

# Associated Colleges of the South

## International Programs Guidelines for On-Site Faculty Directors Emergency Response Protocol

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## A. Introduction

Faculty Directors who accompany students on overseas or other off-campus programs have a variety of duties and responsibilities. In addition to ensuring the academic integrity of the program, these include responding to unforeseen circumstances and emergencies.

In fact, responding to such unforeseen circumstances and emergencies is one of the most crucial responsibilities of the on-site director. Inevitably, problems, from minor to major, will arise and you, as the faculty director, must be prepared to assess the situation on-site and react appropriately. This Emergency Response Protocol will assist with this process for more serious emergencies. Each situation must be assessed individually, but this protocol provides basic steps that will help to guide and structure the process. These procedures are intended to:

- Assist those who deal with an emergency to respond in a timely and appropriate manner
- Provide coordination with external individuals and agencies
- Provide communication to the campus community
- Assist in post-emergency support and evaluation

It is your responsibility to thoroughly familiarize yourself with these procedures and to complete the required contact information. Your home campus international office can provide you with assistance and help you better understand your duties and responsibilities. You should consult with them and with the managing institution international office (if different). Also consult with ACS staff members who will work with you at every juncture to insure a safe and successful program.

## B. Contact information and documentation

Contact information: If a serious emergency arises, you do not want to find yourself scrambling to locate the appropriate phone numbers and contact information. Work with your international office and ACS staff to complete all of the required contact information. **If any information is missing, it is your responsibility to find it and complete it now.**

Documentation: When handling any emergency it is always critical to document your actions. Keep a log of information received, from whom and what steps were taken. Careful documentation will be critical to evaluating the situation once the emergency has abated.

**Stateside Contact Information  
ACS, Campus and Other Offices**  
(provide all available information phone, fax, email, etc.)

Program Name:	
1.Primary Campus Contact:	
2.Alternate Campus Contact #1:	
3.Alternate Campus Contact #2:	
4.Primary ACS Contact:	
5.Other contacts: (e.g. travel agency, etc.)	

**Local Contact Information  
Overseas Program Location  
Emergency Telephone Numbers and Directions**

1.Airport & Airlines	
2.Co-directors	
3.Embassy or Consulate	
4.Fire	
5.Hospital	
6.Insurance providers	
7.Local security personnel	
8.Local site staff & contacts	
9.Police	
10. Sexual assault hotline/clinic	
11. Travel Agency	

## **C. Reporting incidents: communication and responsibilities**

When a serious incident occurs (such as illness, injury, death, sexual assault, political or social unrest), the faculty director should contact the stateside contact(s) listed above and relay the circumstances and context of the situation as soon as possible. "As soon as possible" means that you should first ensure the safety of all students and participants and then proceed to communicate with the relevant parties in the appropriate stateside office(s). When necessary and appropriate, stateside contacts will coordinate contact with other relevant parties (student parents, relatives, and/or international program directors at students' home campuses).

Your first point of contact is the international office at the managing institution. This office (in conjunction with ACS staff) will assist you in dealing with the incident you are reporting. In the unlikely event, that you cannot reach any of the contacts at the managing institution, your alternative point of contact is ACS as listed in B. above.

Depending on the nature of the emergency and after the emergency is "under control," there may be vital decisions that need to be made concerning such matters as terminating the program or sending additional assistance to the site. These decisions will be made by the ACS President in close consultation with the dean of the managing institution, the deans of all other institutions that have a specific interest in the program (those with student or faculty participants), and the full council of ACS deans.

A call from you, as an on-site faculty director, regarding a problem/emergency should always include the following information:

1. Your name
2. Name of program
3. Where you are calling from
4. Nature and severity of the emergency
5. Status of the entire group
6. Telephone number and where you can be reached
7. Other available means of contact (email, fax, etc.)
8. Until when/for how long
9. When you will call back with additional information

If the situation relates to an individual student, then also:

1. Name and current condition of the student in question
2. Whether the student's family is aware of the situation

## **D. Group accidents/natural disasters**

In the event of a group accident (such as a bus wreck) or natural disaster (such as an earthquake, flood, hurricane) the faculty director should:

1. Ensure the safety of all students and participants.
2. Contact all students to make sure they are accounted for and safe.
3. Contact the U.S. Embassy, consulate or other official government agency (local police, local sponsors, etc.) and ask for advice and assistance.

This may include gathering the following information:

- \*advice on minimizing danger to students
- \*probable impact of event on the availability of basic supplies (food, water, medical supplies, etc.)
- \*presence of emergency or military personnel
- \*evacuation plans

Keep the Embassy notified of your location. [Also note that for stays of greater than 14 days, every group member should be registered with the Embassy from the start of the program.]

4. Begin writing a log. Update the log as the emergency progresses.
5. Communicate with the appropriate stateside contacts. (See **B.** above.) [If possible, complete the "Emergency Information Form." This form can be faxed/emailed back to campus.]
6. Caution students about speculative communication (among themselves or with overseas contacts) that may contribute to miscommunication or unfounded rumors.
7. Keep communication flowing with the students! Discuss plans with students and participants.

## E. Political, social, civil unrest

The faculty director is the person "on-the-ground" and thus in the best position to assess the situation AND is the campus community's best source of information. You should:

1. Assess what is happening and how serious the situation is.
2. Is this a real emergency or a perceived emergency? In other words, is there really something to worry about?
3. Even if you determine that there is no real risk to the group, you should communicate with stateside contacts. News reports and/or unconfirmed anecdotal "information" are frequently more alarming from afar than on-site--particularly to students' parents.

If you determine that a real emergency exists, then you should:

4. Ensure the safety of all students and participants.
5. Contact all students to make sure they are accounted for and safe.
6. Contact the U.S. Embassy, consulate or other official government agency and ask for advice and assistance.

This may include gathering the following information:

- \*target(s) of unrest and possible danger to foreigners
- \*advice on minimizing danger to students
- \*probable impact of event on the availability of basic supplies (food, water, medical supplies, etc.)
- \*presence of emergency or military personnel
- \*evacuation plans

Keep the Embassy notified of your location. [Also note that for stays of greater than 14 days, every group member should be registered with the Embassy from the start of the program.]

7. Begin writing a log. Update the log as the emergency progresses.
8. Communicate with the appropriate stateside contact(s). (See **B.** above.) [If possible, complete the "Emergency Information Form." In the event no one can be reached stateside, this form can be faxed/emailed.]
9. Caution students about speculative communication (among themselves or with overseas contacts) that may contribute to miscommunication or unfounded rumors.
10. Keep communication flowing with the students! Discuss plans with students and participants.

## F. Serious injury or illness

If you receive a report of serious illness or injury, you should obtain the following information:

1. What happened?
2. Who is involved?
3. Where is the student now?
4. Does the student need medical attention? Are rescue operations needed?
5. Has anyone called for help? If not, GET HELP! If yes, who has been called?
6. If necessary, take the student to a hospital/clinic, call for an ambulance or advise on-the-scene participants to get help for the student.
7. If help has arrived, what is being done?
8. What medical treatment has the student received?
9. Were there witnesses?
10. Record the answers to all of these questions.
11. Record the date and time of the notification.
12. Record who made the notification.
13. Once you are sure the student is being taken care of, you should communicate with the appropriate stateside contact(s). (See **B.** above.) Regular contact should continue until the emergency has abated.

On-the-scene: You should be with the student as soon as possible. Obtain answers to these questions and take the following steps:

1. What is the name, address and phone of the hospital or clinic?
2. Who is the attending physician (if any)? Name and contact information.
3. Does the physician speak English?
4. What is the diagnosis? Details of injury or illness.
5. What is the prescribed treatment?
6. What drugs have been administered?
7. What is the prognosis?
8. Has the student's insurance carrier been contacted?
9. Have the student call his/her emergency contact/family. If this is not possible or the student refuses to do so, have the appropriate stateside contact do so.

## G. Death

If you are notified of the death of a student, you should get to the site of the incident as soon as possible. You should:

1. If necessary, contact local authorities or emergency personnel.
2. If necessary, at the scene screen off the area and keep on-lookers away.
3. If other students are in the vicinity, they should be gathered together. If possible, provide help to them, and explain that you want to talk with them. Have them wait for you; if possible, with another program administrator/faculty member.
4. Students should be asked not to contact anyone on their home campus until you have had the chance to make appropriate contacts and next-of-kin have been notified.
5. Once you are sure the situation is being addressed, you should communicate with the appropriate stateside contact(s). (See **B.** above.)
6. Notify the U.S. embassy/consulate.
7. Gather your notes and start a written log of all conversations, phone calls and steps taken.
8. Work with local authorities to handle the student's remains in accordance with the wishes of the family and with local laws and facilities.
9. Work with local authorities to have a death certificate prepared.
10. Work with the U.S. embassy or consulate to repatriate the student's remains and effects.
11. Gather the student's effects and box them for transport.
12. Pay attention to other students in the program and offer counseling.

Note: As in all other situations, you will be fully supported in these tasks by ACS and campus offices. This is a particularly sensitive and emotionally charged event, and you must freely seek support and guidance so that the situation can be handled effectively and with a high level of compassion for all concerned.

## **H. Sexual assault**

1. Follow the protocol in F. above.
2. Notify local law enforcement to report the incident. Note: in the event the victim declines to report the incident, you should fully document your conversation with the victim.
3. Assist the victim in finding counseling.
4. In the event the accused is a program participant, he/she and the victim should be kept separated.

## **I. Robbery/Assault**

1. Follow the protocol in F. above.
2. Notify local law enforcement to report the incident. Note: in the event the victim declines to report the incident, you should fully document your conversation with the victim.
3. If necessary, assist student to obtain replacement funds for stolen money.

## **J. Arrest**

1. Keep in mind that if a student is arrested, U.S. law does not apply. The arrestee is subject to all local laws.
2. You should obtain the following information:
  - \*Name of arrestee
  - \*His/her citizenship and date of birth
  - \*Details of the arrest (date, time, place, by whom)
  - \*Charges
  - \*Summary of the arrest -- what is alleged to have happened?
  - \*Was anyone else involved?
  - \*Where is the arrestee being held
3. Notify the U.S. Embassy/consulate
4. Contact the appropriate stateside contact(s). (See **B.** above.)
5. Visit the arrestee. Keep him/her informed of the likely procedures being faced and of who has been notified on his/her behalf.

**K. Emergency Information Form**  
**--On-going Emergency--**

1. Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Program name: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Faculty Director (person completing report and contact information at the program location) :  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the source of the emergency?
5. Is there possible danger or targeted threats to non-nationals?
6. Are U.S. citizens (or others) being advised to leave?
7. How intense is the emergency or political unrest?
8. How can we minimize danger to students?
9. What's the probable impact of the event on availability of food, water, and medical supplies?
10. Are emergency or military personnel being deployed in the area?
11. Are other schools/programs closing?
12. What's your assessment of the situation?
13. What's your recommendation on what to do?
14. What additional steps can stateside contacts/offices take to be of the greatest assistance to you?