanying family members or guests. It is the responsibility of all family members (including spouse/partner and dependent children) of the Associate Travelers to read the US State Department information sheets if they participate in any group travel by land, sea or air. The family members and guests are responsible for their own safety.

**Excursions:** Accompanying family members and guests may participate in program excursions and field trips, provided that such participation does not create increases in costs that would be transferred to student travelers AND that their participation in the program in no way interferes with the academic nature of an experience. Program excursions are planned to accommodate all students plus the Group Leaders and Associate Travelers. If there are empty seats on the bus, boat, or other arranged travel, accompanying family members and guests may travel with the group at no extra cost. However, at no time will a bigger or additional bus, boat or other mode of transportation be arranged in order to accommodate accompanying family members and guests and thus pass on additional costs to the student travelers.

**Excursion Expenses:** If participating in group excursions, accompanying family members and guests must separately pay all per person expenses (i.e., entrances to parks or museums, theatre tickets, etc.). In no case is program money to be used to fund family member and guest participation in special events. If the cost for the family member and guests is included on the group receipt, it must be deducted before the receipt is submitted for reimbursement to the university.

**Group Meals:** If participating in group meals, the Associate Traveler must reimburse the program for any expenses incurred by accompanying family members and guests if a separate bill cannot be obtained. Program money should not be used to buy meals for accompanying family members and guests. The exception to this policy is entertainment of host institution guests to which a couple is invited for a meal. The Group Leaders and Associate Travelers may bring his/her spouse/partner/guest to such an event and receive reimbursement for the meal.

**Minor Children:** Minor children accompanying Group Leaders and Associate Travelers must be adequately supervised at all times. The presence of minor children or other family members and guests should not disrupt or alter the international experience in any way.

**International Health and Evacuation Coverage:** Guests must be insured under the USF policy and the costs must be paid for personally.

## AIRPORTS AND FLIGHTS

**Personal Travel:** Personal travel may be conducted prior to or after the international activity. The additional purchase of international health and evacuation coverage for personal travel is strongly encouraged.

- Group leaders and Associate Travelers are expected to be in residence with the students during the entire international experience when practical.
- Group leaders and Associate Travelers should always be available to immediately respond in-person 24/7 to a student in distress.
- Registered travel dates may differ with the registered travel dates of students, as warranted.

## TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Unless the Education Abroad Office has expressly told you that they will be arranging the transportation on your behalf, it is your responsibility to arrange for your own transportation to the destination and your return home from the destination. If you have the opportunity to travel on your own during the experience, it is best practice to provide the Education Abroad Office your itinerary, transportation information and contact information for that period of travel.

## STUDENT PERSONAL TRAVEL DURING A PROGRAM

The following is our direction to student travelers on a USF international experience.

1. Personal Travel outside of a program city is discouraged as it limits USF's ability to respond in case of an incident.
2. Personal Travel to a location under a U.S. Department of State travel Warning is not permitted as described here: See Tier Chart.
3. If a student makes an independent decision to travel during their free time, they must be advised that:
  - a. They will be responsible for consequences related to such travel that adversely disrupts the program, such as returning late and missing class time.
  - b. They are expected to provide to the Program Leaders or EAO the dates of travel, method of travel, location address, contact number, and their contact phone number in case an incident arises.
  - c. They will be advised if they fail to provide this information that it would seriously impede USF from responding to an incident and they could ultimately be held responsible for their own wellbeing.

## STAYING CONNECTED WITH HOME

We tell students it is their responsibility to notify family that they have arrived safely abroad. However, if anyone encounters a flight delay abroad, do not hesitate to call the 24/7 International Assistance Line and we can help facilitate communication with people concerned about you or your students.

## FERPA

Student travel abroad is protected by FERPA – the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. That means that we need special permission from the student to discuss their activities with their family, friends or guardians. They do provide us with at least one emergency contact, and we can call them and speak to them freely about an emergency where the student may not be able to speak. Those situations generally are rare and would involve being incapacitated in a hospital, missing or arrested. If in doubt, call the International Risk and Security Office before communicating directly with a family member, friend or guardian.

## AIRLINE TICKETS

We clearly tell students do not purchase airline tickets until told to do so by the Education Abroad Program Manager or their Program Leader. Group ticket purchases are often handled by the Education Abroad Office though students may also be responsible to purchase their own ticket. When flying as a part of a group, students must follow the flight itinerary as planned for the group. If they wish to travel outside the group schedule, they will be financially responsible for those additional travel costs.

**When purchasing tickets, do not include any transfer points or connecting flights in a country that is under a [U.S. Department of State Level 3 or 4 Travel Advisory](#) (Links to External Site). If you must travel through a country with a Level 3 or 4 travel advisory, you must petition to the [Global Risk Assessment Committee \(GRAC\)](#) when traveling with students. For instructions on what the GRAC is and how to petition, click on this [link](#) (Links to External Site).**

## TRAVEL DELAYS AND INSURANCE

The USF international health and evacuation coverage does not include travel insurance or renters insurance. Travel insurance and renters insurance are your responsibility and the responsibility of students.

Travel Insurance is intended to cover trip cancellation fees, lost luggage, flight accidents and other losses incurred while traveling. Sometimes it covers theft. Look closely at the policy to be sure. You can acquire travel insurance through many providers. Usually, the airline or travel agent you used to book your tickets will offer insurance. It comes under many different names: trip cancellation, trip protection or travel insurance.

## COMMUNICATION & CELL PHONES

Emergencies do not only happen when wi-fi is available. We strongly recommend that all students have a cell phone that can make and receive international calls without wi-fi when traveling in a group. It is mandatory for independent travel.

It is mandatory that all leaders and associate travelers have a cell phone that can make and receive international calls without wi-fi. That is generally a reimbursable expense, even long-distance charges when in the capacity of your role as associate traveler, such as incident reporting.

Sometimes you can simply call your phone company to activate global coverage. You may need to unlock your phone and buy a sim card or, you may just want to wait and purchase a disposable phone when you get into the country. If unfamiliar with the best option, check with other travelers to see what worked for them.



Costa Rica. 2011. JPEG

## PHONE APPS FOR WI-FI/INTERNET CONNECTION

If you bring a smart phone, you may already be familiar with apps that can help improve your communication. USF World's 24-7 International Assistance Phone is already set up to use WhatsApp. But it is always best to make a regular phone call to the **24-7 International Assistance Line at +1-813-317-5815** to have the best chance of immediate response.

24-7 International Assistance

WhatsApp: Risk Security Office +1-813-317-5815 and +1-813-455-0051

Remember, you can still text or call the **24-7 International Assistance Line at +1- 813-317-5815**.

WhatsApp – This is a free international text message app that uses your mobile cell number but does not offer voice calls. Users can create groups, send each other unlimited images, video and audio media messages. <http://www.whatsapp.com> (Links to External Site)

Viber – this app offers free text messaging and free voice calls to other Viber users, and has group text messaging. It is available for the iPhone, Android phones, BlackBerry but not for Nokia and Symbian. <http://www.viber.com/en> (Links to External Site)

# HEALTH MATTERS

Your health and safety abroad and that of your students are of utmost importance to USF. We recommend that students start working on the activities discussed below at least 8 weeks prior to departure. Faculty and staff can also make an appointment at Student Health Services Travel Clinic to discuss your student's trip or your personal health issues.

## HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS AT YOUR DESTINATION

Prior to departure, you should review worldwide health information and country-specific health requirements for all countries in which you will take students too. Much of this should have been considered during your risk assessment. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list/> (Links to External Site) and U.S. Department of State <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html> (Links to External Site) websites are valuable resources.

If you are traveling to a location where mosquitoes are common, please review this document for additional prevention information: [Mosquito Bite Prevention](#) (Links to External Site).

Take a moment to look up your destination on the CDC and DOS websites and list the recommendations they offer in the box below.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

All countries recommend that travelers be up to date on routine immunizations (but check with your doctor or health care professional first). These are the recommended routine immunizations:

- Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (DTP)
- Hepatitis B
- Polio
- Meningitis
- Chicken pox (Varicella)
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- Influenza

Some immunizations require a series or spacing for protection (as long as three months for a series of shots), so allow as much time as possible for immunization.

## ZIKA VIRUS

The CDC has issued a Level 2 Travel Alert (Practice Enhanced Precautions) for all travelers to the Caribbean, Central America, Mexico, Puerto Rico and South America due to ongoing transmission of the Zika Virus through mosquito bites in numerous countries in the above regions. For a list of all Zika-affected countries visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/index.html> (Links to External Site)

According to the CDC, about 1 in 5 people infected with Zika virus will become ill. The most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, conjunctivitis, muscle pain, and headache. Symptoms usually last up to a week. Infection with the Zika virus usually does not require hospitalization and deaths from this virus are rare. There are no vaccines or medication to prevent this virus. All persons traveling to these areas are strongly encouraged to exercise standard precautions to prevent mosquito bites.

Zika virus can be spread from a pregnant woman to her unborn baby causing significant neurological birth defects and other poor pregnancy outcomes. The CDC is recommending that women who are pregnant in any trimester consider postponing travel to countries where Zika virus is present. If travel cannot be postponed, the CDC is recommending that pregnant women talk to your doctor first and strictly follow the CDC's [guidelines to prevent mosquito bites](#) (Links to External Site).

Any woman who is pregnant or thinks she may be pregnant, traveled to the above regions, and has experienced the above symptoms is strongly recommended to contact their physician for further consultation. If you have further question regarding the Zika virus or other medical concerns regarding traveling outside of the US, contact Student Health Services Travel Clinic at (813) 974-2331.

For more information on Mosquito Bite Prevention for Travelers, [click here](#) (Links to External Site).

To view the most up-to-date Student Health Services statement, please follow this link: <http://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/student-health-services/services/zika-virus.aspx> (Links to External Site).

## COVID-19

### WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause illness in humans or animals. Some coronaviruses can cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to severe respiratory conditions such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The coronavirus responsible for COVID-19 is called SARS-CoV-2.

We are learning something new every day. Below is what we know now but it can change. Stay up to date.

### HOW IS IT SPREAD?

COVID-19 is spread mainly from the following:

- Between people who are nearby of one another
- Respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks
- These droplets can land someone's mouth, nose, or even inhaled.
- There are reports that some people can spread COVID-19 without showing any symptoms or being asymptomatic/presymptomatic. The global health officials are still assessing and researching how often this occurs, though recently it is believed 40%-50% of infected individuals do not present any symptoms.



Photograph by Gustavo Fring.  
2020. JPEG

It takes 1 – 14 days from the time of exposure to COVID-19 and the moment when symptoms start.

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, and tiredness. Other symptoms listed are aches and pains, nasal congestion, headache, conjunctivitis (pink eye), sore throat, diarrhea, loss of taste or smell, rash on the skin, or discoloration of fingers or toes. The recovery rate for people who do not need hospital treatment is approximately 80% at the moment.

Older people and those with the following underlying medical problems are at high risk of becoming seriously ill:

- High blood pressure
- Heart and lung problems
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Obesity

To learn more about this pandemic, here are some resources for any additional questions or concerns:

World Health Organization (WHO) - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub> (Links to External Site).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> (Links to External Site).

### WAYS TO MITIGATE COVID-19

Below are some guidelines that can assist you with mitigating COVID-19:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, then hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content will suffice.
- Always avoid touching any open areas such as your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even in your household.
- When traveling outside of your housing, put distance between yourself and others.
- Stay at least 6 feet from other people.
- Do not gather in groups.
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.
- Cover your mouth and nose with the use of face cover.
- You should wear a mask or cloth face cover whenever you have to go out in public.
- The face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- If you do not have your face covering on, always cover your nose and mouth with a tissue. When you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.

- After you cough or sneeze, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol content.
- Clean and disinfect areas and surfaces that are touched by you or your roommate daily.
- Cleaning and disinfecting include electronics, light switches, doorknobs, tables, and other common areas.

To view updated approaches to slow the spread of COVID-19, please click the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html#:~:text=Wear%20a%20mask%20to%20protect,Avoid%20crowds> (Links to External Site).

## **CDC TRAVEL RESTRICTION ORDER**

To reduce the introduction and spread of new variants of SARS-Co-2, the CDC issued an order that will go into effect on January 26, 2021. It requires all passengers arriving to the US from a foreign country to get tested for COVID-19 infection no more than 3 calendar days before their flight departs and to provide proof of the negative result or documentation of having recovered from COVID-19 to the airline before boarding the flight. The airline will confirm a COVID-19 negative test result or documentation of recovery for all passengers before boarding.

Here is the press release from the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s0112-negative-covid-19-air-passengers.html> (Links to External Site).

This order applies to all air passengers, 2 years of age or older, traveling into the US, including US citizens and legal permanent residents (LPRs). The order requires the following:

### **ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES**

Get tested within 3 days before your flight to the US departs. Make sure to be tested with a viral test (NAAT or antigen test) to determine if you are currently infected with COVID-19. Also make sure that you receive your results before your flight departs and have documentation of your results to show the airline. If a passenger does not provide documentation of a negative test or recovery, or chooses not to take a test, the airline must deny boarding to the passenger. Entry into the United States if you have had a positive viral test within the past 3 months.

If you have had a positive viral test in the past 3 months, and you have met the criteria to end isolation, you may travel with documentation of your positive viral test results and a letter from your healthcare provider or a public health official that states you have been cleared for travel. The positive test result and letter together are referred to as "documentation of recovery."

### **VERIFICATION OF TEST RESULTS**

A verifiable test result must be in the form of written documentation (paper or electronic copy) of a laboratory test result. Testing must be performed using a viral test (NAAT or antigen), and negative results must be provided to the airline prior to boarding. The test result documentation must include information that identifies the person, a specimen collection date and the type of test. A negative test result must show test was done within 3 calendar days before the flight. A positive test result must show the test was done within the 3 months before the flight.

### **TESTING BEFORE LEAVING THE UNITED STATES**

CDC recommends that you get tested with a viral test (NAAT or antigen) 1-3 days before you travel internationally. Travelers should additionally follow any requirements at their destination.

### **TRAVELING IF YOU HAD THE COVID VACCINE**

All air passengers traveling to the US, regardless of vaccination status, are required to provide a negative COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery.

### **TESTING AND QUARANTINE UPON RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES**

CDC recommends that travelers get tested 3-5 days after travel AND stay home or otherwise self-quarantine for 7 days after travel. Even if you test negative, stay home for the full 7 days. If you do not get tested, it is safest to stay home for 10 days.

#### **Always follow state and local recommendations or requirements related to travel.**

You can click the following link to view the FAQs of requirements for proof of negative COVID-19 test or recovery from COVID-19 for all air passengers arriving into the United States: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/testing-international-air-travelers.html> (Links to External Site).

## **CDC COVID-19 TRAVEL HEALTH NOTICES**

CDC uses Travel Health Notices (THNs) to alert travelers and other audiences to health threats around the world and how to protect themselves. The CDC adapted its 3-level notice system to a new 4-level system for COVID-19 and updated criteria used to determine THN levels.

This new 4-level system categorizes destinations, including international destinations and United States Territories, into the following four levels:

- Level 4: Very high level of COVID-19



- Level 3: High level of COVID-19
- Level 2: Moderate level of COVID-19
- Level 1: Low level of COVID-19

Primary criteria for destinations with populations over 200,000

Incidence rate (cumulative new cases per 100,000 people over the past 28 days)

New case trajectory (Are new cases over the past 28 days increasing, decreasing, or stable?)

Incidents rate per 100,000 people over the past 28 days for each level:

- Level 4 (Very High of COVID-19) - More than 100
- Level 3 (High Level of COVID-19) - 51 to 100
- Level 2 (Moderate Level of COVID-19) - 5 to 50
- Level 1 (Low Level of COVID-19) - Less than 5

Primary criteria for destinations with a population of 200,000 or less

COVID-19 case counts (cumulative new cases over the past 28 days)

New case trajectory (Are new cases over the past 28 days increasing, decreasing, or stable?)

Case count over the past 28 days for each level:

- Level 4 (Very High of COVID-19) - More than 100
- Level 3 (High Level of COVID-19) - 51 to 100
- Level 2 (Moderate Level of COVID-19) - 10 to 50
- Level 1 (Low Level of COVID-19) - Less than 10

Please be sure to click the following link to view the COVID-19 travel recommendations for your destination(s): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notice.htm> (Links to External Site).

To view how the CDC determines the level for COVID-19 Travel Health Notices, please click the following link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/how-level-is-determined.html> (Links to External Site).

## USF REOPENING PLAN AND TRAVEL

To the extent possible by local laws and customs, USF's Re-opening Plan and Guidance for Coronavirus (COVID-19) pertains to USF international activities abroad: <https://www.usf.edu/coronavirus/returning-to-campus/index.aspx> (Links to External Site).

USF's Re-opening Plan and Guidance specific to Travel is here: <https://www.usf.edu/coronavirus/returning-to-campus/travel.aspx> (Links to External Site).

Individual programs and local hosts may have guidance specific to safe travel and programming abroad.

Healthy Community Guidance - Please pay special attention to the Risk Mitigation Strategy Level and Nature of Enforcement sections: <https://www.usf.edu/coronavirus/returning-to-campus/healthy-community.aspx> (Links to External Site).

The Re-opening Plan Student Toolkit has some helpful information: <https://www.usf.edu/academic-continuity/student-toolkit/index.aspx> (Links to External Site).

## PERSONAL HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

### FERPA & HIPAA

FERPA and HIPAA regulate how much info we can share. Basically, no information can be shared directly with parents/guardians of our students without the students expressed consent. If in doubt, encourage the student to communicate directly to the party requesting information.

### STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

If you or your students have any questions regarding medical problems, immunization requirements, or other health issues that may affect your ability to successfully and completely participate in the program, you are expected to consult with a physician prior to departure.



Photograph by Anna Svets. 2020. JPEG

Anyone can make an appointment. You can call USF Student Health Services at (813) 974-2331 or visit the [Student Health Services website](#) (Links to External Site).

Even if the countries you plan to visit have no required immunizations to enter, but you have a chronic disease, a pre-existing medical condition or are on regular prescription medications, you should visit a health practitioner to discuss managing your condition and/or your medications abroad. This discussion may also include obtaining recommended, but not required vaccinations. Remember, not all family physicians are certified in international travel medicine.

**Make your appointment 6-8 weeks before departure. This is especially important if you:**

- Are not up to date on your immunizations
- Have a pre-existing condition or chronic disease
- If you are currently taking prescription medications since some medicines are unavailable or illegal abroad
- Are traveling to areas that have higher risk of infectious diseases or other health risks such (e. Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Russia and the Middle East)

## MEDICAL INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

**\*BE CAREFUL THAT YOU DO NOT GIVE MEDICAL ADVICE\***

All students need to complete the confidential medical information questionnaire at least 4-6 weeks prior to departure. This questionnaire is treated like a health record and only Student Health Services has access to this. SHS may contact the student if there is information disclosed in the form. If a student discloses a disability, Student Accessibility Services will be notified.

This form will be reviewed by the Director of USF Student Health Services or his designee, the Director of Education Abroad, the International Risk and Security Office, the Associate Director of Education Abroad, and the Assistant Director of Education Abroad. It is important that USF Student Health Services and the Education Abroad Office be aware of any health conditions which might affect the student's ability to fully enjoy and participate in the international travel. The information that student's provide will be used by USF Health Student Health Services and the Education Abroad Office to help prepare the student for their upcoming international travel as well as to provide appropriate assistance should the need arise during your experience abroad.

The information that the student provides will be kept confidential as required by law and by professional ethical standards. In an emergency, this form may provide critical health information to the medical professionals treating the student and others who may be assisting you in obtaining treatment. We strongly encourage students to disclose all of their health history honestly. In case of an emergency or illness, the ability to coordinate care depends on this information being accurate. Failure to complete this health form accurately may cause delays in care or prevent treatment you may need.

Disclosure will be made only to persons having a genuine need to know in the case of management of an illness or emergency.

**USF strongly recommends that students voluntarily share information with your faculty leader, host family, or the host institution's resident director. Students with chronic conditions are encouraged to talk to you about plans to manage their condition abroad.**

## PRE-DEPARTURE MEDICAL CHECKLIST

To assist you with supporting students, the following Pre-Departure Medical Checklist was developed by a faculty leader and reviewed by Student Health Services. Students are also provided with this as well. Feel free to incorporate it into your face-to-face pre-departure orientations.

**Meet with a medical professional certified in International Travel Medicine**

If you use prescription medications, have a chronic disease or other pre-existing condition, make an appointment with the USF Travel Medicine Clinic at 813-974-2331 or other medical professional certified in international travel medicine to make a plan for managing your situation abroad. Review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for your destination countries here: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list> (Links to External Site). (If you did not fully disclose your health conditions, make sure you update your Medical Information Questionnaire.)

**Verify you have had all of the required immunizations**

It is the responsibility of all participants to obtain required immunizations (if any) for entry to the country in which their program is located and for return to the United States. These requirements change frequently, and it is the participant's responsibility to keep informed about them. USF Education Abroad recommends that all participants our programs consult their USF Travel Medicine Clinic. Not all family physicians are certified in international travel medicine. To prepare for your appointment, you should consult the CDC to learn what vaccinations and inoculations are they recommend. **We also advise every participant to read and heed the "Travel Health Tips for Students Studying Abroad" on that website.**

**Review availability and legality of your prescriptions in host country**

Some countries do not allow certain medications into the country. Examples of these medications include some pain medications (Tylenol #3, Vicodin, etc.), prescription sleeping medications, medications for panic and relaxation (e.g., Xanax), and ADD or ADHD medications (Adderall, Ritalin, etc.) If you have a question about this, contact the embassy of the country or countries to which you are traveling. You may be able to buy some over-the-counter medications, but it would be a good idea to bring what you need – these may include cold medicine like Mucinex, allergy pills such as Claritin, anti-diarrheal medicines, etc. When you do take prescription medications with you, make a list of them and keep that list with you at all times.

**Ensure you have enough medication to last the duration of your stay**

Even if legal to import, many U.S. prescriptions are not available outside of the United States. You should bring enough of your medication to last the entire program (and pack it only in your carry-on bag in the original prescription bottles). You should also bring, if possible, copies of prescriptions, written with the generic (or scientific) drug name, as trade names vary from country to country.

**Review potential reactions from taking your medication**

Some prescription medications may have severe reactions when taken with alcohol; it would likely be a good idea to look at any interactions your prescriptions might have. (Example: benzodiazepines such as Xanax + alcohol = a dangerous combination)

**Inform program leader of chronic condition, if desired**

If you have a chronic condition (epilepsy, diabetes, a severe anaphylactic allergy, etc.), you may want to inform your program leader/resident director in case of an emergency, but you are not required to do so. This might also be good information to share with your host family and/or roommates.

**Inform program leader of food/environmental allergies, dietary restrictions, or other limitations, if desired**

If you have food/environmental allergies, dietary restrictions, or other limitations, you may want to inform your program leader/ resident director, but you are not required to do so. We have learned that sharing this information can assist you later on in the program. This information might also be good to share with your host family and/or roommates.

**Review UHCG policies**

While traveling abroad, doctors and hospitals may expect immediate cash payment for health services. You are provided with [comprehensive international health and evacuation insurance](#) (Links to External Site) through UHCG. To arrange for direct payment by UHCG for an appointment or hospitalization, UHCG should be contacted in advance at UHCG Assistance Line at 1-410-453-6330 (Available 24/7) or 1-1-813-317-5815 (international collect). If advance payment cannot be arranged, retain all receipts and complete a UHCG claim form.

**Consider bringing your own feminine products for convenience**

For women, it might be helpful to bring your own feminine products. They are likely available in your destination country, but may not what you are used to in the U.S.

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## STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Do your students have a disability(s) that will require accommodation(s) while abroad? If yes, please make sure to have them first visit with [USF Student Accessibility Services](#) (Links to External Site). They can discuss what accommodation(s) they may have access to abroad.

Even if they are already registered with SAS, they should still meet with SAS staff to discuss their needs. Ideally, this process must start at least six (6) weeks prior to departure to allow for evaluation and implementation of any accommodation. If they do not timely disclose their disability or request accommodations, USF may not be able to evaluate and implement an accommodation. More time is needed to manage significant accommodation requests.

To assist you and the student with making the most of USF services, SAS and Education Abroad have developed the checklist below. Follow it to make sure you are prepared for your next international experience.

## STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES ABROAD CHECKLIST

### Studying Abroad Soon? What Will You Need?

#### I. Getting Accommodations

**Register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS)**

You may already be registered with SAS for academic accommodations. If not, you must register with SAS in order to receive accommodations. You can do this by visiting the [Forms](#) tab on their website and complete an application. You will also be required to supply your disability documentation before your application can be reviewed. Once registered, you will be assigned a coordinator.

**Request a SAS Verification Letter be sent to the Education Abroad Program Manager**

Schedule a meeting with your SAS coordinator to discuss your plans of studying abroad and request a SAS Verification Letter to be sent to the EAO regarding your unique circumstances and the accommodations you may need.

**II. Steps to Prepare**

**Meet with the Education Abroad Program Manager, Program Leader and SAS Coordinator as appropriate**

To prepare for this meeting, please consider how your access may be impacted in the following areas. Please take into account that unlike on campus, international travel involves all aspects of living abroad, not just classroom time.

- Classroom accessibility
  - Are there ramps, elevators?
  - Are the bathrooms close to your classroom? Are they accessible?
  - Library and other resources?
  - Communication
  - Notetaking during class
  - Reading texts required for class
  - Completing exams
- Housing
  - Do you need to request a bedroom on the first floor?
  - Are you going to need access to an elevator, ramps?
  - Handrails in the bathroom? Accessible shower?
  - Accessibility features (automatic doors, visual fire alarms, bed shakers, etc.)
  - Is it close to your work placement or school?
- Transportation
  - Do you need to have access to public transportation, cabs, or specialized cabs?
  - How will you get groceries, attend church, go shopping, take trips with the class, etc.?
  - Are you able to navigate new environments independently (read maps, identify crosswalks, ask for directions, etc.?)
- Health care
  - What medications do you need to take with you?
  - Do you have adaptive equipment (wheelchairs, power equipment, and specialized computer software) that may require additional planning?
- Dietary
  - Are you familiar with the dietary preferences of your destination?
  - Do you have specific dietary needs related to a medical condition or disability?

**Receive a confirmation letter from your Education Abroad Program Manager**

This letter should include the accommodations available including any limitations or additional agreed upon costs. If there is a Program Leader for the proposed international travel, they should be included in the receipt of this letter.

**III. Understanding Disability Culture**

The Americans with Disabilities Act does not necessarily accompany you as you travel abroad. Research the legislation and approach to persons with disabilities within the culture you will visit.

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## MEDICINE AND PRESCRIPTIONS ABROAD

Do not get stuck abroad needing an illegal or unavailable prescription medicine.

If anyone has a pre-existing medical condition that may require treatment or need prescription medication while traveling, it is important to bring an adequate supply in the original container as well as a prescription with the physician's explanation of the condition and generic and brand names of the medication and dosage information.

As noted in the checklist, some common prescription medications in the U.S. are illegal abroad. Check with the embassies of the countries you expect to visit to make sure your prescriptions and over-the-counter medications are permissible.

Do not plan on sending medications abroad since it will require customs paperwork and may be delayed in delivery or even returned. Be sure to maintain your usual dosage and pattern of taking your medication while you are abroad and ask your physician how to make adjustments due to any time zone changes.

## MEDICAL IDS

USF Student Health Services recommends that if you or a student have a pre-existing condition or chronic condition, that it is a good idea for you to consider purchasing a Medical ID before you travel abroad. If you are confused whether you should or not, discuss your concerns with a healthcare practitioner or at Student Health Services.

Medical IDs are a simple way to communicate important information to first responders in an emergency. With custom medical IDs there are a lot of features to consider.

You can print the order form here or go to this website <http://www.identifyyourself.com> (Links to External Site) to see what options are available that best fit your lifestyle.

## EATING RIGHT

The single most common health issue abroad comes from eating foods that are either spoiled or are not readily accepted by our stomach. While contaminated food and water is more prevalent in the developing world, anyone can suffer from stomach and intestinal problems even in developed countries. We express to students that traveling abroad requires defensive eating habits. They also need to take note of any environmental allergies, food allergies, or dietary restrictions. They need to plan ahead if they have a restrictive diet.

These food and water precautions are shared with students:

- Do not drink tap water and stay away from ice cubes. Do not even brush your teeth with tap water. Fortunately, bottled water is for sale in most parts of the world. Check tamper seals on the bottles to help ensure quality for safe drinking.
- Bottled or canned beverages are usually okay to drink.
- Boiled beverages, such as coffee and tea are also generally safe.
- If you are traveling to remote locations, pack water-purification tablets, iodine, chlorine, or water filtration devices to make the water potable.
- Avoid unpasteurized dairy products.
- Stay away from raw or uncooked meat and shellfish.
- Unpeelable fruit (such as grapes and berries), raw vegetables and salad greens are likely rinsed in local tap water. Be careful when ordering these.
- Beware of foods sold by street vendors, especially in developing countries. Do not eat sauces, salsas, or anything else that has been sitting on any table for a long period of time.

## RISKY ACTIVITIES

Please keep in mind that USF international travel is not designed to promote adventure tourism. Any one of the activities discussed below can lead to an injury or even death, ending your experience for good.

The participation in any sports activity listed below is not insurable under our international health and evacuation policy. If you are not sure if your activity is insurable contact the International Risk and Security Office at [GlobalTravel@usf.edu](mailto:GlobalTravel@usf.edu).

Mountaineering (engaging in the sport of scaling mountains generally requiring the use of picks, ropes, or other special equipment); participating as a professional in a stunt, athletic or sporting event or competition; participating in bodily contact sports, skydiving or parachuting except parasailing, hang gliding, bungee cord jumping, extreme skiing, skiing outside marked trails or heli-skiing, mountaineering, any race, speed contests not including any regatta races, spelunking or caving, or scuba diving if the depth exceeds 120 feet (40 meters) or if You are not certified to dive and a dive master is not present during the dive; See the [FAQ](#) or [Policy](#) (Links to External Sites) for a full list of exclusions.

**If you and the students intend to participate in any risky activity, please first check with the International Risk and Security Office to clarify if it is a covered activity.**

*\*There are exceptions when they pertain to the educational goals of your program, but even then compliance with licensing and training are strictly enforced. Speak to your program leader or advisor for more information.*

## DRIVING A MOTOR VEHICLE ABROAD\*

**Driving is the number one cause of serious injuries and fatalities abroad. USF prohibits students from driving or operating any motorized vehicle when traveling on a USF international experience. Financial aid may block any funds associated with a student planning to use such funds to drive abroad. The international health and evacuation coverage may be suspended for that student.**

When faculty, staff and associate travelers drive, they must meet all applicable laws in the country they are in including having the necessary type of driver's license and insurance. If renting a car or van, it must carry full coverage provided by the rental company. (Please review the Transportation Guidelines in the Addendum.)

USF will not assist students with renting/leasing and operating motor vehicles such as cars, trucks, motorcycles, scooters, boats and jet skis while participating on an education abroad experience.

And absolutely, under no circumstances should students transport other students. Students are prohibited from operating vehicles used to transport any USF students and associated participants on an education abroad experience, ever. Only assigned faculty and staff may do this. Under very strict circumstances a Graduate Student who has been hired specifically to assist with a program may be allowed to drive and transport students.

**Every U.S. Department of State [Country Information Sheet](#) has a section on Travel & Transportation Risks. Always review this before you travel.**

*\*If driving a motor vehicle is a requirement of your USF international experience, you may petition to have driving privileges. Contact the International Risk and Safety Office for more information at [GlobalTravel@usf.edu](mailto:GlobalTravel@usf.edu).*

## SWIMMING ABROAD

**USF World does not support any swimming activity when a lifeguard is not present.\*\***

Not all swimming beaches and swimming conditions around the world are like ours. Swimming in unfamiliar conditions is extremely risky. In fact, swimming in very polluted waters can also expose travelers to serious infectious diseases. Because the risk of drowning is such a serious concern, you must keep the following in mind:

- Take warning flags on beaches seriously: Many drownings occur when swimmers are overwhelmed by the water conditions. If black or red flags are up, do not enter the water. Strong undertow and rough surf along beaches are more common than you may think, especially on the Pacific coast. If you swim with a lifeguard present, still always exercise caution.
- Many international beaches are not protected, and health and hazard warnings are not posted for the public
- Risk of rip currents (undertow) is a significant threat. If you are caught in a rip current, swim parallel to the shore and do not try and fight the current by swimming against it. Once you are out of the current, swim towards the shore.
- Swimming/rafting in rivers and lakes also carries the risk of disease & parasites
- If the place where you want to swim looks inviting but there is no one swimming in that location, there is usually a reason that they do not swim there.
- If there is no lifeguard on duty, Do Not Go in The Water!

*\*\*If swimming at a location without a lifeguard is a requirement of your USF international experience, you may petition to have swimming privileges. Contact the International Risk and Safety Office for more information at [GlobalTravel@usf.edu](mailto:GlobalTravel@usf.edu)*

## DATING, SEX AND TRAVEL ABROAD

Our students will likely have the time to engage in these activities. There is extensive information provided to our students in preparation of their international experience. Around the world, U.S. Embassies receive reports from U.S. Citizens that have been victimized by individuals that managed to take advantage of them. It is so persistent that the U.S. Department of State issued an alert that recommends that U.S. citizens take the following precautions that we hope you will support for your student travelers.

### When traveling internationally:

- Do not go out alone at night.
- Do not walk alone in isolated areas.
- Do not accept drinks from strangers or casual acquaintances.
- Keep an eye on all drinks in public places.
- Avoid late-night or illegal after-hours clubs.
- Never leave anyone alone

**When traveling internationally, USF recommends that students always travel with others** - these can be other students, friends or peers. Unfamiliar locations make a traveler who is alone vulnerable to unforeseen problems.

- Use the buddy system to ensure that all members of your group are accounted for.
- Students should always stay with their Buddies!



Italy. 2008. JPEG

## SAFETY AROUND ANIMALS AND RABIES PREVENTION

Animals can be cute, and you may want to pet them, but any animal, even if it appears to be friendly or harmless, can be dangerous. Any animal can bite, scratch, kick, or otherwise injure you, even if you did nothing to provoke it. Some diseases can cause an animal to behave aggressively toward people, even if it had previously been friendly; thus, do not touch animals including domestic pets—especially monkeys, dogs, and cats—to avoid bites and serious diseases such as rabies and plague. In many countries, pets may not be vaccinated against harmful diseases the way they are in the United States.

Before departure, the CDC recommends that you should have a current tetanus vaccination or documentation of a booster vaccination in the previous 5–10 years. Travel health providers should assess a traveler's need for pre-exposure rabies immunization.

Consider a rabies vaccination if one of the following apply:

- Travelers involved in outdoor and other activities (such as camping, hiking, biking, adventure travel, and caving) that put them at risk for animal bites.
- People who will be working with or around animals (such as veterinarians, wildlife professionals, and researchers).
- People who are taking long trips or moving to a country designated by the CDC as having a concern about rabies. <http://www.cdc.gov/>
- Children, because they tend to play with animals, might not report bites, and are more likely to have animal bites on their head and neck.
- While traveling, you should never try to pet, handle, or feed unfamiliar animals (whether domestic or wild, even in captive settings such as game ranches or petting zoos), particularly in areas where rabies is endemic.
- You should never attempt to feed, pet, or handle any animal such as monkeys, bats, or rodents while traveling. To mitigate the risk of exposure to rabies, stray dogs should be avoided, and travelers should avoid the temptation to adopt a stray dog from abroad.
- To prevent infection, all bite and scratch wounds should be promptly cleaned with soap and water, and the wound should be promptly debrided if necrotic tissue, dirt, or other foreign materials are present. Often times, a course of antibiotics is appropriate after dog or cat bites or scratches. Wound care is especially important.
- All bite and scratch wounds should be considered as a possible rabies case. If you think you might have been exposed to rabies, you should contact a health care provider as soon as possible for advice about rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). The USF 24/7 International Assistance Line can be a good first step to initiate a report.
- Even if you have been vaccinated against rabies, you must get rabies shots as soon as possible if you are exposed to an animal that might have rabies; having vaccine before traveling will simplify your post-exposure management and may give you more time to seek care. Being vaccinated only buys you more time to get treatment after an exposure.

### **ACT QUICKLY IF AN ANIMAL SCRATCHES OR BITES YOU!**

**- Wash the wound well with soap and water**

**- See a health care provider right away even if you do not feel sick or your wound does not look serious**

## REFERENCES:

Be Safe Around Animals: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/be-safe-around-animals>

Animal – Associated Hazards: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2016/the-pre-travel-consultation/animal-associated-hazards>

## ALCOHOL AND DRUG CONSUMPTION ABROAD

Research shows that most students are smart when it comes to their choices about alcohol. The majority of USF first-year students do not drink at all and over a quarter of them have never drank alcohol.

Nevertheless, to paraphrase the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, “Virtually all college students traveling abroad experience the effects of college drinking – whether they drink or not. The problem with college drinking is not necessarily the drinking itself, but the negative consequences that result from excessive drinking.” <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/special-populations-co-occurring-disorders/college-drinking>.

The drinking age is generally much lower in all other countries than it is here in the United States, so it is possible that students may want to experiment with alcohol. Even if it is legal, their behavior resulting from alcohol consumption can still be a violation of the USF Student Code of Conduct as well as local laws.

Alcohol consumption can lead to an arrest, accident, violent crime, or even death. In many locations, just as in the U.S., disturbing the peace, lewd behavior, littering, driving under the influence, drinking on the street or on public transportation may all be considered criminal activities by local authorities.

USF provides a great deal of information and support regarding Alcohol & Other Drugs for students. Students can visit this information presented by the USF Student Affairs Community. <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/wellbeing/health-topics/alcohol-and-other-drugs.aspx> and <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/wellbeing/documents/anatomy-of-a-hangover-flyer.pdf>.

## ALCOHOL POISONING

Alcohol poisoning can kill. The following warning signs and response protocols are shared with students. (From Michigan State University Olin Health Center)

If you think someone may have alcohol poisoning:

- Call an Ambulance (Know your local equivalent to dialing “911”)
- Stay with the person until help arrives. Turn them on their side to keep them from choking if they start vomiting
- Do **not** induce vomiting!
- **Contact the 24/7 International Assistance Line.**

Signs and Symptoms

- Person is **unconscious** or semi-conscious and cannot be awakened by shouting, pinching, or prodding.
- Person has cold, clammy, pale, or bluish skin.
- Person is **breathing irregularly** – which means fewer than eight breaths per minute, or ten or more seconds between breaths.
- Person **vomits while passed out** or does not wake up after vomiting.
- Person is **unable to make eye contact** or unable to maintain a conversation.

Most countries, with the exception of those with religious prohibitions, tolerate social drinking. Intoxication, public drunkenness and inebriating behavior, however, are seldom allowed under any circumstances. If travelers attend Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings in the United States, check the AA Web page for information about meetings abroad. ([http://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/find-local-aa/world/1](http://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/find-local-aa/world/1), Links to External Site).

## ALCOHOL MISUSE

USF does not prohibit the legal consumption of alcohol on its campuses. USF recognizes that as part of a well-planned and structured program, the serving and consumption of alcohol may take place. However, any behavior deemed disruptive that interferes with the rights of students due to alcohol consumption will lead to disciplinary action. The entire USF Alcohol Policy can be read here: <https://usf.app.box.com/v/usfpolicy30-023> (Links to External Site).

At the USF World, improper behavior resulting from alcohol consumption is called Alcohol Misuse and follows USF Policy. Alcohol misuse will not be tolerated on USF International Activities.



**Students could be sent home at their own expense for misusing alcohol while abroad. The Director of Education Abroad and General Counsel will have to make the final decision to send students home.**

What is “alcohol misuse?” Alcohol misuse is present when:

- A student misses any scheduled event because of the effects of alcohol consumption;
- A student becomes ill due to the effects of alcohol consumption;
- A student is disrespectful of others sharing the same or neighboring housing, due to the effects of alcohol consumption;
- A student engages in inappropriate behavior toward other individuals that is the result of alcohol consumption;
- A student becomes so intoxicated that he/she cannot walk unassisted;
- A student engages in destructive behavior toward property that is the result of alcohol consumption;
- A student does not abide by the laws of the country in which he or she is staying;
- A student engages in behavior that causes embarrassment to the other members of the group, the faculty member(s) or the in- country host(s) as a result of alcohol consumption;
- A student engages in behavior that causes his/her companions concern for the safety of the individual or the group;
- Students in a group encourage or ignore a fellow student who is misusing or abusing alcohol; or
- Students who transport quantities of alcohol to program sites with the intent of sharing the alcohol with members of the group.

Students are encouraged to use good judgment if consuming alcohol at private homes or other accommodations during non-program hours. Student groups are encouraged to discuss issues related to alcohol abuse by other members of their group with the faculty leader or resident director. Peers should look out for each other and keep each other safe.

## CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES OR DRUGS

Regardless of your position on marijuana or other drugs, students should not attempt to import, purchase, use, or have drugs in your possession. It is not worth it. Drug charges can carry severe penalties, including imprisonment without bail for up to a year before a case is even tried. A conviction carries several more years of imprisonment in a foreign jail.

THE U.S. EMBASSY CANNOT:

- Demand the immediate release of a U.S. citizen arrested abroad or otherwise cause the citizen to be released;
- Represent a U.S. citizen at trial, give legal advice, or pay legal fees and/or fines with U.S. Government funds.

Therefore, the University of South Florida Education Abroad Office has a **zero-tolerance policy** regarding the purchase, possession, use, manufacture, production, sale, exchange or distribution of illegal drugs by students participating in USF affiliated international programs.

If a student is in violation of this policy by the purchase, possession, use, manufacture, production, sale, exchange or distribution of illegal drugs while on USF World registered travel, **they will face the following consequences:**

- Immediate Referral to Student Conduct and Ethical Development for violation of the USF Student Code of Conduct with possible disciplinary action while abroad
- Possible dismissal from the program
- Possible academic withdrawal from the University for the semester in progress; and
- Possible further disciplinary action upon return to campus.

Also, if they are caught with the purchase, possession, use, manufacture, production, sale, exchange or distribution of illegal drugs by local authorities, **they may be incarcerated**, and it could mean:

- Interrogation and delays before trial including mistreatment and solitary confinement for up to one year under very primitive conditions
- Lengthy trials conducted in a foreign language, with delays and postponements
- Weeks, months or life in prison (some places include hard labor, heavy fines, and/or lashings) if found guilty
- Death penalty in a growing number of countries (e.g., Malaysia and Pakistan).

If purchasing prescription medications in quantities larger than that considered necessary for personal use, students could be arrested on suspicion of drug trafficking. In some countries, anyone who is caught with even a very small quantity for personal use may be tried and could receive the same sentence as a large-scale trafficker.

A few words to the wise...

- A number of countries, including the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico and the Philippines, have enacted more stringent drug laws that impose mandatory jail sentences for individuals convicted of possessing even small amounts of marijuana or cocaine for personal use.
- Once you leave the United States you are not covered by U.S. laws and constitutional rights.

- Bail is not granted in many countries when drugs are involved.
- The burden of proof in many countries is on the accused to prove his/her innocence.
- In some countries, evidence obtained illegally by local authorities may be admissible in court.
- Few countries offer drug offenders jury trials or even require the prisoner's presence at his/her trial.
- Many countries have mandatory prison sentences of seven years to life without the possibility of parole for drug violations.
- If someone offers you a free trip and some quick and easy money just for bringing back a suitcase...SAY NO!
- Do not carry a package for anyone, no matter how small it might seem, and pay close attention to your luggage to ensure that no one can place anything in yours.
- The police and customs officials have a right to search your luggage for drugs. If they find drugs in your suitcase, YOU will suffer the consequences.
- You could go to jail for years with no possibility of parole, early release, or transfer back the United States.

## MENTAL HEALTH ABROAD

***If you believe that you or someone you know is experiencing a life-threatening emergency, call 911 (or the international equivalent while abroad).***

If you or someone you know is in crisis (but not life-threatening), on campus please:

- Call 813-974-2831 and ask to speak with the on-call counselor;
- Attend a walk-in urgent appointment Monday-Friday: 8:00 am-4:00 pm in SVC 2124;
- After office hours (evenings, weekends, and holidays): 813-974-2831 and press #3 to speak with a crisis counselor (This works when you travel!).

Students can participate in international student related travel with a mental health issue. But preparation is key. We encourage anyone with questions to:

- Make an appointment with [USF Counseling Center](#)
- Make an appointment with [USF Student Health Services](#)

Mental health issues abroad are becoming more frequent and are often much more disruptive than many other incidents. However, they can be managed and even prevented if care is taken early.

More and more students with mental health conditions or a history of previous mental health challenges are attending college. Some reports peg this number at 25% with diagnosed conditions and another 25% that could benefit from a counselor or therapist but have not gone yet. This section is intended for everyone traveling abroad. Today it is commonly reported that many of us are struggling with bi-polar disorder, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, stress management, family or other relationships, career decision-making, cultural identity, interpersonal concerns, sexual assault, and many others. With a combination of medications and therapy, the vast majority of us are having productive and enjoyable experiences at home and abroad.

Experiencing another culture is an exhilarating, but often stressful experience. The experience can sometimes cause symptoms or conditions to appear seemingly out of no-where, or worsen if already present, even if only temporarily. For these reasons, we recommend students discuss the rigors of your program with a therapist and physician so that they are more prepared to handle them abroad.

Note: Culture shock is a normal developmental phase of adjustment to a new cultural environment, not a psychological disorder. However, reactions to culture shock can mimic more severe psychological problems such as clinical depression and anxiety.

Some common manifestations of stress are:

- Irritability over small things
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- Queasy stomach
- Desire to run away
- Constant feeling of tiredness
- Psychosomatic illness
- Excessive criticism of others
- Poor work performance
- Difficulty making decisions
- Eating disorders
- Being unusually introspective
- Feelings of guilt, loneliness, worry and anxiety

Poor coping choices include:

- Resorting to heavy alcohol use
- Staying in bed 12-14 hours a day or staying in your quarters all day
- Eating excessively
- Avoiding friends and neighbors
- Escaping into sexual relationships

Better coping choices:

- Immerse yourself in study/reading that is satisfying or keep a journal of your experiences
- Find a local person with whom you can talk regularly
- Make a healthy routine, such as taking a walk through the park every day after lunch.
- Practice your faith through prayer, meditation, reading, etc.
- Write letters/e-mails (or make audiotapes) to family and friends
- Visit fellow students
- Meet with Resident Director/Faculty to talk about the stress
- Eat healthy and get regular exercise

If you notice these signs in someone else, please contact the program director or the International Risk and Safety Office – we will help.

- USF Education Abroad 24/7 International Assistance Line: **813-317-5815**
- USF Education Abroad International Assistance Email: [EAassist@usf.edu](mailto:EAassist@usf.edu)

## RECOGNIZING A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE ABROAD

Be prepared to recognize distress in yourself or in others and respond appropriately. When you do, you can generally intervene early to minimize its effects. Below are the three main levels of distress, how to recognize them and how to intervene if it happens to you or another in your program:

### MILD DISTRESS

When a student demonstrates behaviors that **do not disrupt others** but may indicate something is wrong and that assistance is needed.

Examples of Mild Distress include:

- Difficulties in concentration and motivation
- Disrupted sleep (too little or too much)
- Loss of energy or general body weakness
- Loss of appetite and/or reluctance to eat local foods
- Euphoria and happiness in the presence of generally unpleasant situations

Action for Mild Distress:

- Consult with program leader and/or call the 24/7 International Assistance Line
- Convey warmth and respect, and express empathy and support
- Ask open ended questions and listen to the story
- Help identify possible solutions

### MODERATE DISTRESS

When a student demonstrates behaviors that indicate **significant emotional distress** and may be reluctant or unable to acknowledge a need for help.

Examples of Moderate Distress include:

- Intense difficulties in concentration and motivation that affect participation
- Disrupted sleep (too little or too much) that affects ability to stay awake during activities or class
- Excessive loss of energy or general body weakness that keeps you out of activities or class
- Severe loss of appetite where you are hungry and weak all of the time
- Excessive euphoria, manic behavior, giddiness, laughter and feelings of grandeur completely out of context with the current situation
- Withdrawal from activities or class, refusing to leave your room
- Episodes of crying which are generally spontaneous and may not be controllable
- Persistent loneliness and sadness that affects ability to participate in activities or class
- Disabling anxiety or exaggerated fears that keep you from participating in activities or class

Action for Moderate Distress:

- Explain reasons for concern in concrete and specific language
- Avoid labeling behaviors
- Consult with program leader and/or call the 24/7 International Assistance Line

## SEVERE DISTRESS

When a student demonstrates behaviors that signify an **obvious** crisis that necessitates emergency care.

Examples of Severe Distress include:

- Acting or verbalizing a desire to hurt oneself or others
- Inability to get out of bed, with a persistent claim of pain or loss of all energy
- Manic and uncontrolled euphoria placing you in danger
- Inability to stop crying, often coupled with debilitating thoughts of sadness and hopelessness
- Hallucinations and belief in seeing spirits or beings that may be threatening or speaking to you

Action for Severe Distress include:

- **This is an emergency! Contact program leader, someone in authority or call 24/7 International Assistance Line immediately!**
- Consider impact on other participants and hosts
- Debrief with the program leader or someone in authority during and after incident and upon re-entry

*If you notice distress in yourself or someone else, consult with someone right away... or call the USF 24/7 International Emergency Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815.*

## INTERNATIONAL HEALTH AND EVACUATION COVERAGE

All participants in an international experience with students must be insured with our student traveler insurance from United HealthCare Global. It is comprehensive, accepted around the world, and has been integrated into our health and safety protocols. It is a great value, and you will likely soon see it pay for itself after you eat that street food we warned you about earlier. It is not “travel insurance” so it is important to learn the difference and learn how to get the most out of it!

**If you need a confirmation letter from UHCG for your visa application, contact the International Risk and Security Office at [GlobalTravel@usf.edu](mailto:GlobalTravel@usf.edu).**

Coverage is mandatory for all USF international student related travelers and is paid for by USF for all international travelers. United HealthCare Global (UHCG) is our provider of this comprehensive insurance policy. Once your international student related travel application is accepted by USF World International Risk and Security or the Education Abroad Office, you will be enrolled automatically into the policy. You will receive proof of UHCG insurance coverage via your USF email address approximately 2 weeks before departure. If you have not received your coverage materials at least one week prior to your departure date, immediately contact the USF World.

UHCG coverage is only provided for the registered dates of travel. If you decide to travel before or after your USF international experience, you will need to obtain additional international health insurance. You can obtain additional coverage by calling the UHCG enrollment center at 1-800-732-5309. Please review the **FAQ** for details.

Some of the benefits included in the [UHCG Coverage Plan](#) are:

- Medical benefits which cover any bodily injuries sustained in a covered accident. This benefit will provide a maximum limit of \$250,000 and no deductible.
- The comprehensive Security Evacuation benefit can be used when a situation near your program location is deemed too dangerous. If an evacuation is necessary, the University will notify you via email or phone. If an USF program is evacuated, the evacuation is for all participants within the vicinity. Our office will work to secure some form of academic activity to retain credit, if possible.
- UHCG provides coverage for the treatment of a pre-existing condition. You should always familiarize yourself with the coverage of benefits prior to departure. It is also recommended to understand the host institution's support infrastructure on arrival. This will become very useful if you become ill or injured while abroad.

**In the event of an evacuation, student participants of a university sponsored program must evacuate. If they refuse, they must withdraw from the program and cut ties with the university. This includes withdrawal from the host school, host accommodations, internship, volunteer activities, and the semester in progress. Your UHCG insurance must also be withdrawn. This could have a serious impact on:**

- Student visa/status at USF or in-country
- Academic standing and/or Financial aid

## FILING A CLAIM

Your insurance benefits will activate if you become ill, injured or your program location is deemed unsafe. For example, if you become ill while abroad, you can either contact **UHCG: +1 (410) 453-6330** or the International Risk and Security Office **+1 (813) 317-5815**. If you contact UHCG directly, you will need to identify yourself and provide them with our **USF ID# 902591831**.

**In some countries, cash payments for services are required up front.** In this case, it is recommended to have some extra cash in case you may have to pay for medical services up front. Always keep your receipts for any routine medical care, prescriptions or other medical costs. You must have these in order to file a claim with UHCG when you return to the U.S. If you want a head start on the claim process, you may file your claim at any time via email. See the Claim Form and instructions.

It is strongly encouraged to always notify the 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815 prior to contacting UHCG. This phone is staffed 24 hours a day by designated person on duty. The International Risk and Security Office can open a case on your behalf.

If you decide to contact UHCG yourself while abroad, use +1 (410) 453-6330. You will need to provide UHCG with our USF ID# 902591831. If you are unable to call, have someone call on your behalf. They will give you referrals to English-speaking physicians, emergency rooms, hospitals or other health care facilities that they are familiar with. UHCG will make sure to call you back regularly to conduct a follow-up. They may ask to call your physician to check on appropriate treatment. USF will be notified of your situation. Your emergency contact will only be notified at your request.

## PERSONAL TRAVEL BENEFIT

### LEISURE TRAVEL COVERAGE

USF does not insure you for vacation or leisure travel abroad when it is outside of your registered travel dates. USF strongly recommends that you purchase a personal policy to cover that time period. It is very affordable and well worth it. Please follow the Personal Travel Benefit enrollment instructions [here](#).

### INSURANCE COVERAGE BEFORE OR AFTER YOUR PROGRAM

If you plan to travel before or after your study abroad program, it is very important to obtain additional medical insurance coverage as the medical insurance provided by UHCG only provides coverage during the dates of the study abroad program. While you may believe your domestic health insurance policy will cover the costs for any medical care needed abroad, it is likely you will be required to pay upfront and later seek reimbursement. Keep in mind that hospitalization or evacuation abroad can cost as much as \$40,000. Do you have immediate access to that much money on a moment's notice?

If you would like to extend your insurance coverage beyond your program date, contact the UHCG enrollment center at +1-800-732-5309. Feel free to view the FAQ page for additional information.

Remember, you will need to independently purchase this *separate insurance coverage*. USF World Education Abroad Office cannot do this for you.

### TRAVEL AND TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE

The UHCG Insurance is not Travel and Trip Cancellation Insurance. Students are strongly encouraged to individually purchase travel and trip cancellation insurance which covers you for any problems/costs associated with your travel – stolen luggage, delayed /cancelled flights, etc. You can normally find this insurance by asking the airline.

## TITLE IX, VAWA, THE CLERY ACT AND YOUR RIGHTS ABROAD

When you are traveling abroad, where you live and where you take classes are considered extensions of USF. Therefore, you are not only expected to comply with all USF policies such as the [USF Student Code of Conduct](#), but you are also protected and under the auspices of certain regulations and policies meant to help you. Three significant federal regulations that are there to serve you are Title IX, VAWA and The Clery Act. These regulations are reflected in USF's [Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment \(Including Battery\) Policy Number 0-004 \(Policy 0-004\)](#) (Links to External Site).

Policy 0-004 states that "the University of South Florida (USF community is most successful when it is based on respect and fair treatment of all people. USF strives to provide a work and study environment for faculty, staff and students that is free of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual violence. As part of the effort to maintain an environment that is comfortable for all people, USF establishes this Policy."

Throughout this discussion the term "sexual harassment" is used as an umbrella term that includes all forms of sexual misconduct from the most extreme to the more innocuous. From Rape (sexual battery is the legal term for rape in Florida) to inappropriate gestures. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking. The

person or persons committing the offense can be a student, an unknown individual, a faculty leader or even a host resident director. [Policy Number 0-004 \(Policy 0-004\)](#) (Links to External Site) includes a complete definition with links to other resources.

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.**, (Title IX), [34 CFR Part 106](#) is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. While sex discrimination was identified for the failure to provide equal opportunity in athletics, sexual harassment was also identified as another source of discrimination that was covered under Title IX. This law is enforced by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) who can assess fines and other penalties.

In 1994 congress passed the **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)**. This act is in recognition of the severity of the crimes associated with **domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking**. The protections and provisions afforded victims of such crimes were expanded and designed to improve criminal justice responses to domestic violence and increase the availability of services to those victims. Among other things, victims are now also afforded the right to sue the offender as well as the university if Title IX or VAWA is not followed. You can read more about the History of VAWA by [following this link](#) (Links to External Site).

Some specific provisions in VAWA include:

- Holding rapists accountable for their crimes by strengthening federal penalties for repeat sex offenders and creating a federal “rape shield law,” which is intended to prevent offenders from using victims’ past sexual conduct against them during rape trial.
- Mandating that victims, no matter their income levels, are not forced to bear the expense of their own rape exams or for service of a protection order;
- Keeping victims safe by requiring that a victim’s protection order will be recognized and enforced in all state, tribal, and territorial jurisdiction within the United States;
- Increasing rates of prosecution, conviction, and sentencing of offenders by helping communities develop dedicated law enforcement and prosecution units and domestic violence dockets;
- Ensuring that police respond to crisis calls and judges understand the realities of domestic and sexual violence training law enforcement officers, prosecutors, victim advocates and judges; VAWA funds train over 500,000 law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judges, and other personnel every year;
- Providing additional tools for protecting women in Indian country by creating a new federal habitual offender crime and authorizing warrantless arrest authority for federal law enforcement officers who determining there is probable cause when responding to domestic violence cases.

**The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (The Clery Act)** is a federal law that requires all colleges and universities that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and disclose information about crime on and near their respective campuses. The crimes that must be reported include those crimes identified by Title IX involving sexual harassment. As a traveler under the auspices of USF, we ask that you also report any crimes you are aware of by calling the USF 24/7 International Assistance Line at +1-813-317-5815.

Some of the other mandates of The Clery Act (Links to External Site) include:

- Provide timely warnings to the campus community about crimes that pose an ongoing threat to students and employees;
- Maintain and make available a public crime log in their police or security department (if one exists)
- Maintain a daily residence hall fire log and report and publish an annual fire safety report alone or along with the annual crime statistics
- Provide certain rights to sexual assault victims and make specific statements about sex offenders
- Take action within 24 hours when students in residence halls are reported missing

## DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT IN ANOTHER CULTURE

Discrimination, harassment and retaliation are prohibited within the USF as described in Policy 0-004. (Links to External Site). USF is committed to an environment free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, marital status, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, or genetic information, sexual orientation, as well as gender identity and expression.

There are some locations, where because of our race or ethnicity, gender identity, disability, and/or outward show of religious practices, you or the students may feel particularly targeted. For example, there have been recent crimes against Africans in Moscow; Caucasian students have been asked to leave certain locations in Asia; Students have been fed food against their stated religious beliefs in South America; Many countries have accessibility standards that are either non-existent or far less supportive than the United States.

All instances of perceived discrimination and harassment should be addressed and reported to the program leader and/or the International Risk and Security Office.

## LGBTQIA+ ISSUES ABROAD

LGBTQIA+ issues abroad can be quite complex. There may be LGBTQIA+ laws and cultural norms that are even in stark conflict with each other. LGBTQIA+ considerations when studying abroad may include how some countries support openness and acceptance with regard to sexual orientation while others do not. LGBTQIA+ students are encouraged to use the support of fellow USF students and faculty to help them if they ever feel out of place. It can be very helpful to be aware of how your destination country views the LGBTQIA+ community. Your selected destination may discriminate, persecute and criminalize same sex acts or even displaying support for same sex couples, and may carry severe legal consequences up to and including death.

For your particular destination, explore legal and social attitudes toward the local LGBTQIA+ community. Investigate cultural and local attitudes towards homosexuality. Nearly every Country Information Sheet published by the U.S. Department of State has information about local attitudes and laws towards the LGBTQIA+ community. The U.S. Department of State also has a team dedicated to your LGBTQIA+ concerns and questions. Contact USF's International Risk and Security Office if you have particular questions you would like us to pose to the U.S. Department of State by emailing at [GlobalTravel@usf.edu](mailto:GlobalTravel@usf.edu).

Other resources on this topic include (Links to External Sites):

- The [U.S. Department of State Students Abroad website](#) that was created by and made for students traveling abroad.
- [NAFSA: Rainbow SIG](#) [www.nafsa.org](http://www.nafsa.org)
- [International Lesbian and Gay Association](#) is an international lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex association. It is a worldwide federation of 1100 member organizations from 110 countries campaigning for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex rights. Since 1978.

## REPORTING DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION ABROAD

1. Non-confidential / Responsible Employee Resources
2. Confidential Resources for Assistance
3. The Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention
4. When Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Happens
5. When Sexual Assault Happens

## NON-CONFIDENTIAL / RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

Faculty, staff, program leader, assistant leader and anyone else traveling with students are considered a Responsible Employee under Title IX. Responsible Employees are considered non-confidential resources. They cannot confidentially assist students due to State reporting requirements, but they can certainly assist students with discretion during such a situation. Non-confidential resources do not widely disseminate reports under Title IX. In fact, they must handle all reports very discretely and are only authorized to report to Title IX Coordinators and Investigators. You can report Title IX issues by calling USF's 24/7 International Assistance Line is [+1-813-317-5815](tel:+18133175815)

## CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES FOR ASSISTANCE

Confidential resources offer confidential advocacy services with the crime or incident being reported anonymously per the Clery Act. Review this File for more information. They will not report student information outside of their unit. If a student wishes to first consult with a confidential resource, they may contact the USF Center for Victim Advocacy any time day or night: [+1-813-974-5757](tel:+18139745757).

**The Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention:** You can contact USF Center for Victim Advocacy any time day or night: [+1-813-974-5757](tel:+18139745757).

## CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT FROM THE CENTER FOR VICTIM ADVOCACY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The USF Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention assures confidentiality to all who utilize the program's services. Client names, identifying information and any disclosures will be kept confidential unless an advocate receives permission from the client to release the information to a specific third party.

The following situations are exceptions to this policy:

- An advocate has knowledge of a client's suicidal or homicidal potential;
- An advocate suspects that child or elder abuse has occurred;
- A judge orders the program to release information to the court.

## WHEN DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION HAPPENS

Discrimination, harassment and retaliation is a real safety concern when traveling abroad. Discrimination, harassment and retaliation can come from a variety of different sources, such as students from other Universities, host families, co-workers at an internship, an employee at the host institution or even other USF students or employees in your program.

Even though we may have little influence with another country's laws and customs, we can intervene to offer our support and resources to assist students with an unfriendly or even dangerous situation. You or the students may experience verbal or non-verbal conduct or behavior that is threatening, harassing, intimidating, discriminatory, or hostile and is based on one of USF's protected categories. When it happens, do not try and tolerate it. Encourage discussion and report it.

Remember, you and the students have rights! A victim/survivor chooses how to proceed; chooses if they wish to file charges with the police or not; chooses if they wish to seek medical attention, though USF will always encourage medical care if sick or injured.

## WHEN SEXUAL ASSAULT HAPPENS

- Students can take emergency contraception (EC) or Plan B to prevent pregnancy and get medicine right away to treat STD exposure. Depending on your location, contact the local health care provider, student center or call our insurance provider to direct you to the nearest location: [UHCG +1-410-453-6330 Policy # 902591831](#)
- Often it is helpful to talk to a sexual assault advocate, trusted adult or friend. To speak with a confidential victim's advocate a student can call USF Center for Victim Advocacy any time day or night: [+1-813-974-5757](#)
- Sexual assault advocates will help the caller determine if they want to pursue legal action or not. It is your choice!

Visit the USF Title IX Webpage for additional Information. <http://www.usf.edu/diversity/title-ix/index.aspx> (Links to External Site).



## SECURITY MATTERS

The best way to enhance our personal safety is through prevention. We ask students to try and dress to blend in, not stand out. Do not bring fancy watches or wear expensive jewelry. Avoid packing any shirts that can be construed as inflammatory or brazen. Avoid clothing that may be seen as overly patriotic as it may come across as putting down the local culture.

As much as we often want to compare the homicide rates abroad with Chicago or downtown Tampa, it is a misleading exercise for our students. Many times, it is their first time at that location and therefore, try as they might, they will still stand out. They may not be as vigilant as well. Generally, it comes as second nature to us here in Florida or locations we often travel to abroad, to be vigilant, avoid dangerous neighborhoods or keep an eye open for individuals whose motives are questionable. But this is likely not going to be true for many of your students.



The following risk mitigating strategies for travel anywhere in the world are promoted by the US Department of State for just about everywhere in the world.

1. Exercise vigilance, especially when in public places or using mass transportation.
2. Take appropriate steps to increase your security awareness
3. Be aware of immediate surroundings and avoid crowded places.
4. Exercise particular caution during religious holidays and at large festivals or events.

Spring Break in Prague. 2010. JPEG

If something were to happen:

1. Follow the instructions of local authorities, especially in an emergency.
2. Monitor media and local information sources and factor updated information into travel plans and activities.
3. Be prepared for additional security screening and unexpected disruptions.
4. Stay in touch with your family members and ensure they know how to reach you in the event of an emergency.
5. Monitor your USF email for alerts from the U.S. Department of State.
6. Call/text to report your status to [24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815](tel:+18133175815).

## FEDERAL LAW ABROAD & EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

When you travel abroad as a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident, you may still be held responsible by federal law. This is known as extraterritorial jurisdiction. Extraterritorial jurisdiction is the legal authority of the United States to prosecute criminal conduct that took place outside its borders.

Violating a federal law with extraterritorial jurisdiction may lead to criminal prosecution back in the United States. It may also be used to file a complaint with the USF Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

Please visit the Student Conduct and Ethical Development website for information: <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct-ethical-development/> (Links to External Site).

## ENGAGING IN ILLICIT SEXUAL CONDUCT IN FOREIGN PLACES (SEX WITH MINORS ABROAD IS NOT LEGAL)

Certain sex offenses are covered by extraterritorial jurisdiction in federal law. One important such law is Title 18 Part 1 Chapter 117 U.S. Code § 2423(c). Engaging in Illicit Sexual Conduct in Foreign Places.

18 U.S. Code § 2423 (c) says that any United States citizen or alien admitted for permanent residence who travels in foreign commerce or resides, either temporarily or permanently, in a foreign country, and engages in any illicit sexual conduct with another person shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 30 years, or both.

As used in this section, the term “illicit sexual conduct” means—

1. a sexual act (as defined in section 2246) with a person under 18 years of age that would be in violation of chapter 109A if the sexual act occurred in the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States;
2. any commercial sex act (as defined in section 1591) with a person under 18 years of age; or
3. production of child pornography (as defined in section 2256(8))

What this means is that if you engage in sex with anyone under the age of 18 years while on a USF international activity, you could be in violation of 18 U.S. Code § 2423 (c) and could be prosecuted in federal court as well as have a complaint filed with OSRR. This is regardless of the age of consent abroad.

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You can learn more here (Links to External Sites):

<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/18/2423>

<https://www.justice.gov/criminal-ceos/citizens-guide-us-federal-law-extraterritorial-sexual-exploitation-children>

## TAKING PICTURES ABROAD

**Students are instructed that taking pictures when being instructed not to by either local authority or USF authority can be viewed as a violation of USF World international travel policy.** Foreign laws and customs governing what is permissible to photograph can vary vastly from U.S. norms.

Please help your students understand the local do's and don'ts of photography for the destination you are traveling to. The people they photograph may have strong religious or animist/indigenous beliefs that prohibit photographs of children or temples; women may not be allowed to be photographed; the military and police and their buildings are almost always off limits to photography; and some people simply do not want to be photographed.

"Selfies" have become a favorite style of photo, but also been responsible for some serious mishaps. Pictures that include the following can get our students in serious trouble: immodest skin exposure, lewd or lascivious acts, kissing, and drinking alcohol. In some countries, students may need to avoid pictures of airplanes, trains or any buildings related to aviation, transportation, police or the military. Even pictures of places such as war zones, sacred grounds, archaeological sites, and tribal grounds or artifacts could be off limits.

Depending on what country is involved, visitors who violate local law or custom can be detained for lengthy periods, charged stiff fines, and/ or be declared persona non grata. Not knowing local laws and customs is not excusable in the eyes of the court or police.

In summary:

### Do

- Do ask before taking pictures of locals, children, or anyone, and respect their decisions
- Do remember that you are representing your university, your family, and yourself
- Do be aware that selfie sticks are banned in many locations, especially museums and art galleries. Adhere to signage regarding photography rules.
- Do avoid taking pictures with too much skin, at government buildings, religious structures, sacred grounds, and military areas.

### Don't

- Don't post pictures of inappropriate behavior or indecency on social media
- Don't ignore signs; they are there for your safety and consideration. A picture is not worth your life

This article has some good advice. "[Students Abroad: First, Do No Harm with Your Camera](#)," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 6, 2015. This article suggests that narrative strategies can be useful in prompting students to reflect on ethical and professional questions. Rather than discouraging students from bringing their cameras abroad, incorporate student picture-taking into your pre-departure discussions.

## PICK POCKETING, ROBBERY & PETTY CRIME

Every year, USF student travelers have had their cell phones, passports, wallets, purses and jewelry stolen. USF is not responsible for replacing anything that is lost or stolen. USF strongly recommends that students investigate theft insurance to see if it can cover personal belongings abroad.

When it comes to petty crime, USF wants all travelers to be aware of these crimes, how they are executed, and how being aware of your surroundings can minimize the chance of becoming a victim. Please review the following 5W's = Who, What, Where, When and Why with your student travelers:

- **Who:** These are criminals operating primarily in groups but sometimes alone, who target travelers and tourists. Pickpockets and others involved in street crime often work together and are likely close friends and even family. In fact, they are usually well known to the locals on the street who will take measures to protect them.
- **What:** These criminals will look for what's easy, obvious and convenient – is your purse hanging loosely from your body, with a strap that is exposed enough to quickly cut, snatch, and get away? Are you about to board a subway, so picking your pocket just before you board will ensure an easy escape route? Are you a confused and vulnerable tourist that's easy to manipulate? Petty crime thieves look for situations like this to minimize confrontation and maximize profit.
- **Where:** Crime can happen anywhere, however high-risk areas include airports, train stations, subways, & hotels. These areas have a high frequency of vulnerable tourists and are so busy that crime can go unnoticed.

- **When:** Normally these types of crimes will happen in an environment with lots of stimuli – noise and distractions, which decreases your awareness of the situation around you. Think about it; if you are seeing the Great Wall of China for the first time and are preoccupied with the experience, you are too busy taking pictures to notice that your wallet has been slipped out of your pocket.
- **Why:** Unfortunately, these criminals are taking advantage of an opportunity (travelers in new situations). The best way to prevent petty crimes from happening to you is to never travel alone, to travel light, to lower your profile, and to be aware of your surroundings.

Everyone should make sure that travel documents, credit cards and valuables are safe. As a program leader, try to keep that responsibility in the hands of each student traveler. Try to encourage that passport, credit card and/or debit card, and money should be worn in a pouch or a money belt as close to your body as possible when traveling abroad.

If your destination does not require you to carry your passport with you, encourage all travelers to leave their original passport in a locked safe at your accommodation. Instead, always carry a copy of your passport with you. Actually, in some countries the hotel will require you to give it to them for security. Only in rare circumstances do you need to carry it with you daily.

## SCAMS

If you are familiar with local scams, include that information into your pre-departure orientation. The U.S. Department of State describes scams common to a specific country in their Country Information Sheet under Safety and Security. An internet search may also prove useful in researching common scams in your destination country.

**Here are some common scams we have had experience with:**

- **The Helpful Local:** These are thieves posing as concerned citizens that warn you to store your wallet or valuable in a safe place, then steals it once they know the location of your wallet or valuable. You may also find these individuals at public transportation locations asking to help you with purchasing tickets or changing money. Always ask for help from an employee of the location.
- **The Pick:** This is a maneuver used to separate you from your belongings. Generally, one individual will block you from sitting down, entering a subway train or at a choke point (such as a subway door etc.) That person may try to distract you with a question while the second individual snatches a wallet, purse, or some other valuable in your possession. You will be blocked from recovering your property due to the doors closing or some other obstruction.
- **Other distractions:** A woman with a crying baby asking for money for milk; a man asking you to sign a petition; a random person on the street squirts mustard on your jacket; a stranger recommends a great place to eat; or a young child asking YOU for directions. Their ulterior motives are not always nefarious, but it is wise to be extra cautious. Be polite, say you are in a hurry, and move on.
- **Read about scams** from around the world in this article by USA Today and share it with your students. They mention quite a few country specific scams. Are they talking about your destination? <http://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/destinations/2014/05/04/criminals-target-travelers-abroad-with-scams-and-schemes/8060061/>

## MUGGINGS AND ROBBERY

Though rare, muggings and robbery are a real threat abroad. Students are told to always carry the least number of valuables with them at any given time. Then, if such a situation were to arise they are not to resist. If they have done their homework and prepared well, they will not be carrying anything of value.

A travel blogger shared her hard lessons when it comes to international travel and being a victim of robbery: <http://theplanetd.com/lessons-learned-from-being-mugged-abroad/>. This is shared with our students. She recounts the story of a woman who fought back to keep her purse from a robber with a knife. He stabbed her and she spent the next three weeks in the hospital. The camera in her bag was not worth it.

## BANKING AND ATM SAFETY

Banks abroad do not necessarily operate in the same manner as banks in the U.S. It is important to remind students to organize their finances before departure.

The U.S. Department of State wrote this about safe banking tips. <https://www.usbank.com/student-banking/money-tips-for-students/studying-and-spending-abroad-what-to-know-before-you-go.html>

Students are responsible for notifying their bank for departure. If they get their account frozen, certainly we need to help them communicate with the bank and their family to get their card unfrozen or to have funds wired. Do not loan money to a student if you can avoid it. If you do, please make sure to notify the Education Abroad Office.

We recommend that only ATMs used inside banks should be used. When students attempt to access cash, they can inadvertently draw attention to themselves and possibly to the whole group.

**ATM scams continue to plague tourists. To stay safe and keep your money safe, follow these tips.**

- Only use ATM's located in a bank – not on the street
- Only use ATMs referred by a trusted local or one that you are familiar with
- Check for a thin plastic insert or sticky substances that may be used to trap your card
- Also check for an added card reader, used to scan and store your card information and PIN
- Never use an ATM if the card scanner is loose or appears to be a “add-on” device
- If the ATM eats your card, notify the bank immediately



Alonzo, David. USF in Russia. 2009. JPEG

To read more about ATM scams, review this article. <http://www.scambusters.org/atmtheft.html>

## CYBER CRIME AND IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft and cyber-crime is a growing problem around the world. While traveling abroad it is extremely important to protect your personally identifiable information or PII. PII can be used to distinguish or trace your identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual. Read more about it here: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104256> (Links to External Site).

We recommend to everyone to be very careful of connecting to a strange Wi-Fi hotspot in an airport terminal or a café. It can actually be set up by a criminal working from the laptop computer sitting near you. In addition to cyber security, do not carry your social security number with you, at all. Since you are not driving, do not bring your driver's license. Keep your credit cards stored separately from your passport or your passport copy. It does not take much for a thief to steal your identity.

Some of the more prevalent schemes criminals are using these days to steal identities include suspicious e-mail and/or phishing attempts to trick victims into revealing personally identifiable information, “smash and grab” burglaries involving the theft of hard copy driver's licenses, credit cards, check books, etc., and actual computer and network intrusions that result in the loss of personally identifiable information. To learn more about identity theft, check out this article <https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/cyber/identity-theft> (Links to External Site).

## TERRORISM AND POLITICAL UNREST

### KNOW THE THREAT AT YOUR DESTINATION!

**Rule #1: There is no such thing as a “safe” destination.**

There was a time when many international travelers felt completely safe going to France or Denmark. Those days are long gone. Even though the likelihood of being a victim of a terrorist event is quite small, the chance that an event can disrupt your travel is very high. Communication and transportation can often grind to a halt during such an event.

This does not mean we should not travel abroad. What it means is that we need to heighten our sense of awareness – become more vigilant. To be vigilant simply means to be alert and watchful, especially to avoid danger.

Being frozen by panic, anxiety and fear will only serve to spoil a wonderful experience abroad. However, channeling anxiety into awareness and vigilance can help save one from becoming a victim.

We remind students to be prepared by knowing the tactics used by terrorist groups and criminals at your international activity location. Going to the U.S. Department of State Country Information Sheets here <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html> (Links to External Site) and identifying the risk and the suggested strategies recommended to minimize the risk for each of the following categories is a good place to start:

- Terrorism
- Crime
- Health
- Transportation

## WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A TERRORIST INCIDENT?

A terrorist event can happen in the United States or it could happen while you travel abroad with students. Being prepared and knowing what to do if such an event strikes can mean the difference between successfully negotiating the experience with minimal stress from putting you or your group in harm's way.

The American Red Cross, an organization that we all trust, has put together excellent information regarding "Terrorism Preparedness." Read about how to "Prepare; Respond and Recover" here: <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/terrorism> (Links to External Site). Even though it is written based upon a possible terrorist event in the United States, the same rules, recommendations and advice still apply abroad.

The U.S. Department of State encourages these risk mitigating strategies for travel anywhere in the world.

1. Exercise vigilance, especially when in public places or using mass transportation.
2. Take appropriate steps to increase your security awareness
3. Be aware of immediate surroundings and avoid crowded places.
4. Exercise particular caution during religious holidays and at large festivals or events.

If something were to happen:

1. Follow the instructions of local authorities, especially in an emergency.
2. Monitor media and local information sources and factor updated information into travel plans and activities.
3. Be prepared for additional security screening and unexpected disruptions.
4. Stay in touch with your family members and ensure they know how to reach you in the event of an emergency.
5. Monitor your USF email for alerts from the U.S. Department of State
6. Call/text to report your status **24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815**

### Some other tips shared with students include:

- Remain calm and be patient.
- Do not head towards an incident. Follow the instructions of the security/emergency services and find a place of safety that offers cover from further explosions, shrapnel or gunfire.
- Make an immediate and sustained effort to communicate out; mobile communication networks may be disrupted in the immediate aftermath, so SMS texts and landlines should be considered as alternates.
- Listen to your radio or television for news and instructions.
- Do not leave a place of safety without notifying someone of your plans.
- If it is absolutely necessary to relocate then only do so after ensuring the route is clear and that you have notified someone of your plans.
- Maintain communications throughout; even when telephone lines are down, email and broadband links can stay in operation. Consider "Dead Letter" drops.
- When safe, return to a pre-determined assembly area. (Hotel, school, etc.)
- Avoid likely targets, US facilities, local military or police HQ, etc.

## ENCOUNTERING A DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrations may be planned or spontaneous. They may only involve a few dozen demonstrators or thousands.

- Stay updated using multiple sources, not only news media but also local contacts, and police and government warnings. Real-time, local knowledge allows you to minimize movement during high-risk periods and reduce exposure.
- The U.S. Embassy will send out emails to all those that are registered on the **STEP program** in advance of a planned demonstration and provide some risk-mitigating strategies.
- Monitor your USF Email Address for all notifications of events occurring near your travel location(s).

Certainly, if you know in advance about a demonstration, you can avoid it. But, what to do if one happens without warning, right where you are planning to travel?

- Avoid locations known to attract protests, (government offices, US embassy, military facilities)
- **Do not** participate or loiter in the vicinity of demonstrations or protests.
- **Do not** take pictures. Participants may be afraid that their photograph may be seen by government officials so they may try **all means** to prevent you from keeping a picture of them. Students' have been harmed and even lost their life taking pictures at a demonstration.
- **Follow the directions of law enforcement agencies.** You should also expect, but not be unduly alarmed by, a noticeable increased security presence in major cities. Always comply with instructions issued by security and law-enforcement agencies.

## TRANSPORTATION SECURITY

### BUS HIJACKING AND ROADBLOCKS

Though relatively rare, a bus hijacking can be a harrowing experience. Increasingly more common are roadblocks where authorities stop traffic looking for a thief or terrorist. Often times you may not realize that it is a roadblock and panic. In either event if this happens to you it is extremely important to keep your students calm.

Hijackings of buses by armed criminals are generally limited to countries with weak infrastructures and a weak police presence; however, they can happen in any country. Reported bus hijackings have been noted in parts of Central and South America as well as on the African continent or Eastern Europe. Often times they occur at night and along rural bus routes between major city centers.

A number of travelers have experienced hijackings and armed robberies after just having arrived on international flights, most frequently in the evening, and shortly after the shuttle leaves the airport grounds. In the most common scenario, tourists or business travelers who land at the airport after dark are held up by armed men as their vehicle departs the airport.

Note that it is not just about large buses. Private vehicles, taxis and small shuttle buses have all been targeted by criminals. Typically, the assailants steal money, passports, and luggage, and in some but not all cases, the assailants steal the vehicle as well. In some cases, assailants have been wearing full or partial police uniforms and have used vehicles that resemble police vehicles, indicating that some elements of the police might be involved. Surprisingly, some armed robberies have occurred within minutes of a tourist's vehicle having been stopped by the police.

So, what can you promote to reduce the chance of this happening to your travelers? Here are some tips.

#### Be prepared:

- Know the local threat
- Only carry what you really need
- Separate cash & valuables – keep in multiple places
- Have your passport hidden in a safe place
- Pack away documents and valuables
- Never plan to travel at night. Make sure your flights arrive during daylight hours and leave you plenty of time to reach your hotel during daylight hours.
- While riding cross country or even in the city, always lock your doors and roll up your windows.

#### If this happens to you:

- Stay Calm
- Do not get out of your seat
- Make sure that your doors are locked, and windows rolled up
- Follow instructions from Bus Driver/Faculty Leader
- Avoid eye-contact with anyone entering the bus
- Gently wake up people next to you
- *Do not take pictures*
- Threat or use of violence is likely if guns are drawn – Do not Resist
- Follow the robber's instructions. Do not hesitate to give them any property they ask for.

## TAXIS

Taxis in foreign countries are for the most part safe, but bad things can happen. Some illegitimate taxi drivers are criminals in search of victims. Passengers of unlicensed taxis have been robbed, kidnapped, and/or raped. It is important to know that the taxi you are about to use is a legal and licensed taxi and that the vehicle has been maintained to the local countries specifications.

#### Promote the following tips:

- Only use licensed and regulated taxis. You can find these at the taxi stand or by calling their phone number to request a taxi.
- Don't let taxi drivers pick you – you should pick out the taxi driver.
- When in line at a taxi stand, never accept an unsolicited offer by someone who approaches you and recommends you skip the line and travel with them. Never.
- Don't share taxis with strangers. If someone else is in the taxi besides the driver, do not get in.
- When in doubt, ask the hotel, club or restaurant staff to summon a reputable taxi for you. Do not hail a taxi on your own after dark.

- The U.S. Department of State offers this advice about taxis and public transportation for students here: [http://studenttravel.about.com/od/foreigntaxi/tp/taxi\\_safe.htm](http://studenttravel.about.com/od/foreigntaxi/tp/taxi_safe.htm) (Links to External Site).

**A special note about Uber.** This ride sharing service is very popular around the world. Passengers can summon an Uber vehicle using a downloadable app. However, it is very new and Uber's ability to adequately screen their drivers is in question. There have been many reports worldwide of Uber drivers assaulting their passengers. Therefore, at this time USF does not recommend using Uber for student travel abroad.



Walsh, Ryan. Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link. China.

# INCIDENT RESPONSE

## USF 24/7 INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

USF 24/7 International Assistance is not just for emergencies. You can contact USF 24/7 International Assistance any time you have a question or concern. You can even contact us if you have something positive to share with the USF community. Finally, USF will want you to use USF 24/7 International Assistance to report certain incidents abroad.

A dedicated phone number that can be called direct or collect from anywhere in the world, **+1-813-317-5815**, is monitored every day, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year to support all members of the USF community who are traveling abroad on university business or education abroad. These individuals may be faculty, staff, students, volunteers, alumni, donors, contractors, colleagues from other institutions, government officials and anyone else participating on USF sanctioned international travel.

USF 24/7 International Assistance is also there to support USF international travelers' concerned family, friends and colleagues. For education abroad travelers, your emergency contacts will receive information on using this assistance line before you depart. Feel free to share this phone number with anyone who may be monitoring your travel.

A dedicated email address, [EAassist@usf.edu](mailto:EAassist@usf.edu), is also monitored on the same cell phone that supports the 24/7 phone number. You may also text the cell phone number. Because email and text messages may not be readily noticed, if you want an immediate response always call the phone number: **+1-813-317-5815**

### FREQUENT USES OF USF 24/7 INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE LINE

Your health and safety are of paramount importance to USF, as well as your family and friends while you travel internationally. Remember that your emergency contacts will have access to the 24/7 International Assistance Line, so if there is an event that could be perceived as putting you at risk, we strongly encourage you to call it in and report it to us. It will allow us to quickly put other callers at ease.

The following broad categories are events that we would ask that you minimally make a report using the USF 24/7 International Assistance phone line or [EAassist@usf.edu](mailto:EAassist@usf.edu) as appropriate.

- Any crime of any kind that may impact you directly or indirectly
- Interaction with Law Enforcement or Military such as being arrested or detained
- Health issues needing professional care (We can help with activating insurance)
- Mental Health issues or concerns
- Discipline problems that are affecting you
- Discrimination, Harassment or Retaliation
- Alcohol related Issues that are affecting you
- Missing student
- Natural Disaster – Floods, earthquakes, typhoons, volcanoes, etc.
- Civil Unrest – demonstrations, riots or acts of war

### SEEKING HELP AND ASSISTANCE IN AN EMERGENCY

Always know what the local emergency numbers are for the country you are in. If you are in an emergency situation abroad, you will need to know how to contact the police, an ambulance, or even the fire department. Not every country uses “911” as its emergency contact number, as we do in the United States. You can look up the “911 equivalent” number (Links to External Site) for your destination here: [https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911\\_ABROAD.pdf](https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf) (Links to External Site).

Download this Emergency Contact Card Template. You can edit it to include important phone numbers and carry it with you at all times. If you are attending an Education Abroad Group program, your program leader will create this card for you and hand it out prior to your departure.

If you or a companion is experiencing a threat to life, limb or eye, call an ambulance immediately and get transport to the nearest hospital or clinic! You should always identify hospitals or clinics that will be convenient to you prior to departure. You can find out by contacting UHCG at [assistance@uhcglobal.com](mailto:assistance@uhcglobal.com). You can also submit a request to [EAassist@usf.edu](mailto:EAassist@usf.edu).

Another important number to identify is the closest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. They can help with identifying medical facilities or helping you navigate the legal system. You can determine that number by visiting the U.S. Department of State Country Information Sheet here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html> (Links to External Site).



When seeking health care, you should open a case with UHCG. You can contact the USF 24/7 International Assistance Line and request that or you can do it yourself. If you want to do it yourself, you can call UHCG at +1-410-453-6330. **You will need to provide UHCG with your policy number: 902591831.**

## HOW TO CALL ABROAD

USF strongly recommends that you always travel with a cell phone that can make and receive international calls using a cell network, independently of WiFi. Yes, you will likely use WiFi for the majority of your data needs. There are many convenient apps out there to facilitate communication over WiFi without incurring expensive charges.

However, an emergency rarely waits until you have WiFi. The ability to make or receive a phone call outside of available WiFi can make a huge difference in your experience. Contact your U.S. based cellphone company and ask about ways you can either turn on global calling or unlock your phone to accept a foreign sim card. In an extreme case, consider purchasing a local disposable phone and add international minutes for use in an emergency.



Sanchez, Rene. Summer in Peru. 2008. JPEG

## HOW TO MAKE A LONG-DISTANCE INTERNATIONAL CALL

If you are using your U.S. based cell phone with the U.S. cell phone number, remember that when abroad, calling the U.S. is the same as a local call – except the charges will still be at international rates. It also means that calling an international number will be like calling from the U.S.

A good website to explain how to make an international call from anywhere in the world is <http://www.howtocallabroad.com/> (Links to External Site). Share this site with your family and friends.

Always test your phone immediately when in-country. Call someone in the U.S. and then have them call you back. It is always easier to identify a problem with your cell when there is no crisis. It is never helpful to learn there is a problem with your cell when you really have to use it!

Generally, when calling the United States from an international number, you need to dial the U.S. country code 00 followed by 1 for long distance then the area code and number. So, for calling the USF 24/7 International Assistance Line would be: **00-1-813-317-5815.**

## WHEN CAN USF TRY AND CALL YOU?

USF 24/7 International Assistance may choose to call you. We monitor world events and if it appears that a natural disaster, civil unrest or other activity may impact you or your program, we may try to reach out to you by email and/or phone. Always monitor your official USF email while abroad. This is our only official way to communicate with you. Always keep your cell phone charged and turned on to receive international calls.

USF 24/7 International Assistance may choose to contact your emergency contacts about a situation, in consultation with the program leaders or on-site representatives, without your permission. This is always done with discretion.

### Specific instances when this may occur include:

- You are unable to speak for yourself;
- You are not where you are supposed to be and considered missing (USF does not need to wait 24 hours);
- You are perceived to be a danger to yourself or others; or when
- There is a significant health, safety, or security incident affecting the entire program such as a natural disaster or civil unrest.

## RESPONDING TO CRIME

All associate travelers including faculty, program leaders, student leaders, accompanying staff and assistants are all considered Campus Security Authorities (CSA) under The Clery Act and Responsible Employees (RE) under Title IX. All CSAs and REs and must attend the University combined CSA-RE Training prior to departure.

All alleged crimes abroad must be reported to USF. Title IX incidents require a specialized response. All crimes must be reported to the 24/7 International Assistance Line at 813-317-5815. Do not attempt to investigate the crime beyond inquiry nor try to apprehend the alleged criminals.

## REPORTABLE CRIMES UNDER THE CLERY ACT AND UNDER TITLE IX/VAWA:

### The Clery Act

- Aggravated Assault, Arson, Burglary, Destruction or Damage or Vandalism of Property, Hate Crimes, Intimidation, Larceny-Theft, Motor Vehicle Theft, Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter, Negligent Manslaughter, Robbery, Simple Assault
- Clery Crime Definitions: <http://www.usf.edu/administrative-services/university-police/documents/clery-crime-definitions.pdf> (Links to External Site)

### Title IX/VAWA

- Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Hate Crimes, Sex Offense (Rape, Fondling, Statutory Rape), and Stalking. Sexual Harassment is also covered by Title IX even if it does not rise to the level of a crime.

**When looking into an alleged crime, it is often helpful to gather what information you can through a basic inquiry. But do not go out of your way to investigate.**

- Talk to the person reporting the crime (if not the victim themselves) and determine the identity and location of the victim.
- Ensure that the physical and emotional needs of the victim are being attended to. (Note: If the victim exhibits fear/fright or shock, activate protocol for mental health emergencies.)
- Determine if the authorities were contacted and, if so, what the result of this contact is. If this has not been done, ask if the victim wishes to do so.
- Talk to those associated with the crime. Identify as many of the key persons involved and determine the facts of the incident. If possible, determine identity and present location of the victim(s) and perpetrators(s).
- If necessary, contact the nearest doctor or hospital; assist with locating proper medical professionals and facilities.
- If necessary, notify the U.S. Embassy and Consulate.
- Always contact USF Education Abroad by calling the 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815. The designated person on duty will be able to assist you.
- Direct inquiries from family and other interest parties to USF World.
- Keep a written log of the situation.

## RESPONDING TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

**When responding to an alleged sexual assault, the following are general guidelines, but much will depend first upon the wishes of the victim and, second, upon the country in which the assault takes place.**

1. Contact the USF Education Abroad 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815. The designated person on duty will be able to assist you.
2. Explain that you are a Responsible Employee and what that means and what their rights are.
3. Ensure that the victim is safe. In cases where the perpetrator is known or part of the program, this may involve moving the victim to a safer location or having someone stay with them (faculty, friend of victim, etc.).
4. The VICTIM chooses how they wish to proceed, not the institution. Once the victim is in a safe place, they need to be told of both their confidential and non-confidential resources as identified in the Title IX/VAWA flyer. They also need to be apprised of on-campus and off-campus resources available to them.
5. You may want to call the U.S. Embassy to get advice on the resources available in country, to determine what are the laws regarding rape, if there is a medical facility that can conduct a rape exam, what is the success in prosecuting rapes, what are the requirements of the victim in prosecuting a rape, etc.
6. Inquire whether the student needs to or would like to go for a medical exam. (Note that a physical exam can be traumatizing to the victim. If possible, it is best to find a doctor or location where there is a nurse or physician who is experienced to conduct this type of examination.) Stress to the victim the need for medical care to ensure that he/she is physically okay. (Note that some countries do not have the morning after pill or other ways of preventing pregnancy. While gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis can be treated with antibiotics at any time, in order to prevent HIV, individuals should start treatment within 72 hours of exposure. <http://www.aids.org/topics/aids-treatment/treatment-hiv/>, Links to External Site)
7. Inform the student of the laws and procedures for dealing with sexual assault in the country, as these may vary from those in the United States. Clarify with the student the degree to which he/she wishes to involve local authorities.
8. Provide victim with number of hospital/clinics, psychologist/psychiatrist and any other rape crisis resources that may exist in country. USF's Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention will also talk to a student – they have a 24/7 emergency line (813) 974-5757.
9. **FOLLOW UP!**
10. Keep a written log of the situation.

The term "sexual harassment" is used as an umbrella term that includes all forms of sexual misconduct from the most extreme to the more innocuous. From Rape (sexual battery is the legal term for rape in Florida) to inappropriate gestures. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking. The person or persons

committing the offense can be a student, an unknown individual, a faculty leader or even a host resident director. [Policy Number 0-004](#) (Links to External Site) includes a complete definition with links to other resources. **The victim chooses how to proceed, NOT US. Seeking medical care or filing a police report is their choice.**

## DEFINITIONS

### *Non-Confidential*

- **USF 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815**
- Faculty Leader, Program Leader, Other Accompanying Staff and Assistants
- Local host resident director, teacher or staff member

### *Confidential*

- USF Center for Victim's Advocacy Line +1-813-974-5757
- Licensed Counselor or Therapist in that Country
- Clergy

## PRIVACY LAWS ABROAD - IMPORTANT REMINDER

The privacy laws of some countries might prevent local authorities or local individuals from notifying USF if one of our students has been the victim of a crime or a victim of sexual harassment. For example, if a student were mugged and spoke to the local host resident director in Italy who is not a USF employee, they may not be able to directly share that information with USF. Therefore, we ask that students contact our USF resources directly if they have been the victim of a crime, so that USF can begin the process to assist them.



Gattusa, Robin. British Schools Experience. Summer 2007. JPEG

## RETURN TO CAMPUS

You can always follow-up on your incident reports when you return to campus and seek out support as needed. Students also have a lot of support. The following resources are available for students.

- Center for Victim's Advocacy 813-974-5757 24/7 Help Line (Option 2),
- Victim Advocacy web address <http://www.sa.usf.edu/advocacy/page.asp?id=72> (Links to External Site)
- Counseling Center 813-974-2831,
- USF Office of Student Rights and Responsibility 813-974-9443,
- USF Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity Office (DIEO) 813-974-4373, and
- Crisis Center of Tampa Bay 813-234-1234

## RESPONDING TO MEDICAL INCIDENTS

All leaders and associate travelers are responsible to support a student with a medical issue or concern. If it is a threat to life, limb or eye, immediately arrange to have the student transported to the nearest hospital. This includes possible alcohol poisoning. If necessary, call the local equivalent to "911" to arrange transport or other pre-arranged ambulance provider.

In all situations where a student needs to seek a medically trained professional, a case must be opened with UHCG and the International Risk and Security Office must be notified. The International Risk and Security Office can open a case on your behalf if that is convenient for you. UHCG will then reach out to the student or student representative to coordinate care.

**Students in the hospital should always be supervised initially by a USF program leader or other official USF associate traveler.** You should not rely on other students to arrange this. Though once the situation has stabilized, other individuals may provide supervision.

Do not contact the emergency contact yourself. Determine whether or not the student would like their emergency contact informed of illness/ injury. Once stabilized, the student may want to telephone their emergency contact and/or family members. In extreme circumstances, the International Risk and Security Office may contact the emergency contacts without the student's permission. It is always best to ask before making contact.

To maintain coverage, UHCG will often dictate how a case will move forward. UHCG coordinates medical evacuations when necessary. No one but UHCG, in consult with USF Director of Student Health Services, can authorize a student's return to the United States when the student is ill or injured.

**\*\*Contact the 24/7 International Assistance Line to report this incident: +1-813-317-5815\*\***

*In Summary Incidents Related to Medical Incident:*

1. If the situation involves the risk of life, limb, or eye, contact the local “911” number for an ambulance, if one is available. Otherwise, go directly to step 2.
2. Transport the student to nearest hospital or clinic (try to find a Western/English speaking facility by contacting UHCG in advance of your travel). This information is normally included on the Emergency Cards prepared for each program. The Embassy/Consulate also has information on medical facilities. Take your cell phone charger with you. If possible, have the student take their phone and charger as well.
3. Contact the USF Education Abroad 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815). The designated person on duty will be able to assist you. They will start a case for the student with our insurance provider, UHCG, if you have not done so already. In the case of hospitalization, we will need name, address, and telephone number of the facility where the student is.
4. Contact local support or second in command to ensure that the other students are supported and safe. Depending on severity of the medical issue, program activities may be suspended, abbreviated, or continued as scheduled.
5. Remain with student until stabilized. (Note that, if more appropriate for the situation, local support or other faculty may stay with student in your place.)
6. If possible, remind the student to disclose allergies and pre-existing conditions (USF Education Abroad cannot provide information that the student submitted previously except under extreme circumstances).
7. Do not contact the emergency contact yourself. Determine whether or not the student would like their emergency contact informed of illness/injury. Once stabilized, the student may want to telephone their emergency contact and/or family members. In extreme circumstances, the International Risk and Security Office may contact the emergency contacts without the student’s permission. It is always best to ask before making contact.
8. Assess the extent or severity of the accident/illness, usually by talking with the physician treating the student. It might be necessary to evacuate the student to an alternative site for more appropriate medical treatment. This decision will have to be made in consultation with appropriate individuals at USF and with the insurance company.
9. Keep a written log of the situation.
10. Remind the student to take copies of any and all health documentation (lab results, notes, etc.) so that follow-up can be done at home.

## RESPONDING TO MENTAL HEALTH INCIDENTS

All leaders and associate travelers are responsible for supporting a student with a mental health issue or concern. If it is a life-threatening situation call the local equivalent to “911.” Mental health issues should be handled similar to medical issues with our insurance provider. However, it is not necessary to wait for the situation to escalate. Unlike a medical issue, if you suspect that a student is experiencing distress, call the 24/7 International Assistance Line to discuss your concerns. You do not need to wait to see a doctor.

Do not contact the emergency contact yourself. Determine whether or not the student would like their emergency contact informed of illness/ injury. Once stabilized, the student may want to telephone their emergency contact and/or family members. In extreme circumstances, the International Risk and Security Office may contact the emergency contacts without the student’s permission. It is always best to ask before making contact.

Students, faculty and staff can contact UHCG directly to arrange appointments with a therapist or ask the International Risk and Security Office to assist. UHCG coordinates mental health evacuations when necessary. No one but UHCG, in consult with USF Director of Student Health Services, can authorize a student’s return to the United States when the student is experiencing a mental health issue.

Contact the 24/7 International Assistance Line to report this incident: +1-813-317-5815.

### *In Summary Incidents Related to Mental Health*

1. Talk to the person reporting the incident (if not the student themselves) and determine the identity and location of the participant.
2. Gather information on the actual behavior exhibited and the history of the problem.
3. Talk to other staff members/instructors to see if there is a pattern of behavior that they have noticed as well.
4. Contact the USF Education Abroad 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815). The designated person on duty will be able to assist you.
5. Talk to the student, following these steps:
  - Request to see the student privately.
  - Acknowledge your observations and perceptions and express your concerns directly and honestly.
  - Do not promise confidentiality.
  - Listen carefully to what the student says and try to understand their perspective without agreeing or disagreeing.
  - Follow up with the student.
  - Help the student identify options for action and explore possible consequences.
  - Avoid labeling the student’s behavior or the issues presented.
  - Remember that your ability to connect with an alienated student will allow him or her to respond more effectively to your concerns.
  - Be open about the limits on your ability to help the student.

- If the student appears to be in imminent danger of hurting themselves or others, ask them directly. Consult with local contacts and with the USF World.
- 6. Assess the extent of the issue and the student's support network (good friends on the program, therapist they can talk to at home, parents, etc.).
- 7. Encourage the student to seek help locally or offer to assist in letting them reach their therapist/counselor at home.
  - Encourage the student to tell you about prior experiences with and/or perceptions of mental health professionals.
  - Self-disclosure can be helpful (if you feel comfortable).
  - Offer to accompany the student or help them make the appointment with local help. In some instances, they may need to talk to their support system back home (therapist, friends, etc.)
- 8. Assess who could be called upon to persuade the student to seek help (i.e., friend, Education Abroad Program Manager, roommate, or therapist). Work with these people to persuade the student to obtain treatment. Continue to encourage the student to seek help.
- 9. Contact local back-up to identify appropriate and recommended therapists, or in the event of involuntary hospitalization, facilities that are possible.
- 10. If necessary, arrange and carry out hospitalization by first contacting the USF Education Abroad 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815) so we may coordinate care through our insurance provider.
- 11. **If student DECIDES NOT TO voluntarily seek help and appears to be a danger to self and/or others:** If appropriate and if such procedures exist in the host country, consider petitioning to have a student involuntarily committed to the hospital. In most circumstances, however, arrangement will be made to have student sent back to the United States for hospitalization. Please only do this in consultation with USF Education Abroad by calling the 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815)
- 12. The U.S. Embassy can be helpful in determining options.
- 13. Keep a written log of the situation.

## RESPONDING TO DISCIPLINE ISSUES & STUDENT CONDUCT AND ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT (SCED)

**\*\*Contact the 24/7 International Assistance Line to report this incident: +1-813-317-5815\*\***

### USF WORLD EDUCATION ABROAD OFFICE AND STUDENT CONDUCT AND ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT

When traveling on a USF international activity, all students must adhere to the [USF Student Code of Conduct](#). All international travelers are expected to support the mission, goals, values and vision of the University of South Florida ("University" or "USF") by promoting a community that values individual responsibility and the adherence to community standards in a respectful manner.

This means that all students must also adhere to the USF World Education Abroad Office procedures and regulations, USF Health procedures and regulations as applicable, and all other applicable federal, Florida state and local Florida laws, as well as the laws of the visiting country, their local customs and their cultural norms. When a question exists about a possible conflict, contact the International Risk and Security Office (IRSO) by either calling the 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815 or email address, [Eaassist@usf.edu](mailto:Eaassist@usf.edu) who can seek guidance in this matter.

### REPORTING

Incidents of alleged violations of the Student Code of Conduct or other laws and expectations while abroad should be reported to the International Risk and Security Office (IRSO) by either calling the 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815 or email address, [Eaassist@usf.edu](mailto:Eaassist@usf.edu). If after consultation the reporter wants a formal written complaint initiated with SCED, the IRSO can do it on their behalf or, the individual can submit a complaint directly online.

This link takes one to the SCED Public Incident Report: **Online Complaint Referral:** [https://usf-advocate.symplicity.com/public\\_report/index.php](https://usf-advocate.symplicity.com/public_report/index.php) (Links to External Site).

Verbal or written warnings issued by the IRSO to the individual alleged in the incident may be issued prior to filing a formal complaint.

A complaint must be submitted in writing to engage the SCED. After receiving a written complaint, Student Conduct and Ethical Development will determine University jurisdiction and a staff member from Student Conduct and Ethical Development will investigate the incident. This may include meeting with the student alleged to have violated the Student Code of Conduct and all persons with information concerning the incident to determine future action as proscribed by the Student Code of Conduct. If still out of the country, meetings may be required via web-based methods, or may be delayed until the student's return to campus, depending upon circumstances.



USF Chinese Learning in The Culture Program - Tier II. 2010. JPEG

#### In Summary

1. Observation of alleged violation
2. Consultation with USF representative (IRSO)
3. Options Available – not necessary to follow in order based upon situation
  - a. Verbal Warning – discussion with student and notification to IRSO
  - b. Written Warning – IRSO written warning document
  - c. SCED Written Complaint Online
  - d. Other sanctions and/or possible dismissal from program – Consultation with General Counsel and Director of the Education Abroad Office

## ACADEMIC DISRUPTION

When teaching a course in an international setting, instructors still have authority to employ the [Academic Disruption Regulation](#) (Links to External Site). Though, logistics and circumstances of the international activity may limit or amend its applicability. (<http://regulationspolicies.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf3.025.pdf>)

This Academic Disruption Regulation provides the steps an Instructor may take to immediately address a student disrupting a class or academic setting including restricting a student from class, assigning an academic sanction or other immediate sanction. This is considered an Academic process and provides for academic sanctions. Simultaneously, the academic disruption report is to be filed with SCED.

As with any incident abroad, it is of utmost importance to engage the International Risk and Security Office (IRSO) by either calling the 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815 or email address, [EAassist@usf.edu](mailto:EAassist@usf.edu) to report and coordinate any sanctions.

**Academic Disruption Form:** <http://www.sa.usf.edu/srr/docs/acad%20disruption%20incident%20report%20form%20update%20072014.doc> (Links to External Site)

## CONDUCT PROCESS

Please visit the USF Student Conduct and Ethical Development website for more information: <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct-ethical-development/index.aspx> (Links to External Site).

## RESPONDING TO A MISSING STUDENT

A student is presumed missing if the student is not where they are supposed to be at any given time. This can mean overdue in reaching home, campus or another specific location past the student's expected arrival time. You do not have to wait 24 hours. If factors exist that lead you to a reasonable conclusion that the student is missing, that is good enough.

If a student is presumed missing, do the following:

1. Contact the USF Education Abroad 24/7 International Assistance Line +1-813-317-5815. The designated person on duty will be able to assist you.
2. Talk to the person reporting the incident and gather facts about the disappearance.
3. Talk with other students, host family, friends, professors, etc. Gather information on any unusual behavior that may have been exhibited. Try to find out when the missing person was last seen.
4. Call and text student's phone. Check student's Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites for any indications of current location. Do not report on social media. Make this clear to students. Have all students check social media/phones to determine last known time/place.
5. Make sure that they are not in their residence and just overslept or are ill. If possible, gain entry into student's room to check locations. Leave a note at residence for the student to call in the event that they return home.
6. Immediately notify the local law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction in the area

7. Provide appropriate information and reassurances to the other program participants on an as needed basis. Request that students refrain from posting updates through Facebook or other social media sites about the situation. If fellow students have already done so, please inform the USF World so that the emergency contacts can be notified, and we can be prepared for media inquiries.
8. Contact the U.S. Embassy for assistance. Determine whether phone calls to psychiatric facilities, hospitals, jails, etc. should be undertaken.
9. Once the participant has been located, inform appropriate persons.
10. Consider disciplinary action, if warranted.
11. Direct inquiries from family, media, and other interest parties to USF World.
12. Keep a written log of the situation.

**\*\*Contact the 24/7 International Assistance Line to report this incident: +1-813-317-5815\*\***

## RESPONDING TO A STUDENT DEATH

The death of a student is the ultimate tragedy. Though rare, it happens, and USF has had to deal with such an event. Because of the rarity, we will rely heavily on guidance from UHCG and the U.S. Embassy and General Counsel in such situations.

Do not immediately reach out to family and emergency contacts. **WAIT FOR DIRECTION.** Do not speak to the press. All requests must go through Communication and Marketing. Do not post information on social media. Instruct students do not post as well. Do gather information regarding circumstances as best you can – inquire not investigate.

**\*\*TIME IS CRITICAL. NEWS TRAVEL FAST THROUGH EMAIL, SOCIAL MEDIA, ETC. NOTIFY USF VIA THE 24/7 INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE LINE 813-317-5815 ASAP\*\***

### *In Summary Death of a Student:*

1. Contact the USF World 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815).
2. Gather as much information as possible about the circumstance surrounding the student's death.
3. Verify the identity of the deceased (if possible with the use of a medical professional).
4. Assist with locating proper medical professionals and facilities for keeping the remains.
5. Notify the U.S. Embassy and Consulate.
6. Construct a network to offer appropriate support for involved parties, such as close friends, students on the program, and the person(s) who may have discovered the body.
7. Assist the family and/or emergency contact of the deceased with transportation arrangements, accommodations, housing, arranging for a meeting with a physician, etc.
8. Help arrange for the appropriate care of the deceased, whether that be at the program site and/or repatriation.
9. Direct inquiries from family and other interest parties to USF World.
10. Keep a written log of the situation.

## RESPONDING TO CIVIL UNREST AND NATURAL DISASTER

Though rare, these events do happen from time to time. We have had to evacuate programs from Israel and Japan, for instance. There have also been times such as in France where we had to request student's shelter in place.

You should have an emergency action plan that includes alternate communication plans and meet up locations. Make sure that all participants have a copy of this plan. When an incident happens, the first order of business is to make sure all travelers are accounted for. Monitor news and seek out information. Under our contract, we follow UHCG direction regarding evacuation and extraction. Make sure to follow local emergency protocols and local security providers.

## RESPONDING TO CIVIL UNREST

In the event of a terrorist attack or social uprising, the on-site faculty must seek out the students to provide instructions as to how to proceed. It is wise to establish a meeting place and a plan B location for students to know where to go (generally by foot). If they cannot get to this location (generally a site where classes may be held, hotel, etc.), they should try to get back to their residence. If you are very familiar with the city, other safe places can be established in advance (library, residence of staff from home school, etc.) It can be useful to work with local residents to determine "safe" spots. Avoid major attractions and political/social centers. Make sure that all students are aware of the address and contact information.

Students should try to appear calm and avoid public transportation – generally walking is the safest option. No one in the group should congregate in large groups, nor advertise that they are Americans. Everyone involved in the program should know where the U.S. Embassy is, although embassies are often targets of attacks and should not be considered a safe place. Contact the USF World so we can help to contact the insurance company, students, and provide university support.

1. Contact all students to make sure that they are all accounted for and safe.
2. If necessary, contact the nearest doctor or hospital; assist with locating proper medical professionals and facilities.
  - a. If a student has been injured have his/her physical injuries attended to (see Responding to Medical Incident).
3. Contact the USF Education Abroad **24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815)**. The designated person on duty will be able to assist you.
  - a. USF Education Abroad will determine if an evacuation is necessary.
  - b. If an evacuation is deemed necessary, contact the U.S. Embassy for assistance.
  - c. Know embassy procedures for U.S. and non-U.S. students and the warden system that is in place through the U.S. Embassy.
  - d. If an evacuation is not deemed necessary, decide in conjunction with the EAO Leadership Team and General Counsel what follow up steps, if any, should be enacted to ensure student safety.
4. Contact the U.S. Embassy and Consulate.
  - a. If the U.S. Embassy is closed, determine the location from which the embassy is operating (i.e., another embassy operating within the country or the U.S. Embassy in a neighboring country).
  - b. Gather as much information as you can about the situation from embassies, NGO networks, in-country network, other study abroad program directors, etc.
5. Determine the target of unrest and possible danger to U.S. citizens; advice regarding minimizing danger to students; the probable impact of the event on availability of food, water, and medical supplies; the intensity of the emergency or political unrest; the presence of emergency or military personnel; the feasibility of continuing classes, etc. Direct inquiries from family, media, and other interested parties to the USF World.
6. Keep a written log of the situation.

## RESPONDING TO NATURAL DISASTER

The key to responding to an imminent natural disaster is preparing for one in advance of the event. If you are going to a hurricane-prone area, as part of your emergency planning, you should identify safe locations. If safe sites are some distance away, it may take a great deal of coordination and planning in advance of any event. This planning should be done prior to the program.

In the event of a natural disaster such as a hurricane, volcano eruption, etc., check with the U.S. Embassy and other national resources to ensure that all preparations/ evacuations have been conducted. The on-site faculty must seek out the students to provide instructions as to how to proceed. The on-site faculty will communicate with USF Education Abroad and local authorities to coordinate a safe response. USF Education Abroad will seek the necessary information from governmental and non-governmental sources.

1. In the event of natural disaster where you have lead time (e.g., hurricane, volcano eruption), contact the USF Education Abroad 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815). The designated person on duty will be able to assist you.
2. Red Cross has a useful site for preparing for a variety of disasters: <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster>
3. USF Emergency Management's website for disaster preparedness: <https://www.usf.edu/administrative-services/emergency-management/about/index.aspx>
4. Make sure that you have all local telephone numbers available for students.
5. For large groups, establish a telephone tree for the students. During the event of a natural disaster:
  - a. Check in with US Embassy; follow any instructions recommendations given by them.
  - b. Check in with the USF World by calling the 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815). The designated person on duty will be able to assist you.
  - c. Closely monitor local/national news for updates and directives.
  - d. Follow any and all evacuation protocols. (Note that, in some cases, we can use our insurance to cover expenses.) In most situations, it would be better to bring the group together to a designated safe location well before disaster strikes.
  - e. If you have not evacuated, ensure that everyone has an adequate water supply (one gallon per person for three days), canned food or other food for three days, charged cell phones, first aid kit, and follow general guides for hurricane/storm preparedness: <https://www.ready.gov/be-informed>.

After the event of a natural disaster:

1. In case of injury, assist with physical/emotional needs of the participants.
2. Be attentive to post-traumatic stress once immediate needs have been met.
3. Notify the U.S. Embassy and Consulate.
4. Establish communication with police, doctors, other study abroad programs, and any appropriate officials and local contacts.
5. Check in regularly via the USF World by calling the 24/7 International Assistance Line (813-317-5815) to provide updates.
6. Be extremely wary of aftershocks and/or continuing problems after the natural disaster has apparently ended.



7. Direct inquiries from family, media, and other interest parties to USF World.
8. Keep a written log of the situation.

**ALWAYS KEEP USF UPDATED WITH YOUR STATUS VIA THE INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE LINE 813-317-5815 AND CURRENT CONDITIONS ON THE GROUND**

## POST TRAVEL CONSIDERATIONS

Faculty should complete a short on-line Evaluation Form upon return from the program. For all first-time programs, faculty should meet with their Education Abroad Advisor or USF Health International to have an in-depth conversation about the program.

It is best practice to hold a reentry meeting or event with students following their return from the program. Faculty may also create an on-line reentry program to help students reflect on their experiences.

It is important to stress to students that they need to pay attention to the same guidelines about airline travel that were stressed when they traveled abroad. Airports will be congested. Get their 3 hours early. Do not pack the passport away in checked luggage. And be prepared to deal with customs and export controls!

Travelers may have to pay duty on any goods purchased abroad. Do not try and sneak anything back and do not bring back pirated goods or fresh fruits, vegetables or meats. The government requires you to pay duty on goods purchased abroad and brought into the United States. You should know and understand these requirements before leaving your host country, so you do not encounter problems upon your return. <http://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/kbyg/customs-duty-info> (Links to External Site)

## HEALTH ISSUES UPON RETURN

If you or a student reported an illness while abroad, the UHCG insurance may still cover you for up to 30 days after return, for that same illness. The illness must be reported while abroad for this to be in effect. If you have any questions or concerns, call the international health insurance company's 24-7 number. Except in that occurrence, your student related insurance coverage ends when your program ends.

If you plan to travel before or after your international program, it is very important to obtain additional medical insurance coverage as the medical insurance provided for your international experience only provides coverage during the dates of the program. While you may believe your domestic health insurance policy will cover the costs for any medical care needed abroad, it is likely you will be required to pay upfront and later seek reimbursement. Keep in mind that hospitalization or evacuation abroad can cost as much as \$40,000. If you would like to purchase coverage for your additional travel, contact the UHCG enrollment center at +1-800-732-5309.

If you become ill within 12 months after traveling, make a medical appointment and be sure to inform your physician of all the countries you visited while abroad. Sometimes a general illness here may have a relationship to the international travel you experienced up to a year earlier.

If you have been taking anti-malarial medications because of your travel abroad, do not stop just because you returned home. Continue to do so for the prescribed amount of time after you return home. If you have any questions, ask your physician.

## IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

International Assistance Line\*.....(813)-317-5815

### International Assistance Line:

1. Dial the international access code for the U.S.\*\*
2. Then dial (813)-317-5815
3. Identify yourself as a USF study abroad student and give the country where you are currently located
4. State your name
5. Tell the person what is wrong
6. Tell the person how to contact you
7. Respond to questions and listen carefully to any instructions

International Assistance Email.....[EAassist@usf.edu](mailto:EAassist@usf.edu)

\*This phone is staffed 24 hours a day for emergency use

\*\*To prepare in advance, learn the international access codes for calling to the U.S. from abroad at the Country Codes Web page. Write the numbers on the back of the card.

## EMERGENCY REFERENCE NUMBERS:

### United HealthCare Global Insurance (UHCG)

In the event of medical emergency, call.....+1 (410) 453-6330

Questions regarding your insurance.....+1 (410) 453-6330

Email.....assistance@uhcglobal.com

Policy #.....902591831

### **US State Department Emergency**

Office of Overseas Citizens Services in US.....(202)-647-5225