



GSW Study Abroad Program Manual

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EDUCATION ABROAD OVERVIEW

GSW's previous Study Abroad Task Force and Office of International Programs (OIP) developed this Manual to provide GSW faculty and staff members with guidance as they plan and execute their study abroad programs. The Manual is supplemented by *GSW Program Director's Handbook for Faculty-Led Programs* which should be consulted after preliminary work/preparation has been completed toward a new course/program proposal.

RECOMMENDED STANDARDS FOR NEW PROGRAMS:

- Ensure that new programs complement rather than compete with existing programs (see GSW Study Abroad)
- Clearly state the specific student learning outcomes in the program proposal.
- Combine academic learning with intercultural experiences to utilize the physical, human, and cultural resources of the host community.
- Provide accurate and complete information to prospective students on the expectations, cost, and scope of the program.
- Establish academic rigor within the program comparable to that at GSW.
- Assessment of the program by participants, program leaders, and Office of Experiential Learning to determine how well the program objectives are being met.
- Monitor conditions in the host country including issuance of Travel Warnings, both before and during the program. Faculty-led study abroad programs will not be approved for travel to regions under a US Department of State Travel Level of 3 or higher. See: <http://travel.state.gov> .
- *Carefully consider your program curriculum.* Students participating in study abroad programs are usually looking to fulfill major/minor/general requirements in order to justify (to themselves and/or their parents) the additional expense of the program;
 - Utilize **INTL 2000** as a course offering for study abroad, if appropriate;
 - Justify why the program needs to be done at the specific overseas location versus in Americus, Ga;
 - Determine who will be eligible to participate (major, class, level, etc.);
 - Ensure your program/course will benefit the group based on its location;
 - Consider coursework sequencing, core curriculum and how what you're offering will be of interest to students; and
 - Specify contact hours in program proposal. Field trips are considered lab time (every 3 non-lecture hours are equal to 1 contact hour, travel time 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 GSW, a minimum of 45 contact hours are required for a 3 credit hour class.

Select Appropriate Study Abroad Locations

Consider less traditional sites. The majority of faculty-led study abroad programs are held in Europe. Faculty need to consider sites where they have real expertise. This means having working knowledge and practical experience in their selected locations. Whenever possible it is extremely useful if faculty can speak the language of the country. Expertise shows that faculty cannot design effective programs in locations they have never visited. Consider if the political climate of the host location is conducive to learning.

Program costs should be kept as low as possible to ensure greater accessibility and participation.

Students participating in summer programs will be paying an additional cost to study, and also may have to give up some potential income from full-time work.

To reduce costs and to create a better learning experience:

- Eliminate extensive travel during programs.
- Consider limiting the internal travel during the program to approximately eight hours per week.

Students need to earn a minimum of 6 credit hours during the summer if they want to maintain eligibility for financial aid. Programs should begin during the Maymester or in first summer term in June and should offer either the option of earning 6 credits during the program itself or should be scheduled to end within the first summer session, so that students can take additional courses during the remaining summer session.

These points help students but can also help your recruitment efforts.

PROGRAM TYPES

It is helpful to be aware that there are two major types of study abroad programs faculty can propose:

- 1) Stand alone, study abroad courses, and
- 2) Components of an on-campus course that will be undertaken abroad. Fees associated with the two categories differ. Procedures for approval, however, are similar. Stand-alone study abroad courses are typically offered as "off-model" - meaning that existing, approved on-campus courses must be identified as equivalent and then approved to be offered off-campus;
 - students do pay on-campus tuition in addition to the program
 - faculty compensation is covered by summer course pay or overload pay and is typically regular salary or sources;
 - Enrollments in off-model courses count toward departmental FTE's and influence departmental budgets like tuition-based courses.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES.

There are many responsibilities assigned to Faculty Program Directors before, during and after a program. Administrative steps necessary for all programs may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Identify a Faculty Co-Director - all Programs require a minimum of two faculty;
- Develop a self-supporting budget keeping in mind affordability to students. Your program should support itself, but the cost to students should be as low as possible;
- Promotion of the program and the recruitment and selection of participants. The faculty member is also responsible for seeing that all deadlines are met with respect to publicity, pre-registration, and completion of registration.
- Marketing and Recruiting; The preparation, printing, and distribution of program advertisement (e.g., brochures) in close collaboration with the Office of Experiential Learning and faculty directors' departments; be sure to include all information listed in step 11 below;
- Implement an application procedure that complies with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), American's with Disabilities Act (ADA), and other higher education regulations;

- Review and accept applicants (acceptance procedure should address students with disabilities and students with conduct records);
- Arrange housing, meals, classroom space, excursions, on-site transportation, etc., complying with GSW policies on purchases and contracts.
- Student course enrollment;
- Completion and submission of all faculty travel documentation and separate expenditures
- Ensure course approval. As mentioned above, faculty-led programs typically fall into two categories: 1) stand alone, off-model study abroad courses and 2) components of a course University 4000 / INTL 2000 / INTL 3000.
- Refer interested students to meet with the Financial Aid *as soon as possible* to ensure the availability of funds and to help them plan their expenses owed until financial aid is disbursed;
- Design, distribute, collect and review student application forms, including liability waivers, health and safety information
- Provide pre-departure sessions and on-site orientations
- Locate a doctor/hospital in host country that complies with CISI Insurance - add this to Emergency Contact List
- Locate and arrange reasonable accommodations for any disabled students if feasible;
- Serve as on-site advisor for students (mental health issues, medications, sexual harassment, student conduct, cultural adjustment, crime, emergencies, etc.);
- Manage the on-site finances and receipts according to GSW Business Office procedures;
- Prepare for and managing on-site emergencies: Complete Study Abroad Emergency Protocol Form;
- Submit grades for students upon program completion
- Providing a debriefing to the GSW Office of Experiential Learning following program

In addition to filling the role of teacher, faculty/staff directors also serve as administrators, leaders, interpreters, decision-makers and diplomats. A faculty director's day does not end when class is over, and they are expected to make decisions that are in the best interest of the program and its participants. Directors must be able to uphold and implement GSW policies while at the same time taking advantage of the differences present in the host culture setting. Support systems continue to be established by the Office of Experiential Learning to assist faculty and staff with the tasks and responsibilities associated with implementing a successful education abroad program.

Communication:

- Provide to Office of Experiential Learning prior to departure: a program itinerary, participant, director and program staff emergency contact information, copies of passports, and copies of all information given to students;
- Serve as liaison between Office of Experiential Learning and on-site institutions, agencies, staff, etc.;
- Maintain contact with students throughout the program, counsel as needed on issues of cultural adjustment, conduct, and other non-academic issues;
- Consult with Office of Experiential Learning as needed concerning student problems and concerns throughout program;

- Inform the Office of Experiential Learning immediately of any emergency or medical situation involving students;
- Provide Office of Experiential Learning with regular updates on activities throughout the program;
- Submit a written report and final budget report to Office of Experiential Learning within three weeks of the conclusion of the program highlighting its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; and
- Communicate regularly with Office of Experiential Learning year-round as needed with regard to planning and preparation for future programs.

Student Orientations / Management:

- Organize pre-departure sessions and an in-country orientation immediately following the arrival of students.
- The following are areas to include in the Orientation: A review of the student handbook, program administration, communication, lodging, public transportation, health/safety, passports/visas, program rules/behavioral expectations, group dynamics, academic expectations, intercultural communication, and other daily living concerns
- Verify the Windows to the World (W2W) presentation requirement that is an expectation in return for receiving the Study Abroad Grant (SAG).

ROLES OF PROGRAM DIRECTORS, THE OFFICE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING, AND OTHERS

Study abroad programs are planned, implemented, and administered through cooperation among the faculty director and his or her Department, the appropriate College/School dean, the Office of Experiential Learning (OEL) and the university-wide International Affairs Committee.

Each of these entities has specific roles in the process. Faculty should first know the various roles which these different campus units assume in supporting their study abroad efforts. They are asked to work closely with these units to ensure smooth program administration.

The Faculty Program Directors and Their Departments. Once a faculty member has an idea for a study abroad program, *he or she should discuss it early on with his or her Department Head*. This is extremely important as study abroad programs led by GSW faculty members and offering GSW academic credit are viewed as activities of the academic departments. While the OEL is pleased to support these efforts, the actual sponsorship of them lies with the academic department. Because of the obligations such sponsorship entails, the prospective study abroad Program Director must receive approval from his or her Department prior to initiation of discussions with the OEL.

The OEL also requires that that each program have a second faculty **Program Co-Director** to help administer your program. Team responsibility is particularly important in any emergency, or if one of two Program Director's gets sick, etc. Within the Program Proposal, articulate what specific roles and responsibilities the two faculty directors will have.

The Office of Experiential Learning (OEL). Once the Department heads have approved the study abroad idea, faculty members wishing to offer courses overseas should then discuss their ideas with the Director of Experiential Learning. The OEL Director will:

- Help the Faculty Director develop plans and budgets for the program (required before cost/price information can be released);
- Assist in the development of a promotional strategy for the program;
- Organize study abroad fairs with expectation of GSW Faculty Program Directors participation;
- Help in establishing and monitoring of program trust funds (if needed);
- Promote and process GSW's Study Abroad Grant (SAG) and provide names and IDs to Financial Aid who then transfers SAG funds in their names to the Program Agency Accounts
- Receive and receipt program payments;
- Request course sections in conjunction with the program;
- Provide updated registration lists to the Academic Department, Financial Aid, Accounts Payable, and Academic Affairs
- Submit a class list for the instructor prior to the beginning of the course;
- Assist Program Directors with coordination and promotion of post-program Windows to the World event for campus community by student program participants.

Students are eligible to apply for the Study Abroad Grant ([SAG](#)) funded by student fees. **Please check with the Office of Experiential Learning regarding the priority deadline for students to apply for all study abroad travel funds.**

PLANNING AND EXECUTING A STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM IN 24 EASY (?) STEPS!

Before beginning these 24 steps you should attend an Office of Experiential Learning Interest Workshop where the “**Faculty Guidelines for Developing Study Abroad Programs**” will be presented and discussed.

The following steps should then be taken in sequence.

Steps 1-9 - THREE TO FOUR SEMESTERS PRIOR TO THE CONDUCT OF THE STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM:

1. **Program Director:** Recruit your Co-Director for the program.
2. **Program Directors:** Discuss your plans with your Department Head and seek approval from your Department to offer the course or courses under its aegis. (It is helpful to use the items in number 5 below for your discussions.)
3. **Program Directors:** Set a meeting with the Director of Experiential Learning, The Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs, and your Department Chair to discuss your program and ideas. Before this meeting you should review the "Faculty Guidelines for Developing Study Abroad Programs."
4. **Program Directors:** In consultation with the Office of Experiential Learning (OEL) Director, prepare a budget along the lines described in *Attachment 1*. The budget should specify the total amount needed to cover all costs and the anticipated cost per student based upon the expected enrollment. The OEL Director will then review and preliminarily approve the program budget.
5. **Program Directors:** Prepare for submission to the GSW Office of Experiential Learning *GSW's Study Abroad Program Proposal*. This Application is Appendix 1. *Please note that this application is required each year the program runs.*
6. **Office of Experiential Learning:** Upon approval of the budget, the OEL will prepare and circulate the **Request for Program Approval (RPA)** form for signatures of the appropriate Department Head, Dean, and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. When the approval has cleared, *OEL will set up the course registration file and process the faculty appointment letter.*
7. **Office of Experiential Learning:** The OEL will establish a mechanism to receive and receipt program fees. All monies received will be deposited in the program's agency account.
8. **Program Directors:** In consultation with the OEL, establish deadlines for receipt of program payments and a series of definite "go"/"no go" dates.

(EXAMPLE):

For Programs Held in	SPRING TERM	SUMMER TERM	FALL TERM
\$100 non-refundable deposit	Oct. 15 of preceding year	Dec. 15 of preceding year	same year
50% of program fee or evidence of financial aid award.	Nov. 1 of preceding year	Feb. 28 of same year	May 1 of same year
No deferment.			
Remainder of program fee.	Dec. 1 of preceding year	April 15 of same year	July 1 of same year

The Program Directors will inform the OEL of any dates when airlines, hostels, etc., require firm and non-refundable payments. Should anticipated revenues appear insufficient to justify such payments, the program will be canceled.

STEPS 10-12 TO BE COMPLETED TWO TERMS PRIOR TO PROGRAM

10. **Program Directors:** In consultation with the OEL, produce and distribute advertising materials (posters, brochures, Web pages, etc.) which clearly indicate:
- Title of program
 - Dates of program (including any orientation meetings)
 - Location of program
 - Any affiliated universities
 - Curriculum description (including location of classes and GSW course numbers, titles, credit hours, graduation requirement fulfillment, etc.)
 - Faculty who will teach
 - Housing and meal information
 - Flight information (arranged flight or individual flight)
 - Program cost (including a brief statement of what will be included)
 - List of costs not included in program fee and estimates (if possible)
 - Application procedures (admissions decision procedure, any additional application materials necessary, any prerequisites, any minimum or maximum student number requirements, application deadline, etc.)
 - Faculty directors' contact information
 - Registration information
 - Deadline for pre-registration and payment of a deposit (generally a non-refundable \$100, Deadline for payment of the 50% deposit (See above under 9 for dates.)
 - Deadline for final registration and payment of remaining program fees (See above under 9 for dates.)

All brochures must include a disclaimer about possible program and/or cost changes: “GSW reserves the right to cancel or alter the program format or to change costs in case of conditions beyond its control.”

NOTE: In liability cases, program brochures are viewed by the courts as legally binding contracts. Therefore, all brochure drafts mentioning registration and fees must be reviewed by OEL.

Very important! No publicity can be distributed until steps one through ten have been successfully completed!

11. **Program Directors:** Devise and distribute the publicity materials with the link to the OEL student application form.
12. **Program Directors:** Recruit and select sufficient numbers of students at least to recover all costs contained in the budget.

STEPS 13 - 18 TO BE COMPLETED EARLY IN THE TERM IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE PROGRAM

13. **Office of Experiential Learning:** Receive and receipt student payment of the non-refundable pre-registration deposit.
14. **Office of Experiential Learning:** Immediately after the deadline for receipt of deposits, determine the number.
15. **Student Accounts:** Bill students for remaining funds and periodically provide the OEL and Program Directors with a list of student registrants and the amounts they have paid.
16. **Program Directors:** Monitor those participants who need financial aid to participate in the program and work with the Office of Financial Aid to ensure that sufficient funds are available. Students on financial aid will be required to show a financial aid letter at the time of registration or else their registration may be canceled.
17. **Office of Experiential Learning:** After the deadline for final registration and payment of all fees, inform the Program Director of the total number of registrants and the total receipts. OEL will also send a copy of the class roster to the Office of Financial Aid. If receipts are insufficient to pay program costs as they are incurred, the program may be canceled.
18. **Program Directors:** Ensure that proper invoices for program expenses are processed for reimbursement to the Business Office

IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO THE PROGRAM

19. **Program Directors:** Follow procedures and meet deadlines to provide insurance lists, completed forms, safety reports as outlined in the Handbook (included in this Manual)

20. **Program Directors:** Prepare and submit to the Business Office a Travel Authorization (Form: https://gsw.edu/Assets/About%20GSW/files/Travel_Approval_Form.pdf) which may include a request for a travel advance to cover the on-ground expenses of both the instructors and the students.

STEPS 21-24 - CONDUCTING STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM

21. **Program Directors:** Conduct the program in accordance with high academic and administrative standards. In particular, the Program Directors will collect proper receipts for any and all expenditures.
22. **Program Directors:** Distribute to and collect student's program evaluations, which will be shared with the Academic Department and Office of Experiential Learning

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CONDUCT OF THE PROGRAM

23. **Program Directors:** Submit grades for all students to the Registrar's Office and the OEL; submit a properly completed Travel Reimbursement Form to the Business Office within 10 days of conclusion of program; meet with the OEL Director to review the status of the program's budget and the disposition of any remaining balances; and, conduct a program debriefing session with the Office of Experiential Learning.
24. **Program Directors and the Office of Experiential Learning:** Coordinate and prepare study abroad participants to make a presentation on their experience as part of the Windows to the World Series.

FOLLOWING: Please see the *GSW Study Abroad Handbook* for more details.



GSW Study Abroad Handbook Faculty-Led Programs

A. PROGRAM BUDGET

Please note that all Study Abroad programs must be completely self-supporting. Program Directors must therefore be careful to include in the program budget all projected expenses (including faculty salary, travel, and lodging costs and the administrative costs).

In preparing their budgets, Program Directors should divide their presentations into two parts: A. a description of Fixed Costs; and B. an indication of Variable Costs.

Fixed Costs are those which must be recovered regardless of the number of participants. These fixed costs would include (but not necessarily be limited to): the salary and personnel benefits of the Program Directors and any other instructors; the travel and lodging costs of the Program Directors and any other instructor; the costs of producing and distributing publicity brochures; telephone and fax expenses; the rental of classrooms; and the cost of state-mandated health and accident insurance for leaders of Study Abroad programs.

Variable Costs depend on the number of student participants in the program. These would include (but not necessarily be limited to): the rental of student rooms; expenses for providing student meals; the costs of admissions to museums and cultural events; charges for the International Student Identity Card (ISIC); visas, and the cost of state-mandated health and accident insurance for participants in Study Abroad programs.

Establishing Program Costs. The total budget for the program is the sum of both the Fixed and the Variable Costs. **The course fee charged to each student is the total budget divided by the number of students.** The goal is to arrive at a course fee, which will result in the recovery of all costs, and at the same time be low enough to encourage student participation.

Each participant pays the program fees directly to the Student Accounts Office. These fees, along with tuition revenue, are used to support the program. The Program Fee consists of costs that are directly associated with the program. Costs that may be included in the Program Fee 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, and host university fees. OEL will assist Program Directors with establishing an agency account in the GSW Business Office for each specific Study Abroad Program.

The program will need to set up and maintain two accounts: an instructional account and an agency account. These two differ in their source of revenue and in the types of expenditures that are permissible.

Instructional Account. Revenue for the instructional account comes from tuition dollars paid by student participants. These funds are collected by the Student Accounts Office.

Expenditures covered by this Instructional 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.

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

Agency Account. Revenue for the agency account comes from direct payments made by students to the Student Accounts Office (Program Fees).

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 agency funds are less restrictive than those governing the use of funds in the instructional account. Programs can pay for items that qualify as instructional expenses from the agency account if they choose to do so.

Note: The agency fund can be carried forward from year to year to help fund succeeding programs.

Remember: any funds remaining in an instructional account at the end of the fiscal year are forfeited to the University while funds in an agency account can be carried forward from year to year.

SAMPLE PROGRAM BUDGET

A. Fixed Costs

- Program Directors Salary (indicate basis for derivation of the amount, e.g., 1/12th of annual nine-month contract)
- Program Directors Personnel Benefits (e.g., Social Security, Retirement Contribution)
- Costs of printing and distributing brochures
- Rental of Classrooms
- Program Directors Travel (airfare, local ground transportation, parking, etc.)
- Program Directors Per Diem expenses (indicate basis of deriving the daily rate, for example “state rate for out-of-state travel”)
- Cost of any vehicle rentals (e.g., minibuses)
- Telephone and fax
- Miscellaneous supplies (paper, Xerox, etc.)

- Mandated USG health & accident insurance for leaders of Study Abroad programs

TOTAL FIXED COSTS \$xxx

B. Variable Costs

- International Airfare
- Transportation (trains, taxis, etc.)
- Room rental in dorms or hostel (indicate basis of cost)
- Cost of meals (indicate basis of cost)
- Books and other educational materials
- Tickets to museums and cultural events
- Mandated University System of Georgia health and accident insurance for participants in Study Abroad programs
- International Student Identity Card (ISIC)
- Visas (if required)

TOTAL VARIABLE COSTS \$xxx

!Hint One: You may wish to collect only some of the above costs as part of the program expense and ask students to bring sufficient money to cover other costs—e.g., bus fares and tickets to cultural events—out-of-pocket. That will simplify accounting.

!Hint Two: Figure the cost per student, and then multiply the total by the number of students.

TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS = Fixed Costs + Variable Costs = \$xxx

COST PER PARTICIPANT = Fixed Costs + Variable Costs = \$xxx
Number of Participants

B. SAFETY AND STUDY ABROAD

The health and safety of students participating in study abroad programs is the highest priority of the Office of Experiential Learning. At GSW, as at many of our peer institutions, it is the OEL's responsibility to:

- Monitor the security of program locations abroad;
- Assess study abroad programs to maximize student and faculty safety;
- Offer orientation and training sessions to help students and faculty minimize risks and respond appropriately to emergencies;
- Coordinate any crisis response related to study abroad; and
- Collaborate with other university units to minimize and manage risks

Because the OEL bears the brunt of the responsibility for student safety, the request for assessments, reviews, and reports is at the OEL's discretion, and it falls on OEL staff to cancel programs where security issues have not been adequately addressed. Program cancellation is extremely rare and would always be carried out in consultation with all relevant constituents.

Routine Safety Assessment Practices

Every Study Abroad Program Director is required to:

- Read the Faculty Program Director Handbooks and other materials provided by the OEL;
- Attend training workshops provided by the OEL;
- Provide any information needed by the OEL to carry out a safety assessment of a new program prior to program approval;
- Provide any information required by a college-based review committee for an in-depth review, approximately once every 3-5 years;
- Submit a pre-departure report one month prior to leaving, highlighting any security concerns;
- Communicate with the IPC if any incident occurs during the program; and
- Submit a debriefing report upon program completion every year, including any relevant incident documentation

C. TRANSPORTATION

Flight Considerations: Arrange for a group flight option or have students be responsible for making their own arrangements to the program site.

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. More GSW 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 GSW 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 GSW 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? Can the travel agent get the visa for the group, or does the program need to get individual visas for each student?
4. 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”?
5. 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 transportation. 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 or 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.

D. HOST SITE ACCMOMMODATIONS

Classroom Space

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 GSW students.

Housing Options

Homestays / Residence Halls / Hotels - Hostels. 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. 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.”

Residence Halls 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. Residence Halls 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.

E. MEALS

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.

The Program 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.

F. ROLES AND CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS AND GSW PERSONNEL

1. **Students.** Student participants must be officially accepted to the study abroad program via the official GSW study abroad application, and if not already GSW students, apply to GSW as a transient student. It is up to Program Directors to decide if non-GSW students may participate. Students must register for courses with GSW and must pay GSW tuition for the program abroad.
2. **GSW Faculty/Staff** are regular GSW professors, instructors, or staff members who will be working on the program abroad.
3. **GSW Retirees** can be hired to work for GSW as “post retirees.”
4. **Students/ recent graduates /or graduate assistants** may be hired to provide services or assistance to the program. It is important to remember that those acting on behalf of GSW should

be hired. 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; please see the next section for more information about GSW hiring procedures.

5. **Non-Employees** (family members or significant others of faculty/staff) may travel with family members or significant others who work on the program as faculty or staff, 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.

G. HIRING POLICES FOR GSW STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

1. **GSW Faculty/Staff:** 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 ten-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 Retirees:** Retirees who negotiate to work after their official retirement are classified as "post retirees." Hiring a post retiree involves BOR approval as well as routing through the President's office for the approval of the GSW administration. If you plan to hire a retiree for the program, please contact the Human Resources (HR) in order to follow the normal post retiree hiring procedures.
3. **Faculty Staff Remuneration / Salary - Study Abroad Programs at GSW.** Program Directors should consult with the hiring manager of their academic unit for information on the GSW policy. Programs Directors 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. Faculty are paid a percentage of their salary for courses taught as per normal summer session pay guidelines.
4. **Travel Expenses** - Program Directors are responsible for filing program expenses upon their return to the U.S. Be sure to refer to GSW travel policies when agreeing to cover expenses for faculty and staff. Employees must submit all travel expenses to the program and be reimbursed within 30 days of their return to GSW. Reimbursement should be taken care of as soon as possible since this will have an effect on the final reconciliation of program accounts.

H. ROLE OF THE OFFICE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (OEL) AND GSW DEPARTMENTS RELATED TO STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

1. Advise and handle questions on GSW policies and procedures for study abroad
2. Inform students about eligibility for GSW study abroad
3. Confirm students' eligibility through Banner
4. Act as liaison between the when dealing with students with histories or violations
5. Confirm students' academic eligibility (must be in good standing)
6. Maintain students' files with application and records in case legal issues arise

OEL and Transient Students

- Advise transients on application processes and GSW study abroad policies
- Handle requests and questions from transients
- Explain the GSW Undergraduate Admission Transient Application
- Act as liaison between study abroad transients and Admissions
- Ensure that Health Services waives the vaccination requirements.
- Ensure that study abroad transients are informed of GSW policy and understand RAIN in order to register, where they can get their GSW ID, who they pay, which forms they need to submit, etc.
- Handle other problems that may arise with study abroad transients

OEL and Financial Aid:

- Act as liaison between student and Financial Aid Office. Refer student applicants to go meet with Financial Aid staff as soon as possible to find out their eligibility of funds.
- OEL manages student application for the **GSW Study Abroad Grants (SAG)**. SAG is a two dollar international education fee assessed on every GSW student each semester the OEL can award small stipends to GSW students participating in a GSW or other institution's approved study abroad program. The amount of the award varies according to the funds available and the number of students that apply for the grant.
- OEL provides resources on other study abroad grants and scholarships available to GSW students.

OEL and Registrar's Office

- Liaison between the student and the registrar, and the program and the registrar
- Contact the registrar with students who drop out or are added to programs after the deadlines
- Inform students of registration procedures for study abroad and to contact OIE to resolve registration errors
- 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
- Assist students who CANNOT register to ensure that they do so by the program deadline

OEL and Business Office

- Act as a liaison between the Business Office and students
- Notify students who fail to pay their tuition and fees
- Ensure that all participants in programs are included in the coverage by communicating with the insurance provider
- 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

I. ADDITIONAL GSW SPECIFICS

Participant Numbers. Your program has to have set number minimum number of participants on which to base the program fee structure. If the minimum number of participants is not reached, the program has to be canceled.

Program Size Considerations. 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. GSW Faculty who are designing new programs may want to contact current GSW study abroad Program Directors to help them decide which dynamic would work best for his/her new program.

TUITION is a separate cost and is never included in the program fee. Programs should always talk to students in terms of program fees plus GSW tuition. Program fees and tuition are always paid to the GSW Business Office.

The Program Directors determine which costs should be included in the program fee and which costs the students should pay for directly while participating on the program abroad.

Marketing and Recruiting. Program Directors are responsible for marketing and recruitment with the assistance of the OEL. Program Directors are expected to participate in GSW's biannual study abroad fairs and if possible participate in larger study abroad fairs throughout the state of Georgia including fairs held at the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, Georgia Southern, and North Georgia College and State University. The OEL will alert Program Directors in the fall semester of each academic year about which external fairs would likely be most effective in attracting program participants who register as GSW transient students.

Georgia Southwestern State University
STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM PROPOSAL

Program Title (for use in publicity materials, website, etc.)

Program Location(s)

Dates of Program

In submitting a proposal, the faculty members accept and commit to following the GSW Study Abroad Program Manual, The GSW Program Director's Handbook for Faculty-led programs, and GSW's Fiscal Guidelines. Please attach a description of the proposed program that addresses each of the following:

1. Mission Statement for the proposed program
2. Explanation of the nature and purpose of the program
 - a. Description of the academic component and student learning outcomes
 - b. Faculty member's academic expertise relevant to the proposed program
 - c. Course title(s) and number(s)
 - d. Number of contact hours
 - e. Methods for student evaluation and program assessment
 - f. Course-related fieldtrips, activities and excursions outside the classroom
 - g. Sample draft syllabus
 - h. Justification for why the program is being held at this specific site
3. Study abroad and/or off-campus programming experience of faculty member(s) proposing program; Specify the specific roles and responsibilities of each program director
4. Student behavior guidelines and/or policy contracts
5. Projected number of students and faculty members
6. Program budget including projected cost to each student (attach Excel spreadsheet)
7. Room and Board arrangements
8. Source of faculty compensation - Structure and numbers needed to be self-sustaining
9. Description of program affiliations, host institutions, and service providers
10. Travel arrangements including all countries and cities to be visited (Emergency Protocol Form)
12. Security precautions and arrangements ([Clery Act](#))
13. Recruitment strategy

Signatures below certify that this program meets the fiscal and academic standards of GSW, The Program Director (program proposer), Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs, and the Director of the OEL have also reviewed the program, based on the USG Board of Regents policies regarding study abroad and the regular GSW curriculum approval process. If the program is approved, the Program Director will ensure that all policies and procedures included in the Study Abroad Directors Handbook will be followed.

Faculty Program Co-Director Date

Faculty Program Co-Director Date

Departmental Dean Date

Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs Date

President Date

(Proposals should be submitted to the Office of Experiential Learning with all accompanying documentation and the above signatures. Signature below provided when proposal is approved.)

Director, Office of Experiential Learning Date



GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN
OFFICE OF
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

GSW Study Abroad Grant (SAG) Information and Application Form

Requirements – Eligible applicants must be degree-seeking students enrolled at GSW as full-time or part-time students in good standing (a minimum GPA of 2.5) **who have applied for a recognized GSW or USG Board of Regents accredited study abroad program.**

Funding Criteria:

- The SAG Application is not connected to a specific study abroad program
- Please check with the Office of Experiential Learning for the Annual priority deadline date of application
- To be distributed on a first-come first-serve basis based on eligibility and date of SAG Application submission
- SAG applicants who participate in a study abroad program of 10 days will be eligible for \$250.00 toward their total program cost.
- SAG applicants who participate in a study abroad program of more than 10 days will be eligible for \$500.00 toward their total program cost.

Application: Submit the completed application form to

Office of Experiential Learning,
Administrative Building, GSW

- Funds will be transferred directly towards the study abroad program costs of student
- Students interested in study abroad are encouraged to meet early in the academic year with Financial Aid to determine eligibility of financial assistance towards study abroad.

Students who receive a Study Abroad Grant are expected to share their experience upon return with the campus community, in consultation with the Office of Experiential Learning.

Background - The GSW Study Abroad Grant was established in 2009 to assist students to participate in study abroad experiences. This Study Abroad Grant comes from GSW student fees, approved by the GSW Fees committee, at the current amount of \$3 fee per full time student per semester to support study abroad and international education at GSW.





GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN
OFFICE OF
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

GSW Study Abroad Grant (SAG) Application Form

Name: _____

Today's Date: _____

GSW Student ID _____

Permanent Home Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Campus Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Current Grade Point Average _____

Current Academic standing

First-Year: ____ Sophomore: ____ Junior: ____ Senior: ____ Graduate student: ____

Academic Major and Minor _____

Study Abroad program interest (if known) : _____

Other Study Abroad programs in which you have participated either at GSW or another institution: _____

Please submit the completed application form electronically to the study abroad program director, who will forward the application to the Office of Experiential Learning. Recipients of SAG awards will receive notification of the amount awarded. SAG funds will be deposited directly into the student's BANNER account.

Applicant's Signature: _____

NOTES