

**RIT Risk Management Checklist**  
**for planning**  
**Student Foreign Travel Abroad or Study Abroad Program**

***Instruction to Academic Coordinator:*** Provide written response to Steps 1 through 9 to the Global Risk Management Services Office, Eastman Bldg, Room 4008. If an item doesn't apply, indicate N/A and briefly describe why it is N/A .

Step 1 – Study Abroad Agreements

- Negotiate terms of RIT's study abroad program with foreign affiliate university.
  - Roles & responsibilities of each institution
  - Tuition and room & board fees – how much and how collected
  - Housing details
  - Transfer of academic credit
  - Refunds – how they work
  
- Who are primary contacts for foreign affiliate university site
  - Names, addresses & phone numbers
  - Emergency contacts at university
  
- Get these details in writing
  
- Have appropriate RIT authorized dean/department chair review and sign off
  - Before signing, review of draft document should be done by
    - Office of Advanced Academic Enhancement
    - Global Risk Management Services Office
    - Budget Office
    - Registrar's Office
  
  - Send copies of signed agreement to Office of Advanced Academic Enhancement

Step 2 – Know Your Program

- Visit foreign host site, including classrooms and housing accommodations.
  
- Identify useful information about the academic setting and living environment that you will want to incorporate into the orientation material
  
- Assess health and safety issues. Speak with foreign host site to address safety issues before RIT students arrive.

- ❑ Learn about your host country; check the US State Dept. consular information.
- ❑ Develop a resource list of useful websites for your students to learn more about the program, about study abroad and about the host country.
- ❑ Develop helpful tips sheets for your students to know.
- ❑ Detail how travel arrangements are to be made. Preferable to have students make their own travel arrangements.
- ❑ Screen your applicants for suitability for the program
- ❑ If working with a tour operator or service provider:
  - Request written agreement on what they are providing
  - Review this with Risk Management
  - Require tour operator or service provider to provide RIT with evidence of general liability and professional liability insurance. **This should be in the form of a certificate of insurance naming RIT as an additional insured.** Risk Management should review this document.
- ❑ Review past program evaluation sheets from participants to enact changes to your program management as deemed appropriate.

### Step 3 – Medical Information

- ❑ Learn what medical providers and facilities at the host site or nearby are available to assist students in case of medical emergency.
- ❑ Identify emergency phone numbers for RIT students to have available in case of medical emergency. Are there any procedures students need to follow?
- ❑ Require all RIT students traveling abroad to have medical insurance that will provide coverage overseas. Ask for evidence of their insurance coverage.
- ❑ Develop a plan for reporting medical emergencies or accidents that occur overseas.
- ❑ Advise students to check with their parents and physician to prepare for their individual medical needs when they are overseas (prescriptions, eyeglasses/contact lenses)
- ❑ Are pre-trip immunizations necessary?

#### Step 4 – Travel Arrangements

- How are travel arrangements being handled to the host site?
  - (Refer to Step 2 regarding requirements of tour operators/service providers.)
- Are there planned excursions that become part of the academic program? If so, who takes responsibility for coordinating travel arrangements? What do you need to know about these side trips to make them safe for our students?
  - (Refer to Step 2 regarding requirements of tour operators/service providers.)

#### Step 5 – Crisis Management Plan

##### Pre-Trip

- Develop program contingency plans for
  - Medical emergency or serious accident of participating student; how is it reported?
  - RIT student is victim of crime? How is it reported?
  - Planned evacuation in case of political unrest or terrorism? Where is the nearest US embassy? Students registered with embassy upon arrival.
  - Student's behavior while in program is inappropriate.
- Before leaving for trip, check US State Department:
  - Consular Information Sheets
  - Travel Warnings
  - Public Announcements
- Register your program participants with the US Embassy at the program location site.
- The academic coordinator(s) accompanying the students
- Review Study Abroad Emergency Plan before going on trip (Appendix A)

##### On-Site

- Check in with US Embassy once on site.
- Maintain on-going review of US Travel Warnings and Public Announcements for your program site location(s) before and during the program dates.
- Review Study Abroad Emergency Plan (Appendix A)

## Step 6 – Orientation: Pre-trip and On Location

### Pre-Trip

- ❑ Engage both student and parent in student's plan to participate in RIT study abroad program whenever possible.
- ❑ Develop information packet with study abroad program details obtained from Steps 1 through 5. Provide this information to students (and parents) in advance of their decision to participate. (Refer to Student/Parent Responsibilities – Appendix B)
- ❑ Provide mandatory pre-trip information sessions to go over the details of the program, both academic as well as living aspects of their planned experience. What can they expect...spell it out for them. Be sure to document that every student received information and attended orientation sessions.
- ❑ Emphasize the student's role and responsibilities while in the foreign host country and at the host site, including their role for personal safety. Explain outcomes of their inappropriate, illegal or bad behavior.
- ❑ Highlight in advance the risk associated with traveling abroad.

### On-Site

- ❑ Provide on-site orientation to re-emphasize the information presented during the pre-trip orientation.
- ❑ Review Study Abroad Emergency Plan with students during on-site orientation

## Step 7 – Agreement to Participate Form (Waiver/Release)

Sample form can be obtained from the Office of Academic Enrichment web page or Risk Management.

- ❑ Complete Agreement to Participate form with detailed information. You may reference the detailed packet of information you've provided the student as long as you've documented that they have received all the appropriate documents contained in the packet.
- ❑ Before distributing to students for their signature, have the The Office of Academic Enrichment and Risk Management review the release form.
- ❑ Provide the Agreement to Participate form to students for their review. They may want a parent to review it in advance.
- ❑ Collect signed Agreement to Participate form from student prior to their departure. If no signed Agreement....no study abroad program participation.
- ❑ Keep these forms on file in Academic Program Coordinators Office or Dean's Office for minimum of four (4) years.

### Step 8 – Leave RIT with Detailed Information

- ❑ Develop foreign host site contact list with names, addresses, phone and fax numbers.
  - Include the on-site supervising faculty member's cell phone number where he/she can be reached on a "24/7" basis. Check to make sure cell phone operates in the country(ies) you're traveling to. (Note: standard U.S. cell phones normally will not work outside of North America.)
  - Provide each student a copy of the contact list.
- ❑ Develop itinerary (day by day) with contact names and phone numbers.
- ❑ Develop list of participating students with emergency contact names, addresses and phone numbers to reach in case of an emergency.
- ❑ Leave these lists with your home academic department or dean's office.
- ❑ Forward a copy of the contact information, participants' list and itinerary to Public Safety and Risk Management.

### Step 9 – Worldwide Travel Assistance

- ❑ A Worldwide Travel Assistance program covers all RIT faculty/staff. ID cards are available from Risk Management located in the Eastman Bldg., Room 4008.
- ❑ Contact Risk Management regarding travel assistance available for spouse traveling with a RIT faculty/staff member
- ❑ RIT foreign study abroad students can be covered under RIT's blanket coverage provided specifically for students under Worldwide Travel Assistance programs. **Students must be enrolled into the program to receive ID cards and information about emergency phone numbers. Contact Risk Management at x5-6131.**

More information can be obtained at:

[http://finweb.rit.edu/rmss/travel\\_assistance\\_students.html](http://finweb.rit.edu/rmss/travel_assistance_students.html)

# Appendix A

## ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY STUDENT ABROAD EMERGENCY PLAN

The following description and procedures are a set of guidelines for the overseas director, staff, and/or faculty members representing or in partnership with the RIT Office of Academic Enhancement Programs to prepare effectively for and rapidly respond to emergencies.

As someone who will be responsible for directing an RIT overseas academic program, or who has RIT students in their charge, you may find yourself facing an emergency involving one or more of the students who are in your care. Students can and do become ill, suffer accidents, fall victim to assaults and muggings, find themselves caught up in potentially violent political situations, fail to return on time to programs at the end of long weekends, etc. On occasion, students may be involved in perpetrating an assault or a crime against a host country citizen, or breaking local laws. While it is of course impossible to plan for all contingencies involving our students overseas, procedures need to be followed that will allow us to react in a responsible and level-headed manner when emergencies do arise. We need to be able to provide, in a consistent and predictable way, for the safety and well-being of our students.

As the program director or responsible partner of an RIT overseas academic program, we ask that you follow the procedures outlined below and to be sure to inform the students in your group about these procedures during their on-site orientation program.

### WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY?

For our purposes, an emergency is any circumstance that poses a genuine risk to, or that has already disturbed, the safety and well-being of program participants. Emergencies will include, though not be limited to, the following types of events and incidents:

<i>violent robbery</i>	<i>physical assault</i>	<i>sexual assault or rape</i>
<i>significant accident and/or injury</i>	<i>hospitalization for any reason</i>	<i>serious illness, physical or emotional</i>
<i>local political crisis</i>	<i>terrorist threat or attack</i>	<i>any legal action involving a student</i>
<i>disappearance or kidnapping of a student</i>	<i>arrest or questioning by the police or other security forces of the host country</i>	

### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO TO PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES?

1. Start by reviewing "Risk Management for Study Abroad Programs", which is available from Global Risk Management Services. <https://finweb.rit.edu/grms/restricted/studyabroadprograms.pdf>

All overseas academic program students must be covered by a medical insurance policy. Additionally, you need to enroll your students in our Worldwide Assistance Services program. This program provides a variety of services for you and your students, such as:

#### Pre-Trip Planning

Country Specific Information  
Visa/Passport Requirements  
Embassy/Consulate Information  
Immunization Requirements  
Weather Forecasts

#### Travel/Communication

Emergency Travel Arrangements  
Emergency Cash Advance  
Emergency Message Relay  
Interpretation Assistance  
Lost Document Assistance

#### Medical Assistance

Medical Evacuation/ Repatriation  
Physician/Hospital Referrals  
Emergency Medical Payments  
24 Hour Medical Monitoring  
Claim Filing Assistance

Premiums for this coverage may be waived. For more detail as to this or any other aspect of the program, please contact Global Risk Management Services, x 5-6131.

2. On arrival at your destination, conduct an On-Site Orientation for your group, to familiarize them with their new surroundings. While discussing the purpose of your particular program, you also need to provide the following:

- Advice to the students regarding the need to avoid travel to or through any location where tensions exist and travel may be dangerous.
- An explanation to the students to the effect that they are required to inform you of any medical emergency, and that you in turn are required to inform RIT Public Safety immediately about the emergency. Advise the students that this information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and that it will be shared by you and Public Safety on a "need to know" basis only;
- A written list of reputable local medical clinics or hospitals. If possible, take your students as a group to at least one clinic or hospital that provides 24-hour medical service. Time permitting; introduce them to appropriate staff members.
- A written list of English-speaking doctors and psychologists who have been recommended by the U.S. Embassy or some other agency qualified to judge the competence of local medical facilities and staff;
- Where possible, the name of a reputable rape crisis center, or of an individual trained to respond effectively to a crisis involving a sexual assault or rape; and
- Where possible, the local telephone number the students should use to contact emergency services (i.e., the equivalent of the "911" used in the U.S., which provides access to police, fire, and emergency medical services).

Each of these in the list should include the address, phone numbers and hours of the facilities and staff members. Advise students to carry this list with them at all times. A copy of these lists should be faxed to the Office of Academic Enhancement Programs, Risk Management and Public Safety once you complete the On-Site Orientation.

3. Contact the U.S. embassy/consulate. Provide them with a list of the students' names and passport numbers. Where the embassy requires it, have each of the students fill out any registration form that embassy personnel provide. If possible, ask the local U.S. embassy security officer (or another appropriate U.S. government official) to meet with the students to give them a security briefing. Encourage the students to stop in at the embassy or consulate before and during their travels away from your site in order to get updated information about each country they plan to visit. **An embassy security briefing will be able to reinforce your message to the students that travel to dangerous areas should be avoided.**

## EMERGENCY PLAN

1. **Your first responsibility is to protect the safety and well-being of program participants.** Do whatever is necessary to assure this, whether this means obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, U.S. embassy intervention, or police protection. Expenses relating to the management of an emergency can be reimbursed by our office, if necessary and appropriate.
2. When you have done all that you reasonably can to assure the students' well-being, immediately **contact RIT Public Safety at (585) 475-333**. Brief the Public Safety officer, in detail, about the situation. Make every effort to reach Public Safety by telephone rather than e-mail or fax; there are a number of issues that they will want to discuss with you during a crisis.
3. Notify the local U.S. embassy or consulate about the crisis, and follow whatever procedures they may require; if there is a continuing risk to the welfare of the students (during a terrorist threat, for example), ask the appropriate embassy or consular officer to advise you on a regular basis about the evolution of the crisis, and about how the students should respond.
4. In a medical emergency, contact the appropriate health center at the overseas site so that it can assist you and help coordinate the necessary arrangements. In any other sort of emergency, notify the local police about the situation, if you and the embassy believe this is appropriate; then follow the procedures the police may require of you or the student.
5. In the event of a crisis, try not to overreact or panic; the students are counting on you to get them help through a difficult time. We have had experience dealing with crises in the past and are ready to assist you during and after any type of event or incident.
6. After Public Safety is informed about an emergency, and after we consult with you and other appropriate individuals on site and at RIT, we will fax you a description of the course of action that you and the students will need to follow in responding to the crisis. All program participants will be required to sign a statement acknowledging that they have received, read and understand this response plan; after all the participants in your group have signed it, please fax Risk Management the signed acknowledgment.
7. During an on-going crisis, keep Risk Management and Public Safety informed on a regular basis about the evolution of the crisis, until it has passed.
8. In any emergency, we ask that you give clear and unambiguous instructions to students. These instructions must be obeyed with alacrity. Any discussion or disagreements can be brought to the Office of Academic Enhancement Programs later on, but at the moment of the emergency, there can be no discussion.
9. During a political crisis or some other emergency during which foreigners in general or U.S. citizens in particular may be at risk, tell the students to keep a low profile. Tell them to avoid demonstrations, confrontations, or situations where they could be in danger; to avoid behavior that could call attention to themselves; to avoid locales where foreigners or Americans are known to congregate; and to take down signs, avoid using luggage tags and wearing clothes that would label them as Americans.
10. In the event of a significant crisis, students may be required to return to the U.S. Every reasonable effort will be made to allow them to continue their academic program on campus, and to be housed appropriately as well.
11. It is highly unlikely that participants would need to be evacuated from a site abroad. However, we would of course bring faculty members and students home if a situation were to deteriorate to the point where the degree of risk to participant and faculty was deemed unacceptable. If this unlikely event were to happen, the director of the Office of Academic Enhancement Programs, in consultation with you, the U.S. embassy and State Department, and appropriate individuals on the home campus, would develop an evacuation plan in as much detail as possible. This plan would be transmitted to you in confidence, and we would continue to work closely with you throughout the process.

Observing the procedures outlined here will help assure that our students will have the unique educational experience abroad that you, they, and the Office of Academic Enhancement Programs are hoping they will have.

### **IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Office of Academic Enhancement Programs  
Bausch & Lomb Building  
21 Lomb Memorial Drive  
Rochester, NY 14623-5603

Office Phone: (585) 475-7629

This phone is answered during normal working hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.  
At 4:30, this phone line goes to voicemail and messages are retrieved and answered the following business day.

Office fax number: (585) 475-7633

Office e-mail: [cehrap@rit.edu](mailto:cehrap@rit.edu)

Global Risk Management Services  
George Eastman Building, 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
13 Lomb Memorial Drive  
Rochester, NY 14623-5603

Office Phone: (585) 475-4903

This phone is answered during normal working hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.  
At 4:30, this phone line goes to voicemail and messages are retrieved and answered the following business day.

Office fax number: (585) 475-7950

Office e-mail: [jgzmss@rit.edu](mailto:jgzmss@rit.edu)

Public Safety  
Grace Watson Hall  
61 Lomb Memorial Drive  
Rochester, NY 14623-5603

Emergency Phone: (585) 475-3333 (v/tty)

This phone is answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Non-emergency Phone: (585) 475-2853 (v/tty)

This phone is answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week..

Office fax number: (585) 475-5310

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS**

Report all emergencies to Public Safety: **(585) 475-3333**.

This phone is answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## Appendix B

### RIT STUDENT ABROAD PARTICIPANT & PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

#### **Responsibilities of Participants**

In study abroad, as in other settings, participants can have a major impact on their own health and safety through the decisions they make before and during their program and by their day-to-day choices and behaviors.

Participants should:

- A. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for their personal preparation for the program and participate fully in orientations.
- B. Read and carefully consider all materials issued by the sponsor that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country(ies).
- C. Conduct their own research on the country(ies) they plan to visit with particular emphasis on health and safety concerns, as well as the social, cultural, and political situations.
- D. Consider their physical and mental health, and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program, and make available to the sponsor accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary in planning for a safe and healthy study abroad experience.
- E. Obtain and maintain appropriate insurance coverage and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers.
- F. Inform parents/guardians/families and any others who may need to know about their participation in the study abroad program, provide them with emergency contact information, and keep them informed of their whereabouts and activities.
- G. Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures of the program.
- H. Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals before and/or during the program.
- I. Accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions.
- J. Obey host-country laws.
- K. Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well being of others, and encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
- L. Avoid illegal drugs and excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol.

M. Follow the program policies for keeping program staff informed of their whereabouts and well being.

N. Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and legal system services in the host county.

### **Recommendations to Parents/Guardians/Families**

In study abroad, as in other settings, parents, guardians, and families can play an important role in the health and safety of participants by helping them make decisions and by influencing their behavior overseas.

Parents/guardians/families should:

- A. Be informed about and involved in the decision of the participant to enroll in a particular program.
- B. Obtain and carefully evaluate participant program materials, as well as related health, safety and security information.
- C. Discuss with the participant any of his/her travel plans and activities that may be independent of the study abroad program.
- D. Engage the participant in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues, insurance needs, and emergency procedures related to living abroad.
- E. Be responsive to requests from the program sponsor for information regarding the participant.
- F. Keep in touch with the participant.
- G. Be aware that the participant rather than the program may most appropriately provide some information

**These responsibilities and recommendations were developed by the Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad, a Joint Venture of AIEA, SECUSSA, Council, NASPA other professional organizations, and a number of study abroad providers**