

UFIC Emergency Protocols for Study Abroad Programs



Introduction

Safeguarding the health and safety of the UF community abroad is an important function of the UF International Center (UFIC). The purpose of this document is to provide a general guide for faculty directors and UFIC staff in responding to emergencies/crises if they occur during a UF Study Abroad program. While the emergency response and prevention processes described in this handbook are comprehensive, they are also expected to be adaptive and pragmatic. Any given situation abroad calls for responses specific to the situation and those involved will need to use good judgment and thorough communication.

This handbook will be maintained by the UFIC Executive Director and will be reviewed semi-annually.

Dr. Marta L. Wayne

Dean, International Center & Associate Provost



UF ABROAD

INTERNATIONAL CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Overview

For the purposes of this manual, an emergency may be defined as any sensitive or potentially life-threatening situation affecting students, faculty, staff, and/or affiliated individuals in an officially sanctioned UF international program anywhere in the world, including:

- Medical emergencies of Study Abroad Students
- Legal / bureaucratic emergencies of Study Abroad Students
- Natural disasters or political unrest in the host country
- Personal emergencies (i.e. death of a relative in the U.S.)

General Guidelines

1. All students and staff should be encouraged to register with their host country's US Consulate for the district in which the program is located via <https://step.state.gov/step/>. Telephone and fax numbers of the Consulate and Embassy must be known and easily accessible for use in an emergency.
2. Each Program Director will devise and test within one week of the beginning of the program a system of rapid communication with students and staff of their program. This communication network may be used ordinarily for communicating academic and social notices, but should also enable the director to contact all students at short notice and assemble the group quickly in an emergency.
3. The Program Director will inform the students during orientation that all students who expect to be away from the program site overnight are responsible for informing the staff as well as their roommates and/or their host family, leaving an itinerary and contact information. The information is necessary for any emergency necessitating immediate contact with the student, such as an illness or death in the family, as well as in a crisis affecting the program as a whole.
4. In the event of a crisis situation, it is the immediate responsibility of the Program Director to locate all students and to inform the SAS office about their welfare. Students will be instructed not to travel independently for the duration of the emergency and to remain at a location where they can be reached.
5. Every UF program director will carry at least one cellular phone with international capacity.

Selected Study Abroad Providers

American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS)	866.906.2437
Academic Programs International (API)	512.600.8900
Center for Educational Programs Abroad (CEPA)	011.49.7142.95.6561
Learn International (LI)	011.353.45.939.773
WorldStrides	512.480.8522

Health Insurance/Team Assist

Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI)	800.303.8120 (toll-free)
AXA Team Assist (Emergency Assistance within CISI for medical emergency, 24/7 departure, medical, travel and legal assistance)	855.327.1411 (toll-free, inside US) 312.935.1703 (call collect, outside US)

Response Teams by Incident

Incident	UFIC Crisis Response Team	Partners/Host Country Support (if applicable)
Student Death	UFIC Dean UFIC Executive Director SAS Assoc. Director Dean of Students Counseling and Wellness Center General Counsel University Relations	On-Site Coordinator UF Faculty AXA Assist US Embassy/Consulate Provider
Political and Natural Disasters	UFIC Dean UFIC Executive Director SAS Assoc. Director Dean of Students University Relations	On-Site Coordinator UF Faculty AXA Assist US Embassy/Consulate US Department of State Provider
Health (physical and mental) Emergencies	UFIC Executive Director SAS Assoc. Director Dean of Students	On-Site Coordinator UF Faculty AXA Assist Provider

Family Illness or Death	UFIC Executive Director SAS Assoc. Director Dean of Students	On-Site Coordinator UF Faculty Provider
Sexual Assault	UFIC Executive Director SAS Assoc. Director Dean of Students Title IX Coordinator	On-Site Coordinator UF Faculty Provider
Arrest	UFIC Executive Director SAS Assoc. Director Dean of Students General Counsel	On-Site Coordinator UF Faculty Provider US Embassy

Emergency Response Protocols

Serious Accident or Illness: i.e. auto accidents; recreational injury; serious illness; drug/alcohol overdose; physical assault

1. Assess the extent or severity of the accident/illness.
2. Refer to your Emergency Contact Worksheet and assist the student in finding appropriate medical care at the nearest hospital/clinic or work with on-site contacts to do so if needed.
3. Notify the UFIC Executive Director who will (depending on the severity) open a case with CISI. The UFIC Executive Director will also notify other UF administrators as needed.
4. Keep a record that will include notes regarding the circumstances leading up to the accident/illness, and the course of the medical treatment as it progresses.
5. Continue to monitor the student's condition through on-site contacts and update the Executive Director as needed.
6. If the student's condition deteriorates, or is determined to be life-threatening, UFIC will coordinate with the health insurance regarding possible medical evacuation and/or assisting a parent/guardian/family member to travel to the site in order to be with the student.
7. If the student is determined to be out of immediate danger, appropriate discussion should occur regarding the impact of the accident/illness on program participation and academic progress.

Serious Mental Health Concern: i.e. suicide attempt; ongoing and severe depression; self-inflicted injury; severe eating disorder; manic behavior

1. Assess the student's mental and physical state, usually through talking with students and other on-site program contacts.

2. Refer to your Emergency Contact Worksheet to assist the student in finding appropriate medical and/or mental health care— utilize the resources through CISI to locate appropriate mental health care—or work through on-site contacts to do so if needed.
3. Inform the UFIC Executive Director, who will notify other UF administrators as needed.
4. Continue to monitor the student's condition and update the Executive Director as needed.
5. If the student's condition deteriorates, or is determined to be life-threatening, UFIC will coordinate with CISI regarding possible medical evacuation and/or assisting a parent/guardian/family member to travel to the site in order to be with the student.
6. Once the student is out of immediate danger, discussion with UFIC should occur regarding the impact of the incident or mental state on program participants and academic progress.

Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment: NOTE: all college employees (faculty members, TAs, staff member, etc), are obligated by Title IX to report cases of sexual misconduct to the Title IX coordinator: Dr. Russ Froman. Students who wish to discuss a situation involving sexual misconduct in complete confidence should seek counseling or psychological services. Students may also be able to speak to a member of the clergy in complete confidence. Therefore, if a college employee thinks that a student may have experienced sexual assault or harassment, he/she should make sure the student understands this policy. If the student does disclose an incident, please follow the below-listed procedures:

1. The student may not be aware of the Title IX policies for reporting: tell the student that you or another UF administrator must advise the Title IX Coordinator at UF of the incident so that the College can respond appropriately and supportively.
2. Notify the Executive Director who will notify the Title IX Coordinator and UF other administrators as needed.
3. As a first responder, your primary goal is the safety of the student(s) involved and making them aware of their options as it relates to reporting the event to UF and/or local authorities. Keep in mind however, when advising the student, that local laws governing sexual assault/harassments may differ than those in the U.S.
4. You do not need to investigate the details of the incident unless directed to do so by the Title IX Coordinator: Remember that it can be traumatic for the victim to be called upon to share the details of the incident multiple times.
5. While it is the student's choice, the UF Title IX Office encourages students to seek treatment at a local emergency room to treat any injuries, as well as discuss the possibility of sexually transmitted infections with a medical provider. In addition, even if the student chooses not to report the incident to the University or to law enforcement, the student is encouraged to take steps to preserve evidence. This will ensure that evidence is available if the student later decides

to proceed with a criminal or university investigation. Utilize your Emergency Contact Worksheet and other resources offered by CISI to locate appropriate health care and make sure the student is aware of medical resources available to them.

6. Assist the student in finding appropriate mental health/counseling care if requested: utilize the resources through CISI and CWC. Make sure the student is aware of these resources, even if they are not immediately requested.
7. Continuously monitor and assess the student's mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. Point the student towards appropriate resources and update the UFIC Executive Director as needed. Assess the student's condition, usually through talking to the student and other program contacts.
8. Discussion with UFIC should occur regarding the impact of the incident on program participation and academic progress.

Crimes Committed by a Student: i.e. student is arrested for theft, assault or drug possession

1. Assess the situation by obtaining as many details as possible (i.e., determine who, what, when, where, how and why).
2. Contact the UFIC Executive Director who will notify other UF administrators as needed.
3. Refer to your Emergency Contact Worksheet and immediately contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Ask the Consular Officer for the names of lawyers who can give the student the legal help required and provide this information to the student. The Consular Officer will also work to ensure that the student's human rights are not violated.
4. If the student has been arrested, work with on-site contacts to obtain a copy of all relevant information (such as the police report, incident report, and/or hospital admissions information).
5. Work with on-site contacts to have someone visit the student wherever the student is being held, reassure the student, and assist the student in understanding the legal procedures of the host country and accessing information. Maintain close contact with the U.S. Embassy Officer assigned to the student.
6. Continue to update the Executive Director on a daily basis.
7. Throughout the incident, keep a record that will include notes regarding the circumstances of the incident, any discussions or communications with the student, on-site contacts, local authorities, embassy representatives, etc., any steps taken, and the course of the incident through resolution.

Missing Student: i.e. student is reported missing by roommate, other students, host family or professor. Actions taken to respond to this incident will vary depending on the length of time the student has been missing - the following steps would be followed for an absence of 12 hours or more.

1. Inform the UFIC Executive Director, who will notify other UF administrators as needed.

2. Keep a record of all facts obtained, conversations, communications and steps taken.
3. Work with on-site contacts to make every effort to locate the student.
4. Notify the local police and other relevant parties as previously identified on your Emergency Contact Worksheet. Check hospital admissions. If the student lives in student residences at his or her program site, notify the responsible person in his/her building. This person should contact the student's roommate and friends in the immediate vicinity of the student's room and report any findings to the program leader who will relay information to the Executive Director.
5. If the student lives in homestay or is staying in a hotel of some kind, talk with the student's roommate, other students on the program, hotel staff, or host family and neighbors. Ask them to contact you immediately if the student returns. Try to determine when the student was last seen. Gather information on any unusual behavior that may have been exhibited.
6. Notify the US Embassy of the situation and provide them with as much information as possible. Depending on the stage of the crisis, Embassy officials may be able to offer guidance and resources in addition to local law enforcement efforts.
7. Once the student has been located, inform the UFIC Executive Director immediately who in return will relay the information to other UF administrators.

Student Death:

1. Verify the identity of the student. Gather as much information about the circumstances surrounding the student's death as possible. A chronological log must be kept of all information surrounding the incident and all discussions and steps taken both on and off campus.
2. Immediately contact the UFIC Executive Director who will notify other UF administrators as needed and will open a case with CISI to start the repatriation process.
3. The Dean of Students (in consultation with the Provider) will notify the next of kin.
4. The Dean of Students and the Director of the CWC will coordinate a plan for dealing with the impact of the student death on staff, faculty and participants.
5. Determine the feasibility of continuing the program as is and/or supporting any students impacted by the incident who may wish to return home.

Political Unrest or Natural Disaster: i.e. coups d'état, violence towards Americans or terrorist acts, severe rioting and civil unrest; earthquakes, typhoons, floods etc.

1. Contact all students to make sure that they are accounted for and are safe (or work through onsite contacts to do so). If a student has been injured, have his/her physical injuries attended to (see "Serious Accident or Illness"). Have students contact home to let them know they are safe, but

caution students about speculative communication and advise them to wait until clear information is available before contacting home.

2. Notify the UFIC Executive Director who will notify other UF administrators as needed. The UFIC Executive Director will also contact the US Embassy onsite, to gather initial information about the scope of the incident, on-site advice regarding minimizing risk to students and guidance on evacuation decisions. If evacuation is warranted, the UFIC Executive Director will contact CISI to start the process for evacuation.

UFIC Response Team Members

The UFIC Crisis Response Team that handles student emergencies overseas shall be convened as soon as possible when an incident occurs. Team members will be involved depending on the type of crisis that occurred. (see below)

Team members will include external entities (i.e. Dean of Students (DOS), the University Police Department (UPD), etc.) as the situation demands. The Executive Director (ED) will report the status of all incidents to the Dean of UFIC and keep them fully updated as new information is obtained.

The UFIC Crisis Response Team will:

1. Propose immediate measures needed to ensure the health and safety of students and staff.
2. Consider additional issues regarding academics, financial aid, public relations and legal liability.
3. Develop appropriate actions to be taken overseas, including dealing with initial student concerns and recommendations regarding appropriate student behavior.
4. Develop (if warranted) an evacuation plan. This plan will be developed in cooperation with CISI (TEAM Assist) and the Program Director. Develop a plan for daily communication with the Crisis Response Team and other entities. The Executive Director will serve as the link with the UF Program Director and the members of the Crisis Response Team, until the crisis is resolved.

UFIC Response Team Members		
Marta L. Wayne (UFIC)	mlwayne@ufic.ufl.edu	352.273.1536
Susanne Hill (UFIC)	shill@ufic.ufl.edu	352.273.1500 352.213.9536 (after hours)
Jill Ranaivoson (UFIC)	jranaivoson@ufic.ufl.edu	352.273.1528
Bart Knowles (UPD)	bartknowles@ufl.edu	352.392.2111

Jonathan Yorkowitz (DOS)	yorkowitz@ufl.edu	352.392.1261
Ernesto Escoto (CWC)	eescoto@ufl.edu	352.392.1575
Russ Froman (Title IX)	rfroman@ufl.edu	352.275.1242
Brande Smith (General Counsel)	brande@ufl.edu	352.392.1358
Steve Orlando (University Relations)	sfo@ufl.edu	352.846.3903

FERPA/Buckley Amendment

FERPA (the Buckley Amendment) may conflict with the desire of parents and others to be fully briefed on both student progress and on- site emergencies. Students participating in study abroad programs are given the opportunity to sign a release form which recognizes that program staff will disclose information to their families if needed. If UF believes that certain information must be disclosed because of the severity of the emergency, the FERPA restrictions are no longer binding.

Academic and Behavioral Expectations

UF Study Abroad programs require all students to attend all formal classes, supplemental instructional components of the program (lectures, meetings with invited experts, seminars, etc. apart from formal class time), and all excursions which are a part of the program itinerary. Attendance policies should be clearly spelled out in writing prior to the start of the program. Students will need to understand the difference between “class- time” and “free time”, recognizing the fact that “class time” does not have to take place in the actual classroom. The only acceptable excuse for missing a class, supplemental instructional component or an excursion is illness or injury. Faculty directors should take attendance at all classes and excursions and explain in advance how grades will be affected by poor attendance.

Participants in a Study Abroad program are also expected to serve as ambassadors for both UF and the United States. As it is often difficult for students to understand what is expected of them in this regard, it is important to stress these issues in the pre-departure orientation(s) and again upon arrival. Students need to be aware that behaviors with minimal or no consequences at UF may have major implications for the Study Abroad program. Topics to be included in these discussions include but are not limited to: appropriate dress, local laws, local mobility (which neighborhoods in the area are safe), gender dynamics, youth/elder relationships, food and meal etiquette, and how to recognize signs of displeasure on the part of host country nationals.

While students do have free time during the program and – as adults – can certainly decide how they wish to spend this time, they should be discouraged – within articulated reason - from participating in any kind

of activity that might be harmful to themselves or others or that could reasonably be expected to diminish the quality or integrity of the learning environment established by the faculty leader.

Faculty need to understand however, that students are within their rights to spend their free time as they see fit. Faculty also need to understand that they are not expected to supervise students during their free time except in emergency circumstances.

All students will need to comply with the conduct regulations of the University of Florida which are printed and made available to all students at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>

Due Process

Program Directors should ALWAYS check first with UFIC before making any decisions regarding a student's misconduct. All UF students have a right to due process which needs to be provided in order to not be in violation of the US constitution.

Why Should You Defer to the UF Conduct Process?

1. Sometimes the violation can be a cry for help and the conduct process can connect the student with the appropriate resources.
2. The conduct process allows for an uninvolved third party to make the decision. This creates a better perception of fairness.
3. It is the official policy of the University. You are protected as faculty as long as you utilize the conduct process, even if in the end the student is found not responsible.
4. If you take action on your own, you are not protected by the University. If the student decides to sue, you will be on your own.
5. The conduct process is basically a contract with students. When the university doesn't follow its process, it can be found in violation of due process.
6. Universities have a lot of latitude in how they decide to address violations of their community standards. Generally courts won't interfere. The basic due process a university needs to follow is that they need to do what they say they will do. In other words, provide the process you say you will. To penalize a student in any other way is a violation of their rights to due process.