

Arkansas State University
Study Abroad Office
Crisis Communication Plan

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Prior to Departure:

Prior to program start date, participants are registered in participant health insurance. They will receive an insurance card via email for their use, as needed. Participants are also required to attend a Pre-Departure Orientation. During this orientation, several members of the A-State community come out to help the Study Abroad Office present. These include, for the sake of safety, Student Conduct and Title IX.

During this meeting, we require all participants to register with the Department of State's STEP Program, a program that allows the participants to tell the U.S. Government where they're going to be and when in case a crisis does occur. By enrolling in this program, participants also receive an alert on travel advisories from the Department of State.

So that A-State also has a way to stay in touch with them, participants are also required to sign up in A-State's emergency contact system for Study Abroad, which is called KeyNect Up. This allows the Study Abroad Office to be able to send a message to the participant at any time to get a response on their safety. It also allows the participant to have a contact card on their phone with important numbers for people on-campus. One important number listed is the Study Abroad emergency line, which the Director of International Programs has.

Participants are informed in Pre-Departure that if they are going on their own/through a bilateral exchange partner, in the event of an emergency, their first contact should be that emergency line. If the participant is going on a faculty-led trip, the participant is responsible for telling the faculty leader accompanying them. It will be the faculty leader's responsibility to inform the Study Abroad Office. In the event that it is an emergency with the faculty leader, the participant who has noticed the issue, will be required to report it to the Study Abroad Office emergency line.

What is an Emergency? What is the Crisis Communication Plan and Protocols?

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 are categorized by levels of severity/associated risk and the levels are outlined on page five (5).

The crisis communication plan with protocols becomes effective in situations where participants and employees fall into one of the level of emergencies or other situations that the university deems an emergency. While each situation is unique and may require appropriate flexibility, the protocol provides procedures that will allow program participants to react in a responsible and rational way, for the safety and well-being of all participants. It is the responsibility for university administrators to follow the procedure outlined below and to keep the individual involved in the crisis informed.

In the event of an emergency, the Study Abroad Office's first responsibility is (to the best of his/her ability) take immediate actions necessary to protect the well-being of program participants. The Study Abroad Office should do whatever is necessary, whether this means obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, Embassy intervention, police protection, or contacting the participant's emergency contact. During the event of an emergency, after all actions have been taken to assure the participant's immediate well-being, the Study Abroad Office should determine the emergency's crisis level (as outlined on page five (5)) in order to determine who at the university should be made aware of the crisis and what university resources should be deployed.

Level of Emergencies:

Level One: Incidents that have limited impact on study abroad participants and the university's reputation. For the most part, these can be managed using routine procedures and handled by the Study Abroad Office.

Level Two: Incidents that have the potential to have a broader impact on other participants or require cooperation among units to effectively manage and resolve them. These types of incidents require adaption of routine procedures.

Level Three: Incidents that present substantial risks to study abroad participants or the university's reputation. They require cooperation among units and adaption of routine procedures to effectively manage and resolve them.

Protocols Per Level Level One

In all level one emergencies:

- Participant reports the issue to either the Faculty Leader (if a faculty-led trip) or the Study Abroad Office directly (if a non-faculty-led trip). In the event that the student does not speak up, the incident can also be reported by the host institution coordinator or the faculty leader.
- Faculty Leader or the Study Abroad Office will ensure the health and safety of the participant by helping the participant find a hospital or clinic, if needed and/or will ensure the participant has reported the issue to the local police and (if applicable) the host institution.
- At the same time the participant is being taken care of, the Faculty Leader (when applicable) will report the incident to the Study Abroad Office. After being reported to the Study Abroad Office, or if reported to the Study Abroad Office directly, the next steps should ensue.
- The Study Abroad Office will reach out to the participant to make sure the participant is okay, see if the participant needs to come home early, and ensure the participant has informed their parents.
- The Study Abroad Office will report the incident to the insurance company to ensure payment is made on the incident, only if the student needs support working with the insurance company. Any communication with the insurance company should also copy in the Risk Management Office.
- The Study Abroad Office will report the incident to Global Engagement and Outreach.
- When applicable, the Study Abroad Office can and will report the incident to any of these offices: the Counseling Center, the University Police Department, the Dean of Students, and/or the Student Conduct Board.
 - In the sense of the Counseling Center, note that the Counseling Center will reach out to the participant to assess the severity of the mental health illness and recommend appropriate help for the individual. Please note that appropriate help may be a licensed counselor in the host country, rather than working through the A-State Counseling Center for all treatment. If the recommended treatment requires cooperation with the on-site faculty leader or on-site host institution coordinator, the Study Abroad Office will be the mediator between the two parties.

Protocols Per Level Level Two

In the event of a participant's major physical injury, illness (such as an epidemic), or hospitalization or a severe ongoing mental health incident, including suicidal thoughts:

- Participant reports the issue to either the Faculty Leader (if a faculty-led trip) or the Study Abroad Office directly (if a non-faculty-led trip). In the event that the student does not speak up, the incident can also be reported by the host institution coordinator or the faculty leader.
- Faculty Leader or the Study Abroad Office will ensure the health and safety of the participant by helping the participant find a hospital or clinic (for the first two scenarios)
- At the same time the participant is being taken care of, the Faculty Leader (when applicable) will report the incident to the Study Abroad Office. After being reported to the Study Abroad Office, or if reported to the Study Abroad Office directly, the next steps should ensue.
- The Study Abroad Office will reach out to the participant to make sure the participant is okay, see if the participant needs to come home early, and ensure the participant has informed their parents. As needed, the Study Abroad Office will find a local hospital that the participant can go to for help. The Study Abroad Office ensure the participant goes by enlisting the help of the faculty leader or host institution coordinator to take them there.
- The Study Abroad Office will report the incident to the insurance company to ensure payment is made on the incident, only if the student needs support working with the insurance company. Any communication with the insurance company should also copy in the Risk Management Office.
- The Study Abroad Office will report the incident to Global Engagement and Outreach.
- When applicable, the Study Abroad Office can and will report the incident to any of these offices or individuals: the Chancellor, the Associate Vice-Chancellor for Marketing and Communications, the Counseling Center, the University Police Department, the Dean of Students, the Student Conduct Board, and/or the Title IX Office.
 - In the sense of the Counseling Center, note that the Counseling Center will reach out to the participant to assess the severity of the mental health illness and recommend appropriate help for the individual. Please note that appropriate help may be a licensed counselor in the host country, rather than working through the A-State Counseling Center for all treatment. If the recommended treatment requires cooperation with the on-site faculty leader or on-site host institution coordinator, the Study Abroad Office will be the mediator between the two parties.
 - In the event of a Title IX incident, the victim and/or the guilty party may be asked to return home and will be evaluated on a situation-by-situation basis. If credit will be awarded for the individuals brought home due to not completing the program, will also be evaluated on a situation-by-situation basis.

In the event of a participant experiences or reports experiencing sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dating violence, or any other form of conduct which could fall under the purview of Title IX:

- Participant, host institution coordinator, or faculty leader will report the incident to the Office of Title IX and Institutional Equity. The Title IX Coordinator or designee will choose if and/or when to alert the Study Abroad Office.
- The Title IX Coordinator or designee, or Study Abroad Office (if made aware) will find a local hospital that the participant can go to for help. The Title IX Coordinator or designee or Study Abroad Office ensure the participant goes by enlisting the help of the faculty leader or host institution coordinator to take them there.
- The Title IX Coordinator or designee could report the incident to any of these offices or individuals: Study Abroad Office, Global Engagement and Outreach, University Police Department, the Chancellor, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Marketing and Communications, and the Counseling Center. If deemed necessary, the Title IX Coordinator or designee may have other offices they need to report the incident to.
- If the reported incident was allegedly perpetrated by another participant or a faculty member, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will also expect and require that information be reported.
- If notified, the Counseling Center will reach out to the participant to assess the severity of the mental trauma associated with the reported incident and recommend appropriate assistance for the participant. Please note that appropriate assistance may be a licensed counselor in the host country, rather than working through the A-State Counseling Center for all treatment. If the Counseling Center deems it to be severe enough, the participant can be asked to return home from the program.
- The alleged victim and/or the accused party may be asked to return home and will be evaluated on a situation-by-situation basis by the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator and designee. If credit will be awarded for the participants brought home due to not completing the program, will also be evaluated on a situation-by-situation basis by discretion of the Office of International Programs.

In the event of a participant's arrest, detention, or deportation:

- Participant, host institution coordinator, or faculty leader will report the arrest to the Study Abroad Office.
- The Study Abroad Office will report the arrest to Global Engagement and Outreach, the Chancellor, and Marketing and Communications letting them know of the arrest and the next steps.
- At the same time, the Study Abroad Office will report the arrest to the University Police Department, University Relations for ASU, and General Counsel for ASU.
- The University Police Department (working alongside Jonesboro Police Department, when necessary), General Counsel, University Relations, and the Study Abroad Office will work together to find out the accusations made/why participant was arrested, people involved, date and time of incident, and penalties for such an accusation.

- Note: It is in the participant's best interest for General Counsel and University Relations to work with the consulate to help the participant obtain a lawyer.
- The Chancellor will call the participant's emergency contact to inform them of the arrest and inform them of the steps the university is taking to help the participant.
- The Police Departments involved, General Counsel, and University Relations will work with the foreign government to take the appropriate steps to ensure the participant's safety and to get them back to the U.S. They will be responsible for keeping the Study Abroad Office up to date.

In the event of a participant's unknown disappearance:

- The host institution coordinator or faculty leader will report the disappearance to the Study Abroad Office. In some instances, an emergency contact for the participant may report the disappearance if they have not heard from them in a certain time frame.
- The Study Abroad Office will report the disappearance to Global Engagement and Outreach, the Chancellor, and Marketing and Communications letting them know of the disappearance and the next steps.
- The Study Abroad Office will work with the host coordinator or faculty leader to determine when and where the student was last seen, to do a dormitory check, and to check with the faculty of the courses (if at a host institution) to see when the participant was last in class. The Study Abroad Office will also attempt to contact the participant directly via email and the KeyNect Up phone card given to students at pre-departure orientation. Give the participant 8 hours to respond.
- If the participant is not located with the items being done above, the Study Abroad Office will contact local hospitals and jails to determine if the participant is in one of those. The Study Abroad Office will also work with University Relations for ASU to contact the consulate. During this time, the Chancellor (or the Study Abroad Office) will report this disappearance to the participant's emergency contact. In the event that it was the emergency contact that informed the Study Abroad Office of the disappearance, the Chancellor will do the call as an update on efforts being made.
- After a total of 12 hours from the reported disappearance, University Relations and the Study Abroad Office will work to file a police report of a missing person through the consulate.
- If the participant is located, remind the participant that regular check-ins are essential and of attendance policies.
- If the outcome of the above search involves injury, arrest, or death, please see the proper protocols for those.
- If the outcome of the above still has no evidence of what has happened to the student, continue to work with the consulate and foreign police authorities through University Relations to locate the student.
- During these steps, keep the emergency contact informed at least every 12 hours.

Protocols Per Level

Level Three

In the event of a campus shooting or terrorist event in the country:

- Upon receiving the news of the campus shooting or terrorist event in the country the participant is at, either through news channels, host institution, or the faculty leader, the Study Abroad Office's first step should be to make sure the student is safe.
- The Study Abroad Office will use the KeyNect UP software to communicate with the student to make sure they reply SAFE. Please see sample communication on page 15.
- At the same time, the Study Abroad Office will report the shooting or terrorist event to Global Engagement and Outreach, the Chancellor, and the Associate Vice-Chancellor for Marketing and Communications and keep them updated once the participant has responded SAFE.
- In the event that it was a terrorist event, the Study Abroad Office will also consult with the Department of State's Travel Advisory and OSAC to ensure the area is still safe. If the Department of State issues a travel advisory to leave the country, the Study Abroad Office will work with University Relations (for consulate help) and the Risk Management Office to enact evacuation insurance to get the student out.
- Should the participant not respond, the participant's unknown disappearance protocol (outlined on page 9) should come into play.
- Once the participant has responded SAFE, the Counseling Center will reach out to the participant to assess the severity of the mental trauma associated with this and recommend appropriate help for the individual. Please note that appropriate help may be a licensed counselor in the host country, rather than working through the A-State Counseling Center for all treatment. If the Counseling Center deems it to be severe enough, the participant can be asked to return home from the program.

In the event of civil or political unrest in the country:

- Upon receiving the news of the civil/political unrest in the country the participant is at, either through news channels, host institution, or the faculty leader, the Study Abroad Office's first step should be to make sure the student is safe.
- The Study Abroad Office will use the KeyNect UP software to communicate with the student to make sure they reply SAFE. Please see sample communication on page 15.
- At the same time, the Study Abroad Office will report the civil/political unrest to Global Engagement and Outreach, the Chancellor, and the Associate Vice-Chancellor for Marketing and Communications and keep them updated once the participant has responded SAFE.
- The Study Abroad Office will also consult with the Department of State's Travel Advisory and OSAC to ensure the area is still safe. If the Department of State issues a travel advisory to leave the country, the Study Abroad Office will work with University Relations (for consulate help) and the Risk Management Office to enact evacuation insurance to get the student out.

- Should the participant not respond, the participant's unknown disappearance protocol (outlined on page 9) should come into play.
- Once the participant has responded SAFE, the Counseling Center will reach out to the participant to assess the severity of the mental trauma associated with this and recommend appropriate help for the individual. Please note that appropriate help may be a licensed counselor in the host country, rather than working through the A-State Counseling Center for all treatment. If the Counseling Center deems it to be severe enough, the participant can be asked to return home from the program.

In the event of a natural disaster in the country:

- Please note that it is not the responsibility of the Study Abroad Office to warn students of natural disasters that are headed their way. However, if the office has prior knowledge of a natural disaster expected to hit the location the participant is in, such as, but not limited to a fire, flood, tornado, hurricane, or tsunami, the Study Abroad Office will try to start communications early. Please see page 16 for sample communications.
- Upon reports of the natural disaster hitting the area that the participant is at, the Study Abroad Office will use the KeyNect UP software to communicate with the student to make sure they reply SAFE. The Study Abroad Office shall continue to communicate with the student via KeyNect UP every 24 hours until the area has been deemed clear.
- At the same time, the Study Abroad Office will report the natural disaster to Global Engagement and Outreach, the Chancellor, and the Associate Vice-Chancellor for Marketing and Communications and keep them updated once the participant has responded SAFE.
- The Study Abroad Office will also consult with the Department of State's Travel Advisory and OSAC to ensure the area is still safe. If the Department of State issues a travel advisory to leave the country, the Study Abroad Office will work with University Relations (for consulate help) and the Risk Management Office to enact evacuation insurance to get the student out.
- Should the participant not respond, the participant's unknown disappearance protocol (outlined on page 9) should come into play.
- Once the participant has responded SAFE, the Counseling Center will reach out to the participant to assess the severity of the mental trauma associated with this and recommend appropriate help for the individual. Please note that appropriate help may be a licensed counselor in the host country, rather than working through the A-State Counseling Center for all treatment. If the Counseling Center deems it to be severe enough, the participant can be asked to return home from the program.

In the event of the death of participant:

- The host institution coordinator or faculty leader will report the death to the Study Abroad Office.
- The Study Abroad Office will ask for verification of the death and for details of the incident surrounding the death. Information to be collected should be: time, location and manner of the death; current location of the remains; whether an autopsy is required; if

the Embassy of the deceased has been informed; and if the emergency contact has been contacted. The Study Abroad Office will ensure that the faculty leader or host institution coordinator have already contacted the local police. The Study Abroad Office will ask for them to refrain from texting or calling anyone; speaking to the media outlets; or posting on social media until A-State has verified that the emergency contact has been notified.

- The Study Abroad Office will notify Global Engagement and Outreach, the Chancellor, the Dean of Students, and the Associate Vice-Chancellor for Marketing and Communications about the death of the participant.
- At the same time, the Study Abroad Office will contact the Risk Management Office to initiate the repatriation aspect of the participant insurance.
- At the same time, the Chancellor will contact the emergency contact, alongside the Associate Vice-Chancellor for Marketing and Communications.
- At the same time, the on-campus death notification procedure shall be starting to take place.
- The Study Abroad Office will work with University Relations to work with the consulate to obtain the death certificate.
- The Study Abroad Office, Global Engagement and Outreach, and the Chancellor will receive and assist emergency contacts with airport pick-up and accommodations in regards to accompanying the body back to the U.S. and the home-town.
- In the event that the participant passed away on a faculty led trip, the Study Abroad Office will determine whether the study abroad activity should continue or be cancelled. If cancelled, the Study Abroad Office will arrange flight homes.
 - Regardless of whether it continues or is cancelled, the Study Abroad Office will work with the Counseling Center to assess the other participants and faculty leader(s). The Counseling Center will recommend appropriate help for the individuals affected. Please note that appropriate help may be a licensed counselor in the host country, rather than working through the A-State Counseling Center for all treatment. If the Counseling Center deems it to be severe enough, the participant can be asked to return home from the program.

Sample Communications

To make sure participant is safe from shooting/terrorist event/civil or political unrest:

Dear (participant name)

As of, (date and time) the (name the incident and brief details) occurred in (city, region, or university).

To be assured of your safety, please respond immediately to this message by replying SAFE.

If you are not able to reply to this message, please use one of the other means:

- Call our emergency phone number: 1-870-275-0787
- Email us at studyabroad@astate.edu
- Talk to your host university exchange coordinator and ask them to let us know

Once you have confirmed your safety, we will notify your emergency contact. We strongly recommend that you also notify any loved ones regarding your safety, to prevent additional worry.

For additional emergency resources, we urge you to:

- Keep watch on the Department of State's Travel Advisory warning and sign up for travel alerts
- Follow any instructions given by your host institution, embassy, local law enforcement and media
- Contact us anytime for help

We will continue to monitor this situation and will provide more information as it is made available, if it affects your safety.

Forewarning of a natural disaster:

Dear (participant name)

On (date and time) the (name of the organization that issued the alert) issued a (natural disaster/warning) for (location/region). The (natural disaster) is projected to hit (place, day, hour and time zone). In preparation for this, the Study Abroad Office will be in touch with you regarding your safety.

To prepare for the impending disaster, we urge you to:

- Respond immediately to any calls or “check-in” emails sent to you by A-State, as it is an essential part of our job to make sure you are safe and accounted for.
- Notify your host institution of the location when you will be living before, during, and after the disaster. It is important that they know where you are at all times and have determined that it is a safe place.
- We would also ask that you contact your loved ones to let them know you are safe and your planned whereabouts during this event to prevent extra worry.
- Sign up for storm alerts to stay abreast and vigilant as the situation unfolds.
- Carry a fully charged cell phone with you at all times, in the case of a power outage.
- Let our office know if you have any problems or follow-up questions.