

**Associated Colleges of the South
International Programs
Essential Knowledge and Key Issues**

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I. Background

The International Program Directors of the Associated Colleges of the South (ACS) met in January of 2002 at Rollins College. During that meeting, a subcommittee was formed to draft a document addressing key issues and essential knowledge related to study abroad programs. Members of the subcommittee were Nancy Ericksen, Trinity University; Margery Ganz, Spelman College; Sue Mennicke, Southwestern University; Donna O'Connor, Rollins College; and Katherine Richardson, Rhodes College. Presented here is the result of their collaborative work to create a document useful to many members of the ACS community.

This work is intended as both introductory and illustrative material for various campus constituencies who wish to gain a greater working knowledge of study abroad programs and issues. In particular, faculty members who are considering leading a study abroad program can gain essential information from this document and should review it carefully in conjunction with the following documents: ACS On-Site Director Duties and ACS Emergency Response Protocol.

Many thanks to each member of the subcommittee for her work. Authorship of individual sections is indicated below the section headings.

II. Program Models

(Nancy Ericksen, Trinity University)

Programs come in almost as many shapes and sizes as the colleges, universities, consortia, and programs that sponsor them. There are, however, some general types of programs. The type of program often dictates the strengths and limitations of that program, so choosing a program type is often a crucial step in the selection process.

A. Duration

One of the primary defining characteristics of any program is its length.

Academic Year – Provides the greatest immersion opportunity. For this reason, it is the most productive model for language study. Some of the most prestigious foreign universities will accept only full year students, or at least limit regular university class offerings to full year students. While this was once the most common model for study abroad, it is probably the least commonly used today.

Semester – Most common model. Provides respectable immersion experience, and it may be possible to take some regular university classes or to take classes for foreign students at the university if the terms are compatible with the home institution and the student is qualified. Advisors must be aware that some countries use a trimester system (not the same as a quarter system) that may have a “semester” imposed onto it (especially in Europe). See Section VI. Credit and Transcripts.

Summer – Becoming more and more popular. Unfortunately the tendency is for summer programs to be shorter and shorter. Six weeks has been the traditional standard for creditable summer study. (Four weeks for intensive language.) You need a stated policy on how short is

“too short” for creditability. Generally this should be in agreement with transfer credit policy for other summer credit. Summer programs are frequently faculty led, and may or may not include students from other campuses.

Short Term – Includes January Term and May Term. As above, credit policy should be in agreement with other transfer credit policy for similar US experiences. These are also usually faculty led. Usually includes students from home campus only.

B. Types of Study

Intensive language – This type is most frequently done in the summer or in short terms. This is most effective when combined with home-stay or other type of language-immersed housing. There may be an advantage in accepting only students with a uniform amount of previous language study.

Field Study – May be year (rarely), semester or summer/short term. The program brochure or announcement needs a clear statement on prerequisites and physical circumstances. Method of assessment should be stated in the materials also.

Academic Internship - Needs a clear statement on supervision and assessment. Some campuses also require a minimum number of hours in the workplace and will want a statement for that. This is becoming one of the most popular options in study abroad.

Work Abroad – Not usually creditable. Students often need a different type of visa. In some countries it is illegal to work on a student visa.

Independent Study – May be supervised abroad or by home faculty. This should be arranged in advance with a clear understanding on supervision, credit limits, and assessment methods. If supervised by home faculty, the student may need to register (and pay tuition for) the independent study on the home campus while abroad. Occasionally it is possible to do the research for an independent study while abroad but actually complete the project/paper/summary of research on the home campus in a succeeding term.

Traditional Study Abroad Programs – May be for any length of time. May be sponsored by the home institution, a consortium, a program, or the student may enroll in a foreign institution.

C. Institutional Models

Reciprocal Exchange – A direct exchange of students between two institutions based on a formal written agreement. Usually the student pays tuition (or tuition and room and/or board) to the home institution and goes to the host institution. A student from the host institution does likewise, and the two exchange places for a specified period of time. Credit may be treated as “in residence” or not. The advantage is that the faculty and departments may be very familiar with each other, making credit transfer easier. An exchange often includes other types of cooperation such as faculty exchange or joint research or class projects. Institutional aid usually applies because the aid does not leave the home institution. The International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) is included here. Exchanges may or may not include summer study under the

terms of the agreement, or summer study may be included in a modified version (for instance, three summer students equal one semester student).

Faculty-Led Study Abroad – Has the advantage of known curricular content and standards. It has the disadvantage of limited immersion in most cases. The campus must also consider increased liability issues and the need to make detailed arrangements and decisions. Credit is usually considered to be “in-residence” credit for students from the sponsoring institution, and all aid should apply for these students. In some cases it is possible to arrange for an existing program to make all logistical arrangements for a faculty led program, leaving faculty free to concentrate on the content. This has the advantage of shared liability while taking advantage of the program’s resources and experience.

Affiliated Program – Membership in a larger consortium. Has the advantage of known content and standards while sharing the liability. Affiliated institutions may, in some cases, have a say in program changes, sites choices, etc. Affiliated programs can be assumed to be preapproved for qualified students. There may also be some advantage for rates of acceptance or program scholarships for students applying from affiliated member institutions.

Non-Institutional Program – A program run by another institution or organization not affiliated in any way with the home institution. This usually requires that the home institution advisor be very familiar with the program in order to recommend approval. Some schools maintain a list of “approved” programs.

D. Traditional Program Styles

Island – Most faculty-led programs assume this style. This is a group of American students who live, travel, and study together. There is little immersion.

Peninsular – Has at least one element (instruction, housing, internship, etc.) directly connected to the host culture. For instance, a student might take one or two classes in the local university.

Belaying – The program provides support, orientation, emergency services. However, the foreign institution provides instruction and the student most frequently lives in local housing rather than program housing.

Parachute – A student is directly enrolled in a foreign institution that provides all housing and support. Total immersion. This should be reserved for independent, mature students. Best if the host institution and the international office at that institution are well known to the home institution. Reciprocal exchanges are an example of a parachute program style.

E. Summary

No single program model is right for every institution or student. The first step will be to choose from the different combinations the particular model or models best suited to your campus. Good quality examples of programs exist for all of these models, and most schools are very willing to share details on how and why study abroad developed as it did on their campuses. All you have to do is ask.

III. Advising

(Sue Mennicke, Southwestern University)

The international programs officers of the ACS should be able to rely on adequate and thorough advising from their ACS colleagues, particularly when students are participating in ACS-sponsored programs. Conscientious advising insures that students know about a program before choosing it, and also implies that students have played an active role in program selection. Obviously, each office is structured differently, and resources also vary at each institution. That said, advising should always include at least the following:

A. Learn about the student

Some students are more able than others to articulate precisely what they are looking for in a study abroad program. It is the advisor's job to explore with the student her/his motivations and purpose for studying abroad, and to elicit pertinent information that the student might otherwise fail to provide. An intake form may be useful in documenting this initial conversation.

B. Provide appropriate range of program choices

After learning about the student, the advisor should be sufficiently informed regarding various program options to recommend a suitable selection to the student. These recommendations should be based on the degree to which a student's personal program specifications are met as well as the applicability to the student's degree curriculum. For the purposes of ACS programs, the advisor should be familiar enough with ACS offerings to recognize when those offerings would be appropriate for a given student. In order to provide thorough advising (and to provide the student with agency in selecting a program), the advisor should have program literature easily accessible to students. *Note: ACS IP Directors should keep each other informed by list serve of changes and deadlines for their institution's programs.*

C. Financial Aid

The advisor should be familiar with institutional financial aid policies relating to study abroad. In particular, the advisor should be able to explain to the student the ways in which participation on an ACS program changes the portability of financial aid for study abroad. Financial aid is a critical issue in program selection, and this information must be part of the initial advising process. Students should also be given information regarding scholarships and other dedicated funding to help defray the expense of study abroad.

D. Program Selection and Application

After providing the student with pertinent information and materials, the advisor should approve the program selection. For ACS programs, the advisor should be in contact with the advisor at the coordinating ACS school to facilitate the application process and double check procedures. ACS colleagues should be able to feel confident that each advisor has appropriately advised and screened applicants to insure that no confusion or problem situations arise before or during the study abroad program.

IV. Promotion and Recruitment

(Donna O'Connor, Rollins College)

A good rule of thumb in public relations and advertising is that people need to see something five different times in three different mediums in order to be moved to action. With that in mind, here are some ideas.

A. Home Institution Students (in order of effectiveness)

Program “Invitation” - I get the lists of 3.0 gpa students and up, and issue them an **invitation to apply** for our programs (or sometimes I'll target a particular program, such as our London internship). This works like a charm!

Class Visits - I have found **class visits** to be the single most effective way of spreading the news about study abroad. At the start of every semester, I pour over the class schedule, and look for classes with content related to our study abroad offerings. I contact the professor, and ask for 5 minutes at the beginning of class. It never ceases to amaze me that in every class there are students who are not aware that Rollins has a Study Abroad Program.

Website - How did we manage before we had our **website**?! We have detailed information about all of our programs on line at www.rollins.edu/int-programs. We review the website twice a year to clear out cobwebs. We include our URL on all of our publications and applications.

Table Toppers - I have very good feedback from students about our **table toppers**. These are 4x6 plastic double-sided holders in which we insert snappy ads about our programs. We put them in the dining hall about 3 weeks before our program deadlines, and pick them up on the day of the program deadline. These have the “cereal box” appeal: students sitting at the table will pick them up and read them because there is nothing else to read on the table. I buy the frames in bulk from Dollar Tree, and run them through the dishwasher periodically as they get very dirty. I also put an identifying label on the bottom so that it is easy to identify which toppers are ours.

Information Table at Campus Center - In the first week of class, and during the week before registration, we have an **information table** at the Campus Center staffed by returned students to hand out information and applications. We have also done this during International Week.

Promotional Handbooks, Fliers - We have a **handbook** that describes our own programs (Take Your Brain On The Road) and a handbook of study abroad guidelines. We also do two fliers a year that describe our summer and winter break offerings, as well as fliers for the ACS Costa Rica program and our summer Madrid program. We hand these out when students visit our office, in class visits and at our Information Tables.

Big Banners - Every semester we hang a **big banner** advertising our programs in the Campus Center. We have separate banners for our winter or summer field study courses/programs and separate banners for our Fall and Spring programs. We hang them on the first day of class, and take them down on the program deadline date. We put the locations, our website URL, our

telephone number and location on campus. A new banner from a vinyl sign store costs about \$100 (so we have \$400 invested in these), and it costs very little to take the signs back to the store and have them updated when programs change. I started doing this when I started tracking the cost of stuffing student mailboxes, which was costing about \$100 a pop, and I was distressed to see how much paper we were wasting. I have actually witnessed students copying info from our signs!

Target emails - Much like the class visits, I check out the course handbook, and send **emails** to classes that relate to our program offerings. For example, I'll write to all students registered in Spanish classes to tell them about our summer and semester programs in Spain. I also send emails to target majors. This is fairly effective, and I get some responses from students asking for more information. I give students our URL, so they can go directly to our web pages.

Posters - We create separate **posters** for each program, put a few up around campus, and give the rest to Residential Life and ask them to put them up in the residence halls (i.e. bathroom stalls). We have our students design them, and some of them are very funny.

Campus Newspaper Articles - Most of my work study students are returned or future study abroad students. I have them write **articles for our campus newspaper**. This is better than placing ads, which is expensive, as we are charged for this! I also ask students who are currently abroad to write articles for the newspaper.

Displays - Periodically (meaning if I have work study help) we create displays in the glass cases in the Student Center or the Library. This space has to be reserved in advance. I then keep the display when it is dismantled in a big plastic box so that it will be easy to install again.

B. Students From Other ACS Schools (We need to do more of this, and suggestions are welcomed on how we can each facilitate getting the word out to ACS students.)

Class Visits - I have found **class visits** by a faculty member from Rollins to be effective in spreading the word. We only do this, however, for the ACS Costa Rica program that we manage.

Email - I have sent emails to the IP Directors at ACS schools, and asked them to forward the emails to their students. (I don't know if anyone actually does this for me!)

C. Students From Other Institutions

Advertising - We advertise in www.studyabroad.com and www.iiepassport.com and Peterson's Guide. I've also been approached by The Florida Leader, and have to decide whether or not I'll advertise with them. We get a few outside students this way.

Study Abroad Fairs - We do not do these any more, as it was not cost effective.

D. General Recruiting

Admissions Weekends - Since Study Abroad is becoming one of the criteria by which students choose their college, this is effective both for admissions and for laying the groundwork for later years.

First Year Orientation – It is never too early to get students started thinking about going abroad.

Parent’s Orientation - More and more frequently the parents are the first ones to ask about going abroad.

V. Applications

(Donna O’Connor, Rollins College)

A. Application Process

1. State admissions criteria clearly. For example, this is what we say on our Rollins in Sydney application:

“The minimum requirements for admission to the program are: 3.0 minimum gpa, good college standing, an excellent record of personal responsibility (e.g. judicial record, service to the Rollins community, employment history) and high level of maturity. Applicants will also be evaluated on the basis of their application and academic reference.

Applications meeting the criteria stated above are reviewed after the deadline. Because of limits in the places available, students meeting the minimum requirements are not guaranteed a place.

Applicants not meeting the criteria stated above will be considered on a space available basis after the program deadline and will require a faculty interview.”

2. Enforce your admissions criteria fairly.
3. There can be no bias: applications must be considered without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability or veteran’s status.
4. Get as much material upfront - as part of the application - as you can. Students are very eager to get an acceptance letter, and you are more likely to gain compliance.
5. Only accept completed applications. You will screen out a lot of problem students this way.

B. Background Check

1. Dean's Statement or other College Clearance attesting to the student's personal record. Student must give written authorization for this.
2. Send list of accepted students to Campus Counseling Center and Health Center and ask them to advise students who may have problems that you are not aware of.

C. Selection Process

1. Use a selection committee, even if it is only you and someone else.
2. Use an objective screening tool. I have developed different scales for each program, and students are "graded" for each section of their application. For example, students lose lots of points if they have a bad behavior record (drinking, drugs). We do not use the final scores as the absolute determinant of who gets accepted, but it is amazing how well it works.

Each section gets a score of 1 to 10. Grade point average gets a score of 2 for 2.5 or better to 20 for 3.8 to 4.0. Bad behavior subtracts 2 to 10 points, depending on the infraction. Here are some of the things we look at:

- Written skills (essay, host letter, application)
- Faculty letter of reference
- Sense of purpose for participating in the program
- Potential adaptability in adjusting to new cultural situations (e.g. past roommate issues), prior international experience.
- Poise, self confidence, sense of independence, pleasant personality, evidence of maturity
- Good academic and social standing: +10 points
- Service to the Rollins community or employment history
- Bonus points for outstanding qualities that were discovered in the course of the interview (describe)

D. Office Procedures

1. Open a file for each student. Keep track of information using a checksheet. Keep notes on this checksheet. Don't trust your memory.
2. As part of a Conditions of Participation, each student should indicate whom you may contact, or whom you may speak to about the student. Don't talk to any parent about a student unless you are sure that you have permission to do so. You must protect the student's privacy.
3. Have students pay a non-refundable deposit after they are accepted. We have a \$200 deposit for short courses, and a \$500-\$750-\$1500 for our other programs. This cuts down on students being wishy-washy about their decision to participate. We do allow

waivers for students on full aid, but make it clear that if they drop out, we will bill them for the deposit.

E. Application Content

1. You may include questions on:
 - a. Academic capabilities and achievements
 - b. Behavioral related issues (criminal or disciplinary record, previous experience abroad, etc.)
2. You must postpone questions on health and medical and disabilities information to materials for accepted students.
3. Signature of Study Abroad Advisor.
4. Transcript release so that a transcript may be sent automatically to the home institution upon completion of the program.

VI. Credit and Transcripts

(Margery Ganz, Spelman College)

A. Credit Questions

Since all of our programs carry academic credit, it is essential for the study abroad advisers to work closely with their own curriculum committees and the office of the registrar.

In order to give academic credit that can be backed up, all directors should examine carefully the number of class hours that match up to the credits they give. Comparing overseas credit hours and home campus hours is important. They do not have to be precisely the same, since one can examine overseas work in regard to the added value of living and functioning (we hope) in a foreign environment. Differences in pedagogy and educational systems must also be taken into account. However, travel and exposure to a foreign environment in itself is not creditable.

The following issues need to be discussed on each individual campus:

- Will the grade appear on the transcript, or will only the credit appear?
- Will grades, if they appear, count in the GPA?
- Will the course title appear as reported or will the course be listed by the title of an on-campus equivalent?
- Will there be any notation indicating that the credit was earned abroad?
- How many hours will your institution require students to take to be considered as carrying a full load? 12, 15, 16? (See section on Financial Aid)
- What is the highest number of credits a student can receive for a semester abroad or for a year abroad? or for summer?
- Will the credit be treated as transfer credit or “in-residence” credit?
- Are there any standing exceptions to policy for study abroad credit that do not apply to other types of transfer credit?

Each of these issues needs to be address in writing as a part of statements on program policies and procedures.

B. Credit and Program Literature

Program dates, contact hours, and credit recommendations for each class should be clearly stated in all program literature so that students and advisors are informed of credit issues as a part of the application process. Course descriptions and syllabi should be available upon request. The method of assessment should be clearly stated also.

C. Credit and Grade Translation

As different as institutions are within the US system, as a whole we are still different from almost any school outside the US in pedagogy, credit, terms, and grading. For instance, British universities are now “semesterized”. However, what that really means is that a semester modularization has been imposed on the older trimester system. That means that American students cannot complete a full semester at many British universities in the fall because they cannot remain abroad until the end of January to complete the fall exams. In some cases, instruction is now completed before the Christmas break and special assessment is arranged for the American students. In those cases 15 hours of credit may be awarded. In others, instruction continues after the break. Special assessment is still set for the Americans so that they can return early, but the shorter term is only credited at 10-12 hours.

In other European universities the different term dates mean that university classes are only available to Full Year or Spring semester students. In the Southern Hemisphere (Australia, New Zealand, much of South American and Africa) the fall semester begins in February and continues into July, and the Spring semester begins in July and continues through November. (This sometimes also creates problems with financial aid payments.)

Other questions arise in translating units and credits to US terms. Students often assume that a unit and a US credit hour are the same and as a result take too many or too few classes abroad. For instance, 120 units at the University of Sussex are roughly equivalent to 30 US semester credit hours – or 4 units equal 1 credit. Where the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) equivalents are stated, you have an easy translation since 2 ECTS units equal 1 US semester unit.

Grading scales also differ. I’ve had students panic upon receiving a “D” in a British university class because they did not know it stood for “Distinguished” (a very good grade indeed). In the French university system there is a 20-point grading scale, but in reality no more than 15 points are ever awarded even to the most outstanding work.

Even if credit and grade translation take place in another office, you need to be aware of the standards of the country in which your students are studying.

VII. Financial Aid

(Margery Ganz, Spelman College)

A. Financial Aid and ACS Schools – General Questions

Should we have a standard that all schools in ACS should let their financial aid travel with their students to approved programs? My vote would be yes. What types of aid are transferable? We know legally that federal aid transfers, but are our institutions allowing their own aid to transfer? Are there some scholarships that can't be taken away? What do we do about tuition waivers-- do they travel? Spelman's do, but it is becoming a struggle.

B. Federal Aid

Title IV aid is awarded by the eligible home institution to students with demonstrated need enrolled in that institution. By Federal law this aid is applicable to "Approved" study abroad programs and is administered by the home institution.

In order to do this the Federal regulations require a written agreement between the eligible home institution and the host institution, whether eligible or ineligible, to include provisions stating that:

1. All financial aid will be awarded by the home school;
2. The student must maintain full time equivalency as per program guidelines;
3. The home school must be notified if the student drops below full time enrollment or withdraws.
4. The student must continue to make satisfactory academic progress.

The written agreement may be initiated either by the Financial Aid Office or by the Study Abroad Office at the home institution, but a copy of the agreement should be maintained in the Financial Aid records.

How do individual institutions deal with transferring federal funds? If they are going abroad, we require students to use a borrower that will do an electronic transfer since then we do not need a signature, and that makes life much easier. Other schools use a Limited Power of Attorney in order to process aid for students abroad.

Many programs will accept a letter from the Financial Aid Office verifying applicable aid as acceptable documentation in order to waive early payment deadlines. Students are still responsible for remaining costs. In such cases, you may want to consider sending aid directly to the program rather than to the student to be forwarded to the program. In other instances, the student pays all costs up front and is reimbursed when aid is released at the beginning of the term.

Students should be reminded that a copy of the program invoice must be sent to the Financial Aid Office.

Because of the economic ramifications of allowing financial aid to travel with students, do we foresee a cap on the number who can study abroad, and what should we do about that possibility?

C. Coordination with Financial Aid and the Registrar

What kind of relationship do we as study abroad directors need to have with the financial aid office as well as the Registrar's office? All three offices need to have an understanding of the procedures and deadlines affecting the other offices. Anything you can do to foster cooperation will strengthen your program.

At Spelman we help the Financial Aid office create a budget for the students by sending them a financial aid budgeting sheet for each student so that the office can have support for why they need to budget a higher amount for study abroad than for Spelman's home campus costs. We are a Money magazine best buy since our total cost for a year for tuition, fees, room and board, books, etc is under \$20,000, so for us study abroad is almost always more expensive except for the direct exchanges where no money changes hands.

Coordinating the registration and credit approval for students going abroad; verifying "satisfactory progress" for students abroad; processing forms (such as the budget form and credit approval forms); insuring that students are aware of policies and credit limitations are all crucial steps. The Study Abroad office has many opportunities to improve the coordination and cooperation between offices, and it may be one of the most important things you do to improve your program.

VIII. Predeparture and Reentry Orientation

(Sue Mennicke, Southwestern University)

Orientation encompasses a broad category of preparation for -- and processing of -- study abroad. At its minimum, predeparture orientation should include information on health and safety, cultural adjustment and culture learning, and as much particular country specific information as is practical. Another important aspect of orientation is to prepare students to be self sufficient and to learn to look for problems to solutions. (Development of this skill can actually be part of the ongoing advising process.) Reentry orientation should assist students in returning to campus, but should also encourage them to ask questions about why it is difficult to come back to the home institution, and how they might influence the institution to make it more study abroad returnee "friendly."

A. Predeparture

Health and Safety. There is a wealth of information on health and safety in study abroad, so the challenge becomes deciding what *not* to include rather than trying to find material. Clearly, there is a responsibility to inform students (and parents, when appropriate) on issues of health, safety and responsible behavior while abroad. There exists, however, the danger of "over-warning" students so that the study abroad experience comes to represent a disaster waiting to happen. Students need information to make wise choices, but not such an overload that the

impression is left that study abroad is inherently dangerous, or conversely, that enough information will be sufficient to ward off anything harmful that may come a student's way.

Specific topics that should be addressed in a health/safety orientation include: 1) medical insurance which is useful for study abroad (including medical evacuation and repatriation insurance) 2) prescription drugs and what to know about transporting them across borders and purchasing them abroad 3) vaccinations which might be necessary or recommended before living in the host country 4) safe behavior, and potential dangers abroad, including disease, motor vehicle accidents, and political or social unrest which may occur 5) knowledge of laws abroad (as well as home institution policies) regarding drug and alcohol use 6) clear statement detailing the consequences for student misconduct.

Cultural Adjustment and Learning. Health and safety issues should also be addressed in the context of culture learning and adjustment. The process of cultural adjustment plays out differently with each individual, but it is fairly safe to say that judgment is almost always affected when one is placed in a new and unfamiliar environment. Especially when a student is devoted to experiencing as much as possible about the new culture, it can be difficult for that student to make wise choices, both in terms of cultural norms as well as personal safety. In a more broad sense, cultural adjustment and culture learning should not be presented as something to be “gotten through” but rather as an opportunity for intense self-reflection and learning about others. It is helpful to use predeparture literature as a guidebook for the orientation sessions, but this literature is equally useful for students as a companion and “resource book” once they are abroad. The process of cultural adjustment will seem very abstract to some students before it actually occurs. Once in the host country, the literature can function as a touchstone for the struggling student. A good guidebook which covers a broad range of cultural adjustment issues is Daniel Hess' *The Whole World Guide to Culture Learning* (1994, Intercultural Press). Hess lays out the concept of culture and how it constructs individuals and societies, describes cultural adjustment and culture learning and identifies behaviors and attitudes which make one a successful sojourner, and then provides many practical exercises for the student to follow while abroad.

Much **country specific information** will be provided by the program itself, but if there is a significant number of students traveling to one destination, information on the country itself should be used in orientation sessions. Returned students, when properly directed, can act as an excellent interactive resource for orientation.

For ACS programs, the predeparture orientation should be conducted with the information and program specifics in mind. When possible, predeparture literature from the program should be incorporated into the orientation sessions.

B. Reentry

Reentry is an equally important part of the study abroad process, and students should be encouraged to share information about their program upon return. In the case of ACS programs, advisors should ensure that students have filled out and returned evaluation forms to the program sponsor (should they be required). Advisors should also participate in a “debrief” conversation with the host institution advisor in order to discuss the program's successes and challenges. This is an excellent way for advisors to remain current and informed of the various ACS programs.

Each campus functions differently, and some have more success with returnee group meetings. At a minimum, advisors should provide opportunities for returned students to debrief one-on-one (with the advisor) as well as in a peer group. Opportunities should also be available for students to present their international experience to members of the campus community. In the end, the point of reentry orientation is not to “fix” the struggling student’s problems, but to provide venues for the student to share his/her experience and to process the return home.

IX. Health, Safety, Crisis Management and Liability

(Katherine Richardson, Rhodes College)

The health and safety of students participating in study abroad programs is a primary concern for everyone involved: parents, students, and those faculty and staff members coordinating the program. Parents or guardians can have an important role by assisting their students in various decisions and by influencing their behavior. Students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their health and reminded that they are indeed responsible for their behavior. Faculty and staff have the responsibility of informing students about program policies and health and safety issues, as well as coordinating an effective program.

The outline which follows is intended to point to the various issues which should be addressed when developing a program abroad.

A. Responsibility in Study Abroad: Who’s Responsible?

1. Parent Responsibilities

- a. Communication with Student and Program
- b. Review of Insurance Coverage
- c. Review of Program Literature and Information

2. Student Responsibilities

- a. Academic
- b. Behavioral
- c. Health
 - Disclosure - Students should furnish a complete physical and mental health record and any other information necessary in planning for a safe experience. The information submitted does not affect a student’s admission to the program.
- d. Timely submission of all required forms, requested documents, etc.
- e. Attendance at all required pre-departure and return meetings

3. Faculty/Administrator Responsibilities

- a. Pre-Departure Orientation (see B, C, and D below)
 - Getting Ready to Go: Materials/Forms
 - Cultural Adjustments: On-Site and Re-Entry
 - Academics: Confirm Academic Plan

What to Take: Phone Card, Insurance Card, Passport, Visa, etc.
Housing Arrangements and Money Matters
Health Issues: Exams, Insurance, Prescriptions
Student Conduct and Safety: Program policy, Common Sense, Local
Transportation, Alcohol and Drugs, Relationships, Sexual Harassment, Political
Conflict, Money and Valuables

b. Knowledge of Crisis Management and Crisis Protocol

In case of an emergency, it is important that the course of action be based on accurate information. Emergencies can include many things, from natural disasters to political unrest to student arrest. While each emergency situation requires a unique action plan specific to the event at hand, there will be some basics steps that help in assessing the situation and establishing an appropriate course of action. Confer with your campus official prior to departure to learn appropriate protocol (e.g., who informs parents of a crisis), obtain a list of emergency phone numbers, etc.

c. Distribution of Information to Parents

B. Health and Safety Issues

1. Student Health Issues: Physical and Mental; Pre-Existing Conditions

- a. Medical Reports/Forms - Medical information should be requested following a student's admission to the program.
- b. Prescription Drugs - If possible, take an adequate supply of any prescription drugs. The exact medication may not be available overseas. Additionally, some drugs, for example Ritalin, are illegal in some countries.
- c. Vaccinations
- d. Accommodations: Coordination with Campus Disability Services Office
- e. Consent for Medical Treatment

2. General and Region Specific Health Issues

- a. Traffic
- b. Swimming/Water Activities
- c. Motor Vehicles
- d. Disease (e.g., Malaria, Hepatitis, HIV/AIDS)

3. Issues of Alcohol and Illegal Drug Use

- a. Institutional Policies
- b. Local Laws

4. Student Conduct and Safety Issues

- a. Student Misconduct -- Institutional and Program Policies
- b. Travel Safety: Independent Travel and Program Travel

- Institutional Policies
- Road Safety and Car Rental Issues
- c. Waivers

5. Region Specific Crime

- Theft and Property

6. Threats of Political Violence

- Instructions for Students

7. Health Insurance Coverage: Repatriation and Medical Evacuation

- Handout: Questions to Ask When Considering the Purchase of Medical and Accident Insurance for Study/Travel Abroad (see appendix A)

8. Property Insurance Coverage

C. Crisis Management

1. Crisis Protocol: On-Site and Home Campus

- When is it a Crisis? Conditions Requiring Crisis Management include:

- Serious illness, injury or death

- Emotional or psychological stress requiring professional attention

- Crime: Victim of theft, assault, rape, harassment, etc. or being accused of a crime.

- Serious in-country situation: Political unrest or natural disaster

2. Protocol for each type of crisis

- When handling any crisis, document your actions.

3. Refund Policy

4. Policy in the Event of Program Cancellation

5. Incident Report Forms

D. Liability

1. Safety and Tort Liability Issues

- Legal Duties

- College-Student Relationships

- Special Relationships

- Landlord/Homestay Relationships

2. Contractual Liability

Institutional
Insurance Contracts

3. Legal Audit Checklist (see SAFETI Audit Checklist under Resources)

X. Resources

Axtell, John. *Do's and Taboos Around the World: A Guide to International Behavior*. John Wiley & Sons.

Centers for Disease Control. 1600 Clifton Rd. NE, Atlanta, GA 30333. 404-639-3311.
<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/travel/html>

Crisis Management in a Cross-Cultural Setting. Edited by Patricia Burak and Bill Hoffa. NAFSA: Association of International Educators. 2000.

Department of State. Overseas Citizens Services. 202-647-5225. An automated menu provides information on current epidemics and health conditions worldwide as well as travel advisories and other information. <http://www.state.gov/travel>

Forms of Travel. By Judith W. Carr and Ellen Summerfield. NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Working Paper #51. 800-836-4994.

Health Check: For Study, Work, and Travel Abroad. By Joan Elias Gore and Judith A. Green. NAFSA: Association of International Educators and CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchange.

Managing Liability and Overseas Programs. By Bill Hoffa. NAFSA: Association of International Educators. 1998 Ken Weeks. College Legal Information, Inc. 1999.

NAFSA's Guide to Education Abroad for Advisors and Administrators. Edited by William Hoffa and John Pearson. NAFSA: Association of International Educators. 1997.

Schroeder, Dirk, MD. *Staying Healthy in Asia, Africa, and Latin America*. Moon Publications.

Study Abroad: A Parent's Guide. Edited by Bill Hoffa. NAFSA: Association of International Educators. 1998.

U. S. Department of State pamphlets: *Your Trip Abroad, A Safe Trip Abroad, and Tips for Americans Residing Abroad*. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402

Rose, Stuart, MD. *The International Travel Health Guide*. Travel Medicine, Inc.

Zepotas, Thalia. *Journey of One's Own: Uncommon Advice for the Independent Woman Traveler*. The Eighth Mountain Press.

INTERNET RESOURCES:

Association for Safe International Road Travel: <http://www.asirt.org>

Centers for Disease Control, CDC Travel Info: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel.html>

Electronic Embassy: <http://www.embassy.org>

Mobility International: <http://www.miusa.org>

NAFSA: Association of International Educators: <http://www.nafsa.org>

NAFSA: Responsible Study Abroad: Health and Safety Guidelines
<http://www.secussa.nafsa.org/safetyabroad/default.html>

Study Abroad.com Handbook by Bill Hoffa
<http://www.studyabroad.com/handbook>

US Department of State: Tips for Students Going Abroad:
<http://www.travel.state.gov/studentinfo.html>

US Department of State Travel Warnings and Information:
http://www.travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html

USC SAFETI Audit Checklist:
<http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/globaled/safeti/auditcklst.html>

US Department of State: Travel Warning
http://www.state.gov/travel_warnings.html