



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Study Abroad

WMU STUDY ABROAD GROUP SAFETY PLAN

This safety plan is designed to help international travelers develop mitigation strategies for health, safety, and security risks.

The United States Department of State issued a new travel advisory system in January, 2018. Under the new system, every country, and in some cases specific locations and regions within countries, will have a Travel Advisory, providing levels of advice ranging from 1-4:

Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions: This is the lowest advisory level for safety and security risk.

Level 2 - Exercise Increased Caution: Be aware of heightened risks to safety and security.

Level 3 - Reconsider Travel: Avoid travel due to serious risks to safety and security.

Level 4 - Do Not Travel: This is the highest advisory level due to greater likelihood of life-threatening risks.

WMU Study Abroad will not authorize students to travel to countries at Level 4. Individuals and faculty-leaders who wish to travel to countries at Level 3 (or to countries at Level 2 with Level 3 locations and areas within) must submit this form to Dr. Lee M. Penyak, WMU Director of Study Abroad, after which it will be reviewed by members of the WMU International Security Health Advisory Counsel to determine if travel may occur. Individuals and faculty directors going to Level 1 countries or to Level 2 countries (without Level 3 areas within the country) do not need to submit this form.

This form is due 4 months prior to program start date.

Travel Group Information

Submitter's Name:

Submitter's Email:

Submitter's Daytime
Phone Number:

Submitter's
Organizational Role:

Group Leader's Name
(if different than
submitter's name):

Group Leader's Email:

Group Leader's Phone
Number:

Group Leader's Affiliation:

Type of Project/Experience:

Group & Program Name –
Provide the name of your
group/department and the
name of this experience:

Program Start Date:

Program End Date:

List all countries and cities, and arrival and departure dates for each destination:

	Country	City	Department of State Travel Advisory Number	Arrival Date	Departure Date
1.					
2.					
3.					

Questionnaire 1: Program Details

1. Briefly explain academic relevance and purpose, and provide an overview of planned activities during the program. Include compelling and urgent reasons for engaging in this project at this time.
2. Anticipated number of undergraduate students who will travel with this project experience:
3. Anticipated number of graduate students who will travel with this project experience:
4. Anticipated number of travelers who are non-WMU students. Please list their affiliations:

Questionnaire 2: Accommodations and Transportation

1. Accommodations:

List accommodations for each city on your travel itinerary, including in-transit cities. For each entry, list the address and phone number (including country and city codes) if applicable.

	Accommodation Name	Address	Anticipated Arrival Date	Phone Number
1.				
2.				
3.				

Provide a brief overview of the accommodations (hotel, hostel, host family, apartment, dorm, campsite, etc.), including how they were chosen and/or vetted for safety and security.

2. Transportation:

Describe the inter-city and intra-city transportation methods for each location on your itinerary, including transportation to and from the program site. Types of transportation include walking, public bus, night bus, taxi, chartered vehicle/personal driver, train, plane, etc.

3. Will the group leader be driving students during any portion of the program?

Yes

No

Questionnaire 3: Emergency Support, Contact Information, and In-Country Communication Plan

For each of the following items, please indicate whether that step has been completed:

1. Embassy – Enter the address of nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate (www.usembassy.gov) for each destination:

	Country	City	Embassy/Consulate Address
1.			
2.			
3.			

2. Have you enrolled in the STEP program (step.state.gov/step)?

Yes

No

3. Have you collected Embassy or Consulate contact information for any non-U.S. travelers?

Yes

No

4. Write the city/country 911 Emergency equivalent number for police, fire, and ambulance support (travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf or www.geobluetravelinsurance.com/):

	Country	City	911 Emergency Equivalent Number
1.			
2.			
3.			

5. Write the name, address, and phone number of the nearest GeoBlue facility for each site location (www.geobluetravelinsurance.com/):

	Site Location	Nearest GeoBlue Facility (Name and Address)	Phone Number
1.			
2.			
3.			

If the nearest GeoBlue facility is more than an hour away from your work and/or living site, list the name and address of the nearest medical facility to the site(s):

	Site Location	Nearest Medical Facility (Name and Address)	Phone Number
1.			
2.			
3.			

6. **In-Country Partner, Your company, or Host Organization:**

If applicable, provide the name of your in-country partner, host organization, and/or placement agency. Please list all partners if there are more than one.

7. **On-site Support Resources:**

Describe on-site health, safety, and security support resources and services that are provided by your on-site host or others, if applicable. For example, on-site orientations, familiarization tour of the area, accompaniment of staff (if so, how often?), after-hours emergency number, local clinic, evacuation services, emergency protocols, etc.

Group On-Site Information

1. **Group Leader Primary Local Mobile Phone Number** – Group leaders are encouraged to have a mobile phone number that will work in all travel destinations. If the number is available at this time, please provide the phone number (include country code + city/area code).

If the number is not know at this time, please describe how and when the group leader will obtain a working cellphone. Please note that the group leader will need to email the respective area specialist in WMU Study Abroad with their phone number once available.

- 2. Secondary Local Phone Number** – Please list a second number, if available, where the group can be reached while abroad. This can be a co-leader’s number, a landline, or the number of a partner who will know the group’s whereabouts (include country code + city/area code).
- 3.** How can you be reached in the event of an emergency using other media (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.)? If you list social media, please list your username or other means of identification.

Communication Plan

- 1.** What is the in-country communication plan between the group leader and the group members? With your local contacts/hosts? In the event of an emergency? If the group anticipates being away from regular email or phone contact, please describe how you will overcome such challenges.
- 2.** Emergency *on-site* contact person(s) and number(s) (include country + city code). This can be a member of a partner organization/s, a personal contact, or anyone that a participant or WMU can contact in the event of an on-site emergency.
- 3. WMU Communication Plan** – What is the communication plan with the group’s WMU Study Abroad Specialist? Please note contact should include a minimum of a check-in when the whole group has arrived on-site and a check-in email every Monday to the Study Abroad Specialist. If the group anticipates not having access to email or phones, please describe how you will overcome such challenges.

Questionnaire 4: Country Specific Health, Safety, and Security

- 1. Travel Risk Assessment and Mitigation** – For each of the following, please provide information on specific risks in the first box and strategies of how you intend to mitigate each risk in the second box. Consult these resources to supplement your prior knowledge when identifying these risks:

U.S. Government Sources – [CDC](#), [OSAC Crime and Safety Reports](#), [OSAC](#), [U.S. State Department Travel Warnings](#), [U.S. State Department Country Profiles](#)

Other Sources – [GeoBlue Insurance](#)

- A. Ground Transportation** – Safety on highways, travel on mountain roads, night travel, public transportation concerns, etc.

Risk Assessment:

Risk Mitigation:

- B. Health Concerns** – Immunizations needed, diseases, water quality, on-site medical access and quality, etc.

Risk Assessment:

Risk Mitigation:

- C. Forms of Harassment** – Gender inequality, nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

Risk Assessment:

Risk Mitigation:

- D. Natural Disasters** – Earthquakes, floods, landslides, etc.

Risk Assessment:

Risk Mitigation:

E. Personal Safety – Fear of bodily harm, terrorism, violent crime, kidnapping, theft, safety issues in housing, etc.

Risk Assessment:

Risk Mitigation:

F. Political Unrest – Upcoming elections, history of demonstrations, political instability, etc.
Resource: www.electionguide.org

Risk Assessment:

Risk Mitigation:

G. Risky Activities – High altitude, physical activity, swimming, traveling to unstable/travel restriction areas, etc.

Risk Assessment:

Risk Mitigation:

H. Other (Please Describe) – Project involves working with human subjects, photographing people, interviewing individuals in their homes, using expensive equipment, etc.

Risk Assessment:

Risk Mitigation:

2. Vaccinations – Have you consulted the CDC’s recommended vaccinations for each destination on your itinerary?

Yes

No

Please note that Sindecuse Health Center can provide vaccinations, recommendations, and Travax reports for travelers.

3. Language Barriers – If your host country is not primarily English-speaking, explain how your team will address language barriers, i.e., level of language proficiency of the group leader and/or participants, accompanying translator, etc.

4. Group Leader(s) Leadership Experience – Describe the group leader’s leadership experience, i.e., experience leading student travelers in a domestic context, international context, experience navigating new cultures, responding to conflict/emergencies, etc.

5. Group Leader Previous Travel – List previous travel destinations including estimated time spent in each location, especially in the destinations listed on this itinerary:

6. Pre-Departure Preparation/Training – Before departure, will the group participate in one or more pre-departure sessions or trainings to prepare for logistical, cultural, and safety issues abroad?

Yes

No

7. On-Site Orientation – Will the group participate in an on-site orientation that will cover a minimum of group rules/expectations, emergency health, safety, and security risks, mitigation strategies, local support resources, WMU resources including support for sexual misconduct incidents, communication plan, and emergency response plan?

Yes

No

8. Debrief Activities, Reports, and Evaluation – Will the group participate in on-site debrief and/or team meetings, in addition to the on-site orientation?

Yes

No