

# STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM MANUAL, FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS (FLSA)

This document is intended to summarize the policies and procedures as set forth by the Georgia Institute of Technology (GT), the GT Study Abroad Committee, and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (BOR) as they pertain to GT Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs (FLSA). This manual should be used as a guide by GT faculty and staff currently running and/or developing GT overseas programs.

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## SECTION ONE: Creating a New Study Abroad Program

Creating a study abroad program can be one of the most rewarding experiences in one's career. Creating a new program takes time, planning, and patience. There are many practical issues that need to be worked out before the program can take shape.

### 1A. Getting started: Designing and Developing a Study Abroad Program

#### I. Conceptualizing a program

It is important to define what we mean by study abroad so that we have ways to distinguish among the various types of study abroad programs and to assist with assessment of study abroad quality. By definition, study abroad involves an academic experience (for which we are willing to give academic credit) that takes place outside of the United States. But, beyond that, what are the important characteristics of the study abroad experience that enhance the overall impact of the program? Study abroad programs vary substantially depending upon the educational needs of students, the educational expectations of the discipline, and the particular conditions that exist in the foreign country. While this means that there is substantial diversity of programs and that no single program may be ideal, it is possible to have several important general guidelines toward which any study abroad program should strive:

1. Exceptional academic quality. Students should take classes that meet the standards of courses offered on the Atlanta campus.
2. An effort, where possible, to have the academic program take advantage of the location of the program. This may mean offering courses in the language, history, politics, art, cultures, etc. of the country in which the program is operating or using local surroundings, labs, facilities, etc. for projects in science or engineering.
3. While the academic work should be of the highest quality, academic credit should be available for a variety of educational experiences. Traditional course work may be combined with coordinated field research, and/or independent study or research projects. Often, the most effective study abroad programs are ones in which traditional course work is combined with such out of classroom experiences.
4. There should be significant planned opportunities for students to learn about the country in which they are living including excursions to historic sites, visits to cultural events such as plays, musical events, guided tours of local cathedrals or museums, visits to local companies, firms, factories, plants, labs, and so on. Ideally, these opportunities would occur in the context of relevant coursework.
5. Students should be provided with opportunities for, and be encouraged to obtain, immersion into the culture of the host country including living with local students or families, and/or efforts to engage students with local people (e.g., opportunity to participate in sports or clubs with other university students, working with local organizations, sharing facilities, labs, studios), membership in sports facilities used by students from the host country, efforts to bring young people from the local culture together with students on the program, opportunities to participate in volunteer services to the local community, work in local companies, etc.
6. Students should be offered opportunities before the study abroad experience to learn about the country/region in which they will study and to gain some understanding of issues in cross-cultural understanding. Discussions of how the host culture views, teaches, uses the students' chosen disciplines is very important. Not all countries teach in the same way, for example. In addition, students should be given opportunities to reflect upon their study abroad experience so as to gain a deeper and fuller understanding of the experience upon their return to campus.

#### II. Practical considerations when developing a GT study abroad program

Program Directors will need to do some research about the program site before proposing the program to ensure that the host culture can provide integrated cultural learning experiences, which are pertinent to the coursework abroad. There are many factors that should be considered when developing a program.

##### ➤ Academics

Academics are, of course, one of the main concerns of all program administrators and have to be kept in mind at all stages of planning. There should be a benefit for offering a particular set of courses in an overseas location rather than in Atlanta, and Program Directors should be able to justify this.

If the program is major specific, who will be eligible to participate? Will the program offer only major specific courses that require prerequisites, or will more general courses be included? Is there a demand or a need for a particular group of majors to study in a particular location (e.g. Modern Language majors studying French in France, Industrial Engineering majors studying logistics in Singapore, or Biology majors studying tropical ecology in Costa Rica)? Which benefits can be derived from studying in the chosen host country?

If a program chooses to offer lower level courses, it is rarely advisable to offer 1000-level courses, who should be allowed to apply? Applicants must have two semesters of college study to participate in GT study abroad programs, and be over 18 years of age. Therefore, many of them will have already completed their 1000-level courses by the time they become eligible to study abroad.

Programs should also keep the succession of course work in mind when planning coursework abroad. If part one of a course is offered, will students be able to register for part two upon their return to Atlanta the next semester? Also, does the course offered follow the regular succession of courses offered in Atlanta so that students are not thrown off their graduation schedules? Research these questions by talking to Academic Advisors and undergraduate coordinators in the target units before classes are set.

Contact hours must also be taken into consideration in the planning stages. Students must have a certain number of contact hours in order to receive credit for a course. Please note that field trips are considered lab time (every 3 Non-lecture hours are equal to 1 contact hour, but travel time is **not** included. Only the amount of time spent at the site location for the field trip can be counted in the total for contact hours. At GT, a minimum of 37.5 contact hours are required for a 3 credit hour class. Please see the GT study abroad proposal forms (located at [www.oie.gatech.edu](http://www.oie.gatech.edu)) for more information.

### ➤ **Choosing a country**

When choosing a country to host a program, GT Faculty should consider what they hope to accomplish, and where in the world is the best place to reach the program goals. For example, a program on Chinese history would most logically take place in China, but what about a program specifically for ISyE majors? Which would be the best country or city to host a program for this particular group of students? Which organizations or companies are known for logistics, and other ISyE-related topics, etc. and will it be possible to arrange for meetings, lectures, and site visits?

Other considerations are whether or not the current political climate of the host location would be conducive to learning. Does the host country have an environment which would allow the program to hold successful classes while abroad? What benefits could be gained by teaching the course abroad in this particular location? Why teach the course abroad instead of in Atlanta?

### ➤ **Warning to faculty proposing to teach or run a program in their home country**

Faculty and Staff should consider specific risks to themselves and the participants in their proposed programs if they choose to teach or run a program in their home country. As a citizen of the host country, the Faculty/Staff member may fall solely under the jurisdiction of their country of birth rather than the United States while visiting the host country. In an emergency situation, they may not be recognized as a U.S. citizen or U.S. Permanent Resident by the host state, thus denying them any of the protections that the U.S. government would normally provide to its citizens and residents abroad.

### ➤ **General safety**

More than ever before, Program Directors must be concerned about health and safety and ensure that there has been sufficient research about a site. GT Faculty should assess the security risks in locations that they may be considering to host a study abroad program. Resources and organizations that provide information about countries that may be under consideration for a program; the U.S. Department of State <http://www.travel.state.gov/>, the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) <http://www.ds-osac.org/>, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <http://www.cdc.gov/>, and the World Health Organization (WHO) <http://www.who.int/en/>. OIE has contacts at partner institutions in many countries that can help to provide information and recommendations about the current situation in their locations abroad. These contacts could allow GT faculty to use structures and leads already in place to assist them while planning future programs.

### ➤ **Country entry requirements (passports and visas)**

Program Directors should consider entry requirements for U.S. citizens to make sure that participants will be able to acquire the necessary visas to enter the host country. Some countries have difficult visa procedures, so Program Directors may inquire at the appropriate embassy of the country(ies) to be visited to ensure that

students will be able to apply for and receive the necessary visas by the program departure date. In extreme cases, countries may have entry restrictions. GT faculty should try to be as informed as possible about all entry requirements to be sure that the chosen host site is feasible in regard to entering the country legally. (Note: Not all GT students are U.S. citizens. Citizens of other countries may have different entry requirements than U.S. citizens. The embassy of the country can advise the program of these requirements. Programs should decide if the Program Director will handle visas for these students, or if the students will handle these themselves.)

## ➤ Transportation

### ❖ Flight arrangements

Should the program offer a group flight option, or should students be responsible for making their own arrangements to the program site? The amount of involvement the Program Director will have with flight arrangements depends on the need for the program participants to arrive at the same port at the same time, the difficulty of navigating and the conditions in the host country, whether or not the group can arrive in the host city or if more land travel will be required to arrive in the host location, etc.

Group flights offer more convenience to students since they can just “sign up” and then pay for the flight rather than calling airlines and travel agents themselves. Although convenient, group flights may not offer the cheapest rate to travel to the host destination. Some students will prefer to use frequent flyer miles to purchase flights or even to use “buddy passes.” More GT faculty responsibility is needed to organize the group flight since agents will need to be contacted and negotiated with for rates. Allowing students to make their own arrangements can be desirable for some programs because it takes less time from the program for them to arrange this directly. If students will be arriving on their own, or if a GT faculty member will not accompany the group flight, there should be arrangements made for them when they arrive in the host country or alternative plans should be communicated to the participants. If no arrangements for airport pick up will be offered, then students should have clear instructions of where and when they should arrive for their program. Programs should consider the pros and cons of offering a group flight or requiring participants to make their own reservations.

If programs plan to offer a group flight, they should consider contacting various travel agents to get the best price quote for the group. When choosing an agent, keep in mind that cancellation and refund policies and overhead costs vary. Recommended questions that GT faculty may wish to ask when speaking with an air carrier or agent:

1. Is there a cancellation policy, and what is the penalty for changes and cancellations?
2. What is the deposit due date for the tickets, and when is the final payment deadline?
3. When is the final list of group flight names due to the airline?
4. Can the travel agent get the visa for the group, or does the program need to get individual visas for each student?
5. If students want to alter their tickets, can they contact the travel agent/visa service directly, or does the program need to be the “go-between”?
6. Can students depart or return on a different day than the rest of the group?

***Tip:***

***On occasion, free tickets are awarded for group flights for reserving and then purchasing a minimum number of seats. These tickets can be used to lower the overall ticket cost charged to each student or to cover the airfare of staff teaching/working for the program. Programs should ask the airline or travel agent if this can be negotiated.***

### ❖ Local transport

How will students get around once on-site? In order for the program to run smoothly, local transportation may need to be negotiated for program participants. Program Directors should consider convenience, cost, and safety when considering local methods of transportation for student participants.

If the program will be going on field trips or traveling from city to city/country to country, which is the best method of transit? Research to find the best method to use (bus, train, air), and determine if they will need to contract for a private service. Many programs with large numbers of participants use private bus services to transport participants over long journeys but depend on local public transportation (bus, metro, taxi) when stationary in a particular site for a period of time. The Program Director should assess the needs of the program and its participants to determine the safest and most cost effective way to travel with students once abroad.

Remember that only academic related travel can be included in the program fee. Personal travel is the responsibility of the individual student. Programs should never make non-program related travel arrangements or recommendations for travel providers to students.

➤ **Where will students study, live, eat?**

❖ **Classroom space**

Classroom space is another consideration that programs will have to handle. Since programs may take place in remote locations, there may not be typical classroom space available to hold lectures. Programs should reserve space to hold lectures that is adequate for students to be comfortable, to be able to write, to take notes or to take exams. Since many programs do not have the luxury of a university campus for all program lectures, Program Directors may have to be creative when searching for rentable space. Some possible locations to try are hotels, conference centers, museums, academies, high schools, churches, etc. Not all places will have internet access, technology, air conditioning, etc. so be sure that sites are checked out and are adequate before commitments are made.

❖ **Housing**

Housing for students is one of the most important aspects of planning a study abroad program. Programs should be sure to clarify when negotiating housing arrangements to avoid misunderstandings that can occur due to cultural or language barriers. For example, if two students will be sharing a “double room,” it should be made clear that two beds will be required, not one double bed for two people. Programs may wish to look into agencies which can assist with finding viable housing options. Caution should be used when working with an agency to avoid scams, and it is a good idea to have someone trustworthy visit the housing to ensure that it is acceptable, clean and safe for GT students.

There are three main types of housing options for study abroad programs: homestays, dormitories, and hotels. The type of housing will depend, first and foremost, on what is available in the host country, but also on the goals the program has set for the students, the length of the program, the amenities included, the convenience of the location (access to transportation, the city center, and classes), and of course, the cost.

Homestays can provide more cultural and language immersion for students participating in programs. Depending on the program site, this can also be a very cost-effective way to house students while abroad. Arranging homestays is very time consuming, so if programs pursue this option they may want to work through an agency. Be sure that the agency has standards, rules, and refund/cancellation policies that are acceptable to the program. In many cases, this option can be very rewarding for the student and the family because it provides the opportunity to view the local culture from the “inside.”

Dormitories may be the most practical option for students who are studying or using facilities mainly on a foreign university campus. This will depend on the location, and Program Directors should use caution when reviewing housing contracts. A foreign institution’s rules may differ greatly from institutions in the U.S. Dormitories can sometimes provide access to the local student population, meals and computers, and establish an environment that students associate with school and study.

Hotels and hostels may be the best choice for some programs and may be the only option available in certain countries and for very short-term stays. Hotels are usually more expensive than the other options simply because they are mainly intended for vacation stays. They do not always have kitchen facilities or restaurants, which can be another drawback. Programs may be able to secure a group rate which would bring costs down, and, depending on the dynamics of the program, may be the best option.

Regardless of the type of housing chosen for program participants, there will be some sort of contract between the program and the housing provider. Programs should review the housing policies of the provider and ensure that participants are well prepared for the rules and regulations stipulated by the housing provided. Programs should be sure to confirm arrangements, and to double-check that the agreed upon conditions will be provided upon arrival.

❖ **Meals**

Should meals be included in the program? This depends largely on the location of the program and the housing situation. Meals can usually be negotiated and included for programs housed in a campus setting since there is usually a cafeteria on campus. Programs should also consider the availability of choices and food sources in the location. Do students have access to kitchens to be able to prepare their own meals? Are they in an isolated location with few, none, or only expensive restaurants?



Often students benefit from the ease of having some meals included in the program. Including all meals usually means that students will be paying double for some lunches or dinners as they may not be near their food source at all meal times.

Programs should provide students with information on whether or not meals will be included in their program abroad. If meals will not be included and students will be completely on their own, programs should provide them with information about shopping, local restaurants, and when and how students can take meals while abroad. Program Directors should ensure that students are informed of how much to budget for daily meals. Finding suggestions for affordable options helps students to take care of themselves and eat properly while away from home.

If meals will be included in the program, Program Directors should clearly state how many meals will be included and when in the day. Students should be informed of extra money that they should budget for meals not included and which meals of the day they will be responsible for handling on their own. Meals plans can sometimes be negotiated in homestays with families, through host universities, and even through local restaurants and eateries.

**Note on Executing Contracts** – No member of the faculty or staff may sign an agreement without the specific written authorization from the President to do so. As it relates to study abroad programs, this means that any contract with a foreign institution, the owner of a property abroad (such as an apartment which a program will rent) or a travel provider must be sent to Legal Affairs for review and subsequently signed by the President or his designee authorized to sign such agreements..

➤ **On-site coordination/staffing**

Who will be in charge of the program while abroad? If staying on a campus overseas, is there someone there to help out and/or serve as a point of contact for the students? Will professors teaching in the program be required to do administrative work overseas, or will someone else be hired to accompany the students and act as a coordinator? Who will be in charge of emergencies, discipline, logistics...? In addition to teaching, someone needs to be responsible for the coordination of the group. This involves administrative issues, transportation, emergencies, safety, discipline, etc. The Program Director sometimes does all of these things, but this depends on the size of the program. Larger programs usually build the cost of staff that will be hired to take care of these tasks into their budgets. All faculty or staff members who will be hired to work on the program should attend the Faculty/Staff Study Abroad Orientations and Trainings presented by OIE each spring. *Please see page 28 for more information.*

**IMPORTANT:** When designing a program abroad, keep all of the participants, not just the students, in mind.

❖ **Who's who?:**

**Status of Faculty/Staff, Students, Student Employees, and Non-Employees while abroad**

There are six types of people who may be involved with a study abroad program and who are authorized to accompany GT groups overseas. All individuals who are overseas with the program must have one of the official statuses as described below.

1. **Student Participants** must be officially accepted to the study abroad program via the official GT study abroad acceptance issued by OIE, admitted to GT (if not already GT students), registered for courses with GT, and must pay GT tuition for the program abroad. Participants cannot be hired as employees since they will be studying on the program abroad. Students CANNOT bring accompanying spouses or dependents on GT programs abroad.
2. **GT Faculty/Staff** are regular GT professors, instructors, or staff members who will be working on the program abroad.
3. **GT Retirees** can be hired to work for GT as "post retirees." These require specialized approval from Faculty Affairs and Teachers Retirement System of Georgia. Please notify OIE as soon as possible if you plan to have a GT retiree work on your program.
4. **Officially hired Students/Recent Graduates/Graduate Assistants\*\*** who are providing services/assistance to the program, but are not participating as students in the program. It is important to remember that those acting on behalf of GT should be hired through OHR. Even if a person is not receiving a paycheck, if s/he is acting in a way that gives responsibilities vis à vis program participants, the person should be officially hired; Students must be hired for their own

protection, as well as for the protection of the Institute. Only official employees hired through OHR (including student employees) are eligible for legal protection, liability coverage, as well as worker's compensation insurance through GT should an injury occur while on the job. This does not mean that a salary is required – it is still possible to cover student workers' program related expenses and reimburse them for their travel as their compensation – but the paperwork must be completed with OHR in order for them to work with the program. Please see the box below for more information about the responsibilities that are acceptable for student assistants working as a part of GT programs abroad.

### **Student Program Assistants may:**

- Perform office administrative duties (copying, filing, faxing, etc.)
- Pick up tickets or entry passes for site visits
- Run program-related errands
- Make contact with program participants to plan meetings
- Disseminate and/or gather paperwork and program information from/for participants
- Help with student head counts on buses or on site visits to ensure all participants are present
- Assist students in checking out equipment used during program
- Be in charge of participants' lost and found items
- Encourage social activities between GT students and host institution students

### **Student Program Assistants MAY NOT** (these duties should be handled by GT staff and/or faculty members only):

- Handle disciplinary situations
- Handle emergency situations
- Be the "program representative" on-call at any time during program. A full-time GT staff or faculty member must be on-call at all times
- Represent GT for any official business (including contracting for services such as lodging, bus companies, tours, etc. or making any payments for these types of services)
- Make any policy-related decisions for the program
- Be in a position to ensure safety of program participants and/or staff
- The Program Assistants should never be a point of contact for problematic issues that may arise during the course of the program

5. **Non-Employees (family members or significant others of faculty)** may travel with family members or significant others who work on the program as faculty at the discretion of the program, as long as it is understood that they have no official role or function with regard to the program, the participants, or the Institute, and are neither to be included in the program budget nor have their expenses paid with program funds. Students may not bring spouses or other family members.

#### ❖ **Hiring Faculty, Staff, and Former Students for GT Programs Abroad**

Once the Program Director decides how to staff the program, he/she will need to officially hire the faculty and staff. There are five hiring categories for study abroad programs.

1. **GT Faculty/Staff:** There are many GT professors who may be interested in teaching on GT programs abroad. The professor's academic unit must approve of the professor's study abroad involvement. Programs should work through the professor's academic unit to hire them to work temporarily on a program abroad. If the professor being considered is on a nine-month contract, then there is usually no financial conflict for summer programs. For faculty on twelve-month contracts or for programs which need professors to teach during fall or spring semesters, the program will have to pay the professor's salary and fringe benefits or pay the cost of hiring an adjunct replacement. Additionally, the program cannot pay professors more than their regular twelve-month salary. Salary negotiations must include both the professor who wishes to teach abroad and his/her Chair.

Each course being offered on study abroad programs must have an “Instructor of Record,” listed on the course proposal form. All “Instructors of Record” must be approved by the academic unit awarding credit for the course.

2. **Hiring Tech Temps to work on the program abroad:** At GT, short-term workers are hired through the Tech Temp Program. GT’s Office of Human Resources (OHR) reviews resumes and conducts criminal background checks on Tech Temp applicants. As employees, Tech Temps are covered by the same insurance (for Institute and employee liability) as permanent employees. Tech Temps are not entitled to receive any other benefits, and there is less accountability than with regular GT employees. Persons affiliated with the program in this capacity should also attend a faculty/staff orientation session presented by the OIE. Please contact OHR in order to follow the normal Tech Temp hiring procedures. Please note that recent graduates of GT also must be hired as Tech Temps to be able to work on GT Programs.
3. **Hiring Student Assistants:** Any current student (grad or undergrad) who will act as a student assistant on the program should be hired through OHR, and should attend faculty/staff orientation.
4. **Hiring Former Participants:** Any former participants who will be affiliated with the programs, who are not Institute employees, and who will be acting on behalf of the program should also be hired. This means that former participants, who are still students at GT, must be officially hired to be permitted to go abroad with any GT program. Even if students will not be receiving a paycheck, if they are acting in a way that gives responsibilities vis à vis program participants, then they should be officially hired in a temporary status as a Tech Temp.  
  
Persons affiliated with the program in this capacity should also attend a faculty/staff orientation session presented by the OIE. Program Directors should be aware that persons in this category are under no obligation to report any misconduct or disciplinary violations against their fellow students to regular GT faculty/staff.
5. **Hiring Retirees:** Retirees cannot be rehired/classified as Tech Temps. Retirees who negotiate to work after their official retirement are classified as “post retirees.” Hiring a post retiree is a much more complex and comprehensive process than hiring a Tech Temp. It involves BOR approval as well as routing through the President’s office for the approval of the Institute. If you plan to hire a retiree for the program, please contact the Office of Human Resources (OHR) in order to follow the normal post retiree hiring procedures.

➤ **Paying faculty/staff**

When deciding on faculty and staff salaries, programs must adhere to standard GT policy. Programs should consult with the hiring manager of their academic unit for information on the GT policy. Programs should also consult with the faculty or staff member’s supervisor to ensure that compensation is legal and fair and meets with the academic unit’s approval. There is no set process for the faculty component. Some programs pay a flat fee per course while others pay faculty a percentage of their salary for courses taught.

➤ **Reimbursing faculty/staff**

Faculty and staff will have some expenses that should be reimbursed upon their return to the U.S. Programs should be sure to refer to GT travel policies when agreeing to cover expenses for faculty and staff. Please visit <http://www.business.gatech.edu/> for more information. Employees must submit all travel expenses to the program and be reimbursed within 30 days of their return to Atlanta. Reimbursement should be taken care of as soon as possible since this will have an effect on the final reconciliation of program accounts.

➤ **Number of participants**

Please note the BOR Study Abroad Committee recommends a 10:1 faculty to student ratio. Fluctuations are sometimes required due to needs to meet faculty salary requirements.

All programs set a minimum number of participants on which to base the program fee structure. If a certain number of participants is not reached, it may be financially impossible for the program to run. Therefore, Program Directors should consider whether they wish to run a small program or a larger scale program. Smaller programs, logically, require fewer courses to be offered, and overall less capital overhead to rent

facilities, buses for field trips, group flights, housing contracts, hire faculty to teach various courses, program coordinators to help organize groups while abroad, grad assistants, etc., etc. Program Directors should consider the size of the program that he or she can handle with current resources, while at the same time offering a quality program at a reasonable cost to students.

Another consideration when deciding on the size of the program is the type of atmosphere desired. Smaller programs allow for more one-on-one interaction and create a smaller group dynamic. In a smaller program, the group of students is more manageable since the entire group is able to travel together, do site visits all at one time in one group, have the same classes together, etc. Larger groups require more of a time commitment logistically, and also create a less interactive environment for one-on-one contact with professors. Program Directors may not be able to get to know each individual student in larger groups, and site visits may need to be divided up to allow for smaller numbers to do visits. GT Faculty who are designing new programs may want to contact current GT study abroad Program Directors to help them decide which dynamic would work best for his/her new program.

➤ **Setting up program accounts/budgets**

❖ **Budget**

All programs have a budget. Programs should start by speaking with the financial representative or the accountant from their academic unit. The program's budget should be included with the program proposal submitted to the Study Abroad Committee each fall semester (deadline is October 1<sup>st</sup>). Instructions for preparing a proposal, including financial reporting requirements, are available at <https://ea.oie.gatech.edu/faculty-staff>.

❖ **Accounting**

Study abroad financial procedures are governed by the [University System of Georgia Business Procedures Manual Section 21.0](#). The program will need to set up and maintain two accounts: an instructional account and an department sales and services (DSS) account. These two differ in their source of revenue and in the types of expenditures that are permissible.

**1. The instructional account**

**Revenue source:** Revenue for the instructional account comes from tuition dollars paid by student participants. These funds are collected by the Bursar's Office and then forwarded to the program's instructional account. Currently, study abroad programs retain 100% of any tuition paid by student participants.

**Expenditures covered by this account:** There are more restrictions concerning the expenditure of funds in an instructional account than there are concerning the use of funds in an agency account. The instructional funds are to be used to pay faculty and staff salaries and benefits. In addition, expenses such as housing, meals, transportation, medical insurance, communications, classroom rentals, computer support, and services required to administer the program are paid from this account. If the revenue in this account is not adequate to cover all instructional expenses, these expenses can be covered by the agency account only if funds are first transferred from the agency account to the instructional account.

**Note:** Any surplus in an instructional account at the end of the fiscal year reverts to the Institute.

**2. The department sales and services (DSS) account**

**Revenue source:** Revenue for the DSS account comes from direct payments made by students to the Bursar as set by the program (Program Charge).

**Expenditures covered by this account:** Funds in this account are used to pay for student housing, transportation, meals, entrance fees, etc. Rules governing the use of study abroad DSS funds are less restrictive than those governing the use of funds in the instructional account. Faculty and staff salaries and fringe may not be paid from the DSS account, however, faculty and staff travel may be paid from this account.

**Note:** The DSS fund should be linked to a P-Card for the program to use for purchases. Study abroad programs only have 18 months to spend funds from the agency account.

**Remember:** any funds remaining in an instructional account at the end of the fiscal year may be forfeited to the Institute while funds in an DSS account can be carried forward from year to year for up to 18 months.

**Tip:** In order to establish new accounts, the Program Director should contact the person handling the accounting for the program.

❖ **Setting the Program Charge**

- ❖ Each participant pays the program fee directly to the Bursar. This fee, along with tuition revenue, is used to support the program. The Program Charge consists of costs that are directly associated with the program. Costs that may be included in the program charge are room and board, books and supplies, field trip costs, airfare, visa fees, transportation, administrative fees, application fees, and other expenses which could be contingency fees, classroom rentals, host university fees, etc. **All GT programs are required to provide international insurance, and this cost must be included in the program fee.**

*TUITION is a separate cost and is never included in the program charge. Programs should always talk to students in terms of program fees plus GT tuition. Program charges and tuition are always paid to the GT Bursar.*

The program determines which costs should be included in the program charge and which costs the students should pay for directly out of pocket while participating on the program abroad. The program should look for a balance: students may be unhappy if not enough elements of the program are prepaid (in the program fee) causing them to constantly reach for their wallets; however, including too many items will raise the program charge and make it appear too expensive and unattractive to students when choosing a program.

❖ **Deadlines for program charges**

These are set by the program (OIE does not provide this information; Program Directors will give this to accepted students directly, and students pay these charges to the Bursar directly). OIE suggests that programs break the program charge into two payments. It is strongly recommended that the final payment for program charges be set well in advance of the program's departure date.

**Note: Student cancellations and refunds** Program Directors should also consider a policy for how students who cancel or drop out of programs before departure or during the program will be handled. Program Directors may set their own refund/cancellation policy. Most programs set a deadline well in advance of the departure date for program fees to be paid in full. After this deadline, most programs will not refund any amount to participants who wish to cancel. Furthermore, participants may well owe full programs fees to the program if they cancel past this deadline and have not paid their accounts in full. Having such a policy does not prevent Program Directors from refunding program fees to a student based on particular extenuating circumstances, even after the no-refund deadline. Cancellation/refund policies should be posted in materials and on the web and be provided to students in writing.

❖ **Building insurance into the program charge**

- ❖ All GT faculty-led study abroad programs provide international insurance coverage to their student participants. Most U.S. policies do not cover medical care while abroad, and if they do only in emergency situations. Therefore, GT requires that its programs cover students with a policy that provides them with insurance for overseas medical emergencies, medical evacuation, and repatriation of remains. The current policy, through Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI), costs \$1.36/day per student. Programs should calculate the cost per student, including travel time (coverage should begin on the day of departure from the U.S. and end on the actual day of return to the U.S.) The cost of insurance is included in the program charge, and programs also include this total cost in their budget. OIE informs students and programs of rate changes each year during the student prep meetings and the faculty orientations. Programs should include contingency money in their budgets for any unforeseen increases with insurance and other service providers.

**\*\* Financial implications for students**

Study abroad insurance is provided by Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) to all University System

of Georgia students who participate in an official school sponsored program. This policy includes coverage for medical expenses, accidental death and dismemberment, emergency medical and security evacuation, and repatriation of remains. Policy information may be found at [www.culturalinsurance.com/gatech.edu](http://www.culturalinsurance.com/gatech.edu). All participants are encouraged to review what is and is not covered by the study abroad insurance to determine if they wish to purchase additional coverage. Insurance information is provided to students via an online pre-departure orientation.

**Note about faculty and staff coverage:**

*Programs are not required to provide insurance for faculty/staff, but many programs do offer this as a benefit.*

***Tip: Programs are required to provide insurance coverage for students only for the official program departure and return dates.***

***If there will be no group flight offered by the program, then the program should calculate the period of coverage to begin a couple of days before the first day of the program and to end a couple of days after the last day of the program.***

**Any personal travel before or after the program is the student's responsibility, and so the student should arrange and pay for this extension of coverage directly.**

➤ **Program cancellations**

If a program were to be cancelled, there would likely be financial implications for students and for the academic units out of which the program is operated. OIE advises that Program Directors consider procedures and steps that would be taken in the case of an unforeseen cancellation of the program or of participants.

➤ **Financial implications for academic units**

As indicated above, in the event of cancellation for reasons beyond GT's control, programs (and, therefore, academic units) will not be responsible for covering expenses for which they cannot obtain refunds. However, if tuition and fees are refunded to students, even partially, or if the program is cancelled prior to departure, the program will not have that instructional revenue to pay faculty salaries and other instructional expenses. Program Directors should speak to the heads of their academic units about this possibility

### III. OIE Services

Because GT believes that international education and study abroad are an integral part of internationalizing GT's campus, OIE was created to facilitate study abroad for students and to provide many services to all GT programs abroad. OIE explains this to students so that they are aware that OIE takes care of the needs and requirements common to all GT study abroad programs and students, while programs take care of program/site specific needs and requirements.

OIE's services include:

➤ **Marketing GT programs:**

OIE provides general marketing for study abroad; for detailed information on OIE marketing, please see page 22.

➤ **Applying to GT programs for GT students:**

1. Administer and manage application process for all GT programs
2. Advise and handle questions on GT policies and procedures for study abroad
3. Inform students about eligibility for GT study abroad
4. Confirm students' eligibility through the Office of Student Integrity and Housing
5. Act as liaison between Dean of Students, Housing, and programs when dealing with students with histories or violations
6. Confirm students' academic eligibility (must be in good standing)
7. Maintain students' files with application and records in case legal issues arise

➤ **Applying to GT programs for transient students:**

1. Advise transients on application processes and GT study abroad policy
2. Handle requests and questions from transients, as they are not on campus

3. Explain the GT Undergraduate Admission Transient Application (this must be completed as well as FLSA Application Packet)
  4. Act as liaison between study abroad transients and Admissions (transient applications are unique for study abroad)
  5. Ensure that Health Services waives the vaccination requirements of the Atlanta campus for study abroad transients
  6. Ensure that study abroad transients are informed of GT policy and understand OSCAR in order to register, where they can get their GT ID, who they pay, which forms they need to submit, etc.
  7. Handle problems with study abroad transients (transcripts not being released, problems with registration, etc.)
- **Acceptance:**
    1. Maintain the Atlas application system (atlas.gatech.edu)
    2. Issue Institute's official acceptance and denial letters for GT study abroad programs
    3. Organize and provide acceptance emails via Atlas Application System
    4. Coordinate and manage student appeal process
  - **Financial Aid:**
    1. Act as liaison between student and Financial Aid Office
    2. Advise students on financial aid and study abroad, refer students to the proper financial aid contacts
    3. Create financial aid verification forms and ensure that the Financial Aid Office receives these; students cannot receive their aid without this form
  - **Scholarships:**
    1. Work to administer and develop local and national scholarships
    2. Administer grants provided through the BOR
    3. Inform students of scholarship opportunities
  - **Registration:**
    1. Act as a liaison between the student and the registrar, and the program and the registrar
    2. Inform the registrar of which students should be coded '7' for faculty-led study abroad classes
    3. Contact the registrar with students who drop out or are added to programs after the deadlines
    4. Inform students of registration procedure for study abroad and to contact OIE to resolve registration errors
    5. Deal with the Registrar when classes have been improperly added to Banner (after the deadline) to resolve this without having to cancel the program abroad
    6. Assisting students who cannot register to ensure that they do so by the Institute's deadline
  - **Bursar:**
    1. Act as a liaison between the Bursar and students
    2. Notify students who fail to pay their tuition and fees
    3. Act as contact for students who have been cancelled due to lack of payment
  - **Pre-departure:**
    1. Deliver an online pre-departure orientation and assessment as required by the Institute
    2. Confirm students' completion of this orientation
    3. Follow up with all students to ensure that they submit Assumption of Risk and Release Form
  - **Health Insurance:**
    1. Communicate to programs about USG negotiated insurance policy. Act as liaison between programs, students and insurance provider
    2. Answer general questions about the coverage
    3. Enroll students in study abroad insurance prior to departure
    4. Add and remove students as they drop out or are added to programs so that program will be charged or credited accordingly and all students will have proper coverage
  - **Best Practices:**

1. Work with the Office of Legal Affairs to ensure that faculty, staff, students and the Institute are protected
2. Organize and provide information for faculty and staff who will accompany students on programs abroad
3. Organize Disciplinary Training offered by Dean of Students for faculty and staff who will deal with these issues
4. Gather emergency contact information and maintain these contacts for all programs
5. Monitor U.S. State Department warnings and recommendations
6. Monitor advisories of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to advise students and staff about safety while overseas
7. Attend the Association of International Educators (NAFSA) and the Georgia Association of International Educators (GAIE) meetings, trainings, and conferences in order to stay current in the field of study abroad
8. Act as liaison with the Board of Regents

➤ **Overseas Support:**

1. Act as a campus contact while overseas for students, faculty, and staff
2. Communicate emergencies to the Office of Student Affairs
3. Communicate with parents who need information while the program is abroad (within confines of FERPA)
4. OIE is available for whatever needs may arise while the program is abroad

#### IV. Choosing and developing the program structure

When determining the structure of a faculty-led study abroad program, Program Directors should keep in mind that quality, effectiveness, duration, cost, and the degree of independence a student needs to be comfortable on the program are all variables that should be considered in the planning stages. In order to maximize the number of students who elect to study abroad, the program should encompass all of these ideals while keeping the program affordable, offering a certain learning style/comfort level. There are two faculty-led models at GT.

➤ **Types of Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs at Georgia Tech**

❖ **Traditional Faculty-led Study Abroad**

- Program that is developed and administered by Georgia Tech faculty and takes place abroad during the fall, spring, or summer semester.

❖ **Embedded Faculty-led Study Abroad Course**

- Course that is developed and administered by Georgia Tech faculty and takes place primarily in Atlanta and includes an international travel component (example: international course related travel during spring break, for a spring semester course)

❖ **Virtual Study Abroad Program**

○

❖ **Global at Home Program**

○

➤ **Types of Faculty-Led Study Abroad Program Models at GT:**

❖ **Academic Unit Model:**

- Program is organized and administered through academic unit with OIE providing all services that are not program specific\*∞
- Program must adhere to GT's Program Proposal and Approval Guidelines, course proposal form, and all GT policies and rules governing Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs

❖ **OIE and Academic Unit Joint Collaboration Model:**



- OIE provides administrative and logistical coordination (e.g. student advising related to the international experience, budget, housing, transportation, etc.. please refer to OIE Services below for additional services that OIE provides)\*\* ∞
- Academic unit organizes all curricular details (e.g. academic advising, courses, site visits, professors, collaboration with academic units at host university, etc.)
- Program must adhere to GT's Program Proposal and Approval Guidelines, course proposal form, and all GT policies and rules governing Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs

\*In the Academic Unit Model, the Program Director is responsible for all aspects of the program, logistically and administratively, except for general study abroad procedures and information, which OIE handles and provides to all students going abroad with GT. This means that the Program Director will have additional responsibilities such as opening program accounts, dealing with DSS funds and the program budget, paying faculty, collecting student payments, making travel arrangements, negotiating housing for students and faculty, finding and reserving classroom space overseas, renting equipment, buses, etc., etc...

\*\*In the OIE and Academic Unit Joint Collaboration Model, OIE deals with administration and logistics while the Program Director focuses on the academic coursework, site visits, and the academic progress of the participants.

**For more information on how each model is set up, please contact the OIE.**

**∞ OIE Services**

OIE always provides the services listed on pages 15-17 to all GT programs abroad (including BOTH faculty-led models described above)

**1B. Role: Professor as a Study Abroad Administrator (Program Director/Coordinator)**

Study Abroad Program Directors/Coordinators often have responsibilities that cross over into the territories handled by other departments and academic units on the home campus. It is often said that those who work in study abroad “wear many different hats.” In order to give potential Program Directors an idea of what exactly is involved we’ve listed many of those potential responsibilities in the chart below:

Academic program development	Interpreter
Admissions and enrollment manager	On-the-spot therapist
Budgetary officer	Orientation program administrator
Bursar/Accounts Payable/Receivable	Parental liaison
Computer center manager	Personal and professional counselor
Contract developer	Personnel manager
Course development and evaluation administrator	Program developer and evaluator
Crisis and emergency manager	Professor
Cross-cultural communicator and culture advocate	Public relations specialist
Cross-cultural issues consultant	Recruiter and marketing specialist
Disciplinarian	Risk manager
Drug and alcohol counselor	Student affairs administrator
Enforcer and judicial officer	Student conduct judicial officer
Equipment manager	Students with disabilities manager
Event Planner	Student health professional
Facilities manager	Testing administrator
Fashion police	Textbook manager
Health and safety officer	Translator
Housing rental agent	Transportation supervisor
Currency exchange expert	Travel agent and tour operator
Insurance agent and counselor	Visa and immigration law specialist
International communications expert	Writer and Editor
International law expert	Etc...Etc...Etc...

- Chart information taken from NAFSA, Professional Development Program, Trainer Manual.

Who are Program Directors? Program Directors are prepared for all of the responsibilities referred to above. They are aware that creating and running a successful study abroad program takes a lot of time, effort, and dedication, but that the rewards far outweigh the costs and time commitments.

The Program Director is responsible for following all Georgia Tech (GT) and Board of Regents (BOR) policies, including those that do not specifically relate to the administration of study abroad programs.

The efforts of the Program Director are the single largest determining factor in the success or failure of a study abroad program. Faculty members who become involved in organizing study abroad programs solely for the opportunity to travel never remain involved for very long, unless their only responsibility is teaching on the program.

A successful Program Director enjoys working with students and possesses administrative skills. He/she is comfortable providing student counseling and taking disciplinary action if necessary. Diplomatic skills are a must to establish good relations with institutions and other contacts abroad. In addition, the Program Director should be familiar with the host country and its culture.

In the development stages of a program, a lot of work will go into making the logistical arrangements. Constant communication with all service providers is necessary to make basic program arrangements and to handle the program details. This will include negotiating with airlines, travel agencies, bus companies, hotels, academic institutions abroad, guest lecturers, financial institutions, and a myriad of others. Systems should be set up in order to keep up with foreign providers, student participants' information, payments, etc. This information is extremely important for tracking, budgeting, and legal purposes.

While the group is abroad, the Program Director is essentially "on call" around the clock. This may seem like an exaggeration; however, Program Directors will want to keep the following in mind:

Some students who participate in study abroad programs have never traveled outside of the United States, and possibly, outside of Georgia. Many still live in their parents' home. Some may have never flown on an airplane, traveled by train, or used public transportation such as buses or underground systems. There will be many situations which they will be facing for the first time in their lives, including dealing with homesickness, culture shock, and perhaps communicating in a foreign language.

Ordinarily, while on campus, professors do not have to concern themselves with such issues outside of the classroom; when abroad this situation changes dramatically. It is important to understand that the Program Director, faculty, the host institution, GT, and/or the BOR could be held legally liable for many different unfortunate occurrences. Thus, the Program Director should take a special interest in protecting the student, the Institute, and of course, himself/herself.

Program Directors are not expected to watch over students as a parent or to anticipate all possible problems; rather, it is important that the students be well informed of how to reach the Program Director or his/her designee at all times, especially in the event of an emergency. With regard to legal counsel, regular GT policy applies. Faculty should always act in good faith and use prudence when making decisions for study abroad programs.

Program Directors who are dedicated to the success of the program and to the benefits that the participants will take with them find working with study abroad programs very rewarding.

### **1C. Submitting a Proposal to the Study Abroad Committee**

After considering all elements required in creating a GT study abroad program, Program Directors are required to submit a program proposal to the GT Study Abroad Committee.

#### **I. What is the GT Study Abroad Committee?**

The Study Abroad Committee (SAC), which is a subcommittee of the Institute's Curriculum Committee, reviews and approves proposals for Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs and sets policies related to study abroad.

The committee is comprised of the Provost's designee, the Executive Director of International Education, the Registrar, the Director of Faculty Affairs, the Director of Education Abroad, two faculty representatives from the Institute's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, one faculty representative from the Institute's Graduate

*GT Study Abroad Program Manual, Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs (FLSA)*

Curriculum Committee, and three at-large faculty representatives. The Associate Director of Education Abroad serves as staff to the SAC.

The committee meets on an as needed basis during fall and spring semesters. Program Directors or their designees are welcome to attend committee meetings in order to address the committee regarding their program proposals or other matters of concern. The agenda for each committee meeting is set one week before the date of each meeting. For more information, please contact the OIE.

## **II. Submitting a program proposal**

All GT programs submit a program proposal each academic year to request approval by the Study Abroad Committee. There is no automatic renewal process, so even programs previously approved will need to resubmit a proposal each year.

**STEP 1.** Contact the OIE when considering a new faculty-led study abroad program.

**STEP 2.** Review program proposal documents, which can be downloaded from the web at <https://ea.oie.gatech.edu/faculty-staff>. There are three parts: Course Proposal Forms, Program Budget, and Core Proposal. Questions about these forms may be directed to Mary Alice Allen, Associate Director of Education Abroad who serves as staff to the GT Study Abroad Committee.

**STEP 3.** You will receive an e-mail with the date, time, and location of the Study Abroad Committee Meeting at which the program's proposal will be reviewed if you are requested to attend;

Once approved by the Study Abroad Committee, the proposal will be signed by Executive Director of International Education and Vice Provost of International Initiatives.

The Program Director should continue to recruit students to apply while the proposal is being reviewed.

After the Study Abroad Committee has approved the program, OIE will start accepting eligible students to participate in GT programs. Application and acceptance/denial of students is centralized through the OIE. All official GT study abroad acceptance/denial letters are emailed to students from the OIE. Acceptance of students depends on three main criteria: Approval of the Program Director, good disciplinary standing, and good academic standing. Programs may set their own criteria above and beyond those set forth by GT. New Program Directors may wish to refer to section 2C of this manual or contact OIE for more information on the student application and acceptance processes.

## SECTION TWO: Pre-Departure

Once the program has been approved and established, there are many considerations and tasks that will need to be completed in the months before the program's departure. Program Directors will need to decide broad issues, such as how to prepare staff hired to teach on the program, and very detailed matters, such as which academic unit representative will input the study abroad classes into Banner, who will handle payments for program fees and budgets, how should the student participants be prepared about the program's rules and expectations and the host location before leaving the U.S., how will the program be run logistically, what about emergencies, funds, etc....

### 2A. Logistics and Set-up

Once the program is approved, Program Directors should use contacts forged overseas to finalize all logistics and set-up necessary for the program to run. The best advice when finalizing the logistical portion of a program abroad is to be as flexible as possible, have back-ups planned in case one scenario does not work out in the end, keep in contact with all providers, confirm all arrangements, make payments on time, and have all contracts or policies provided in writing. A few major points to remember are:

#### I. Dates and schedules

During the period of time preceding departure, appointments, class schedules, meeting days and times, etc. should be confirmed and reworked if necessary. When leading a program overseas, it is likely that many planned events could change due to cultural differences, unexpected strikes, holidays, political visits, protests, and simple human error. It is absolutely imperative to request confirmations in writing via e-mail or fax in order to have proof of reservations and other arrangements. Remember to be as flexible as possible and design a program with elements that can be easily reworked if the unexpected occurs. Have back-ups in mind! For example, the group has a planned appointment at a museum, but upon arrival it is discovered that the museum has closed due to an unexpected event. Will the program have an alternate plan to hold class or visit another site instead of losing the day?

#### II. Holidays

Program Directors should keep local holidays in mind when planning the program schedule. Many countries have very generous vacation policies, and in some areas even practically shut down for entire seasons due to holiday travel. For example, in Spain, nearly all locals leave their homes in the city for the beaches in August. Madrid can be nearly empty of locals, and many businesses close completely, or at least have reduced summer hours during July and August. This means that the program would have little or no opportunity to provide experiences for its students with the local culture.

Programs should also be aware that some countries have more holidays than the U.S. This can mean additional closings, lack of available facilities, etc.

It can sometimes be difficult to pinpoint all holidays that will take place during a program, but programs can research as much as possible to avoid confusion and having plans cancelled or rescheduled at inconvenient times.

#### III. Field trips and site visits

When arranging field trips, programs should check into the specific rules and regulations for group visits. Some have minimum and maximum numbers for groups, reduced rates (provided that proof of student and educator status can be supplied), required tour guides, wardrobe requirements, tight reservation schedules, etc. Programs should be sure to maintain contact with vendors, get quotes in writing, and check for cancellation policies, holidays, hours, and methods of payment. Programs should clarify whether providers should be prepaid or paid upon arrival, if deposits are required by a certain date to hold reservations, and whether the provider of the service requires payment in U.S. dollars or in a foreign currency.

***Tip: Arranging to pay in dollars rather than the foreign currency can serve as an insurance policy against fluctuating exchange rates!***

## 2B. Recruitment and Marketing

Once the program has been designed and approved, the question remains, how do programs get students to apply?? OIE does general marketing for all GT study abroad programs. The Program Director and other participating faculty should do the major targeted marketing and recruitment for the program.

### I. Targets

The best way to start marketing a program is to determine who the target audience will be. Who is eligible to apply and participate in the program? Is the program designed for any student in any major, or is it only for IE majors, EE majors, INTA majors.....? What level are the classes – will only juniors or seniors be able to participate, or is it a program for all levels?

Once all of the questions have been answered, programs will be able to better assess where and when they should market the program.

### II. OIE marketing of GT programs

(For a complete list of OIE's services, please see section 1A)

1. Maintain and develop printed materials used to market programs
2. Maintain and post program information in online listings and maintain advertising opportunities
3. Market programs through OIE web site with links to program web sites, and list program contact information.
4. Poster Campus and residence halls/dining halls, etc.
5. Hand out flyers and handbills at Tech Square and Student Center
6. Stuff campus mail boxes with flyers
7. Place ads in Technique
8. Create and maintain study abroad social media
9. Create and run ads on GT plasma advertising throughout campus
10. Schedule and staff weekly Info Tables to distribute materials and recruit students
11. Schedule and present to classes to interest students in going abroad
12. Hold weekly "General Study Abroad Advising" sessions to inform students of all GT programs
13. Present at Family Weekend, Connect with Tech, Preview Tech, FASET, President Scholar's Weekend, minority events etc.
14. Present to campus organizations such as Society of African American Engineers, Spanish Speaking Students Org, etc.
15. Plan, market and host SA Fair at no cost to programs (coordinating all logistics, etc.)
16. Plan and market receptions for outgoing and incoming students to raise awareness on campus
17. Plan and develop International Photo Contest to keep students interested and advertise SA positively on campus
18. Advise the OIE Peer Advisors, group of returned study abroad students who help spread the word about study abroad, sponsor and assist with Peer Advisor events
19. Plan events for International Education week each November
20. Maintain interested students database and e-mail list
21. Plan international events and speakers on campus
22. Post events and news on the OIE web site's events calendar and news section

***OIE does general marketing for all GT programs and promotes study abroad throughout the year. Programs should do major marketing to students and are welcome to take these ideas and adapt them for their specific marketing purposes.***

### III. Basic options for program specific marketing

In addition to OIE marketing, below are some basic suggestions that most GT programs currently use for individual program recruitment and marketing.

### ➤ Posters/flyers/brochures

First and foremost, programs should develop a flyer/brochure to be used in various marketing venues. Some programs have professionally designed and printed brochures, but most create a one-paged flyer themselves and photocopy them on colored paper to keep costs low. Brochures should include details about the courses offered, program dates, location, and cost. Also, a cancellation footnote should always be included to protect the program in the case of unexpected/unforeseen cancellation.

Distributing and posting posters and flyers throughout campus can also help to get the word out about the program. There are many designated posting areas on campus approved for hanging such items. Programs may also wish to solicit the help of past participants as volunteers to hand out flyers at critical points of traffic on campus, such as the Student Center, Technology Square, etc.

#### **IMPORTANT Note about Program Materials:**

**Any program materials (either printed or electronic) that explain program policies and procedures must include the following disclaimer: “Georgia Tech reserves the right to alter or cancel this program due to low enrollment, unavailability of a professor to teach a planned course, or other unforeseen circumstances. If Georgia Tech cancels the program before departure for reasons within its control, all fees paid by participants will be refunded. If Georgia Tech cancels the program before departure or while the program is in progress for reasons beyond its control, such as political unrest or danger to participants’ safety, only those fees that Georgia Tech is able to have refunded by service providers will be returned to participants.”**

### ➤ Study Abroad Fair organized by OIE

The annual GT Study Abroad Fair presented by OIE is an excellent marketing opportunity for all programs. Programs are invited to sign up for a table at the fair, which typically has space for about 60 different study abroad programs and organizations. Extensive marketing is done for this event encouraging an excellent turn-out of GT students. A raffle is held in which donated prizes are awarded to fair attendees (past prizes have included Eurail train passes, travel vouchers, t-shirts, book bags, etc). Banners, posters, and handbills are distributed and posted throughout campus before the fair to encourage participation. OIE encourages all programs to participate in the event!

### ➤ Classes

Program Directors who also teach courses at GT, of course, will be able to market the program to his/her classes. This is a perfect opportunity to inform a captive audience about the program, and most likely, students enrolled the Program Director’s classes would have an interest in the subject matter being offered.

OIE study abroad advisors currently ask permission to speak to classes about programs abroad. Program Directors may also wish to ask for the permission of colleagues to speak to classes about his/her program if it would be pertinent. Class presentations are an excellent way to peak students’ interest in learning more about programs and possibly applying.

### ➤ E-mail

E-mail lists can be a great way to keep interested students in the loop about programs as they are being planned and costs and courses are approved. This keeps students in touch with the program while they are considering applying. It also provides a great outlet for students to ask questions and express their concerns. A great place to get students to sign up from an e-mail list is at the annual fall study abroad fair.

OIE also maintains a list each year of interested and returned study abroad students. This list is used for marketing as well; programs may wish to send e-mails to OIE for posting.

### ➤ GT Post Office

The GT post office may allow programs to send mailings to students in their GT boxes. This depends on the amount of material and the number of students to whom the program wishes to include in the mailing. Programs should contact the GT Post Office for rules and regulations about mailings.

### ➤ Meetings

Programs may also consider advertising and holding info sessions or meetings about the program and the host country. Meetings can be planned within departments and campus wide. Also, faculty meetings can be a great place to announce program features and distribute flyers to colleagues to hand out to students. Programs may e-mail their meeting dates to OIE to be added to the OIE events calendar on the web.

## 2C. GT Study Abroad Student Application Process

Students apply to Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs (FLSA) through the OIE and the Atlas Application System. Applications are available at [www.atlas.gatech.edu](http://www.atlas.gatech.edu); students fill out an online application and then submit supporting materials. All GT students must be in good academic standing and in good disciplinary standing to be eligible to participate. OIE checks the Registrar's and the Dean of Students' records, and the Housing Office to verify their standing and eligibility to participate.

The Program Director reviews the student's application and then decides whether or not to accept him/her. If Program Director decides to accept the student, and if the student's academic and disciplinary records are both in good standing, then OIE issues an official acceptance letter. Students who are not eligible or are not accepted to the program will receive an official denial letter from OIE.

### I. Program-specific application requirements

Programs are welcome to set their own requirements above those currently set by GT as long as they are clearly stated in writing and do not conflict with GT policy or application deadlines. Some programs do have additional program specific requirements such as higher GPA requirements, letters of support or recommendations, interviews, language requirements, course prerequisites, etc.

#### ➤ Who can apply?

All students must have completed at least two full-time degree-seeking semesters of college and be at least 18 years of age by the program's departure date to participate. GT students who meet the GT study abroad eligibility requirements for participation on GT programs abroad are eligible to apply (GT study abroad requirements state that GT students must be in good academic standing and good disciplinary standing, must maintain appropriate standards of behavior, and must meet all course pre-requisites and any additional program specific requirements to be eligible to apply).

Non-GT Students (Transient/Special students) from other U.S. universities are also eligible to apply at the discretion of the program. Most GT FLSA programs do allow Transient/Special students to apply, so the Program Director should tell OIE if they do not wish to accept Transient student applications.

**IMPORTANT: Academic and disciplinary probation:** OIE screens applicants to study abroad simultaneously as the Program Director reviews the candidate's application. Programs Directors decide on the acceptance of candidates based on his or her application materials. If OIE is informed that the student is ineligible to participate based on grades or disciplinary standing, the Program Director is notified immediately. Occasionally, a meeting is called by the Dean of Students if the applicant in question has a history that would warrant more discussion before a decision can be made on his or her application. Accepted students who fall out of good academic or good disciplinary standing before the program departs will no longer be eligible to participate and are not entitled to any refunds for program fees.

#### ➤ When to apply

Applications for Summer and Fall GT Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs are generally available on the first day of Fall classes. Application for Spring program typically open on May 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceedind year. Students are encouraged to apply early, as many programs fill up quickly. Program Directors will need to decide on an application deadline and how they wish to review the applications. Most programs accept qualified applicants on a rolling basis until programs are filled or until the application deadline (usually February 15<sup>th</sup> for summer programs), whichever comes first. Deadlines vary from program to program, so students should refer to the Program Deadlines to ensure that applications are submitted in a timely manner.

**Note about applying:** Students cannot be accepted into any program until the program proposal has been approved by the Study Abroad Committee. Since the GT application is available in August and programs fill up quickly, students should NOT be encouraged to wait for program approval. They may apply beginning on the first day of Fall classes before the program has been approved, but they should be informed that official acceptances cannot be mailed until the after the final committee approval.

➤ **How to apply (GT students)**

All students submit completed GT study abroad applications to via Atlas (atlas.gatech.edu).

**STEP 1:** Applications include biographical data, an essay explaining why the student wishes to be a part of the program, short answers about additional activities/awards, and a program deposit. Students submit applications to OIE by the program's application deadline. Some programs have additional requirements and program specific questionnaires.

***\*\*OIE recommends that programs require a deposit at the time of application. This gives the program a financial "insurance" that the applicant is serious about participating in the program. Program deposit are typically \$500.00 and are non-refundable.***

**STEP 2:** As soon as OIE receives a completed application, it is forwarded to the Program Director for review. Applications are reviewed and accepted on a rolling basis for most programs. While the Program Director reviews and decides on applications, OIE completes the academic and disciplinary screening process through the Registrar and the Office of Student Integrity and Housing. An additional academic and disciplinary check is conducted prior to departure for all students.

**STEP 3:** As soon as OIE receives clearance from the Program Director, the Registrar, and the Office of Student Integrity and Housing, an official GT acceptance email from OIE. The time between application and acceptance is typically 2½ weeks.

Occasionally, more time may be needed to evaluate certain candidates. If students have a disciplinary file with the Office of Student Integrity and/or Housing, or are not in good academic standing, it is likely that the application will take longer than 2½ weeks to process since meetings and phone conversations between the Program Director, OIE, and the Dean of Students may be necessary.

➤ **GT alumni**

Persons who have already graduated from GT may be permitted to participate on GT programs as **Special** students at the discretion of the program. GT Alumni are required to complete the regular study abroad application as well as an application for readmission to GT. Special students must also register for classes, receive grades on their transcript, and pay tuition just like any regular student – Special students are NOT eligible for financial aid!!

➤ **Non-GT applicants**

❖ **Transient Students**

Non-GT students, who are enrolled full-time and are degree-seeking at another U.S. university, may apply for GT study abroad programs as **Transient** students through OIE. They follow the same application process as GT students (above), but also have to apply to GT since they need a student status at GT to participate in GT programs abroad. OIE helps these students complete their GT admissions application. They should be accepted by both the study abroad program and the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

❖ **Special Students**

Non-GT students, who have already graduated with a bachelor's degree from another U.S. university, may apply for GT study abroad programs through OIE as **Special** students. They follow the same application process as GT students (above), but also have to apply to GT since they need a student status at GT to participate in GT programs abroad. OIE helps these students complete their GT admissions application. They should be accepted by both the study abroad program and the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The rules are different for students from other universities who have at one time or another taken at least one course at GT. Any student who has ever taken a course at GT must complete an application for readmission.

➤ **Accepted students**

When officially accepted to participate in a GT program abroad, students will be required to complete post-decision requirements in Atlas:

**Pre-Departure Online Orientation** is completed online in Atlas following admission to the program. Students are required to pass an orientation assessment before they may depart.

*GT Study Abroad Program Manual, Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs (FLSA)*



**Program Specific Orientations** Program Directors also have program specific orientation(s) for students before the departure date. This meeting usually covers program specific information (see section 2G).

**Note:** Official acceptance emails are **NEVER** sent to students until **1) the Program Director has given his/her approval, 2) the disciplinary record check shows that a student is in good disciplinary standing and 3) the grade check shows that a student is in good academic standing.**

## 2D. Office of the Registrar: Procedures for Study Abroad

### I. Creating study abroad courses in Banner

In order for students to be able to register for classes abroad, the study abroad classes have to be created in Banner. Program Directors must ensure that each department offering classes for their program takes care of this by the Registrar's published deadline for inputting classes into the system (usually in February for summer programs).

*It is the responsibility of the Study Abroad Program to oversee that all classes are entered properly. The Program should ensure that each academic unit refers to the Registrar's web page for full instructions on how to set up study abroad courses in Banner: <https://registrar.gatech.edu/academic-scheduling/study-abroad>.*

#### ➤ Study abroad course restrictions

The GT Registrar follows a coding system for the various campuses of GT (such as Atlanta, Georgia Tech - Europe, Studies Abroad). OIE is responsible for ensuring that approved and accepted study abroad students are coded properly for the registration periods. OIE approves all accepted study abroad students to be coded for the "studies abroad campus" (otherwise known as "Campus 7" for all programs) each semester. This gives accepted students permission to register for study abroad classes.

**Note:** Due to the GT Registrar's coding system and the BOR's special study abroad tuition rates, students are not permitted to register for studies abroad (campus 7) or GTL undergraduate courses (campus X) if they are also registering for Atlanta campus or online/distance courses during the same semester.  
**Students are not permitted to register for Atlanta or Online/Distance courses during a study abroad semester.**

### II. GT study abroad registration and tuition

All participants in GT FLSA programs must register for classes on OSCAR and pay appropriate tuition to the GT Bursar.

#### ➤ Registering for classes

The Program Director is responsible for telling his/her accepted participants about classes offered on the program abroad. Students will be responsible for registering themselves on OSCAR, during their assigned time ticket, just as they do during any regular semester. The Program Director must tell participants ahead of time about the program requirements and the class numbers, class sections, and the Course Reference Numbers (CRN)s for which they should register. The Program Director or his/her designated administrator should also run class rolls throughout the official registration periods to ensure that all participants have registered for the proper classes/credit hours, etc. Any student not registered for classes during Phase I or II Registrations will not be able to participate in the program. Once Registration closes (usually the First week of Atlanta classes) no student can be added into classes. Failure to register makes the student ineligible to participate in GT study abroad.

### III. Grades for study abroad courses

All GT study abroad courses must award a letter grade. Programs that wish to offer another grading option should address this in their program proposal to the GT Study Abroad Committee.

➤ **Deadline for study abroad grades**

Grades earned for study abroad courses must be submitted to the GT Registrar's office online by the professor who is the instructor of record for the course. The deadline for submitting grades each semester is communicated by the GT Registrar (usually the first Monday after final exams conclude). GT programs abroad must adhere to the same grading policies and submission dates as Atlanta campus. For more information, go to [www.registrar.gatech.edu](http://www.registrar.gatech.edu).

## **2E. GT Tuition for Study Abroad**

### **I. BOR policy on study abroad tuition**

The Board of Regents (BOR) of the University System of Georgia has set forth a special tuition policy for study abroad programs: All students participating in GT Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs will be assessed in-state tuition. Students are also assessed the GT Technology Fee, which they pay to the Bursar.

### **II. Paying study abroad tuition**

All participants in GT study abroad programs pay tuition, per the BOR policy, to the GT Bursar by their official deadline. Students who fail to pay the GT Bursar by the deadline will be cancelled from classes and will not be eligible to participate in GT study abroad. *In addition to tuition, all students also pay the GT Technology fee.*

Tuition is used as revenue for the program and may be used to cover faculty and staff salaries and travel costs, as well as other academic expenses (see section 1A, Part II).

## **2F. Financial Considerations**

### **I. Financial plans for individual programs**

During the pre-departure period, there are various financial considerations that Program Directors should think about in budgeting funds.

➤ **Student Payments for Program Charges**

Students will pay their program charge directly to the Bursar. Program Directors should work with their academic unit to determine who will be responsible for making sure payments are made by the program deadlines, tracking revenue and expenditures, and reconciling the program's accounts upon completion of the program.

➤ **Promissory Notes**

Many students will not have all of their funds available to them by the final payment deadline for program fees, if they are mainly dependent on financial aid. Additionally, disbursement dates for financial aid are regulated through the Federal Government, and usually fall after program fee deadlines. Program Directors may choose to use promissory notes in these situations. Essentially, the Program Director can write up a financial contract with certain student participants who are having difficulty securing all funds by the program payment deadlines. The Program Director should confirm that the student really does have the necessary amount of financial aid to pay for the program. It is highly recommended that promissory notes be made only for a portion of the fees and that all program fees be paid in full BEFORE the departure deadline to guarantee that the funds exist to cover the student's expenses. Students who fail to pay all program fees before the program departure date should not be allowed to participate. *TUITION AND FEES DUE TO THE BURSAR CANNOT BE DEFERRED WITH PROMISSORY NOTES.*

➤ **Vendor Contracts**

All vendor contracts must be reviewed and approved by Georgia Tech Purchasing. Programs should work with their academic unit's financial administrator to submit these for review via Workday as soon as possible. Once reviewed, approved, and sign, only then may a program submit a vendor invoice for payment.

In preparation for potential emergencies during the course of the program abroad, OIE advises Program Directors to have as many different ways as possible of accessing funds and paying for services, including the following:

➤ **Obtain a P-Card**

A “P-Card” is an Institute credit card. Normally, the card cannot be used for any travel expenses; however, with prior permission from the P-Card Administrator, the card may be used to pay for student housing/hotels, shuttle service or other transportation for students, and program-related entrance fees for students. **The P-Card can never be used for faculty or staff travel expenses.** With appropriate approval, it can be used to pay for services for which GT has been paid. In other words, students have paid GT for a service (e.g. hotel, shuttle) so the P-Card can be used to provide that service to them. It is also important to have a P-Card in case of emergencies requiring expensive purchases with little or no notice (e.g. plane tickets for the entire group). **GT requires that all study abroad programs have a P-Card in case of emergency.**

➤ **Make arrangements to receive emergency funds on site**

In the event that emergency funds are needed for last minute plane tickets to return early to the U.S., or for alternative housing arrangements if the group has to be moved, or if another such emergency arises, the Institute is prepared to send funds to cover the cost of these emergency expenses. The Institute will make funds available for programs in case of an emergency that threatens the well-being of participants. In order to receive those funds, the Program Director will need to make arrangements at each of the program’s sites before the program begins or as soon as he/she arrives to receive funds. If an emergency arises and the Program Director needs the Institute to send funds, he/she will follow the normal emergency response plan (see section 3). OIE will then work from Atlanta with Accounting Services to have the funds sent abroad to the program. Post 9/11 services such as Western Union are not as dependable or quick. They also have now placed limits on amounts of cash that can be sent unless you have a well established account with them. There is also a waiting period which can prevent you from receiving large amounts of cash in a hurry. GT has developed a way to ensure that programs can still have access to funds in an emergency. Please note the following:

- 1- GT does not recommend that GT employees open foreign accounts. If you do this, or even list yourself as a signer on a foreign account, you are now almost guaranteed an audit by the IRS. There is no official rule against this, but if you do choose to deal through foreign accounts, you do so at your own risk.
- 2- For routine expenses in-country, program should plan to utilize a Georgia Tech Purchasing Card (p-card) or Cash Advance from GT Accounts Payable.

## **2G. Orientations/Preparatory Meetings**

### **I. Student orientations/preparatory meetings**

In order to prepare students for study abroad and to inform them of GT study abroad policies, there are two required meetings presented by the OIE. In addition, the Program Director is responsible for orienting his/her participants about the host culture(s), program site(s), and other particulars of the program.

➤ **Required OIE Meetings**

OIE offers a required online pre-departure orientation via Atlas for all students that will travel abroad on a faculty-led study abroad program. These consist of recorded videos and cover the following topics.

- The Student Code of Conduct and Sexual Harassment
- Course Registration and Payment Information
- Money Matters and Financial Aid
- Safety and Security Abroad
- Health Matters and Study Abroad Insurance
- Embassies, Consulates, Customs, Passports, and Visas
- Technology Abroad
- Traveling during the Covid-19 Pandemic

➤ **Optional Cross-Cultural Training**

*GT Study Abroad Program Manual, Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs (FLSA)*

In addition to the two required OIE meetings, students have the option of attending one of OIE's Cross-Cultural Trainings before departure. Living abroad in a completely distinctive culture can be a very stressful experience, especially for students who have little or no travel experience, or very little international exposure. This specialized training is designed to help students cope with new and different cultures. The training consists of various interactive exercises to get students used to being out of their comfort zone. These trainings are provided by OIE's On Campus Internationalization (OCI) workgroup. For more information, please contact the OIE.

### ➤ **Program-Specific Meetings**

These meetings should be presented by the Program Director before the program's departure. OIE only covers topics that are relevant for all participants in GT study abroad programs; therefore, it is the responsibility of the Program Director to prepare his/her participants specifically for the program location and host culture. Some items that Program Directors should cover in their program specific pre-departure meeting are the following:

- Language barriers, language skills
- Manners and etiquette
- Site-specific safety info: Students receive general safety information and tips at the general Pre-Departure Orientation that OIE conducts. Programs can also provide information about the city or country where the students will study. Are there any areas or neighborhoods to avoid at night or even at all times? Are pickpockets especially frequent in metro stations or certain public transportation lines? Remember that it is not a matter of making rules as much as providing advice or suggestions about safety.
- Emergency plans
- Local foods/eating habits
- Site specific packing tips
- Handling money on-site
- Class schedule
- Group flight info, if applicable
- Arrival info
- Program rules and expectations
- Customs regulations for the program site
- Laptops
- Electrical current/adapters
- 24-hour emergency contact number
- Housing

Additionally, Program Directors should put everything that they communicate to their students in writing. It is important to do this so that students will have a handout or other type of document to refer to later.

**IMPORTANT:** Program Directors should also provide the Consular Information Sheet for the country(-ies) in which the programs are held to each person associated with the program. Consular Information Sheets can be viewed and printed from the Bureau of Consular Affairs' website: <http://travel.state.gov>.

## **II. Faculty/staff orientations and trainings**

Just as students need preparation to go on a GT program abroad, faculty/staff also need some preparation and information about as many aspects of the experience as possible prior to departure.

### ➤ **Faculty/Staff Orientation**

All faculty and staff who will teach or work on GT faculty-led study abroad programs should attend one of the orientations presented by OIE in conjunction with the Office of the Dean of Students, Director of Education Abroad and Vice Provost for Faculty Advocacy and Conflict Resolution. The orientation consists primarily of a panel with representatives from each of these areas. Each person on the panel makes a brief presentation and then answers questions (in the past, this Q & A has taken up most of orientation). These trainings are

recorded and all supplemental training materials are available online at <https://ea.oie.gatech.edu/study-abroad-faculty-and-staff-training-resources>.

➤ **This training provides information about study abroad policies and procedures, risk management planning, faculty and staff well-being, and student disciplinary incident reporting and response.**

Regarding student disciplinary incident reporting and response, these are just a few examples of what may occur while abroad:

What would happen if a student were arrested? What if he/she assaulted another student? How would the program deal with a student who constantly drinks and never comes to class? What if a student had to be rushed to the hospital with alcohol poisoning, should he/she be punished? These are just a few examples of the scenarios that Program Directors have found themselves in over the years.

The Dean of Students provides training for programs since most faculty/staff do not normally work in a capacity dealing with disciplinary issues in Atlanta. While the Dean will always be available to assist the program in such situations, the Program Director is the person on site who will have to deal with the student.

Programs should decide who will be the main staff member in charge of discipline and who will be the back-up.

## SECTION THREE: Overseas with GT

Once the program departs for the study abroad destination, the Program Director should be aware of many unexpected situations that could arise abroad. It is important that the program be as prepared as possible for many different scenarios that could occur while teaching students overseas.

### 3A. Minimum Level of Support

All GT programs abroad are required to have a minimum level of support for students while abroad. **There should be at least one Program Director or staff member on the program who is in charge, accessible at all times, carries a cell phone, and capably trained to handle emergencies and disciplinary problems.** This does not have to be the same person at all times; many programs do this in shifts. Please see section 3B, which details the requirements of an emergency plan, and section 2G for more information on faculty/staff trainings.

#### I. 24-hour phone number

All programs must have a cell phone that is reachable 24-hours a day. At the very least, students participating in the program, the OIE, and the Office of the Dean of Students must be supplied with a 24-hour contact phone number (usually a program cell number) in case of emergencies abroad or at home in the U.S. This number must be available at all times, or a back-up number must be provided in the case that the primary contact cannot be located or is off duty.

The person designated as “in charge” must be physically on location with the students in case he/she is needed to handle an emergency situation. Many programs alternate between trained faculty/staff so that this responsibility can be shared. This person should be an official faculty or staff member approved and qualified to handle emergency situations.

#### II. Emergency contact information

Program Directors must supply OIE and the Office of the Dean of Students with emergency contact information (including the 24-hour contact number as specified above). He/she should include the contact person's name, address, phone, fax, e-mail, etc. It is also helpful to include country access codes for international dialing, a schedule of dates and locations for program travel, and a few alternate contacts in case the first contact cannot be reached. If the students are residing in a separate residence than the Program Director/Coordinator, a phone number for the students' residences should also be included in case they need to be contacted directly.

This information is required in case of an emergency while students are overseas. An emergency could be in the host country, such as political unrest, or it could happen here in the U.S., such as a death or serious illness in the student's family. GT officials should be able to contact the program at all times in case of these or other unexpected events.

#### III. Back-up support

All GT programs abroad should have a back-up person who can be immediately available in case of a serious situation with the Program Director. Program Directors should consider what he/she would do in the unexpected event of illness, serious injury, or even death. There should be someone who can take over and handle the remainder of the program or evacuate the students back to the U.S. if necessary. This would mean that the backup would replace the Program Director if necessary.

### 3B. Emergencies while Abroad

#### I. Preparing students for emergencies while abroad

This is one of the most important responsibilities of the Program Director.

- **Students should remain vigilant**

The Program Director should be as informed as possible about potential situations that may disrupt the program while abroad. Program Directors should make every effort to keep students informed of their surroundings and safety concerns during the program.

➤ **Political protests**

Some countries may from time to time have political situations which cause the locals to organize public protests. Program Directors should monitor such situations and inform students that they are advised to absolutely avoid all types of protests while abroad. Peaceful protests can turn violent in an instant, putting students in danger. Also, students may not be aware that in many countries, penalties for public protests could be much more stringent, and may carry heavier fines or jail terms than they might expect.

Programs should also be aware that with the current political climate, the U.S. and its policies could be the subject of many protests, and students should remain aware of their surroundings and avoid such demonstrations.

➤ **Local strikes**

It is not uncommon for many countries to have local or national strikes that occur with some frequency, affecting business, commerce, and transportation, and, more importantly, GT programs and its students. Program Directors will be very busy but should try to stay tuned into current events. They should be prepared to anticipate back-up plans in the case that a strike closes down metro underground systems, buses, trains, airlines and airports, and even taxis. Since students will not usually have access to cars while abroad, programs should plan for the unexpected event that available transportation could be interrupted causing delays and problems for students and the program schedule.

## II. GT emergency plans while abroad

The safety and security of our students and staff are of paramount importance.

OIE monitors the world situation and the situation in countries where we operate programs by staying abreast of current events, by reviewing U.S. Department of State announcements, and by corresponding and talking with local contacts whenever possible. OIE receives an e-mail message from the U.S. Department of State whenever a new announcement or travel warning is released and will let programs know if we receive any information concerning the locations of GT programs.

Also, Program Directors, as the organizers of programs in particular countries, should use the contacts that they have in the host country(-ies) to assess the situation. Program Directors should monitor information released by the U.S. Department of State and also keep informed of current conditions in the country (-ies) in which the programs are operated. The U.S. Department of State posts all Public Announcements and Travel Warnings on the website of its Bureau of Consular Affairs: <http://travel.state.gov>. Also, the websites of U.S. Embassies and Consulates should be monitored because they contain announcements for Americans in their respective countries: <http://usembassy.state.gov>. OIE also advises that Program Directors try to obtain information from the country(-ies) in which the program will be held by consulting media sources in the country, faculty colleagues, service providers, or others who may be able to provide information on the state of affairs in the country.

If at any time before departure, the Program Director becomes concerned about the feasibility and safety of operating the program and thinks that cancellation of the program should be considered, he/she should immediately contact Ms. Amy Henry. She will set up a meeting between the Program Director, Legal Affairs, Risk Management, the Dean of Students, and other relevant parties so that a decision can be made as quickly as possible.

If at any time during the program, the Program Director becomes concerned about the feasibility and safety of operating the program and thinks that cancellation of the program should be considered, he/she should follow the Emergency Response Plan (see the forms section of this manual). The Study Abroad Program Director, the Office of International Education, and the Office of the Dean of Students all work together to make joint decisions regarding program cancellation.

<p><b>IMPORTANT:</b> Program Directors should review all of the information on the website of the U.S. State Department (<a href="http://www.state.gov">http://www.state.gov</a>) so that they will be familiar with the kind of emergency assistance that U.S. Embassies and Consulates provide to Americans abroad.</p>
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➤ **Site-specific emergency plan**

In case an emergency arises during the course of the program, Program Directors should have a plan in place for handling emergencies that might arise on the particular program. The GT Emergency Response Plan for study abroad is not country-specific, so additional procedures should be put into place by individual programs to ensure that students, faculty, and staff will know how to react in a crisis. It is impossible to plan for every scenario or even to imagine all possible emergencies, but Program Directors should lay out general procedures for the program that will serve as a guide. Clearly, it will still be up to those on site to use procedures in a way that best suits the situation or emergency that is faced by the program abroad.

### ➤ **GT emergency plan requirements while abroad**

Some of the points that should be addressed by the program procedures for emergencies are:

1. All GT Programs Abroad must have an emergency contact, on call 24 hours/day (see section 3A).
2. If there is only one person in charge of the program, as is the case with many small programs, then a back-up person must be designated to continue the program or to safely accompany the students back to the U.S. in the event that the Program Director should be injured, become ill, detained, etc. (see section 3A)
3. In the event of an emergency, all persons associated with the program need to know where to seek temporary safe haven. Program Directors should provide students, faculty, and staff associated with the program with information on how to reach the nearest police station and/or Embassy and let them know that this is where they should go in an emergency.
4. If it is deemed that the city or housing facility of the program is unsafe, the Program Director should have an alternative location to house the students until they can leave the country.
5. Faculty and staff involved with the program need to know how to contact each other if there is an emergency, and they need to know who will be responsible for coordinating any change in program location.
6. Program Leaders should have a P-card to make emergency purchases – tickets, medical, etc.
7. Some items to remember to include in an emergency plan:
  - a. Back-up Program Leader, who will be in charge if something happens to the current leader?
  - b. Emergency cell phone, contact numbers? Be sure the cell phone works to call locally and internationally
  - c. Know how to use local pay phones to make calls, and have the currency/cards to use them if necessary.
  - d. List or db of students
  - e. Phone tree or Org Tree with contact info and crisis duties
  - f. Listing of local hospitals/health care providers
  - g. Local contact info for emergency responders
  - h. Safe meeting point for all program participants
  - i. Transportation options (commercial, charter – bus, ferry, air, etc.)
  - j. Routes out of host country
  - k. Alternate housing location
  - l. Access for students, faculty, and staff to telephones or other forms of communication with families/friends in the event of an emergency
  - m. Emergency contact cards – who to call in emergency?
    - i. Contact GT Police – they will contact the Dean of Students 24 hours/day
    - ii. Contact Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) if necessary

All faculty, staff, students, and others associated with the program should register at the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate for each city/country to be visited. All U.S. Embassies and Consulates are online: <http://usembassy.state.gov>. Programs should advise their students of online registration in writing; all U.S. citizens/Permanent Residents should register their trip with the U.S. Department of State at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>.

Some programs have participants who are not U.S. citizens. OIE informs all non-U.S. citizens participating in the programs that neither the program nor the Georgia Institute of Technology can provide any guarantees that they will be accorded the same benefits as U.S. citizens in the event of a crisis and that they should inform the nearest Embassy or Consulate of their passport country of their relevant travel and contact information. This information is communicated to students at the prep meetings and pre-departure orientations. OIE suggests that programs also remind students of this since this could be important in an emergency situation.



For those Program Directors who are unable to attend faculty/staff orientation, the packet of materials, which includes an emergency contact information card, the GT Emergency Response Plan for Study Abroad and Exchange Programs, and many other documents, are included in section 5, Forms, of this manual, or they can be downloaded at <http://www.oie.gatech.edu/fac/>.

### ➤ **Medical emergencies**

All GT programs are required to provide medical insurance including evacuation and repatriation of remains to student participants. GT negotiates insurance for all programs, and Program Directors include the cost of insurance in the program fee that students pay to participate. Students are provided with insurance information at the OIE pre-departure meetings and are issued insurance cards before leaving the U.S. Any questions about coverage or the processing of claims should be directed to the current insurance provider, Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) at [www.culturalinsurance.com](http://www.culturalinsurance.com).

### \*\* **Financial implications for students**

OIE enrolls all students in the CISI study abroad insurance policy. Students receive their insurance card and policy brochure directly via email prior to departure. Information about this policy is also covered in the OIE Online Pre-departure Orientation.

## **3C. Supporting Students while Abroad**

Study abroad is a very different experience than being on campus in Atlanta. In Atlanta, most student issues are handled with the collaboration of one or more offices or departments specially trained to deal with specific situations or processes that affect students. Overseas, faculty/staff and students will find themselves disconnected from this environment, and will have to depend more on the program staff to deal with these needs while abroad.

### **I. Helping students through the experience**

Sometimes students participating in study abroad programs could have logistical questions/issues. Learning to navigate a new city or country, and possibly being compelled to communicate in a foreign language, can be daunting for anyone, especially if this is their first time outside of the U.S.

Some students may have more difficulty than others adjusting to their new surroundings; many could become homesick or depressed. Also, students who have physical and/or emotional illnesses could find that their unfamiliar surroundings exacerbate their condition(s). Students who take medications on a regular basis could forget to take their medicines, or could feel a temporary euphoria and believe that they do not need to continue to take prescribed medications. All of these factors can lead to difficult situations which can be dangerous to the student.

Program Directors should be aware of these potential issues and be prepared to listen to students' concerns while abroad. If students need assistance, programs should call the GT Counseling Center or the Office of the Dean of Students for assistance in referring students who may need to speak with a professional counselor.

### **II. Ways to get students involved**

While GT students are living and studying in a particular location, the program will have opportunities to help students learn about the culture.

#### ➤ **Helping students to engage with the local culture**

One of the most rewarding experiences for participants of study abroad programs is getting to know the host culture. Being able to live and study in a different country with unique customs and cultures is most beneficial for students if they can take part and bring something of their encounter back with them to the U.S.

#### ➤ **Inviting local students to participate**

One way to get GT students more involved with the host culture is to invite host nationals to participate in the program in some way. Some programs, based at universities overseas, allow host nationals to enroll in the GT classes (NOT for GT credit) which allows for a lot of contact for our students.

#### ➤ **Collaborative projects**

For programs that cannot invite host nationals to enroll in the offered GT courses, there are many other methods of involving them in programs. Some programs have introduced collaborative projects between host nationals at partner universities and GT students. For example, one program currently requires students to complete a film project with assigned groups made up of GT students and host nationals. This type of collaboration leads to teamwork and forging friendships across cultures.

➤ **Going on site visits/field trips linked to courses**

Some programs have also found ways to include local students on site visits. If plausible, this can be an excellent method for encouraging GT students to get to know host nationals better and to learn more about their culture, language, values, etc. just through spending time and conversing. Programs should always have any additional participants from the host country sign waivers in order to participate in field activities.

➤ **Attending local festivals and ceremonies**

An excellent way to help students learn more about local culture is to encourage them to attend or participate in local festivals, ceremonies, events, plays, etc. This will give them exposure to differences in belief systems. They may be able to learn more about the other culture's values and beliefs through experiencing these local events. Tying local happenings to classes and the program can encourage students to get out and experience their surroundings first-hand.

➤ **Inviting local speakers to classes**

Arranging to have guest speakers from the host culture can be a wonderful addition to any program abroad. This could expose students to different lecture styles and ideas. Having an expert speak on their area of expertise and about the host culture can open the door for students wanting to know more about the program site or their field of study in the context of the host culture.

Programs may wish to contact local companies, universities partnered with GT through OIE, or colleagues in their fields to find local guest speakers and experts on the subject matter being studied. Programs should remember that guest speakers will most likely require compensation, so this should be built into the program budget.

➤ **Language exchanges**

For programs with the main focus of improving students' language skills, language partners from the host culture could be considered. Many universities or other overseas organizations have language programs and can provide a pool of students interested in meeting to practice language.

For programs that do not have a language focus, but are located in a non-English speaking country, language partners can be an excellent way to give students a link of involvement with the host culture. They will not become fluent speakers of the local language without formal training; however, they can learn from these meetings, become more able to navigate their surroundings with some language exposure, and make local friends in the process.

### **3D. Relationship with Students while Abroad**

#### **I. Student/Faculty Relationships**

All faculty and staff teaching or working on GT programs abroad need to be aware that they will see students more often and in more situations than they may be accustomed to on the Atlanta campus. Program Directors will see students at their best and their worst, dressed well and dressed sloppy, sick and well, hung-over and energetic, happy and sad or depressed, etc. Professors will, of course, have to take on more responsibility than they are accustomed to, and they will most likely have the opportunity to get to know their students on a more personal level while abroad. Still, they must remember to remain professional at all times, just as they would on the Atlanta campus. For many professors and staff, this is an entirely new experience. One of the most important things to remember is that professors are still professors and students are still students, even with these more frequent interactions.

➤ **“Office hours”**

Program Directors and their staff should establish a regular schedule for students, whether they will hold office hours or not, whether they will have a specific meeting place or not, etc. Programs should let students know who they can come to for assistance with their coursework and/or personal problems. Someone

should be available and open if students want to talk to them. The Program Director/ staff should build an environment conducive to students' trust.

### **3E. Student Affairs Issues**

Another outcome of having more contact with students is that faculty/staff may have to handle student affairs issues.

#### **I. Academic misconduct**

Programs should deal with academic misconduct in the same manner that they would on the Atlanta campus. They should contact the Office of Students Affairs and follow the proper procedure for dealing with students who have allegedly been involved in academic misconduct.

#### **II. Disciplinary misconduct**

Students with disciplinary problems can put themselves, the Institute, and the study abroad program all at risk by engaging in inappropriate behavior. Program Directors should use the appropriate channels to deal with disciplinary problems in order to protect students and entities involved with running the program abroad. Program Directors should consult with Student Affairs to determine sanctions for students who misbehave and enforce them. Situations that seem minor in nature and are overlooked or not dealt with from the start can balloon into larger and more serious problems.

All students permitted to go abroad with GT have been informed during orientation that there are consequences for disciplinary cases, even while abroad. Additionally, students have signed legal documents informing them that they will be punished according to the infraction committed, and even risk being sent back home if a serious enough offense were to occur while overseas.

Students are informed and reminded that host countries may carry heavier penalties, fines, jail sentences, and even death penalties, for offenses that may be traditionally treated as more minor in the U.S.

Program Directors should feel empowered to use the systems in place at GT to always seek the best interest and safety for students, the Institute, and GT faculty/staff.

Disciplinary problems should be handled in cooperation with the Office of the Dean of Students. Program Directors are always encouraged to seek the advice of the Dean of Students in situations where they may need help in dealing with disciplinary situations. See the document "Handling Misconduct..." in the forms section and section 2G, Part II, for further information.

### **3F. Progress Report**

#### **I. Progress report of program**

Program Directors are encouraged to write a report on the progress of the Study Abroad Program. This report is best written in the second half of the program, and should be shared with parents of the students, members of the Study Abroad Committee, the Dean of the sponsoring college and the chair of the sponsoring school. Such reports should highlight the following:

1. Unique learning experiences that would not have been possible in Atlanta
2. Any instance of positive impact the program or student(s) may have made in the host community, e.g., an article in the local paper, service learning activity
3. Support provided to the program by local agencies, individuals, institutions
4. Field trips/site visits sponsored by program
5. Student assessment of program

While this is not a requirement, Program Directors should know that this is a great opportunity to generate very positive press on their respective programs.

## **SECTION Four: Re-entry**

### **4A. Evaluating the Student's Experience Abroad**

#### **I. GT study abroad evaluation**

OIE is responsible for administering GT's survey of study abroad satisfaction to all participants on GT programs abroad. This evaluation is now available online through OIE's web site. The link is e-mailed to students at the end of their program, and their responses are compiled for Program Directors. Program Directors should encourage their participants to complete this online evaluation as their input is integral to the future of study abroad at GT.

#### **II. Program evaluations**

Programs should have students complete a confidential program-specific survey. This is the only way that programs can get information about things that they have done well, or things which they may need to improve upon. They should be asked to respond to questions about courses, schedules, faculty, staff, accommodations, meals, costs, transportation, and anything else that may be pertinent to future program planning. Programs should also include questions which would give them an idea of the international experience as students perceive it. What did students learn from their time abroad? Was it difficult to navigate with or without language skills? Were students well prepared for their time in the host culture? What skills or benefits have they acquired since their participation on the program?

#### **III. Re-entry meetings/debriefings**

Programs are encouraged to arrange a follow up meeting with students once they have returned to campus. Students may have issues that should be discussed with the program, and the program can take this opportunity to inform students of any final pending issues.

### **4B. Faculty/Staff Evaluations**

We recommend that Program Directors conduct an exit interview with other faculty and staff involved with the program. Faculty/staff will be able to provide insight into particular situations and details of the program that could be adjusted to make the program run more smoothly. Faculty and staff should also be provided with program evaluations so that they may make suggestions. They can give input on the program's academic structure, site visits, faculty/staff preparation, future course ideas, student comments about the curriculum, etc.

### **4C. Reconciling the Budget**

PLEASE NOTE: The BOR study abroad committee requires that all programs reconcile budgets in a reasonable amount of time from the end of the program, but no later than six months from the end of the program.

Once all providers and employees have been paid, program budgets will need to be reconciled. It is important to keep clear records for auditing purposes and to know exactly how much surplus or deficit may be carried over for the following year. If the program is affiliated with OIE, then the OIE accountant handles this; otherwise, the financial manager of the academic unit usually does this for the program. Program Directors can ask this person to keep this financial statement on hand to complete each year with the new/updated study abroad proposal for the Study Abroad Committee. Study Abroad funds must be spent within 18 months. Instructional funds are fiscal year-based (see section 1A).

### **4D. Record Retention Policies**

The BOR Study Abroad Committee recommends that study abroad records be kept in archives for a minimum of seven years after the return of the study abroad program. It is important to keep clear records for auditing purposes and to know exactly where these records can be located.

## 4E. Helping Students to Use their International Experience

Many returned study abroad students will crave some sort of link to their time abroad. An excellent way to encourage them to stay involved in the U.S. is to let them know about all other international opportunities. OIE has many suggestions that may interest study abroad returnees, so they can always come to OIE for more information. Some suggestions are: volunteering at language schools, being a language/conversation partner, enrolling in courses at GT with an international focus, studying abroad again, working abroad, teaching abroad, volunteering on GT's campus or in the Atlanta community with International Students (GT has approximately 3,000 international students with whom they can meet and mingle), etc.

Once students return to campus, many of them will want to continue building on their overseas experience and applying their new knowledge and perspectives here in Atlanta. Some of the ways that programs can help students continue to grow their international experience are listed/explained below.

### I. Speaking to prospective students

Former participants are the best advocates for programs abroad. They are able to relate their experience abroad in a tangible way that fellow students can understand. They can speak to applicants from a student perspective about the ins and outs of going abroad with GT, living and studying in a foreign country, traveling abroad, and gaining the most benefits from this experience. Programs should encourage participants to help them recruit new participants and let them know the importance of studying abroad and gaining international experience.

### II. Student clubs or organizations

GT has a large number of internationally inspired clubs and organizations.

#### ➤ OIE Peer Advisors

This group is made up of students who studied abroad on Georgia Tech programs and who want to spread the word about how great the experience was. PAs mentor prospective study abroad participants, volunteer at FASET, study abroad orientation sessions, the Study Abroad Fair, and cultural events on campus. They also speak to classes and other student organizations about study abroad opportunities. Students interested in joining this group, should contact OIE ([study.abroad@gatech.edu](mailto:study.abroad@gatech.edu)).

#### ➤ CultureTech

Culture Tech is a student organization that works with the OIE to promote cross-cultural relations on campus through discussions, events and other means of interaction. CultureTech is in charge of organizing CultureFest, a week-long event of on-campus cultural activities. CultureTech also holds occasional Culture Breaks. These cross-cultural programs are designed to stimulate the senses and share knowledge about the various cultures represented at Tech. Students interested in getting involved in this organization or any of its activities, e-mail the CultureTech President, at [culture@gatech.edu](mailto:culture@gatech.edu).

#### ➤ International Student Organizations

Itching to meet international students at Georgia Tech? There are many nationality clubs on campus. For a full listing of those clubs, visit OrgSync and look under "organizations." Meetings are open to everyone.

#### ➤ AIESEC

As the largest international student exchange program in the world, AIESEC offers foreign job training experiences to its student members. AIESEC is located at more than 800 prestigious universities in 85 countries. Georgia Tech has its own AIESEC chapter. For more information, visit the AIESEC website: <http://www.aiesecgt.org/>

#### ➤ IAESTE

The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) provides opportunities for students to participate in paid internships overseas. In addition, the exchange involves international students coming to Atlanta in order to participate in an internship and cultural immersion experience. IAESTE coordinates on-the-job training for students in technical fields such as engineering,

computer science, mathematics, natural/physical sciences, architecture, and agricultural science. IAESTE can also provide work permits to students (even those who are not engineering or science students) who have identified their own international internships. For more information, please contact OIE or email the IAESTE student organization on campus at [iaestegt@hotmail.com](mailto:iaestegt@hotmail.com).

## SECTION Five: Forms & Resources

(This section is comprised of many of the forms used for GT FLSA programs. The most up-to-date copies of many of these forms are available at <https://ea.oie.gatech.edu/faculty-staff>. Please contact OIE if you do not find the form that you need either in this manual or on the web).

### I. Forms and Resources for Faculty/Staff

- [Program Proposal Document](#)
- [Study Abroad Course Proposal Form](#)
- [Program Budget and Cost of Attendance](#)
- [Protocols for Study Abroad Faculty and Staff](#)
- [Orientation Recording and Supplemental Training Materials for Faculty/Staff](#)
- [USG Business Procedures Manual: Section 21.0 Study Abroad](#)