

# **Short-Term Faculty-Led Education Abroad Program Guide for Program Leaders**



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Education Abroad Program  
Guide for Program Leaders  
Center for International Education  
St. Ambrose University**

**Table of Contents**

Designing Your Program	3
Marketing Your Program	7
Preparing for Departure	10
While Abroad	11
Upon Return	15

This guide is intended to assist faculty and staff in planning and carrying out short-term education abroad programs. Organizing and leading an education abroad program for a group of students may be one of the most personally and professionally rewarding enterprises you will undertake as a St. Ambrose University faculty or staff member, but it also will present you with tremendous challenges. This handbook highlights your responsibilities as a leader of a short-term education abroad program and describes the administrative services that the Center for International Education will provide to support your efforts.

## **Designing Your Program**

Designing an education abroad program requires years of advance planning and considerable communication with your Department Chair, Dean, and the Education Abroad Coordinator. Please give yourself the time necessary to establish a thoughtful program. Programs that are carelessly crafted will fail to achieve their potential, and likely will not attain their student enrollment quota. Handle with care!

### Envisioning a Program

To begin, ask yourself the following questions:

- Can I create a credit-bearing education abroad course that will *add value* to my students' area of study? No matter how much the location interests you, if an education abroad program does not add value then it should not be created. For example, simply taking students to London does not necessarily add value to their educational experience. Rather, it is the learning experiences that you create for the students in London that will add value to the education that students receive at SAU.
- Will my envisioned program be attractive to a critical mass of students while remaining affordable? For example, if you are envisioning a History course in Estonia that will only be open to History majors, you ought to reconsider this idea because this program will be expensive and unlikely to attract a sufficient number of students.
- How will this course fit into my teaching load? You need to earn the support of your department colleagues and the Dean.

### Types of Programs

- A course taught over the Winterim (with at least 3 Fall Semester orientation meetings). Students will be registered for the course as part of their Spring Semester zone course load. If the course is not taught within the faculty teaching load (preferred) faculty members earn an overload salary that is borne by the student program fees.
- A Spring Break trip that bisects a course taught over the Spring Semester. Students will take the course as part of their Spring Semester zone course load. Faculty members typically teach the course as part of their Spring Semester course load, or as an overload with the salary borne by the student program fees.

- A May Term trip that culminates a Spring Semester course. Students will take the course as part of their Spring Semester zone course load. Faculty members typically teach the course as part of their Spring Semester course load, or as an overload with the salary borne by the student program fees.
- A course taught entirely over the May Term (with at least 3 Spring Semester orientation meetings). If the course is not taught within the faculty teaching load (preferred) faculty members earn an overload salary that is borne by the student program fees.
- A course taught entirely over the Summer Session (with at least 3 Spring Semester orientation meetings). If the course is not taught within the faculty teaching load (preferred) faculty members earn an overload salary that is borne by the student program fees.

### UMAIE

St. Ambrose is an affiliate member of UMAIE, a consortium of the following colleges and universities:

- Augustana College (South Dakota)
- Elmhurst College
- Hamline University
- St. Catherine University
- University of St. Thomas

UMAIE seeks to provide high-quality faculty-led education abroad programs (nearly all of its programs run over the winter break) for their students. UMAIE programs typically require at least 20 academic days abroad. UMAIE students can participate on any UMAIE program, so it is likely that the majority of students on a UMAIE course taught by a SAU faculty member will come from outside of SAU. Each year, we have to cancel some extremely exciting faculty-led programs due to poor enrollment numbers, but UMAIE programs draw extremely well, and are less frequently cancelled.

Regular SAU policy states that faculty compensation (or the adjunct replacement) is folded into the education abroad program price. UMAIE policy does not allow this practice. SAU faculty who are approved to teach a UMAIE course will teach it as an overload. The funds to pay for the overload will derive from the Center for International Education budget; currently the Center can fund no more than two UMAIE courses per academic year. Faculty members will earn a salary based on the overload salary scale used for SAU summer school teaching; this scale will factor the number of SAU students on the course, not the total number of UMAIE students. SAU-UMAIE faculty members who establish a track record of successful SAU student enrollment will be given consideration to teach the course as part of their regular teaching load.

### Statement of Intent

You must submit an online Statement of Intent that articulates your vision, however unformed, for your program. You will be asked to identify your course, program location(s), program type, and to give a program description. Your Statement of Intent must be approved by your Department Chair and the Dean before you can go any further in the process. You must submit a Statement of Intent by the appropriate deadline:

- **Spring Break, May Term, or Summer programs: October 1st two academic years prior to your program.** Example: if you intend to run your program in spring break 2021, your Statement of Intent is due by October 1, 2019.
- **Winterim programs: April 1st two academic years prior to your program.** Example: if you intend to run your program during winterim 2021-2022, your Statement of Intent is due by April 15, 2020.

### Site Visit

If you have not investigated your program location before, you will need to do so before submitting a program proposal. There are several primary sources for funding a site visit:

- Faculty Development Grants offered twice/year by the Faculty Development Committee. The usual maximum award is \$1,200.
- International Initiatives Grants offered to both faculty and staff when funding is available by the Center for International Education. The maximum award generally is \$1,500.
- Travel funding offered by your department.

On your research trip, you should devote the bulk of your time to developing your syllabus (particularly your daily set of learning activities) based on the opportunities available at your location. You should also research the accommodation and transportation that you would like to use.

When you plan your program you also want to consider opportunities for your students to engage in a sustained fashion (more than guest lecture or two) with regular people in the country. Students particularly enjoy interacting with fellow students! Think about ways for your students to break out of their comfort zones!

### Submitting a Course Proposal

The proposed course should already be listed in the SAU course catalog. If approval is needed from the EPC Committee for a new course, approval must be finalized BEFORE you submit an education abroad course proposal.

You will complete your proposal using our online form. All proposals must be submitted through the portal by the appropriate deadline:

- **Spring Break, May Term or Summer programs: August 15th the year prior to your program.**

Example: if you intend to run your program in spring break 2021, your proposal is due by August 15, 2020.

- **Winterim programs: January 15th the year prior to your program.** Example: if you intend to run your program during winterim 2021-2022, your proposal is due by January 15, 2021.

Your proposal must address the following areas:

- Program Leadership—your experience in the location and expertise with the subject matter.
- Onsite Support—any program that does not have onsite support staff (from an academic institution, program provider, tour company, etc.) that is available on a daily basis to assist the program may be required to recruit a Support Person to aid the Program Leader. Support Persons are not paid for their duties, but will receive a per diem and have all of their travel costs covered by program fees.
- Travel Requirements—preferred flight, hotel, and internal transportation arrangements. You must use an affiliated on-site educational institution, professional travel agency or education abroad program provider to help you make your hotel and internal travel bookings. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Education Abroad Coordinator. The Center for International Education can connect you with appropriate, reputable travel agencies and program providers.
- Integrated Syllabus, to include:
  - Course Description
  - Student Learning and Development Outcomes
  - Assignments: be sure that you include as one of your assignments a daily journal or blog so students can reflect on their experiences. Most experienced faculty agree that the more directed you can make the journal assignment, the more reflective and intellectual work the student will probably accomplish.
  - Evaluation Methods (be as detailed as possible)
  - Daily Schedule (as a rule 2/3's of each day should be structured time in some fashion)
- Teaching Methods—how important is foreign language ability? Will guest lecturers be used?
- Teaching Load—will the program be an overload for your department or part of your existing load? All faculty expenses are borne by the students on a per student basis. Typically, faculty compensation consists of:
  - Salary (if an overload)
  - Per diem (the maximum per diem is based on the Meals and Incidental Expenses category of the US Department of State per diem chart for your location; the minimum per diem is \$15/day. The per diem that you choose is determined after consultation with the Education Abroad Coordinator). Typically, you **do not** have to retain receipts of your per diem expenditures.
  - All travel, lodging and other expenses

- Itemized Budget - tentative total cost per student
  - Education Abroad Fee: For undergraduate and graduate programs taught entirely over the winterim, May term, or summer term, and for which students are enrolled under the one-price plan, a \$300 Education Abroad Fee is charged to the student in lieu of tuition. Otherwise, for undergraduate and graduate programs in which the education abroad experience culminates a fall/spring course taught throughout the semester, and for which students are enrolled under the one-price plan, the Education Abroad Fee is \$125. Graduate students not enrolled under the one-price plan will be charged tuition to absorb the faculty salary, at a rate of \$580/credit hour for the 2019-20 academic year, and will not be charged the Education Abroad Fee.

### Initial Review

Your proposal must first be approved by your Department Chair and Dean before it moves forward. Their approval ideally is the culmination of a series of conversations with them that you have engaged in from the conception of your program through the Statement of Intent through the proposal process.

Your proposal also will be reviewed by the Education Abroad Coordinator. During this process the Coordinator usually asks for a review from at least one veteran education abroad program leader from the applicant's college. Finally, your proposal is reviewed by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and the Vice President for Finance.

## **Marketing Your Program**

### Center for International Education Responsibilities

Once your course is approved, the course information is shared with Records and Registration and a course "shell" is created in Ellucian with the approved student price and number of credits. A program brochure is created on the education abroad portal. This brochure includes your course description, tentative program price, list of what is and what is not included in the program price (from the approved program proposal) and application deadlines. You should always refer students to the website for the most up-to-date and reliable program information.

Your approved course will be added to the education abroad portal as a course open for student applications. Students will be able to use the search engine to find the course, where they will see a course description and the electronic application.

Finally, the Center for International Education can produce a program flier for distribution around campus. This flier likely will be used at its Education Abroad Fair and in the frequent presentations that the Center staff makes to students.

### Program Leader Responsibilities

Although the Center for International Education will assist in program marketing, **ultimately it is up to the program leader to market his/her education abroad program.** The program leader should:

- Introduce the program in his/her courses
- Share the program with his/her department colleagues and ask to visit their courses
- Participate in the Education Abroad Fair
- Host information sessions about your program
- Direct students who have financial aid questions to the Office of Financial Aid

In many cases, it is possible to market your program to SAU alumni or to community members. Your intention to market to them must be mentioned in your program proposal and the marketing arrangements coordinated with the Education Abroad Coordinator.

### The Student Application Process

Students will complete an online application. Applicants submit all application documents to the Center for International Education by the deadline day along with a \$500 deposit. The typical application deadlines are:

- Winterim programs: April 15
- Spring break programs: October 15
- May Term programs: November 15
- Summer programs: December 1

A completed application file typically includes the application, a Dean of Students endorsement, and deposit. The \$500 deposit is non-refundable after the initial application deadline unless the program is cancelled or the student is not accepted into the program.

### Course Viability

By the application deadline, serious consideration is made about program viability. Programs must achieve their minimum enrollment goals in order to be viable. For first-time programs, the customary enrollment goal is **six** students. For programs that have run before, the usual enrollment goal is **nine** students. **The tentative price that is marketed to the students is based on the stated enrollment goal for the program, so it is very important to be realistic about your enrollment goal.**

If a program has not achieved the enrollment goal by the application deadline, the program likely will be cancelled at this time. The Education Abroad Coordinator will notify students and their application deposits will be refunded.

### Application Review

If a course has achieved its enrollment goal, the applications will be reviewed by the Education Abroad Coordinator and faculty leader based on the following criteria:



- Academic credentials. Typically, the minimum GPA is 2.5, but faculty leaders have discretion to admit students with a lower GPA.
- Quality of the application: does the applicant articulate thoughtful reasons for wanting to participate in this program?

If necessary, students will be called in for personal interviews with the program leadership to determine their fitness for the program. Accepted students are sent an acceptance email from the Education Abroad Coordinator outlining important dates and payment deadlines. Accepted students should apply for a passport immediately if they do not already have a valid passport. Passports must be valid for at least six months after the program end date. Students who are not accepted are notified by the Education Abroad Coordinator and receive a full refund of their application deposit.

### Course Registration

Upon acceptance, students are registered for the education abroad course by the Registrar and the Education Abroad Coordinator. Students are NOT permitted to register for education abroad courses on Beeline. Only after students meet all education abroad application requirements and are accepted will they be registered and billed for the course. The charges are billed to the student's account.

If a faculty-led course is for credit (and that is the expectation), and approved as such in the program proposal, students must receive all credits for the class. Students typically will not be allowed to take the course for zero credit, unless they are a SAU alumni or a community member. If a student is already registered for 18 credit hours, he/she should drop a course before applying for an education abroad course that will take place that semester. Students who exceed 18 credit hours will typically be charged extra for each additional credit above the 18 credit zone maximum.

### Plane Tickets

For all SAU faculty-led programs, except those run with UMAIE, one month after the application deadline a commitment fee payable to St. Ambrose University is due to the Center for International Education. The commitment fee is calculated so that the sum of the application deposit and the commitment fee will pay for plane tickets and any other early bookings. The commitment fee is non-refundable after the deadline unless the program is cancelled. If a student does not withdraw from a program by the commitment fee deadline, they are liable for all expenses incurred on the program on their behalf. If students fail to pay the commitment fee, they will be removed from the program roster. If the number of enrolled students subsequently falls below the enrollment target due to a shortage of commitments, the program will be cancelled and all recoverable student fees will be refunded.

After commitment fees are received, plane tickets are purchased. Plane tickets are non-refundable and cannot be changed once they are ticketed. All students must travel round-trip from the airport designated in the

program proposal—no exceptions. If the group is flying out of Chicago, students must arrange their own transportation to the airport. An ACT II shuttle can be arranged for a large group to travel from SAU to the airport at an additional cost (~\$200 per person roundtrip). The Center for International Education will work to book plane tickets following the instructions outlined in the program proposal.

### Medical/Psychological Assessments

After acceptance, students must complete a medical and psychological self-assessment form. Every effort will be made to accommodate students who have medical, physical or psychological issues. If it is deemed impossible to provide the necessary accommodations for these students and it is determined that their participation on the program is a potential liability to the university and to this program, they will be removed from the program roster and given a full refund. The removal of these students will not result in the cancellation of the program, even if the program no longer meets its enrollment target.

All students are enrolled in a travel and health insurance policy that is included in the student program cost.

## **Preparing for Departure**

### Pre-Departure Orientation—Program Leaders

Prior to departure, program leaders must attend an orientation session hosted by the Education Abroad Coordinator. Program leaders also are encouraged to contact the Education Abroad Coordinator whenever they have questions.

The program leaders, the Dean of Students, and SAU Campus Security are given access to the following information:

- Participant list including ID numbers and cell phone numbers
- Student emergency contact information
- Student health/medical information
- Passport information
- Flight information
- Travel itinerary

### Pre-Departure Orientation—Students

The Center for International Education has developed a pre-departure slide show for short-term education abroad participants. It is preferable that the Education Abroad Coordinator meet with the students as a group rather than sending out the information electronically.

Prior to departure, program leaders are responsible for sharing site-specific information with the students. Ideally, program leaders will hold at least three meetings with the students (if they are not meeting as a class beforehand) to prepare students for their program. At these meetings, make sure that you:

- Specify the safety information at *each location*. Are there certain neighborhoods to avoid, etc.? Learn the location and contact information of the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. Strongly encourage your students to register with the Department of State’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>
- Urge students to keep a low profile while abroad. Participants should not act in ways that call attention to them or to their nationality. Prohibit clothing with US flags or logos or other provocative or inappropriate dress. Drunken behavior will not be tolerated.

Before leaving, students should receive a packet containing the following information:

- Participant list including cell phone numbers
- Emergency contact information for the Education Abroad Coordinator and SAU Campus Security
- Flight information, confirmation numbers, and contact information for the travel agent – if flights were booked by the Center for International Education
- Travel itinerary
- International cell phone numbers of program leaders

## **While Abroad**

Program leaders should contact the Education Abroad Coordinator upon arrival to the education abroad location. The Coordinator should also be notified if there are any delays or travel issues.

As soon as possible after arrival, program leaders should conduct an on-site orientation that reminds students about the expectations for the program, answers student questions, and details the safety precautions discussed below. In this orientation, be sure that you remind your students that:

- This is **education** abroad, not party abroad, shop abroad or vacation abroad.
- Any extracurricular activities require at least one “buddy.” Students should never go anywhere on their own. It is extremely important that everyone looks out for each other! If someone goes missing, students must notify the program leadership immediately.
- Specify the consequences for misbehavior, referring to the Student Discipline Policy that students signed with their Post-Acceptance materials. Although this is a “two strikes and you’re out” policy, program leaders reserve the right to dismiss students from the program after their first violation.
- Do not do ANYTHING that could get you into trouble with the host country’s legal authorities.
- They are representing their families, the university, and their country.

## Communication Plan

Students are required to inform you of their whereabouts at all times. All students should know how to contact their place of accommodation and the program leaders at all times. Program leaders should give their students their phone numbers immediately. Leaders will be reimbursed for any program-related phone expenses. Ideally, all students would also have working phones of their own. At the very least, you should make sure that when students have free time that there is one person in each group with a working cell phone. These cell phone numbers should be kept by the program leaders.

Advise students to report anything troubling to you as soon as possible. Inform the students that information they share will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and that it will be shared with others on a "need to know" basis only. But, also explain to the students that they are required to inform you about any emergency, and that you in turn are required to inform the Education Abroad Coordinator as soon as possible about the situation and the plan to address it.

## Crisis Protocol

For our purposes, an emergency is any circumstance that poses a genuine risk to, or that has already disturbed the safety and welfare of program participants. Emergencies may include but are not limited to the following types of events and incidents:

- Physical assault, sexual assault or rape
- Disappearance or kidnapping of a student
- Robbery
- Travel accidents
- Serious illness, physical or emotional
- Significant accident and/or injury
- Hospitalization for any reason
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Local political crisis that could affect the students' safety or well being
- Arrest or questioning by the police or other security forces
- Any legal action (lawsuit, deposition, trial, etc.) involving a student
- Weather-related events (earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes)

In an emergency, your first responsibility is to safeguard the safety and well-being of program participants. Do whatever is necessary to assure this, whether this means obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, U.S. Embassy intervention or police protection. You will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses necessary to the management of an emergency.

If there is any kind of problem onsite, your first point of contact is the Education Abroad Coordinator. The Education Abroad Coordinator will then contact the relevant parties, such as the Director of Security, Vice

President of Academic and Student Affairs, Dean of Students, Director of Counseling, Campus Chaplain, or Health Services.

If you are unable to reach the Education Abroad Coordinator, please contact the following people in this order until you reach someone:

- Director of Security
- Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs

During an on-going crisis, keep the Coordinator informed on a regular basis about the evolution of the crisis through telephone, email or fax until it passes.

During a political crisis or some other emergency during which foreigners in general or U.S. citizens in general may be at risk, require that the students:

- Keep a low profile
- Avoid behavior that could call attention to themselves
- Avoid demonstrations or situations where they could be in danger
- Avoid locales where Americans are known to congregate
- Avoid wearing clothes that would label them as Americans

Notify the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate about the crisis, and follow any procedures required by them. If there is a continuing risk to the welfare of the students (during a terrorist threat, for example), ask the appropriate Embassy or Consulate Officer to advise you on a regular basis about the evolution of the crisis, and about how students should respond. If the Embassy advises you to notify local police, do so and follow any procedures they may require as well.

Depending on the severity of the crisis and after consultation with you and appropriate individuals on site, the Education Abroad Coordinator may email or fax you a description of the course of action that you and the students will need to follow. All program participants will be required to sign a statement acknowledging that they have received, read, and understood the response plan. The signed acknowledgments must then be faxed back to the Education Abroad Coordinator.

In the event of a significant crisis, consider the option of returning to the U.S. and make necessary preparations and arrangements. Inform the Education Abroad Coordinator of these plans as soon as possible. Keep in mind that a decision to cancel a program and bring students home has a variety of potential logistical, legal, social and financial ramifications. In the unlikely event that an emergency evacuation is necessary, you and the Education Abroad Coordinator, in consultation with the U.S. Embassy and State Department as well as other appropriate individuals on the home campus, would develop an evacuation plan in as much detail as possible. We would work closely together throughout the process to bring the group home. You would be advised to locate and secure the students, arrange the flight to the US, and accompany the students.

If St. Ambrose University cancels a program for security reasons after it has started:

- Additional expenses related to bringing the participants home (or to another approved program location) will be borne by St. Ambrose University (for example, airline ticket change fees associated with early departures home or to a new program location).
- Refund of program fees paid by St. Ambrose University will be prorated and may be limited by non-recoverable contractual obligations.

If a student chooses to withdraw from a program due to safety and security concerns or for any other reason but the program has not been canceled:

- The student is responsible for his/her travel expenses and will not receive a refund.

If a student is expelled from a program:

- As defined in the notification of dismissal, the student will be expected to make all travel arrangements at his/her own expense to leave the program. The student is expected to return to the USA at the earliest possible date. No refunds will be given. Any unpaid balance on the student's account will be due and payable at the time of dismissal.

### Program Leader Responsibilities

Program leaders must:

- Adhere to the protocols described in the St. Ambrose University Faculty or Staff Handbook at all times.
- Remember that first and foremost you are educators charged with providing students with a valuable educational experience. As you see that students are beginning to see the world in a new light:
  - Give them prompts so that they will be able to observe for themselves what the world is like, how things are done both differently and in similar ways to the USA.
  - Help them to discover an interpretation for themselves rather than telling them how to interpret what they see and experience. Provide the kinds of questions and ideas that will help them to come to their own conclusions based on their experiences and observations. Try not to program them to come to your conclusions and evaluations. It is their chance to discover. You may not agree with their observations or conclusions, and if you think they have used erroneous information in arriving at those, do help to set them in the right direction, but be open to differing viewpoints in those situations where the students can arrive at their own ideas.
- Assume the challenging role of guardian, chaperone, disciplinarian, mediator, confidante, tour guide, etc.
- Act as the 24-hour resident director in charge of the overall welfare of the students; resolve all student affairs related issues, including housing and student behavior incidents.
- Faculty leaders are required by law to report instances of sexual misconduct to SAU. A formal report will include the name of the student bringing forward the complaint, details of the incident, the name of

the affected student, and the name of the person who is being accused. If a student approaches you regarding sexual misconduct, do the following:

- Believe a student when they disclose to you that they were the victim of violence.
  - Explain to them that you are required to report this to your home campus.
  - Report the incident to the Education Abroad Coordinator, who will then advise you about appropriate next steps.
  - Remember that a victim of sexual misconduct has the right to preserve evidence, seek medical care, report the incident to the police and, in the case of student-on-student assault, file a formal complaint against the other student after return to the home campuses.
  - Support the student's decision to seek help, talk with a counselor, go for medical care, or contact the police.
  - Advise the student about any sources of support he or she may need, including family members, campus counselors, religious leaders, etc.
- Follow all General Accounting policies regarding travel expenses and credit card purchases. Please see the Education Abroad Coordinator for specific information.
  - Travel back to the US with the students. Upon arrival in the US, you should stay with the students until they have all been picked up by expected family or friends.

## **Upon Return**

Upon your return to the US, please do the following:

- Notify the Education Abroad Coordinator immediately.
- Submit receipts and account for all moneys spent, if applicable. Typically you **do not** have to retain receipts of your per diem expenditures.
- Hold a follow-up meeting with the Education Abroad Coordinator.
- Complete the online self-assessment of your program.
- Encourage your students to complete the online evaluation of the program. Results will be shared with the faculty leader after grades are submitted.
- Encourage your students to attend the International Mixer hosted by the Center for International Education.
- Help to recruit a student peer mentor to assist in marketing your future programs.