



Emergency Response Guidelines for Faculty-led Study Abroad Programs

Three rules for handling an emergency abroad

1. Take control of the situation
2. Get to the scene as soon as possible
3. Document the events, details, and actions taken

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EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDELINES

Faculty-led Study Abroad Programs provide our OSU students with extraordinary opportunities to explore new cultures, countries, and concepts under the leadership of OSU faculty members. While emergencies rarely occur, when they do leaders need immediate guidelines to follow to ensure they have covered all the bases and that the situation is handled smoothly and efficiently.

In general, good documentation is important. So for any incident, documenting the date, who was contacted, who was involved, and what was done is important to record keeping and recall of incidents in case there are later questions about how the incident was handled.

Each OSU college coordinates its own faculty-led programs abroad and provides an immediate contact in case of emergency. These "Emergency Response Guidelines" consolidate college emergency response protocols to provide an easy reference of specific procedures for emergencies involving participants in OSU's faculty-led programs. The purpose of these procedures is to ensure the safety and well-being of the participants and the leaders.

PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

Provide participants a complete cultural and logistical orientation at OSU and on site.

Ensure participants:

- Carry health and accident insurance
- Are informed about emergency procedures including a phone chain for emergency communication
- Possess an emergency contact list
- Understand their responsibilities to the program and the university
- Know the rights of US citizens abroad

Have the participants complete and sign:

- An emergency contact form, including insurance provider and policy number
- A release of information or authorization to communicate with the emergency contact
- A release from liability form
- A student behavior agreement (code of conduct)
- An authorization for the program to use photos or quotes

Locate contact information for the hospitals, ambulances, police departments in the sites to be visited.

Know the access codes for the US from the country or countries you are visiting.

Register participants with the U.S. Embassy in the country or countries on your itinerary

Know the contact information for the closest US Embassy or Consulate

Complete an emergency contact form to be left with your college Outreach/International Programs (IP) Director

What is an Emergency?

Two types of incidents can occupy the faculty leaders' attention. Both should be treated seriously.

Real emergency: Genuine or imminent risk or disturbance (physical or emotional illness, accident, physical assault, disappearance for an unusually long time, incarceration, kidnapping, terrorist threat or attack, political coup or civil unrest, natural or manmade disaster).

Perceived emergency: Risk thought by the participant, family, university personnel, or others in the US to be threatening. (Sensationalized reporting of an event, a distortion of information, incomplete information, or misinformation about a particular event.)

1.0 CONTACT INFORMATION/REPORTING INCIDENTS

When a serious incident occurs (illness, injury, sexual assault, death, political unrest, natural disaster, etc.) contact the College Outreach/International Programs Director coordinating your program abroad and the Risk Management Office. If you call after hours, contact the OSU police to relay your message to the family, rather than calling the family of the victim directly.

Dial the access code for the US from your site, then the country code (1), then the number below. **Be sure you know the access code for the US from the countries you will visit.**

OSU Official	Contact number
OSU Police Emergency Number	(405) 744-6523
Risk & Property Management: Mike Bale	(405) 744-8899 (office); (405) 880-0885 (cell)
International Studies and Outreach: David Henneberry	(405) 744-6606 (office)
Study Abroad/NSE Office: Jeff Simpson	(405) 744-8540 (o); (405) 334-3699 (cell)
Communications Services: Gary Shutt	(405) 744-4800
A&S Outreach Emergency Number	Individual Outreach Coordinator phone attached to program
DASNR International Programs	Adele Tongco: (405) 269-2341 CASNR Main Office: (405) 744-5395
Education Outreach	Vallory Vencill (405) 612-4770 (cell)
Human Sciences Outreach	Coordinator's Office (405)744-9386 (o);
CEAT Programs	Kristi Wheeler: (405) 744-9227 (office) (405) 714-3316 (cell)
SSB - CAGLE: Study Abroad and Travel	Cinda Krout: (405) 744-5210(o); (405) 714-0314 (cell)
Vet Med Programs	Chris Ross: (405) 744-6651 Robin Wilson: (405) 744-6653

If you call the OSU Police Department, you may call collect stating that you are the faculty leader of a study abroad program. A list of program leaders and students for each program should have been previously provided to the OSU Police so the dispatcher will know to accept a collect call. Be sure to emphasize that the situation is urgent or an emergency. Note the conversation in your log of the incident. (See the incident report form at the end of this document.)

Provide the following details when you call:

- Your name and the program you are directing
- Your location and immediate contact number and how long it will be valid
- Participant’s name, individuals involved
- The nature of the emergency
- When you will call back or when the OSU administrator may call you
- Your longer term contact number
- Whether the participant’s/s’ families are aware of the situation

2.0 RESPONDING TO SERIOUS INJURY

RESPONDING TO SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNESS CHECKLIST

If you are on-site, take care of the medical emergency first and foremost, then

- Obtain details and document what happened
- Go to the participant
- Evaluate the situation
- Arrange medical evacuation if necessary
- Be able to provide medical alert/allergy information to the Emergency Response/ medical staff
- Do not call the family, but rely on the Outreach Office or OSU Police to ensure communication is complete and accurate.

2.1 Obtain details and document what happened, including who provided the information and when:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- Where is the participant now?
- Does s/he need immediate medical attention? Is a rescue operation needed?
- Has anyone called for help? If so, who has been called?
- If help has arrived, what is being done?
- What medical treatment has the participant received?
- Were there witnesses (in cases of accident, assault, or other crime)?

If the participant needs to be taken to a hospital/clinic, help the student get there – either in person or by calling an ambulance, or advising an on-the-scene participant to get help for the student (especially if the incident occurs across town or while the student is traveling.)

If the situation requires immediate medical action, call the emergency contact provided by the participant on his/her application. If you are uncomfortable calling, telephone the college Outreach/International Program Director to make the call and explain the situation.

2.2 Go where the participant has been taken for treatment

Join the student as soon as you can to be sure s/he is receiving appropriate care. If you can't get to the participant, (for example if he/she has gone to another location for the weekend) call the Outreach/IP Director to discuss what should be done.

Document the answers to the following questions:

- Who is the attending physician (if any)?
- Does the attending physician speak English?
- What is the diagnosis?
- What is the prescribed treatment?
- What is the prognosis?
- Has the participant's insurance company been contacted?
- Are other participants at risk (physical or psychological)?
- Is airlift evacuation a desirable and/or viable action?

2.3 Monitor the situation

At all times, be respectful of the participant's privacy. Don't divulge information, even to the participant's family members without his/her prior specific consent. Privacy law exceptions apply, however, in case of emergency and the injured person cannot act for him or herself.

Other participants may learn about the incident and want to share their information. Explain that the participant involved in being taken care of and caution them about speculative discussion. Advise them to wait until complete and accurate information is available before they communicate with persons at home. Keep them informed in a way that will ensure their confidence as well as protect the privacy of the participant.

Stay in contact with any medical personnel involved in the situation and keep your incident report up to date. Keep the Outreach/International Program Director updated.

2.4 If medical evacuation is recommended

If it is recommended that the participant be taken to the nearest medical facility (in-country or out-of-country) equipped to deal with the illness or injury, you or a co-leader should accompany the participant if possible. If not possible, call the Outreach/International Program Director to discuss possible solutions.

3.0 DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

3.1 Become familiar with the code of conduct for your program

3.2 Document the incident/incidents

3.3 Inform the Outreach/IP Director

Keep the Outreach/IP Director informed so as to assist you with assessment and response

3.4 Respond to egregious behavior

Egregious violation of conduct rules dictate immediate dismissal

3.5 Follow due process in dealing with other violations

- 3.5a Verbal warning (and e-mail to Outreach/IP Director)
- 3.5b Written warning
- 3.5c Dismissal

3.6 Be specific in giving a verbal warning

- 3.6a Identify the unacceptable behavior
- 3.6b Request the student cease the behavior
- 3.6c Outline consequences for failure to comply
- 3.6d Inform the Outreach/IP Director

4.0 MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS**4.1 Become aware of signs of distress**

The most frequent conditions reported on study abroad may include:

- Anxiety symptoms and panic attacks
- Depression
- Self mutilation
- Eating disorders
- Chronic alcohol or prescription drug abuse

If a participant's behavior leads you to believe s/he may have a mental health condition, focus on the disruptive or harmful behavior and the impact on the learning environment, rather than trying to diagnose the problem.

4.2 Document the behavior**4.3 Ask participants to report if a peer's behavior is hampering their ability to learn or to get the most out of their program.****4.4 Contact the Outreach/IP Director if you notice indication of a potential problem****4.5 The OSU Counseling Services Office website lists signs and symptoms of distress:**

<http://www.okstate.edu/ucs/studentdistress.html>

4.6 If you need to consult with personnel in the University Counseling Services, a counselor is on call after hours and can be reached through the OSU PD, (405) 744-6523

University Counseling Services
(405) 744-5472; suzanne.burks@okstate.edu

5.0 SEXUAL ASSAULT

SEXUAL ASSAULT CHECKLIST

- Do what is immediately best for the participant
- Contact the college Outreach/International Program Director
- Follow up with the participant
- Document the incident and continue to log actions and conversations
- Follow up with other program participants
- Don't call the family, but rely on the Outreach Office or OSU Police to ensure communication is complete and accurate

5.1 When a sexual assault is reported

The primary concern is to do what is best for the student both physically and emotionally. Maintain careful notes of all conversations and observations. Listen to the participant's wishes, especially if s/he asks you not to get in touch with an emergency contact.

If the victim reports the assault soon after it happens, s/he may be in shock, physically harmed and emotionally distraught. Remember (especially if you and the victim are of opposite sexes) the victim may respond negatively to physical contact or invasion of personal space. Treat the victim gently without judgment. Ask if s/he would like to have a friend present during your conversation.

5.1a If a participant reports a sexual assault to you or if a student believes another participant has been victimized:

- If the reporter isn't the victim, ask how s/he knows about the assault. Record the reporter's name.
- Find out where the victim is, what happened, and who was involved when the assault occurred.
- Ask the victim to what extent s/he wishes to involve the local police.
- Ask the victim if s/he wishes the emergency contact to be notified of the assault.
- Note any obvious signs of physical distress or injury. Take the student to a local hospital or clinic that you can trust if appropriate and desirable.
- Don't wash or discard clothes, bedding, or other potential evidence.
- Note any signs of emotional distress. If there are, start the process of getting support for the student. As soon as possible consult a rape counselor, psychologist, or psychiatrist.
- Reassure the victim that the assault isn't his/her fault and that s/he didn't cause it.
- Explain the host country's laws and procedures for dealing with sexual assault so the victim can be prepared to make a decision to go to the police, hospital, or a rape-crisis agency. Check the country specific page of the State Department website, www.travel.state.gov.
- If there is no obvious physical injury, ask the victim whether s/he would like to go to a hospital or clinic. If so, help with getting to the facility.

5.1b If the victim declines assistance:

- Escort him/her to student housing and make sure s/he gets to the room safely.
- Explain that you or someone designated by the program (local rape counselor, for example) will contact him/her to see if assistance is required.
- Provide the names, telephone numbers, and addresses of local authorities s/he can contact if assistance or counseling is needed: police, counseling/mental health agencies or hotlines; local psychiatrist/psychologist; rape crisis center, or other appropriate on-site services.

- Give her/him the number for the Stillwater Rape Crisis Hotline (405) 624-3020.
- Contact the local psychiatrist/psychologist whose name you have given to the victim, and explain that there has been an assault, and though the victim declines assistance, you provided her/him with this professional's contact information.
- Continue to check in on the student and (without insisting) remind her/him there are resources available should she/he decide that assistance is needed.

5.1c Start a log – document everything you know about the situation, including:

- What happened; who was involved; when the incident took place
- The victim's wishes about involving the local police and notification of her/his emergency contact
- Obvious signs of physical distress or injury – what are they? Describe appearance and location
- Obvious signs of emotional distress – describe the victim's demeanor and apparent state of mind
- What you told the victim about host country's laws and procedures for dealing with sexual assault
- The victim's wishes about care
- Name and phone number of local hospital or clinic that's caring for the victim, as well as physicians' names
- Victim's wishes to decline care, reporting, emergency contact protocol –note the circumstances under which the offers were made and declined (each time you offer assistance, note the circumstances, the offer, and the outcome)

5.1d If the accused attacker is also a participant or is affiliated with the program in some way:

- Do what you can to keep the alleged attacker away from the victim. This is not a presumption of guilt, but rather an effort to serve the interests of the injured student to help deflect a potentially upsetting presence. In this case, no matter what the wishes of the victim, the situation must be reported and dealt with.
- Generally, if the victim wishes family members to know, s/he will call them him/herself. You may offer to help (a conference call with a counselor can be arranged); however, don't insist.

5.2 Contact the college Outreach/International Programs Director

Once the victim's physical state has been taken care of and s/he is reasonably stable, contact the college Outreach/International Programs Director and report what has happened. The OSU University Counseling Center may be brought in at this time.

5.3 Follow up with the student

- Check periodically on the participant's state of being.
- Pass along the materials on coping with the aftermath of sexual assault; provide the student with a list of on-campus services for sexual assault.
- Give her/him the number of the OSU Rape Crisis Hotline, **(405) 624-3020**. If the student wishes, facilitate contact with his/her family, friends, or other support network members at home.
- Assist the victim with contacting or getting to counseling (or another official agency).
- Be aware of the victim's general spirits and appearance. Follow up if s/he is absent from class, develops emotional, physical, eating, or psychological difficulties and send him/her to the appropriate professional. If s/he declines help, get advice from the appropriate professional and do what you can to support the student.
- Keep the OSU Counseling Services informed of the situation.

5.4 Observe administrative protocols

- At all times, respect the participant's privacy. Don't reveal information to other participants, medical staff, or even to the participant's family members, without his/her express consent.
- Keep the incident log up-to-date, noting conversations with the participant.
- Maintain contact with any physicians involved in the case.
- Continue to update the college Outreach/International Programs Director.
- Work with any local authorities to help advance any investigation.
- Call your college Outreach/International Programs Director if you are concerned about the victim's behavior, academic performance, or health and discuss options, including sending the student home.
- If the accused attacker is also a program participant, do what you can to separate him/her from the assault victim—both in the classroom and in student housing. Balance the needs of the victim and the accused participant. If the victim decides to press charges at the official level and through the University, you must help him/her to do so. Likewise, while the accused attacker is bound by the laws of the host country (which may limit your ability to be of help) you must help him/her process the case and protect his/her privacy as well.

5.5 On-site follow-up with other program participants

Be prepared to deal with rumors that might circulate faster than you can imagine. In all cases, protect the victim's privacy as much as you can. You may want to mention that the participant in question was the victim of an (unspecified) assault and that it's important for other members of the group to be careful and to support each other. Emphasize safety guidelines. If pressed for details, be as reassuring as possible, but explain that you are obliged to protect the victim's (and the attacker's) privacy, just as you would the person asking for details.

6.0 DEATH OF A PARTICIPANT

DEATH OF A PARTICIPANT CHECKLIST

- Go to the site of the incident
- Determine victim's identity and full name
- Call local authorities if necessary
- Call college Outreach/International Programs Director
- Don't call the family directly, but rely on OSU officials to provide complete and accurate communication with them
- Work with local authorities
- Attend to other participants
- Call the nearest US Embassy or Consulate to arrange for repatriation of remains
- Have a death certificate prepared
- Follow up on-site to thank the local authorities/officials for their assistance
- Follow up with program participants

6.1 When you receive news of a participant's death:

- Go to where the incident occurred as soon as possible. If you can't travel to the site where the death has occurred, gather information about the student in order to help local authorities.
- If you are at the scene and you think the participant is dead, do not try to move or touch the body, or interfere with it until help arrives. If possible, try to screen off the area; for example, keep onlookers away to preserve the evidence of the incidence.

- If there are other participants in the area, call them together and provide any help and reassurance you can. Explain that you want to speak with them and ask them to wait for you to deal with the incident. If possible, ask another program administrator to remain with them.
- Determine the dead participant's identity and correct full name.
- Call local authorities and explain what has happened or send someone to contact the authorities.

6.2 Call your college Outreach/International Programs Director

If there is no answer at work or at home, call the OSU Police Department or the OSU Risk Management Office at 405-744-8899, (office) or 405-880-0885 (cell). Report what has happened using the list of questions in section 1.0 of this protocol.

Leave calling the family to appropriate University personnel.

6.3. Help the local authorities

How you work with local authorities to handle the situation will depend on local customs. Be sure to give the local authorities any details you can, including information about where and how you can be reached. Document what you've been advised to do; be sure to request the names of the officers or emergency personnel involved, as well as the name and telephone number of their emergency services.

6.4 Attend to other program participants

Help the other program participants, especially those who might have been involved in or witnessed the incident. Listen to their concerns and provide any comfort and reassurance you can. Request that they not contact anyone on their home campus until you've had a chance to talk with the University directly and until the next-of-kin have been notified.

6.5 Take care of administrative matters

- Notify the in-country US Consulate or Embassy of the incident
- For information on the role of the US Embassy in the death or injury of a US citizen abroad visit: http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_3878.html
- Gather your notes and begin a written log of all conversations, telephone calls, and steps taken in response to the incident. This will help keep you organized and help others in reconstructing events as they occurred.
- Review the participant's records for medical history and contact information and insurance contacts so you are prepared to provide or act on information when needed.

6.6 After the death – on-site faculty leader responsibilities

The University may consider sending personnel to carry out the tasks below or another faculty member to complete the program while the original faculty leader attends to the details of the aftermath.

- Coordinate with local authorities and the US Embassy/Consulate to attend to the participant's remains in accordance with the wishes of the family and taking into account local laws and facilities. You may not always be able to meet the wishes of the family and the exigencies of the local facilities and customs
- Work with local authorities to have a death certificate prepared. Depending on the location, the certificate may not be prepared in English. The Embassy or Consulate will need a copy of the document to issue their own certificate of death which must accompany the body on the flight back to the US.

(continued)

- Work with the US Embassy/Consulate to repatriate the student's remains and effects. Embassies and consulates are technically responsible for sending home the effects of US citizens who die overseas, talk with them about how this should be handled.
- Gather the participant's effects and prepare them for transport.
- Notify your college Outreach/International Programs Director of when and how the student's body will be brought home. The Director can then notify the appropriate OSU personnel.
- Attend to the other participants in the program. Be as supportive as you can. If you need advice or assistance in helping students cope, call the OSU Counseling Center, (405) 744-5472. Susie Burks is the OSU Counseling Services Director.

7.0 EVACUATING THE PROGRAM

This section outlines specific procedures for any emergency or crisis involving participants in the Oklahoma State University's study abroad programs that may require departure from the study site and/or return home. First and foremost, the procedures are intended to ensure the safety and well-being of the participants and faculty.

EVACUATING THE PROGRAM CHECKLIST

- Assess the seriousness of the situation and its impact on the program
- Account for all participants
- Contact the nearest US Embassy or Consulate for advice and instructions
- Notify the college Outreach/International Programs Director
- Rely on the Outreach/International Programs Director to contact the families
- Document the situation and actions taken
- If the program is suspended, prepare the participants for departure
- Arrange for transportation to departure site and flight to US

7.1 Steps for faculty leaders

7.1a Determine what is happening and how serious the situation is:

- Is it a real or perceived emergency? In other words, is there something to worry about?
- If there is a natural disaster, will it affect the program?
- What about rumors of a coup d'état? Because you will be closest to what is happening in the country, you are the University's best source of information.

7.1b If it's a real emergency involving all of the participants:

- Contact all the students to make sure they are accounted for and are safe. Follow the emergency procedures you've set up with the students.
- Ask the US Embassy/Consulate or other official government agency to ask for advice or assistance. If the US Embassy is closed, determine the location from which the Embassy is operating (i.e. other embassy within the country or US Embassy in a neighboring country).

Document the following:

- The target of the unrest and the possible danger to US citizens
- Advice regarding minimizing danger to students
- Probable impact of the event on availability of food, water, and medical supplies

- Intensity of the emergency or political unrest
- Presence of emergency or military personnel
- Feasibility of continuing classes, etc.

Begin a log. Continue to update this log as the emergency progresses

- Document who and what are involved, the date and time, and a description of what's happened as you can, fill out the crisis information form which can be faxed to the college Outreach/International Programs Director if you can't reach anyone on campus and which will become part of the final report on the program.
- Call your college Outreach/IP Director and inform them of the event (see section 1.0 for emergency contact numbers and the information to provide). The Outreach/IP Director will channel the information on campus
- Control the situation. Caution participants about speculative communication and advise them to wait until clear information is available before contacting home.

The College Outreach/IP Director will contact you once a consensus has been reached on suspending or continuing the program.

7.2 If the program is suspended – on-site procedures

- Use the emergency procedures established at the initial orientation to assemble all the participants in one place. Outline the problem and explain acceptable actions, including the need for moving or evacuation; methods of not calling attention to the group; ways to contact families once an agreed-upon course of action is established (and contact is possible); reporting of any suspicious persons or activities; evacuation readiness and plans to reconvene.
- Students should pack one carry-on bag that includes medications (prescription and over the counter), passports, travelers' checks, US currency if possible, personal items and a change of clothing (appropriate for the destination climate).
- Coordinate with your Outreach/International Programs Director to make alternate arrangements with the travel agent to book passage out of the country.
- Make arrangements for transportation to the airport, bus or train station.

Reconvene the participants ready to travel and get them to the designated departure site and on the way home.

7.3 After the program has returned to the home campus

- Follow up with the participants to recommend any counseling services that might be needed
- Work with the college Outreach/International Programs Director to arrange academic credit and to negotiate any refunds that might be available

RESOURCES

The references cited below do not represent a comprehensive list of resources, but rather a starting point for developing an understanding of all the elements involved in emergency preparedness and management abroad.

Burak, Patricia A. & William Hoffa eds. (2001) Crisis Management in a Cross-Cultural Setting. NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

State Department Resources:

- General website for the US State Department: www.state.gov
- Emergency Assistance to American Citizens Abroad:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1212.html
- Death or injury of an American citizen abroad:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_3878.html
- Crisis Preparedness for Americans abroad:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1212.html
- Campaign to Encourage College Students to Travel Safely Abroad
<http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov/>
- Overseas Citizens Services : Call 1-888-407-4747
(from overseas: 202-501-4444)

Overseas Security Advisory Council: www.osac.gov/
(information on security threats around the world)

Crisis Management Handbook Adapted from the *Crisis Management Handbook: A Guide for Overseas Staff, Peace Corps Volunteer Safety Council*: <http://www.globaled.us/peacecorps/crisiscontent.html>

Spencer, Sarah E & Kathy Tuma, eds. (2002) The Guide to Successful Short-Term Programs Abroad. NAFSA: Association of International Educators



INCIDENT REPORT

Oklahoma State University Off-Campus Program

Off-campus program leaders/representatives must complete this form as thoroughly as possible for any crimes or incidents (*including hospitalizations, serious/major illness, etc.*) that involve bodily harm, or threats of bodily harm, and/or racially motivated verbal/physical harassment. *Note: Stalking behavior should be considered an incident, which involves "threat of bodily harm," even if no direct threat is verbalized.*

Today's Date: _____
OSU Program and Country: _____
Person Submitting Report: _____
Title or Relationship to Program: _____ _____

Submit the form to the Outreach Program Coordinator.

Student's Name: _____ CWID: _____

Date of Incident: _____

Time of Incident: _____ am pm

Location of Incident:

Were other OSU students involved? Yes No

Were there witnesses? Yes No

Brief description of Incident:

Incident Report

Immediate action taken by Program Leader:

Were clinic/hospital/health practitioners consulted?	Yes	No
Was medical treatment required?	Yes	No

Brief Description:

Were host university authorities notified?	Yes	No
Was the local police notified?	Yes	No
If "yes," was a report filed?	Yes	No

Report Number: _____

Contributing factors, if known, such as weather, student's own behavior, failure to follow OSU policies, failure to follow Study Abroad Program advice, political situation, etc. (*Note: A major purpose of incident reporting is to understand contributing factors to document preventive actions, recommendations, etc.*):

Follow-up Information (*Follow-up information should include: dates & times, persons spoken to, actions taken, additional phone/contact numbers. These notes should be appended to a final report, kept in student's file, and forwarded to the Outreach Coordinator for your program*):