

Emergency Management Procedures for Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs

The KU Office of Study Abroad has developed the following emergency management information and procedures expressly to safeguard the well-being of program participants (students, faculty, staff and dependents) and to protect the University's interests. The procedures set forth below ensure the Office of Study Abroad, Faculty Directors, and the institution are effectively prepared for and able to rapidly respond to emergencies in a KU-administered study abroad program.

What is an Emergency?

An emergency is any circumstance or event that poses a risk to, or has already disturbed, the health, safety, or security of students, faculty, staff or dependents participating in study, internships, or research abroad through the University of Kansas Office of Study Abroad. Emergencies include, but are not limited to:

- Illness (physical, mental or emotional)
- Accident or injury
- Hospitalization for any reason
- Robbery
- Physical assault
- Sexual assault or rape
- Attempted suicide
- Death of student
- Disappearance of participant
- Kidnapping of participant or hostage situation
- Local political crisis that could or does affect participant safety
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Natural or man-made disasters
- Arrest or questioning of participant by police or security forces
- Any legal action involving participant

Emergencies may be both "real" and "perceived." Real emergencies are those events which pose a genuine and sometimes immediate risk to the health, safety, or well-being of program participants. Perceived emergencies are those which pose no significant risks to the safety or well-being of participants, but which are seen as threatening by family members in the United States or by others, including friends, fellow students, or program staff. Because perceived emergencies often affect family members and others as strongly as do real emergencies, the OSA response to both real and perceived emergencies will be the same.

Characteristics of Emergencies

1. Unexpected Events or Circumstances

Emergencies require us to work quickly on incidents or events that have not provided adequate time for us to plan. Time is generally a critical factor.

Emergency Planning and Prevention

The Office of Study Abroad

The OSA places the utmost importance on the safety, security, and well-being of study abroad program participants. Programs are carefully planned, vetted, and annually evaluated to ensure all aspects of the experience are safe, secure, reliable and of high quality. All programs must file comprehensive itineraries, communication plans and emergency contact information with the OSA prior to departure. In addition, the OSA takes the below steps to prepare all participants to effectively deal with an unforeseen emergency abroad.

Information and Insurance

Prior to the departure of a program, the Office of Study Abroad gathers comprehensive information from students to keep on file in the event of an emergency situation. This includes emergency contact information, a health and liability release, a signed conditions of participation form, flight itineraries and pre/post program travel plans, and medical insurance policy information. Relevant information will be made available to the Faculty Director prior to departure.

All students on University of Kansas study abroad programs are required to demonstrate sufficient insurance coverage for the duration of the program. It is the responsibility of the student to understand his/her health insurance policy. Important to note, however, is that most plans require that the student pay up front for all medical expenses incurred while abroad. The insurance company will then reimburse the student after he/she files a claim.

As a supplement to individual medical insurance, the Office of Study Abroad provides [Scholastic Emergency Services \(SES\)](#) insurance to all students and faculty participating on KU study abroad programs. SES provides assistance to overseas travelers in the way of consultation about and coordination of local medical services. In addition, SES provides medical evacuation to an adequate care facility or repatriation services in the event of an acute crisis.

Orientations and Required Readings

Students have three required pre-departure orientation workshops to attend as a condition of participation in Study Abroad:

1. The Student Health Services Travel Clinic conducts Travel Health Consultations for all students. The travel health consultation provides students an opportunity to discuss personal health matters as well as those particular to their host country and to international travel.
2. The Office of Study Abroad conducts general pre-departure orientations for all KU students who will be participating in Study Abroad. These sessions cover cultural adjustment and culture shock; personal safety; alcohol, drugs and the legal environment abroad; general health guidelines for studying abroad (including health insurance, SES and tips for staying healthy) and handling emergencies.
3. Each individual study abroad program has a pre-departure meeting that addresses the above topics in relation to the specific host country. Program-specific meetings are conducted by faculty directors, OSA staff, and/or student returnees.

In addition, all students are provided a copy of the [Study Abroad Program Handbook](#), the [Travax Report](#) specific to their destination country(ies); and information on safety and security provided by the FBI.

All faculty directors of KU study abroad programs are also required to attend a mandatory orientation prior to program leadership to prepare for issues they may encounter while leading students abroad. These sessions cover issues of personal and institutional liability; student physical and mental health; conditions of participation, student conduct and disciplinary concerns/dismissal; and emergency management. The Office of Student Affairs, General Counsel, and the OSA conduct these sessions.

Communication

All Faculty Directors are provided cell phones for the duration of a study abroad program to ensure communication channels are accessible in the event of an emergency. Phones may be acquired directly by the OSA, or a faculty member may opt to use his/her personal phone with reimbursement for program-related calls.

The Office of Study Abroad also maintains two, 24-hour emergency cell phones available to all students and faculty abroad. Upon calling these numbers (001-785-691-7610 OR 001-785-691-7608), students and faculty will be able to speak to a member of the OSA staff who can assist them in responding to an emergency.

Faculty Directors

Faculty Directors of study abroad programs also play a critical role in planning for (and preventing!) any emergencies that may affect participants while a study abroad program is in session. Directors of study abroad programs should take the following steps:

Prior to Program Departure

- Become familiar with the U.S. Department of State, OSAC, and Travax country-specific information sheets. This will enable you to more accurately and effectively share information on health and safety concerns with your students.
- Hold an on-campus orientation meeting with students. Possible topics to cover include:
 - Program itinerary (academics, excursions, free time)
 - Cultural norms
 - Health concerns for the host country (food and water precautions, medical facilities, common issues for foreigners, etc.)
 - Safety concerns
 - Rules/Regulations governing accommodations
 - Perceptions of Americans in the host country
 - Behavioral expectations
 - Special needs? Ask that students voluntarily disclose physical, medical or mental health conditions that might affect them while abroad. Maintain strict confidentiality with any information provided.
- Register your travel with the U.S. Department of State “Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)”
- Provide students with a complete program itinerary, including contact information for on-site staff (KU faculty/staff, host institution staff, etc.), accommodation facilities, safe and reliable transportation, etc.
- Provide students with information on what to do upon arrival in-country or in the event they encounter travel delays en route to the program site.

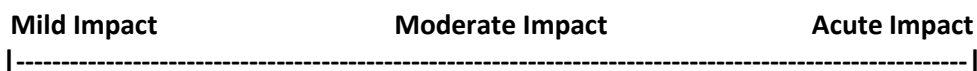
Upon Arrival at the Program Site

- Identify phone numbers and locations for:
 - Emergency Services (police, ambulance, fire, etc.) and Consulate/Embassy
 - Local Residence (hotel, apartment, host family)

- Local clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies for minor illnesses/injuries
- On-call emergency contact(s) information (program director's cell or local contact)
- Fill out the emergency card provided by the Office of Study Abroad and carry at all times.
- Carry Scholastic Emergency Services card and U.S. phone access code with you at all times.
- Maintain rosters of all student participants, including local addresses and contact information.
- Hold an on-site orientation meeting. Possible topics to cover include:
 - Arrival and survival (program itinerary, maps, currency, etc.)
 - Hotel contact info/faculty contact info/on-site contacts/OSA contacts
 - Local Transportation (types, safety concerns, contact information, etc.)
 - Communications (phones, internet access, how to call home, how to contact you)
 - Health (sleep, hydration, early notification of illness, mental health, cultural adjustment)
 - Safety (neighborhoods, transportation, cultural norms, etc.)
 - Alcohol and Drugs
 - Independent Travel (see Independent Travel Check-Out Sheet)
 - Emergencies – *ensure students know how to contact local authorities and program staff in the event of an emergency. Establish a meeting place in the event of an emergency and if telecommunications are down.*
- Be available 24-7 to respond to the needs of student participants

Incident Assessment and Response

Emergencies move along a continuum, and the appropriate response to an incident will vary greatly dependent upon the characteristics of the event, the location of its occurrence (both in terms of country and timing within the program) and the individuals involved.



Mild Impact:

Single incidents that adversely impact an individual student or a small group of students, such as a minor illness, non-violent theft, loss of a passport, minor behavioral issues, etc.

Response:

Faculty Director takes action appropriate to the incident. Incident is reported by email or phone to the Study Abroad Program Coordinator as soon as feasible. OSA Program Coordinator will support faculty director in resolving the incident. For behavioral problems, refer to Disciplinary Guidelines (below).

Moderate Impact:

Developing situations that have the potential to disturb the health and safety of students on-site, or isolated incidents acute enough to place a student or group of students at risk, such as behavioral problems (including excessive drinking or offensive/disruptive conduct), illness for which medical care is being sought, criminal assault on a student, student arrest, or worsening political conditions.

Response:

Faculty Director attends to the immediate health or safety needs of the student or group of students. As soon as possible, director calls OSA Program Coordinator or (OSA emergency phone if after hours) to report incident or ongoing issue. Director and OSA work collaboratively to develop and implement a response plan. If situation continues to worsen or resolution is not reached, OSA will notify the AVP of International Programs and the KU Emergency Management Team to coordinate future action. For behavioral problems, refer to Disciplinary Guidelines (below).

Acute Impact:

Specific incidents that require the immediate attention of the Program Director and the Director of Study Abroad. These may include: sexual assault, significant physical or mental illness/hospitalization, accident or serious injury, disappearance or kidnapping of participant, attempted suicide, death of a student or natural disaster/terrorist attack in the location where the group is residing.

Response:

Faculty Director attends to the immediate health or safety needs of the student or group of students and ensures all students are safe, accounted for, and understand what they are to do. Faculty Director immediately calls U.S. Consulate or Embassy, SES, and Director of Study Abroad to report incident. Director of Study Abroad will assist faculty in immediate response plan and implement appropriate institutional communication protocols. KU Emergency Management Team will be convened to coordinate future action.

General Role of the Faculty Director in an Emergency

- Attend to the immediate needs of the student(s) involved.
- Remove other participants from danger (if applicable).
- Gather information related to the event causing the emergency, including impact, intensity, and recommendations regarding the student/program.
- Contact (as appropriate) local medical emergency officials, law enforcement officers, the U.S. Embassy/Consulate, Scholastic Emergency Services, and KU OSA.
- Provide continuous monitoring of situation and open communication with KU.
- Record all steps taken in response to the incident.
- Support the program and crisis management team in completing other tasks as needed.

University of Kansas Emergency Management Infrastructure

Most emergencies affecting KU study abroad programs can be fully addressed by the Faculty Director and the Office of Study Abroad. Early, frequent and open communication between these two parties, along with consultation with all appropriate KU offices (could include Student Affairs, General Counsel, the academic department, etc.), generally leads to resolution of the problem. However, in the event of an acute emergency, the Emergency Management Team will be assembled. The team is comprised of individuals from the following units (composition of the task force will vary depending upon the nature of the emergency): Study Abroad, International Programs, Student Affairs, General Counsel, the Provost's Office, the academic unit, and Public Affairs. The Emergency Management Team will have responsibility for development of a plan of action to deal with all aspects of the overseas emergency.

In all cases:

1. Maintain strict confidentiality.
2. If additional students or staff members are aware of an incident, ask that they respect the rights of those involved for confidentiality and wait to contact their families until Study Abroad, KU officials, and family members of those involved have been informed.
3. Refer media inquiries to the Director of Study Abroad.
As a Faculty Director, you should not speak to the media (domestic or international) unless authorized to do so by Study Abroad or KU Public Affairs. Whenever possible, statements to the media should be made exclusively through Public Affairs or another designated spokesperson. Adhering to this policy ensures that only one source releases information to the media and limits conflicting or misinformation from being released.

Office of Study Abroad Emergency Contact Information

8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday – Friday

OSA front desk 785-864-3742

After Hours Emergencies:

OSA Emergency cell phones 785-691-7608
..... 785-691-7610

OSA email

Angela Perryman, Directoraperryman@ku.edu
Nancy Chaison, Associate Director.....nchaison@ku.edu
Michele Arellano, Associate Director.....michelea@ku.edu

Scholastic Emergency Services Contact Information

Contact SES immediately for emergency assistance and coordination of emergency services in the event of moderate or acute incidents involving a student or staff member’s mental or physical health or safety (injury or illness requiring medical services or if student requires counseling, replacement documents, etc.)

Scholastic Emergency Services..... from outside the U.S. dial 001-609-452-8570
Call collect 24/7

If requesting assistance through SES, ask student/staff member in question to fill out Authorization for Release of Medical Record Information (provided by SES) so that Scholastic Emergency Services can release information to the program director, Study Abroad and student’s parents (if appropriate).

Disciplinary Guidelines for Study Abroad Programs

It is our hope that all KU students will use mature judgment and make thoughtful, responsible decisions while abroad. However, inappropriate conduct and student misbehavior may occur from time to time. The following guidelines for disciplinary action are based upon the KU campus procedures (**See:** KU Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, KU Student Housing code). Additionally, the *Liability, Medical Release and Conditions of Participation Form* can be used to help you identify appropriate student conduct and behavior, and guide you in addressing misbehavior and/or misconduct should it occur.

When should I call OSA? OSA staff are here to provide assistance and support at any time. Program directors should contact OSA if student behavior warrants a warning (see below) or more serious disciplinary action.

Progressive Disciplinary Action while Abroad (*frequently behavioral problems*)

1. **Counseling** – In the majority of cases, this is the first step. Counseling is a dialogue, conducted in private, between director and participant about an incident. The program director should clearly identify program rules and subsequent behavior expected from the participant. The program director should document the session in writing and share it with the student.
2. **Warning** – A warning is a written citation of inappropriate behavior, with reference to the rule that has been violated. The warning should state that subsequent infractions should not occur and that repeat offenses will receive more serious disciplinary measures including dismissal without refund from the program. The student should be asked to sign the citation, with a brief statement that he/she received a copy of the written warning. The student must be given a chance to respond to the charges in a private meeting with the program director (and third person, where appropriate). This meeting should be scheduled in a timely fashion.
3. **Subsequent Disciplinary Measures** should be made with the assistance of the Office of Study Abroad. Imposing of any of the following disciplinary measures requires a report of non-academic misconduct to be filed with the University's Vice Provost for Student Affairs.
 - a. Probation from program activities for a period of time, without refund of activity costs.
 - b. Probation from class for a period of time, with or without the possibility to make up the work missed.
 - c. Dismissal, without refund.
4. **Appeal of Disciplinary Measures** — On a study abroad program, the program director's ultimate decision is final. If the student wishes to appeal a decision, he or she may do so upon return to campus.

Exceptions to Progressive Discipline

The above process may be waived in situations involving acts of violence by a member or members of the group, irrefutable evidence of drug abuse, or immediate threat to the safety of the individual student, the group or a member of the group. In these circumstances contact the OSA immediately.