OP 34.26: Faculty-led Study Abroad Programs

DATE: December 12, 2013

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to enable more students to participate in TTU faculty-led study abroad programs by ensuring that those programs are:

1. Student-centered;
2. In conformity with standards of safety and responsibility in study abroad as established by recognized international education professional organizations (e.g., NAFSA: Association for International Educators and the Forum on Education Abroad), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Texas Administrative Code, and TTU operating policies and procedures; and
3. Operated by all TTU academic units in a manner that meets certain operation and program standards.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in June of odd-numbered years by the Office of International Affairs (OIA) with coordination by the vice provost for international affairs (VPIA), Office of the General Counsel, and the International Affairs Council.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

This OP is an outline of procedures for faculty-led programs at TTU. An accompanying handbook that contains the details of these procedures is on the Study Abroad website at http://www.studyabroad.ttu.edu/?go=FacultyHandbook.

1. Establishment of Departmental Faculty-led Study Abroad Programs

   a. Faculty interested in establishing a new program must review the Study Abroad website and meet with the Faculty-Led Program coordinator no later than the deadline established in the Handbook for Faculty-led Study Abroad Programs (handbook). Responsibilities, including submission of the program proposal, are further defined in the handbook.

   Continuation of programs that have existed in previous years should be confirmed for the current year by the faculty member, the department chair, and the college dean. Proposed programs must meet Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board standards. Details on how to confirm the continuation of an existing program are provided in the handbook.

   Faculty have the option of using a third-party provider to organize the logistics of the program. Faculty with no experience in the host country are required to use a third-party provider. See the handbook for details.
According to OP 32.01, Promotion and Tenure Standards and Procedures, leading students on studies abroad may be considered a contribution to teaching.

b. OIA responsibilities are defined in the handbook and include, but are not limited to, meeting with faculty to ensure compliance with all procedures required by Texas Tech University and the state of Texas.

2. Responsibilities Prior to Departure

a. Faculty responsibilities prior to departure include, but are not limited to, working with OIA to establish a budget; submitting forms; attending colloquia and workshops; preparing for emergency situations; providing a site-specific orientation; and recruiting and maintaining an appropriate student/faculty ratio as prescribed in the handbook.

b. OIA responsibilities prior to departure include, but are not limited to, establishing accounts and managing funds for all faculty-led programs; facilitating the application process; providing students with information on emergency and liability forms and insurance; conducting pre-departure orientation sessions; billing students for the deposits and program fees; and notifying on-campus offices of students’ intent to study abroad.

3. Responsibilities during the Program

a. Faculty responsibilities during the program include, but are not limited to, arriving with students or being on location in advance of their arrival, remaining on location for the duration of the program, and behaving in a manner that conforms to TTU policies (see OP 32.04) and is consistent with local law and custom.

All TTU faculty taking students abroad must have a cell phone with which to communicate with OIA during the program or have an alternate method of communication in locations where cell phone coverage is not available.

Faculty are responsible for establishing acceptable behavioral norms for students participating in their programs that are consistent with the TTU Code of Student Conduct and local law and custom. Faculty responsibilities are further defined in the handbook.

b. OIA responsibilities include, but are not limited to, responding to emergency situations and supporting faculty with advice and resources to address non-emergency issues that may arise. The OIA, which maintains a 24/7 emergency phone, is the point of initial contact for any emergency that occurs during a program. OIA and faculty responsibilities regarding emergencies are defined in the handbook.

4. Upon Return

a. Faculty are responsible for reconciling their account in the OIA according to OP 79.07 and as defined in the handbook and for meeting with OIA personnel to evaluate the program. They are also responsible for reporting any incidents that need to be included in the TTU reporting for compliance with the Clery Act (see OP 76.02).

b. Responsibilities of the OIA are defined in the handbook.
c. Accumulated funds in the account may not be more than the equivalent of program fees for two participants. These funds may be used when there is a significant change in the currency exchange rate or if a student needs to be refunded prior to the program. Approval for use of these funds for other purposes must be facilitated by OIA. If more than this amount accumulates in the account, the excess amount should be returned to the student participants after the accounts have been reconciled annually. For faculty-led programs at the TTU Center Seville, each program should maintain no more than €1000 in Seville. The remaining monies should be wired to OIA at the end of the summer, with excess funds to be distributed as described above.

5. **Faculty Accompanied by Spouse/Family**

Faculty wishing to have family members accompany them on a program must comply with the guidelines established in the handbook.

6. **Visitors to Faculty-led Programs**

Due to the intensive nature of a faculty-led program, faculty and students should not have visitors. Exceptions to this policy would be Texas Tech University administration (chair, dean, provost, etc.) who may wish to observe the program. Other visitors should not expect to be accommodated during the program.

7. **Insurance**

a. Faculty taking programs to the TTU Center Seville are covered by a Spanish insurance policy. Faculty in all other faculty-led programs are covered by HTH Worldwide insurance while leading TTU students on a faculty-led program. Additionally, faculty at the TTU Center Seville are required to purchase the International Teacher ID Card (ITIC).

b. All student participants will have health and accident and emergency evacuation and repatriation insurance coverage. Students at the TTU Center are covered by a Spanish policy; the cost for the insurance is included in the programs fee. All other students participating in TTU faculty led programs are covered by HTH Worldwide insurance. Study Abroad staff will enroll the students and bill the student’s account for the charge. This coverage will be for the duration of the faculty-led program. Additionally, students at the TTU Center Seville are required to purchase the International Student ID Card (ISIC).

8. **Alcohol**

In accordance with Texas Tech policy, TTU funds may not be used to purchase alcohol. Faculty and students of legal age in the study abroad location may purchase and consume alcohol with their own funds. Faculty may not purchase alcohol for students.

9. **Per Diem**

Per diem for meals and incidental expenses for faculty taking students abroad is based on the U.S. Department of State meals and incidental expenses allowance. Details about the per diem rate may be found in the handbook.
10. **Safety and Security**

   a. The decision to cancel a TTU program for any period of time can have serious consequences, and should be considered carefully in view of how the cancellation will affect other TTU international programs. The director of Study Abroad and the VPIA must be consulted in the decision to cancel a program. See OP 34.20 for procedures.

   b. When any type of emergency occurs, it is the responsibility of the faculty leader to notify the OIA immediately. TTU has procedures in place to respond to emergencies, and the OIA is responsible for coordinating the response.

11. **Evaluations**

   a. To better serve Texas Tech students, each program should provide an opportunity for students to evaluate the program in terms of content, location, excursions, value for money spent, etc.

   b. Faculty will be given the opportunity to evaluate the program itself, the support provided by the Office of International Affairs, third-party providers, or the TTU Center Seville and offer suggestions for future changes.