



15.3.1 Education Abroad Policy

Chapter 15 - International	Original Effective Date: October 2010
Section: 15.3 Education Abroad	Date Last Reviewed: November 2019
Responsible Entity: Vice President for Academic, Faculty, and Student Affairs	Date Last Revised: November 2019

I. Purpose

UT Health San Antonio (hereafter referred to as University) places great importance on international experiences, particularly those that provide value added educational and training opportunities for its students. When students of the University community, and the faculty who teach them, travel abroad for academic or professional purposes, the safety of these individuals is of paramount importance and, to that end, the University and the University of Texas System have implemented education abroad program guidelines, policies, procedures, and internal requirements to help facilitate a safe and rewarding education abroad experience.

Education abroad programs are intended to provide University students with an intellectually challenging experience beyond the University, the State of Texas, and the United States. In order to ensure that students are prepared to gain full benefit from the education abroad experience, the University has established academic and other eligibility criteria that regulate student, departmental, and School participation in these unique academic and para-professional program

II. Scope

This policy concerns all education abroad programs (examples: credit-bearing, experiential/training related, and/or “Service Learning” programs) that are delivered by, in association with, or under the auspices of the University.

The Office of International Services (OIS) has institutional oversight for the management and administration of University international programs and services, including education abroad program administration, international program development, and implementation of institutional international linkages.

The responsibility for meeting the terms and conditions of this policy resides at the School, departmental and divisional level, and includes but is not limited to University Centers, Institutes, and affiliated entities that bear the University name and logo.

III. Policy

- A. All education abroad trips must be approved by the OIS in advance of program advertisement. Faculty and Schools development and/or administering education abroad programs must submit a Program Approval or a Program Renewal form annually to OIS. This submission must include an Emergency Action Plan, which must be submitted by the sponsoring faculty member(s) traveling with students abroad. Faculty, staff, and students participating and/or leading an education abroad program is required to attend separate pre-departure safety orientations through OIS.
- B. University education abroad activities should, if possible, involve the issuance of academic credit to students. Because the University is responsible for the academic quality of all courses and for the academic credits recorded on a University transcript, courses that have any element of activity abroad must be vetted and approved, well in advance of the proposed education abroad departure date, via established course approval processes within the departments and the schools.
- C. Faculty and/or staff who lead group education abroad activities must have a bona-fide University appointment; adjunct faculty members may not have lead responsibility for a University sponsored or associated education abroad program.
- D. A University education abroad program can be cancelled or suspended at the discretion of OIS at multiple points, including: 1) at the point of proposal, 2) at any point in the program development/logistical/travel preparation process, and, 3) post-departure. Reasons for cancellations may include but are not limited to impending security threats, national disasters, infectious disease outbreaks, low participant numbers, and faculty availability.
- E. Per the Institutional Handbook of Operating Policies (IHOP), Policy [6.2.3 Foreign Travel](#), international travelers are required to complete certain steps prior to departing on an international trip. University faculty and staff should also review the University's policies in the IHOP, Policy [6.2.12 Purchase of Airline Tickets](#), Policy [6.2.14 Travel Reimbursement Policies](#), and Policy 6.2.15 Receipts for Travel Expenses".
- F. In addition to the above, all University travelers must adhere to any additional International Travel Policies set forth by the IHOP, Policy [15.2.1 International Travel Policies](#) which includes information on Travel to High Risk Areas and Emergency Response.
- G. Additional guidelines for meeting the terms and conditions of this policy may be found at the [Office of International Services website](#).
- H. Academic Unit Responsibilities

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1. The schools, and the academic departments and divisions therein, will have curricular and fiscal responsibility for all education abroad activities, which includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Education abroad faculty must carefully follow the established course development and course approval processes, paying careful attention to established timelines, timeframes, credit hour calculations, and accreditation requirements, etc.;
 - b. The University must also ensure that each and every education abroad course program or endeavor will establish and evaluate both program and student learning outcomes;
 - c. Education abroad courses, programs, and activities must receive appropriate institutional approval, including consultation with the Office of International Services, which may include the establishment of a written Memorandum of Understanding between institutions, for program delivery in all locations;
 - d. Schools and departments must assess institutionally determined education abroad program fees when and where appropriate; and,
 - e. Education abroad faculty must ensure that all student service-related issues will be addressed via established institutional channels and protocols.

I. Student Responsibilities

1. Student participation in University sponsored or associated education abroad programs is predicated on the following minimum conditions and circumstances. Failure to complete these requirements by any and all imposed deadlines will result in dismissal from program participation with no refunds.
 - i. Participants must be fully admitted, registered University students at the time of program participation;
 - ii. Participants must be a student in good academic standing at the time of program participation;
 - iii. Participants who have any form of campus judicial sanction or who are involved in disciplinary action are ineligible for education abroad participation; and
 - iv. Consultation with OIS is required by all student participants well in advance of the proposed education abroad program departure date. Students must complete required forms and documentation by the indicated deadlines on the OIS website and must also meet and complete any additional forms and deadlines required by each sponsoring school and department. This includes obtaining health clearance from a licensed provider and, in some cases, includes providing up-to-date immunization documentation and/or receiving new vaccines.

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- v. All students must also participate in a formal education abroad pre-departure orientation provided by OIS.

J. Specific Revisions

1. University students who participate in an education abroad experience or activity, but who do not follow campus policy and procedures as noted in this policy and other governing policies may not receive academic or experiential credit for the education abroad experience.
2. If an official member of a registered University student organization travels abroad and does not follow the education abroad guidelines noted herein and retroactively requests academic credit for the education abroad experience, academic credit may not be awarded for any reason.
3. Personal travel or travel taken while on vacation or leave from the University, if not conducted within one's capacity as a University representative, is not included under this policy.
4. The friends and family members of University faculty members and students may not participate in or be part of a University sponsored or associated education abroad program.
5. Graduate Medical Education Trainees should refer to GME Policy 2.15A for all international rotations and/or global health trips.

IV. Definitions

When used in this document with initial capital letter(s), the following words have the meaning set forth below unless a different meaning is required by context.

Education abroad program – for the purposes of this policy, education abroad program means: Reciprocal student exchange program; Faculty-led course, program, or activity; or Direct enrollment and/or placement at a foreign University or through an external organization that includes, but is not limited to, elective rotation/clerkship or laboratory-based research.

V. Related References

There are no related documents associated with this Policy.

VI. Review and Approval History

- A. The approving authority of this policy is the University Executive Committee.
- B. The review frequency cycle is set for three years following the last review date, a time period that is not mandated by regulatory, accreditation, or other authority.

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Effective Date	Action Taken	Approved By	Date Approved
10/2010	Policy Origination		
11/2019	Policy Revision		
06/2021	Policy Update		