

## Checklist for Student Group Abroad Trip Leaders

### Section I: Checklist for Study Abroad Programs Office

Below are the chronological steps that a student organization should follow before conducting an international trip abroad. The Study Abroad Programs Office is here to assist with any questions you have about the process.

<b>4 – 6 months prior to departure</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Begin the <b>Student Group Abroad Registration</b> in the Study Abroad Portal. Visit <a href="http://studyabroad.tamu.edu/People/Faculty-and-Program-Leaders/Student-Groups">http://studyabroad.tamu.edu/People/Faculty-and-Program-Leaders/Student-Groups</a> and click on “Student Group Abroad Registration page.”
	<b>Check for updated information about your destination:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Texas A&amp;M Country Risk List:</b> <a href="http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/safety/pdf/travelrisk.pdf">http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/safety/pdf/travelrisk.pdf</a>. If your destination country is on the list, additional approval may be needed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory:</b> <a href="https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html">https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html</a></li> </ul>
<b>2 – 4 months prior to departure</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Once the Student Group leader begins the group registration, the Study Abroad advisor will open the individual student group application in the Study Abroad Portal and send registration instructions for students to the trip leader. <b>You must forward these instructions to all student participants.</b> Participants <u>must</u> complete the registration process by the date indicated by the Study Abroad advisor in order to allow ample time for insurance enrollment.
	Complete the following items in the <b>Student Group Registration</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student Group Abroad Name, Dates, Leader(s)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> List of Participants</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement Forms</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Funding and financial aid resources for students</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> University Rules and Standard Administrative Procedures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> On-Site Emergency Form, including itinerary, lodging, and transportation details</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Departure Training information for Trip Leader(s)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> CISI Enrollment Information for Trip Leader(s), if staff/faculty involved</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pre-departure Orientation information for Trip Leader(s) to share with all students</li> </ul>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Trip leader shares the Pre-departure Orientation information with students.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete a <i>Pre-Event Planning Form</i> and submit to Student Activities through MaroonLink for approval.
<b>1 – 2 months prior to departure</b>	<b>Payment of \$70 Field Trip Fee</b> ( <i>trip leader selects one option below in group registration</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If the <b>college/department</b> coordinating the trip will be paying the \$70 fee on behalf of the participants, the Study Abroad advisor will send an invoice for the total amount owed along with a payment deadline and instructions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If the <b>student participants</b> will be responsible for paying the \$70 fee, the Study Abroad advisor will post the fee to their individual TAMU student accounts. Please remind students that they must pay this.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If the <b>student organization</b> coordinating the trip will be paying the \$70 field trip fee on behalf of the members, the student leader must submit an Approval to Bill form to the SOFC. A copy of the completed form must be sent to the Study Abroad advisor.</li> </ul>
<b>4 weeks prior to departure</b>	<b>Send the following to the Study Abroad advisor:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Any updates/changes to information pertaining to the field trip</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Any updates/changes to emergency contact information.</li> </ul>
<b>2 – 4 weeks prior to departure</b>	<b>Study Abroad advisor will e-mail designated trip leader(s) an exit packet, to include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> CISI insurance card for each participant and leader</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A copy of each participant’s medical consent and information</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emergency contact information for each participant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additional resources for emergency assistance</li> </ul> <b>Once all items are complete, the SAPO Field Trip Advisor will change the Student Group Registration to “Confirmed”.</b>

## Section II: Pre-Departure Considerations

Below are some basic pre-departure considerations and recommended information to collect from participants. The list is not exhaustive of all that could be covered during the pre-departure planning.

### Trip Logistics

The Study Abroad Programs Office can provide advice and recommendations upon request. However, it is expected that the Trip Leader will coordinate or assist in coordinating the following:

- Trip location(s) and dates
- Number of participants and support staff needed
- In-country arrangements, including lodging accommodations, transportation, cultural and educational activities, etc.
- Bus, flight or transportation arrangements to/from the destination

### Budgeting & Payments

- Create budget based on itinerary and program activities.
- Coordinate with the college, department or organization business office to post program fees to student accounts, if applicable.
- Coordinate with the college, department or organization business office to execute payment of all trip-related expenses (e.g. hotels, airfare, and other vendors) or work with third-party provider to pay associated fees.

### Passports

- Ensure that students who do not have a passport or who have an expired passport apply for one at least 3 months prior to departure. More information on the passport application process, fees, and processing time can be found at: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html).
- Ensure that all participants' passports will be valid for the required length of time after the trip's end. Each country has different validity requirements. For country-specific requirements, visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html>
- Collect color copies (scanned or hard copies) of each participant's passport (photograph and information pages). These must be uploaded to the group registration in the SAPO portal. Students should also carry a color copy of their passport.

### Visa Requirement

- A visa might be required by the host country (-ies). For more information on country-specific entry and exit requirements, visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html>.
- If required, contact the appropriate Consulate to begin the visa application process.

### Non-U.S. Citizens (including International Students & Green Card Holders)

- Non-U.S. Citizens may need a visa to enter the destination country. Refer to the destination countries' embassy website for entry requirements based on citizenship. International students also need to have a valid student visa to re-enter the United States upon return from the field trip.
- International students are required to check their visa status and obtain a Travel Signature with International Student Services (ISS) prior to going abroad.

### Research International Travel and Security Information

- Determine appropriate carry-on and checked baggage allowance. More information can be found on your airline carrier's website or at <http://tsa.gov>.
- Recommended airport check-in time: 3 hours prior to departure (for international flights); 2 hours prior to departure (domestic flights).

### Health and Medical Considerations

- **Vaccinations**—might be required. See the Center for Disease Control's website (<http://cdc.gov>) for country-specific vaccination requirements. **IMPORTANT: For those groups staying at one of the A&M Centers or Partners (Santa Chiara, Soltis Center, or Santa Clara) must provide proof of bacterial meningitis vaccinations for all student participants per University regulations.**
- **Prescription Medications**—should be transported in its original container with the prescription attached. Remind participants to bring a sufficient supply.
- **CISI Medical Insurance**—for more information regarding Texas A&M University's policy with CISI, including coverage limits, see <http://studyabroad.tamu.edu/Parents/Insurance>. All participants are enrolled for the duration of the trip.
- **Doctors and Medical Facilities**—for information regarding doctors and medical facilities worldwide, consult the CISI website and go into their online portal.
- **Emergency Contacts, Medical Information & Consent Form**—The form collects information about allergies, medications and medical conditions that the student discloses. Should a participant need medical assistance and is incapacitated, this form can be given to the assisting doctor or medical personnel. This form is embedded in the

student's application. Approximately 1 month before the program starts, this form will be sent to the trip leaders by the along with all participants' insurance cards. Trip leaders should travel with a copy of this document, keeping it in a secure place at all times. This document must be destroyed upon completion of the trip.

**Pre-Departure Preparation and Orientations**

- The Health & Safety Pre-departure orientation is embedded in the group registration. Trip leaders have access to this material as soon as they start a group registration and are asked to incorporate this material in their pre-departure meetings with students.
- Field Trip Leaders should provide *at least one* orientation specific to their trip for all student participants. Suggested pre-departure orientation topics include, but are not limited to:
  - Behavior and expectations (pre-departure and while abroad)
  - Budget and financial information
  - Cultural and country-specific information
  - Health and safety advice
  - Travel and packing guidance
- In addition to the pre-departure orientation, SAPO provides an "[Affording Study Abroad](#)" presentation each month during the fall and spring semesters that is open to any student and discusses scholarships and financial aid for study abroad. Field Trip Leaders could encourage students to go to the presentation or read through the online material.
- Before the group starts, the trip leader should check and make sure that students are enrolled in the required courses, if the program is credit bearing.

**Copies of Documents**

- Encourage participants to make copies of all important documents (e.g. passport, visa, airline tickets, credit cards- front and back, etc.).
  - Have them leave 1 copy with a trusted family member/friend in the U.S.
  - Take 1-2 copies with them abroad; should be stored securely.

**Register with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate**

- This can be done online at <https://step.state.gov/step/>.
- Group or individual registration is available.

**Destination Considerations**

- Arrange a cell phone for while abroad.
- Consider destination country/area food and water safety.
- Prepare a first-aid kit for the group.
- Determine rendezvous locations, dates and times if group will not always travel together.

**Final Trip Preparations**

- Confirm all in-country logistics, including accommodation reservations, transportation, museum appointments, etc.
- Finalize and distribute a final copy of the field trip itinerary, emergency contact information, etc. to all participants
- Confirm that participants requiring special documentation (e.g. visa) are prepared for international travel
- Verify that all participants have submitted required materials (e.g. copies of important documents, Medical Consent Form, etc.)
- Verify **Destination Considerations**

**Final Check for Safety of Travel Announcements**

- Check to see if there are any warnings on the Texas A&M Country Risk List: <http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/safety/pdf/travelrisk.pdf>
- For information regarding U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories, visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>
- For other news involving international travel for U.S. citizens, visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en.html>

**Questions?**

Contact the Study Abroad Programs Office Field Trip & Student Group Team:

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